



ASKING BETTER QUESTIONS -
THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT
SESSION 20 - DO NOT WORRY
(Mt 6:25-34)

Do Not Worry (Mt 6:25-34)

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? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?

Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life? “And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith?

Do Not Worry (Mt 6:25-34)

So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them.

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.



Initial Questions

- So is “worry” sin?
- How is *worry* and *faith* related?
- Is Jesus advocating a lack of planning?
- What does it mean to “seek first the kingdom?”

Overview

Therefore I tell you this is how you must go on to behave: do not worry about your life . . . or about your body . . . But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness (25, 33).

In other words, **our basic choice of which of two masters we intend to serve** will radically affect our attitude to both. We shall not be anxious about the one (for we have rejected it), but concentrate our mind and energy on the other (for we have chosen him); we shall refuse to become wrapped up in our own concerns, but instead seek first the concerns of God. [Stott, 136).

Does that make sense?

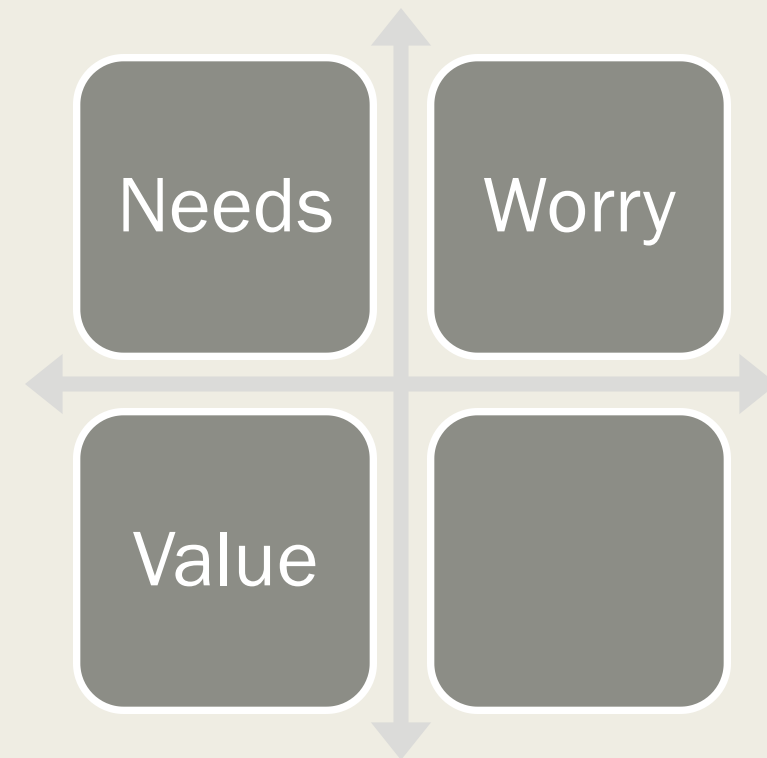




RATE
YOURSELF –
HOW MUCH
DO I WORRY
RIGHT NOW?

Digging in....

- 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**? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more **valuable** than they?



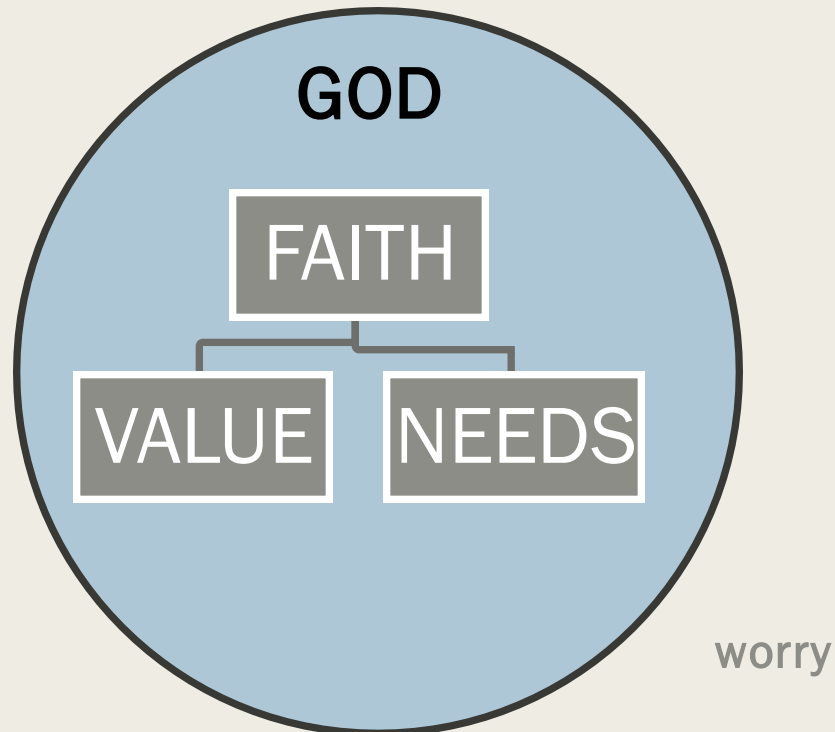
Digging in....

