

PURSUIT OF PEACE

"Seek Peace and Pursue it" - Psalm 34:14

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CHAPTER SIX -

WHY TRUST WHEN YOU CAN WORRY?

ONE MORNING I drove my mother to the bank where she had occasion to visit the president. The door to his office was opened long enough for me to see a rather large but attractive sign on his desk. It said: "Why trust when you can worry?"

Several months later I was at a rather large social gathering. It suddenly came to me that someone had mentioned the name, Lawson Kelley, in a group near me. I edged closer to listen, as this was the name of the president of the bank we had visited where I had seen the unusual sign. Then they told me the story of how that sign came to be on his desk.

Mr. Kelley was a worrier, with a capital W. He worried about his health and carried a pocketful of pills with him everywhere he went. He was afraid to be without them. He listened to his heart and often checked his pulse when he became the least bit excited. He was sure that every pain was a sign of an ulcer or cancer or a heart attack. He worried about his business, and about every detail of his day's routine. Every time he had to make a trip out of town or had an important business conference, he went into a nervous upset. He lived in dread that his wife would be killed or the children injured. Worry and anxiety were not only slowly killing him but were affecting his family and those who had to work for him.

Lawson Kelley's doctor had done all that he could for him. He had suggested books on how to overcome worry, how to live without fear, and other related subjects. Mr. Kelley almost memorized them in hopes of getting relief. The result was always the same. A little temporary help came at first; then he was back to the same set of worries again.

Mr. Kelley was a person who prided himself on reading a chapter of the Bible a day whether he remembered a word of it or not. Obviously it was not getting through to him. Because of this he thought that he had gotten all the help he could from the LORD. It hadn't occurred to him to ask his minister for help. Finally he did.

The minister was slow and deliberate in talking to him about his family and the weather and seemingly unimportant things. Mr. Kelley got rather impatient and began to worry about the time he was missing from the bank. Finally the minister asked, "I wonder if you will do me a favor?" Mr. Kelley was anxious to promise and be on his way.

"Will you read Matthew 6:19-34 every day for a week? Come back to see me and we will discuss your problem."

Mr. Kelley was madder than he ever remembered, but being an outstanding Christian man in the little town, he was careful not to let the pastor see how he felt. He promised and stomped out of the church office. He had wasted his time; he was sure the minister hadn't done a thing for him. When he had simmered down a little, he remembered his promise and started reading the sixth chapter of Matthew carefully every day.

In several months, bank president Kelley was a changed man. The people who worked with him knew, his family knew, the minister knew, and it seemed that nearly everyone in the town had heard about the change in him.

At the last session of study together, the pastor had said, "Keep this thought always before you as a reminder." That night Mr. Kelley thought of the sign and the next morning he ordered it made. He thought it would also be a testimony to other businessmen who had similar troubles. But Mr. Kelley's life was much more of a testimony than the sign.

Worrying about things will not help in the least. We all know that is true but somehow we find it difficult to stop. GOD is the only One who can give the relief we seek. That is why the minister had Mr. Kelley study GOD's Word before he tried to add any advice.

Perhaps the largest group of verses that deal with the problem of worry and anxiety is found in Matthew 6:19-34.

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness! No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for

the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

That is why the pastor chose these verses for the bank president. Here CHRIST commands us to **"take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?"** (v. 25). The word **"thought"** here does not refer to the careful planning that is necessary for effective everyday living, but rather means the anxious worrying that makes our lives perpetually uneasy. The same word is used in Philippians 4:6, where we are told, **"be careful for nothing."**

First of all, CHRIST tells us not to worry about our lives. That includes our health and the length of our lives.

Doctors are becoming increasingly alarmed because the people of this country worry about their health more than anything else. We have more specialists, increased medical knowledge, new miraculous medicines, and advanced treatments. Our hospitals and clinics today have far surpassed the wildest dreams of a generation ago. This should be a comfort and encouragement. But increased knowledge has also led to increased worry. Instead of the increased knowledge helping us, it has made us a nation of hypochondriacs, feeling pulses, taking antacids, dreading cancer and ulcers.

