

## What Is Worry?

One of the most destructive habits ensnaring human beings is also so common that many consider it as natural as breathing and as harmless as blinking. That habit is called worry. It is such a skilled and deceptive thief that its victims don't even know they've been robbed ... of peace, of time, of mental energy, and of emotional well-being.

- To worry is to divide your mind between that which is useful and worthwhile and that which is damaging and destructive.
- To worry is to block the flow of creative energy in your life.

*"Can any one of you by worrying add  
a single hour to your life?"*  
(Matthew 6:27)

## What Is the Nature of Worry?

Worry is a blatant sin that is displeasing to God because its underlying nature is ...

- **Disbelief:** Worry reveals that you really don't believe God when He says He will provide all that you need. (Isaiah 58:11)
- **Disobedience:** Worry reveals that you are taking on personal responsibility and concern for that which God has already promised to provide. (Matthew 6:25–31)
- **Destruction:** Worry destroys your physical body, which is the "temple of the Holy Spirit." It can bring about a host of physical ailments, such as high blood pressure, heart trouble, headaches, colds, and other stomach disorders. (1 Corinthians 6:19–20)
- **Dishonor:** Worry shifts the focus of attention from the all sufficient power of Christ to your human insufficiency and insecurity. Ultimately, worry can undermine your Christian witness by presenting God as impotent and unworthy of praise. (Matthew 5:16)

## Are You Snared in the Web of Worry?

### Emotional

- Are you fearful of what others think about you?
- Are you overwhelmed with fear of the future?
- Are you dismayed when you hear bad news?
- Are you fretful when an unjust person succeeds?
- Are you anxious over unresolved relationships?
- Are you terrified of death?

*"Relieve the troubles of my heart  
and free me from my anguish."*  
(Psalm 25:17)

### Physical

- Are you having difficulty sleeping?
- Are you losing your appetite?
- Are you overeating?
- Are you experiencing headaches?
- Are you having stomach problems?
- Are you struggling with maintaining good health?

*"All their days their work is grief and pain;  
even at night their minds do not rest.  
This too is meaningless."*  
(Ecclesiastes 2:23)

## Key Verse to Memorize

*"Cast all your anxiety on him  
because he cares for you."*  
(1 Peter 5:7)

## Key Passage to Read

Luke 12:22–34

## Why Do You Worry?

What you worry about is not nearly as important as *why you worry*. You may know and love God, but when you trust in anything other than God's promises and provision for your life, then worry will turn your heart away from the Lord and turn your trust into distrust. ...

*"Cursed is the one who trusts in man,  
who draws strength from mere flesh  
and whose heart turns away from the LORD."  
(Jeremiah 17:5)*

**D**istorted Thinking—Trusting God to save you but not trusting Him to meet your everyday needs (Matthew 7:9–11)

**I**llusory control—Thinking that by mentally arranging future events you can control the outcome (James 4:13–17)

**S**uper responsibility—Having a burdened sense of duty to make every area of your life perfect, not having learned to content yourself (Philippians 4:11–12)

**T**ransferred guilt—Instead of confronting the real sin in your life, allowing false guilt to surface as worry in other areas (Psalm 32:3–5)

**R**unaway emotions—Instead of choosing to respond to what Scripture says when you face difficulties, letting anxiety or fear have full control (Psalm 34:4)

**U**nhealthy need—Feeling a desperate need to have the approval of others and worrying about how you look, how you present yourself (Galatians 1:10)

**S**piritual starvation—Trying to live on past spiritual nourishment, but starving for lack of a present spiritual intimacy with God (Psalm 34:8, 10)

**T**rampled self-image—Lacking a sense of God-given self-worth, thus feeling powerless to cope with problems (Psalm 34:18)

## 8 Occasions of Worry

1. **If you say:** I'm afraid that my situation is impossible.

**The Lord says:** I can make all things possible. (Luke 18:27)

2. **If you say:** I'm worried that I'm not wise enough.

**The Lord says:** I will give you My wisdom.  
(1 Corinthians 1:30)

3. **If you say:** I feel anxiety over the cares of the world.

**The Lord says:** Cast all your anxiety on Me. (1 Peter 5:7)

4. **If you say:** I'm overwhelmed with fear.

**The Lord says:** I will give you My strength when you're afraid. (Isaiah 41:10)

5. **If you say:** I'm so worried—I can't forgive myself.

**The Lord says:** I can forgive you. (1 John 1:9)

6. **If you say:** I'm worried that my loved ones might leave me.

**The Lord says:** Once you've come to Me, I will never leave you. (Deuteronomy 31:8)

7. **If you say:** I'm worried that I might die.

**The Lord says:** I will give you eternal life. (John 3:16)

8. **If you say:** I'm so worried that I can't rest.

**The Lord says:** I will give you My rest. (Matthew 11:28–30)

*"Therefore do not worry about tomorrow,  
for tomorrow will worry about itself.  
Each day has enough trouble of its own."  
(Matthew 6:34)*

## God's Word for Worried Hearts

### Do You Need ... ?

- **Comfort**

*"The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he refreshes my soul" (Psalm 23:1–3).*

- **Confidence**

*"For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline" (2 Timothy 1:7).*

- **Contentment**

*"I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do all this through him who gives me strength" (Philippians 4:11–13).*

- **Grace**

*"Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need" (Hebrews 4:16).*

- **Hope**

*"I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future" (Jeremiah 29:11).*

- **Love**

*“See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him” (1 John 3:1).*

- **Peace**

*“You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you” (Isaiah 26:3).*

- **Salvation**

*“If you declare with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved” (Romans 10:9).*

- **Strength**

*“So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand” (Isaiah 41:10).*

- **A New Beginning**

*“Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland” (Isaiah 43:18–19).*

- **Freedom from Personal Works**

*“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do” (Ephesians 2:8–10).*

- **God’s Presence**

*“The LORD is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit” (Psalm 34:18).*

- **Perspective on Worry**

*“Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? ... But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own” (Matthew 6:25–34).*

- **God’s Provision**

*“Which of you, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!” (Matthew 7:9–11).*

---

HOPE FOR THE HEART’s *Biblical Counseling Library* contains our *Biblical Counseling Keys*, providing *God’s Truth for Today’s Problems* on 100+ topics.

The *Quick Reference Guides* contain excerpts from our *Biblical Counseling Keys* and offer immediate, concise answers with *biblical hope and practical help*. For more comprehensive help and additional resources, refer to our *Biblical Counseling Keys* on **Worry**.

If you would like more information, biblical counsel, or prayer support, contact:  
1-800-488-HOPE (4673)  
[www.HopeForTheHeart.org](http://www.HopeForTheHeart.org)

The information in this resource is intended as guidelines for healthy living. Please consult qualified medical, legal, pastoral, and psychological professionals regarding individual concerns.

THE HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®, NIV®  
Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™  
Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

## Related Topics ...

- Anger
- Depression
- Fear
- Guilt
- Rejection & Abandonment
- Self-Worth
- Temptation



*Together ... Changing Minds.  
Changing Hearts. Changing Lives.*

P.O. Box 7, Dallas, TX 75221