- Can any one of you by **worrying** add a single hour to your life? “And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, **will he not much more clothe you**
- ... o you of little **faith**...




Spiritual Maths

- **NEEDS + value = WORRY**



- **FAITH** as trust that God will take care of our needs.
- But **FAITH** also accepts the dignity and value that God supplies to us.
- **FAITH** pushes **worry** out.

A flock of birds is silhouetted against a vibrant sunset sky. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm orange and yellow glow. The birds are scattered across the frame, some in the foreground and some further away. The sky transitions from a deep blue at the top to a bright orange near the horizon. In the bottom right corner, the dark silhouette of a forested hillside is visible.

Lessons from the birds

- Jesus invites us to look at the birds of the air. Think for a moment about “the birds”. What do you see or learn?



Lessons from the flowers

- Jesus invites us to “see how the flowers of the field grow”
- What do you see?



- Did you enjoy your nature walk?
- What's going on for you right now?
- Are you feeling less worried right now?
- What do we learn?



RE-RATE
YOURSELF....

Two sets of questions

Our Questions

- What shall we eat?
- What shall we drink?
- What shall we wear?

Jesus' Questions

- Are you not much more valuable than they? [the birds]
- If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith?

What is the essential difference between the two sets of questions?

What is it Jesus is basically teaching us here?



- To cultivate the habit of including God and his provision in our thinking.
- How? By cultivating the habit of seeking his kingdom first.
- Worrying doesn't do anything. **Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?**
- Worrying is pointless. Let it go.
- Do I feel any sense of “resistance” or “unwillingness” with the idea of saying good-bye to worry?

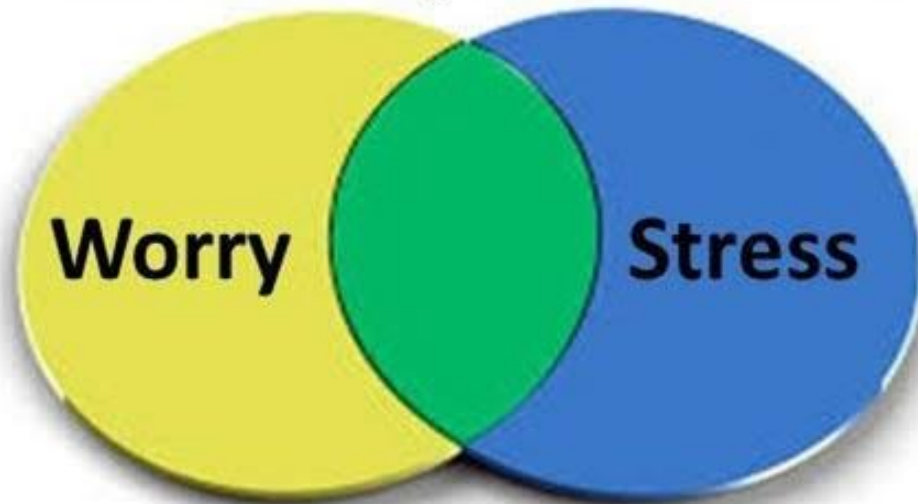
What to do when anxious...



- Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, **but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.** And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Php 4:4-6)
- If anxious, then do what?
- Conscious decision to intentionally formulate and present a request to God.
- Conscious decision to recall God's promises and create thankfulness in the heart.
- Thankfulness and worry can't occupy the same heart at the same time. So being thankful (for many things, not just the current topic of worry) is in fact a transforming initiative.

Worry v Stress

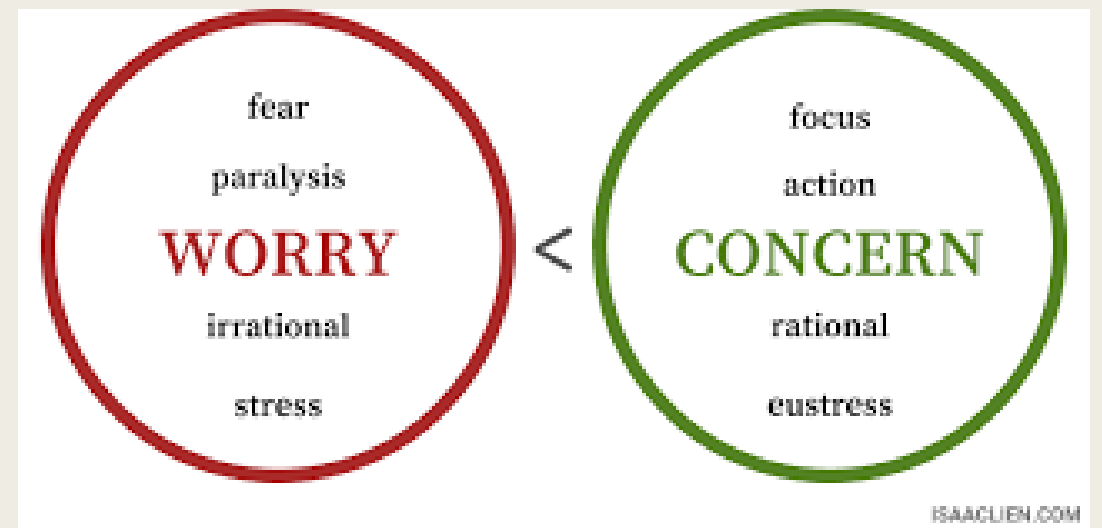
Understanding the Differences



- What is the difference between **worrying** and **stress**?
- Stress is more about what the external situation is.
- Worry is about how we respond to the stress internally.

Worry v Concern

- I have labored and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked. Besides everything else, I face daily the pressure of my **concern** for all the churches. Who is weak, and I do not feel weak? Who is led into sin, and I do not inwardly burn? (2 Cor 11:27-29)
- Sounds Stressful?
- Concern = taking problems seriously and responding appropriately.
- Worry = emotional response. Paralyzing.



Seeking first the Kingdom...

- What have we heard this means?
- What do you think Jesus meant by this? What does the context demand?
- Making sure your response is in line with what we have been learning about God's kingdom. God's rule reigning.
- Am I making decisions with God's rule in my heart?





Is Jesus anti-planning?

- Go to the ant, you sluggard; consider its ways and be wise! It has no commander, no overseer or ruler, yet it stores its provisions in summer and gathers its food at harvest. (Prov. 6:6-8)
- Consider the birds? Nests. Migration.
- Anyone who does not provide for their relatives, and especially for their own household, has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. (1 Tim 5:8)
- Planning is not the problem. Responding to pressures without worry and seeking first the kingdom is the problem.



The inside of the cup...

- **What is the internal heart attitude here?**
- **True heart alignment with God's priorities reduces the lure of material security demands and eliminates worry.**
- **What's my go-to?**
- **Do I intentionally have prayers of gratitude?**

In your own words

Do not worry...

Seek first the kingdom...

How would you say it in your own words?



Reflection

- Do I see *worry* as being a problem?
- Is *worry* a comfortable old friend I don't want to say good-bye to?
- Do I need to cultivate habits of “presenting my requests” to God when faced with difficult situations?
- Have I experienced *thankfulness* pushing out *worry*.