Programs on television and articles in magazines have done just the opposite of what they hoped to accomplish. They have merely added to our uneasiness and led to constant worry over the least sign of the dreaded symptoms.

The answer to this problem is to remember what GOD's Word says, **"My times are in thy hand"** (cf. Psalm 31:15). Our state of health and the length of our lives are planned by GOD. Even though we are Christians and are convinced of the joys of Heaven, we don't want to go there now. It is natural for us to feel that way, because GOD has given us a sense of self-preservation that makes us want to cling to life. It makes us fear dying because of the pain, expense, and suffering it causes our loved ones. But no Christian should worry about the state of death.

"We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (II Corinthians 5:1). **"That where I am, there ye may be also"** (John 14:3). We are promised that we will live forever in the presence of the LORD.

Many people have wondered why GOD has not described Heaven for us in detail, but I seriously doubt if there are any words in our language which He could use to convey the correct idea. We make new words as we have a use for them. Thus, none of us adults ever studied the word "astronauts" [1962] when we went to school because there was no need for a word pertaining to outer space then. Our finite minds could never understand just what GOD was trying to tell us about Heaven, so it would be vain to try.

While GOD has given us a sense of preservation and encourages us in His Word to take care of our bodies, He does not mean that we are to carry that out to the point of "taking anxious thought," or worrying about it. These are things that are to be left to GOD's discretion. Doctors

have found out that worry about death and our health is often the basic cause of many other worries.

We are also told not to worry about what we are going to eat and how we are going to be dressed. While housing is not mentioned here, I am sure that CHRIST also had that in mind, because He has promised to supply all our needs; certainly a place to live is included.

I have never met a person who was honestly worried about having enough to eat or a roof over his head. But I know myriads of people who are worried because GOD might not give them as much material possessions as they want. We are not so much concerned about GOD providing our food as we are about whether we will have hamburger or steak for dinner tonight. Our worry is not having some adequate place to live but if it will be in the right neighborhood, built in the latest style, and have an all-electric kitchen.

We are all sure that GOD will give us enough clothing, but we worry if we can't get our clothes from the best stores so we can have the same labels on them as wealthy friends. The problem is not in the realm of having enough for life but in keeping up with the Joneses. Our eyes are so set on worldly standards that we have lost sight of the fact that GOD will provide what He in His wisdom knows is best for us to have. But, because GOD's best is not as good as we want, we feel that we must slave to achieve these goals ourselves. It is not surprising that people suffer with tensions, nervousness, and an uneasy dissatisfaction with life. Trying to get things that God does not want or intend for us to have will naturally lead to frustrations.

CHRIST then asked a question to bring us up sharply about this matter. **"Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?"** Isn't it more important that GOD has given us life than what we are going to eat tonight? Isn't your body more important than the kind of clothes you have to wear? We think so much about the cost of living in the present style that we have forgotten the value of life. When there is danger to our lives, we soon forget what we are eating or wearing.

This was vividly illustrated on a recent plane trip. As we were boarding the plane a number of people commented that they were very hungry and later we heard a few complaints to the hostesses when there was a delay in serving dinner. We were going through a severe storm when the trays were finally given out. I noticed that the very ones who were thinking the most about their stomachs an hour earlier were the ones who left their dinners untouched during the dangers of the storm.

To show His care, CHRIST referred to the birds and to the lilies of the field as examples of His care and provision (verses 26-28). **"Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them."** GOD takes care of the birds without their striving and worrying about their needs.

It is interesting to note that He is our heavenly Father - not the birds' Father.

He cares for the birds who bring us beauty and enjoyment. Then He asks, **"Are ye not much better than they?"** If GOD cares for a little bird, can't you believe that a person with a soul is of much more value to Him? (Luke 12:6,7.)

