

SERMON NOTES

SUNDAY 24.11.24

PREACHER: NATHAN BEAN

DO NOT WORRY

BECOMING CHRISTLIKE

BEING, THINKING & DOING

Conviction of a Disciple: As we journey in our growth into Christlikeness, we are learning to release our worries and trust fully in God's goodness as we live out of abiding in Christ

OVERVIEW

Jesus invites us to release worry and embrace worship, shifting our focus from fear and control to trust in God's presence and provision in our daily lives.

ACTION

Step 1: Reflect: What worries or anxieties have been competing for your focus and trust in God this week?

Step 2: Commit: How can you intentionally replace moments of worry with worship or prayer?

Step 3: Act: What specific practice—like gratitude journaling or a prayer walk—can you adopt to keep your focus on God's faithfulness?

THOUGHT

SCRIPTURE: MATTHEW 6:25 - 34

In Matthew 6, Jesus offers a simple command. In Greek text it only takes four words to say it and yet they are some of the most challenging words that he spoke. He says to those gathered around him: "Don't be anxious about your life."

This just might be the most counter-culture statement in history. For many, these anxieties are fuelled by an uncertainty of where they will sleep, where their next meal is coming from, or how they're going to pay their next bill. On top of those everyday concerns about survival, our 24-hour news cycle keeps us panicked and concerned about things far outside of our ability to impact. We are overwhelmed by information from all sides and it can just get to be WAY too much!

Whether our anxiety feels reasonable or not, one thing remains true:

WORRY and WORSHIP can't occupy the same place. Why is this? It comes down to the question of where we place our focus, intentionality, and TRUST.

When we worship we are placing all our focus and adoration onto Jesus. We rise above our circumstances and declare that there is Something and Someone who is truer than whatever we are experiencing.

In a way, worry is like a warped version of worship. It magnifies our circumstances, elevating them in our mind. When we are worrying, we are attempting to pull the world back into our control and figure things out on our own. Worry is the opposite of trust.

Jesus looks around at creation and shows how it worships just fine. Lilies, birds, trees, stars, rocks - they all are fully settled in their being, doing what it is they are created to do. You never see a rock going to therapy because it's had an identity crisis.

The rest of the created cosmos seems perfectly secure in who it is and in living out its created purpose. And yet, we are given this great gift of choice - Who will we trust? In whom will we place our confidence? To what and whom will we give our greatest affections?

It's worth clarifying here what we're talking about when we talk about "worship". Worship is far more than the songs we sing on a Sunday. Worship is a way of seeing, being, thinking, and living with and before our Creator. Worship is the posture with which we approach all of our life, not just when the music is playing. This is what Paul meant in Rom 12:1 when he spoke of the whole of our lives being poured out as a LIVING act of worship.

It is easy to trust Jesus with our eternal future, but not with the moment at hand.

In verses 25, 31, 34 Jesus speaks of forward-facing thoughts. We are not in control. Coming to terms with this gives us such freedom. Future focused thinking robs us from being here and now, which is the only place Jesus meets with us.

When Jesus talks about anxiety, he isn't offering us a new technique for coping with an anxiety-filled life. Instead, he's giving us a new set of eyes with which we see everything from a totally new perspective. He is giving us the eyes of His Kingdom.

It's with these new eyes and new vantage point that Jesus invites us to make our requests to the Father. Since He already knows what we need, we come to him - not with anxiety and worry - but with thanksgiving. This gratitude comes because we've surrendered to this reality:

Our Father's knowing is higher than our knowing.

This means we may not always understand or like what it seems like God is up to. However, because we are confident that HE knows what we need and is for us, we can relax into HIM and into HIS goodness. From this surrendered place, worry has no grip on us and we can live from a place of worship and trust.

DISCUSSION

1. How does worship help you to reframe your perspective during difficult or uncertain times?
2. What makes it challenging to trust God's provision, and how can we support each other in growing that trust?
3. How can our Connect Group intentionally create habits that draw us away from worry and toward worship and trust in God?

PRAYER

Jesus, help us let go of our worries and place our trust fully in You. Teach us to live in the freedom of Your presence, worshipping You with our whole hearts. Thank You for holding every part of our lives in Your loving care.

Amen.