**Lesson 14: Why Worry When You Can Worship?**

Text: Philippians 4:6-7

**Introduction**

You cannot worry and worship at the same time. In worship, we acknowledge the worth and power of our great God. There is no need to worry when we remember how great He is. On the other hand, if you are given to worry it is because you have lost sight of the greatness of God. Paul exhorted the Philippians to turn to God in worship rather than giving in to worry. Specifically, he urged them to pray and give thanks instead of stewing over their problems and trying to work them out to the best of their ability. In this lesson, we will consider the God-given way to avoid worry and to fortify our thinking.

1. The Philippian believers could avoid worry by communing with God in prayer. (v. 6)
   1. Worry plagues many believers.
      1. *Be careful* means “to have an anxious concern, based on apprehension about possible danger or misfortune.” (Greek-English Lexicon of the NT)
      2. Warren Wiersbe says it means “to be pulled in different directions. Our hopes pull us in one direction; our fears pull us the opposite direction; we are pulled apart! The Old English root from which we get our word *worry* means to strangle….Worry is *wrong thinking* (the mind) and *wrong feeling* (the heart) about circumstances, people and things.”
      3. We tend to worry about bills, exams, taxes, relationships, children, vehicles, time, clothing, acceptance with peers, finding a mate, health concerns, aging parents, the weather, our appearance and the future – just to name a few.
   2. Worry adversely affects your spiritual life.
      1. It distracts you from the most important things in life. (Matt. 6:31-34)
      2. It hinders faithful application of the Word to your daily life. (Matt. 13:22)
      3. It keeps you from spending meaningful time with the Lord. (Luke 10:41)
   3. The biblical solution for worry is prayer. There are three words used to describe our communion with God.
      1. *Prayer* is the general word used to describe the way that we approach the Lord. It simply means to speak to God and make request. It implies trust in the greatness of God to be able to answer. We can come reverently before Him and make request.
      2. *Supplication* refers to the specific requests and petitions. There is an idea of urgent pleading that is conveyed by this word. It is “an earnest sharing of our needs and problems….Supplication is not a matter of carnal energy but of spiritual intensity.” (Wiersbe). For example, Paul prayed urgently for the salvation of the Jews. (Rom. 10:1)
      3. *Thanksgiving* ought to accompany every prayer request. We ought to come offering our gratitude for all God’s blessings upon our lives.
   4. There are many biblical examples of those who turned to God in earnest prayer rather than being pulled apart by worry.
      1. Hannah poured out her soul before the Lord in requesting a child. (1 Sam. 1:15)
      2. When King Hezekiah received a threatening letter, he took it before the Lord in prayer. (2 Kings 19:14-20)
      3. The church prayed and Peter was delivered. (Acts 12:5)
2. Communing with God in prayer would fortify their thoughts with the peace of God. (v. 7)
   1. Peace is a theme found throughout the Bible.
      1. “The LORD will give strength unto his people; the LORD will bless his people with peace.” (Psa 29:11)
      2. “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.” (Isa 26:3)
      3. “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.” (John 14:27)
   2. The Greek-English Lexicon of the NT defines *peace* as “a state of freedom from anxiety and inner turmoil.”
   3. “When the exhortations of verses 4-6 are heeded, the peace of God will flood one’s troubled soul….Every child of God has peace *with* God through justification by faith (Rom. 5:1). But the peace of God relates to the inner tranquility of a believer’s close walk with God.” (Lightner)
   4. The peace God gives exceeds understanding. Circumstances do not have to be favorable for the believer to experience the peace of God.
   5. Paul used a military term to describe how the peace of God will *keep* the heart and mind of the believer given to prayer.
      1. The word *keep* means to guard or garrison.
      2. God’s peace will protect our minds from the entrance of wrong thinking and wrong feeling.
3. Central Idea: The Philippian believers could avoid worry and fortify their thoughts with the peace of God if they would commune with God in prayer.
4. Application: You don’t have to worry if you will spend time in worship.
   1. Is your life characterized by worry or worship?
   2. Do you keep a prayer list or a worry list?
   3. What areas of life do you need to bring before the Lord?
   4. Have you left your mind wide opened to the attack of worrisome thoughts because you have neglected the privilege of prayer?
   5. Spend time giving thanks to God. Write out reasons you are grateful and share them with a family member or friend.

**Conclusion**

When was the last time that you had a meaningful time of communing with God through prayer? Schedule some time this week. Take your lunch hour to talk to the Lord. Pray together with a family member or friend. Bow before the Lord in worship and be reminded of His greatness. Why worry when you can worship? Find your joy in Christ by spending time in prayer.