Then CHRIST turns our eyes to the lilies of the field. He wants us to notice how they grow. They grow quickly and die quickly. They don't toil or spin, weave or make clothes. Then He adds, "**Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.**"

Solomon was noted for his costly and beautiful garments as well as his wisdom and fame. But nothing that man makes can compare with the beauty of the flowers all around. If GOD lavishes such perfect care on the flowers that are lovely one day and dead the next, why do you doubt His loving care of you, His child?

Why should we stop worrying?

First, worry is useless (verse 27). By taking thought or worry can you add one cubit to your stature? One cubit is about eighteen inches.

We may be able to add a few pounds to our weight or subtract a few by taking thought to our diets. We may be a little more attractive by taking the thought and time to go to a beauty salon. But there really can't be much alteration in our height or looks by worrying about it.

Second, worry is a sure sign that we are living like unbelievers. "**After all these things** [material possessions] **do the Gentiles** [unsaved] **seek.**" This grieves GOD because it shows that we are not satisfied with His will and provision for us. We are lusting for the things we see others having (Philippians 4:11).

It is characteristic of those who do not know GOD to live for material possessions. Their lives are spent trying to get more of this world's goods. They have empty, hungry hearts that can only be filled with GOD. They don't recognize this and have a longing for more things. But they are never satisfied. The more they possess, the more they worry; and the more they worry, the more they feel they must have to conquer the worry. It is an eternal circle of never-ending desires that cannot be truly completed outside of knowing the LORD. When Christians live in the same manner, we are showing that we are not satisfied with the LORD or His provisions but are always craving for more (I Timothy 6:6-10).

Third, worry is also foolish because our heavenly Father already knows the things that we need (verse 32). When the Bible says something once, that is enough for us to know that GOD means it. In this one chapter, JESUS tells us twice that GOD knows our needs (see verse 8). Verse 32 refers to our needs for food, clothes, shelter, health and life. He knows even before we do, and before we ask Him, what our needs are. He knows and has gone ahead of me, making provision for those things I will need later today - things I don't know I am going to need and things I think I will need. You and I can make a list of the things we think we will need for the next months. Many will be things that we don't really need, yet there will be many other things we do need that we know nothing about now. GOD knows what is best for us. What a great comfort it should be to us to know that there is no reason for worry and anxiety of any kind when we are safe in His hands.

Fourth, worry is unbelief. CHRIST put His finger on the real sore spot when He spoke the words, "**O ye of little faith.**" We may say that we are trusting GOD to take care of us but if we

continue to worry we are proving that we are lying. Perhaps we don't see it ourselves but it is nevertheless true. We have been giving mental assent to this truth but deep in our hearts we know that we don't trust God as we should.

In view of all these things, we are forbidden to take anxious thought "**for the morrow; for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.**" Doctors and ministers tell us that worry about the future is one of the greatest sins of our nation today. We are living tomorrow, next week, and even next year in the strength that is given us for today only. This is why so many bodies and minds break down. We are trying to carry too large a load at once. GOD did not promise strength for tomorrow, next week, and next month. He only promised the power we need for one day at a time. My mother used to tell me when I was in pain so much, "You only have to live one moment at a time." There is real help and strength in remembering that. I learned not to live the next moment or relive the past one. I was just wasting precious energy and peace by trying to face too much at once.

We should live in airtight compartments of one day at a time. In the large ocean-going liners there are doors in different parts of the vessel that will completely close off all other parts. In case of some danger to the ship, the damaged section can be closed off from the rest of the ship. The ocean-going liner is a good illustration of how we Christians must close off yesterday and refuse to live in tomorrow. Live only in the airtight compartment of today.

Don't live yesterday, or even this morning or afternoon again. There are enough trials and burdens for today to take all of your strength, so don't try carrying a double load.

Live today! Look at the flowers today, walk in the sun today, say the kind things today, complete that task today.

