

## MID-WEEK MESSAGE FROM PASTOR LESLEY

Pine Bluffs UMC June 10, 2020

Good morning, Friends! Do you remember a message that I gave on Pray More, Worry Less and we had black t-shirts made for the congregation with those words on them? It's been awhile ago but I'd like to revisit that with you today.

My pillow in my study even has that scripture written on it "Don't worry about anything, instead pray about everything and thank Him for his answers."

Philippians 4:6

My morning devotion from Guidelines today was "5 Ways to Turn Worry into Trust." As I was reading it I thought that this was one I'd like to share with you. "The persistent refusal to do something about an issue that troubles you is what can give birth to chronic worry. Worry, however, is a choice, a bad decision which can be overcome. Interested in breaking the worry habit? Then follow these practical guidelines which will help you turn worry into trust.

Guideline #1: Acknowledge that worry has become a problem. Worry may be such an ingrained habit that it feels normal. But admitting that worry has become chronic is the first step towards a long-term solution to the problem.

You may think, "I can handle my problems. Sure, I do a little bit of worrying—everybody does—but I don't need any help." Your body may be telling you otherwise. Gained a few pounds after reaching for "comfort food?" Or would your friends confirm that they have long listened to you complain about the same troubling issues? We are so used to worrying that turning our problems over to God feels irresponsible to us! Ask yourself, how wise is it for you to carry the burden of worry when God says there is a solution by entrusting that concern to Him. The first step is to acknowledge that, as "He himself bore our sins [including what worries you] on the tree..." (1 Peter 2:24).

Guideline 2: Ask God in faith to deal with your problem. Remember Paul's advice? "Don't worry about anything; pray about everything!" Today we seem to do the reverse. We worry about almost everything and pray about practically nothing. God's prescription begins with trust, so specifically ask Him to deal with the problem that kept you tossing and turning last night. Ask Him to undertake for you and remove that nagging thought about what could happen if...

Guideline #3: Act in obedience to the Word of God in this matter. What does the Bible say about our worries? It says they are to be cast upon a Savior who cares.

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

What beautiful words for a world filled with cut-throat competition, a world which is seemingly so cold and friendless. Psalm 55:22 has similar words of advice, "Cast your cares on the LORD, and he will sustain you."

Guideline 4: Commit to Him what He alone can do. To put God's prescription into action requires something fundamental and very difficult. It requires commitment, whereby you come to the place where you say, "I refuse to worry about this."

So very many of the issues that keep us awake nights, tossing and turning, are things which only God can do; but it is our nature to "fix" things, and when we can't—we worry about them. You can decide to turn your concern over to the God who says, "I am the LORD, and there is no other; apart from me there is no God, (Is. 45:5) and find peace.

Guideline #5: Refuse to worry about your problem again. Once you have finally committed your worry to the Lord, you've got to make the decision that you are going to leave the problem with Him, and not pick up right where you left off the last time this issue came to mind. You must refuse to worry, and you can!!! You can say, "Lord, I turn this need over to You—You work it out without my help. I refuse to stay awake and be concerned about it," and instead repeat a verse of

scripture to yourself, or try to think of names and attributes of God starting with A and working to Z. [I start praying down my list of all those I pray for daily—and often I'm asleep before I get to the end. L.] He can and will take the night shift and you will have a good night's sleep.”

In closing I'd like to share a prayer I've shared with you before but it seems an apt one to use today.

#### PRAYER BEFORE SLEEP

Dear God, as I lay me down to sleep relax the tension of my body; calm the restlessness of my mind; still the thoughts which worry and perplex me. Help me to rest myself and all my problems in your strong and loving arms. Let your Spirit speak to my mind and heart while I am asleep, so that, when I wake up in the morning, I may find that I have received in the night-time, light for my way; strength for my tasks; peace for my worries; forgiveness for my sins. Grant me sleep tonight, and tomorrow power to live. In Jesus' Holy Name, Amen!