

TITLE AND NUMBER: 56. Do not worry



REFERENCE AND KEY VERSE(S): Matthew 6:31-34

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.

LOOKING FURTHER: Philippians 4:6-8,19 ; Romans 11:33-36

What does this Bible passage tell us?

We can't stop our minds from thinking; that is what God created them to do. When we don't have anything to keep us busy, such as if we are awake during the night, we can easily start to overthink – to imagine things to be worse than they are, or we can try and work out our own answers to the problems we face.

Jesus teaches us not to worry about practical things like food, drink and clothes. That doesn't mean we simply sit and wait for everything to come to us, but it means not getting stressed about things we cannot change. In prison there are many things we cannot control and we have to be patient. Getting worked up doesn't make things happen any sooner. Instead we are to concentrate our thoughts on God's Kingdom – the things that are important to Him - and through prayer, reflection and reading the Bible allow Him to make us more like Jesus.

In Philippians 4:6-8, Paul tells us not to be anxious about anything, but to bring our requests to God with thanks. He goes on to say that if we do this, God will give us His peace which is greater than we can possibly imagine. Finally, in verse 8, he suggests some good things for us to focus our thoughts on.

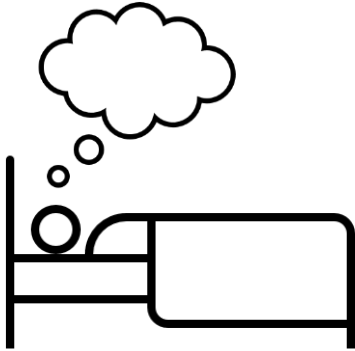
Many people have a copy of Reinhold Niebuhr's "Serenity Prayer" which begins: -
"God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change;
Courage to change the things I can;
And wisdom to know the difference."

These are great words to include in your prayers every day.

Reflections:

- What things are you anxious about at the moment? You might find it helpful to write a list, bring it before God in your prayers, and then screw it up and throw it away as a symbol of handing those things over to God.
- Write out Philippians 4:8 and put it up somewhere. When you are anxious, turn to it to help you focus your thoughts on Jesus.
- Remember God is bigger than your problems. Use Romans 11:33-36 as a prayer to close this time of reflection.

Write or draw something you read in this Bible Study that stood out to you.



Do you have any questions about this week's Bible Study?



How does this week's message apply to your life?



What can we learn about God from this week's passage?



What would you like to ask God this week?



Has God responded to your prayers this week in the way you had hoped for? It's okay to talk to God about this.