Leave yesterday and tomorrow in GOD's loving hands. Many people spend their hours worrying about what they have done in the past or fretting about what they will do in the future. They completely ruin the present by reliving the past or planning for the dim, unrealistic future. Instead, take all your thought and strength to make this a purposeful and workable present.

Fifth, worry is a sure sign that our hearts are set on the treasures here on this earth instead of setting them on the LORD (Matthew 6:19-24). We are told not to lay up treasures on earth, because they will be lost or destroyed, but to lay up treasures in Heaven. "**For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.**" Paul gives us the same command in Colossians 3:1-3. "**Seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth.**" Why? Because "**ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.**"

Our eyes are so easily set on the wrong things. We covet the changeable things in this life. Our trouble comes when, instead of setting our love on GOD and on eternal, unchangeable things, we set our affections on the things of this earth.

Our treasure is where our hearts are. It is a sad but true commentary that our dearest possession is usually ourselves and that is why we live such miserable, self-centered lives.

Of course, this makes a fertile field for worry.

- Your heart may be set first on a child that you dearly love, and the LORD makes him sick, and you go to pieces.

- Your heart may be set first on a husband. It could be that the LORD will let him die and you go to pieces with worry.

- Your heart may be set on your money, and GOD may bring financial ruin and you naturally worry. Why? Your heart was set on these changeable things instead of being set first on GOD.

GOD never changes. Sometimes GOD has to remove even the good things in our lives to teach us that these things have been taking His place.

These may be things that He normally would like us to have, but when we give them His place, He must teach us the folly of our action. He convicts us, He talks to us through His Word, but if we stubbornly go on in our own way, He may have to remove our dearest possessions to change our hearts' attitude toward Him.

"No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." CHRIST is here trying to show us that we can't have our hearts in two places at once. Either CHRIST is put first or material possessions are put first. Far too many Christians think that we can have two loves at the same time on the throne of our hearts. CHRIST states that this is impossible.

Either we love one and hate the other, or put one first and leave the other. There is no chance of serving GOD and satisfying our desire for worldly things at the same time.

If your ambitions are set on things of this earth, GOD is not having His rightful place.

We might think of our lives as a wheel. GOD is the center or the hub. Each part of our lives represents a spoke. Our jobs, our social life, our children, our life partners, our recreation, our church, etc., are all spokes held together in the proper place by the hub. When GOD is the center holding each of these things in their places, we have contented, peaceful lives.

If GOD is taken out of the center and made just one of the spokes among many others, the spokes fall apart. When self is in the center of your life and GOD is made one spoke, the whole life will be off-balance. It is not surprising that many have frustrated, unhappy lives that fall apart under special pressure when the hub of the life is self. Self will be manifested in an overemphasis on wealth, health, fame, love and all material needs. These are ever changing things that will naturally lead to much worry.

GOD has given His solution to the whole problem of worry in one verse. **"But seek ye first [not "only"] the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you"** (Matthew 6:33).

This is GOD's pyramid of values. To conquer anxiety and worry, we do not have to give up our

desires or try to suppress them. We must rearrange them in the order of importance that GOD gives them. GOD places material possessions on the bottom. He is placed at the top along with the things that concern Him.

When things are put into the right order in our lives we are not only happy and peaceful but we are promised material needs will be provided for us. All this is given without the need for worry or straining or scheming on our part. This is all GOD's work for us. In all honesty, then, we worry because we are not putting GOD in His rightful place in our lives. We are letting some idol have the throne of our hearts. Usually that idol is self, often manifested in our desire for some worldly possession (Luke 12:15,21).

The principal cause of unhappiness is unregulated desires.

We want more than we really need or we may be wanting something that is harmful to our spiritual lives. The modern world has geared itself by its advertisements to increase our wishes and goals for more. We want more! We get more. But instead of being satisfied, we just worry more. Peace and contentment cannot be found in earthly things.

They are only a "come hither" tempting us to strain and struggle to get to the "top" in our business or social circle. The very things we have our eyes so set on, which we believe will give us joy and peace when attained, only add to worry and turn to ashes when we finally get them. Augustine said, "Our souls are restless until they find their rest in Thee [GOD]." If there were anything in this world that would bring peace and satisfaction apart from GOD, you can be sure that it would have been found before now and the secret would be widespread.

Someone has said that "worry is a cycle of inefficient thought whirling around a center of fear." A group of New York doctors pooled their case histories to make a study of the causes and effects of worry. Of all their patients, seventy per cent were constant worriers. Fifty per cent worried mostly about the future, while twenty per cent of them worried about the past. Thirty per cent of them worried about the present. There are a myriad of things about which people worry. The commonest worries are about ourselves, our business, home life, health, or the future.

These are the very things that CHRIST mentioned in the sixth chapter of Matthew, assuring us that these things will be taken care of by Him. There are also people who worry when everything is going fine. They are sure that it is too good to be true; something is bound to happen to ruin it. They let worry about the future ruin the happiness of today. This pessimistic attitude so colors the challenge of life that today can never be enjoyed because of what may happen tomorrow.

Few of us seem to realize the devastating effect that worry has on us.

Our magazines and newspapers are full of statements by doctors telling us how worry affects the body and nervous system. Worry is often the cause of ulcers, colitis, functional heart troubles, indigestion, loss of appetite, tiredness, physical and emotional breakdowns and many unexplained aches and pains. Corporations are having regular checks on their employees to make sure that they are not worrying about anything. These men know that when the mind is occupied with worries, the worker will be inefficient in his job. Many companies employ full-time psychiatrists to keep an emotional check on all their workers. In a recent safety drive here in Dallas, the police begged people not to drive when they were worried or emotionally upset in

any way. These are the basic troubles, other than intoxication, in most accidents. When a person is worried he drives erratically and carelessly, often displaying poor judgment.

You may be saying, "I know all that you have been saying is true. I worry and I can't seem to stop it. What am I going to do?" You may often have dealt with each individual worry, confessed it to the LORD, then turned right back to it again. This has become such a hopeless cycle that you have finally given up. Perhaps a look into several of the basic causes of worry might help get at the source of the trouble instead of just trying to treat the symptoms.

A specialist in medical psychology, Dr. Ernest White, along with many others, says that the real cause of worry lies not in the things we worry about but in the lack of an inner sense of security. Case histories show that the more well developed a person's sense of security is, the less he is disposed to worry and vice versa. The person who lacks inner confidence in himself transfers his attitude to outside things, including the outcome of situations; consequently he worries about them. Worry is purely a symptom, an expression of an inner need for assurance.

A patient came to the doctor because he was worrying about money. He really was poor and had to live a very frugal life. The doctor was not able to convince him that this was just a symptom and if this worry were removed, his mind would find something else about which to be concerned. Some months later, the same man returned. In the intervening time, he had inherited a considerable fortune. Now he no longer worried about money, but was worried sick about his business. When one worry is removed we have the tendency to permit another to take its place.

Now that we have recognized this as a need, we have made an important step toward curing ourselves of the worry habit. We need security.

GOD has promised us all the security we need; the trouble is we don't take it. Christians are secure in their salvation, with no room for worry there. In the first part of this chapter we discussed the ways that CHRIST has promised to provide for all our needs. If we live by the standards He set up in the sixth chapter of Matthew, we can have a constant feeling of security in Him. This is our blessed privilege, but few of us avail ourselves of this help. We either don't bother to study the Word to see the ways in which we are secure in the LORD, or we don't accept them by faith as true.

It is only natural that we worry for fear of doing wrong and for fear of its results. Overcoming that is simple. Don't do things that you know are wrong. When you have sinned, tell GOD and He will forgive it.

A third and equally important reason for worry comes from a lack of surrender to the LORD of ourselves and a willingness to live according to His will, not our own. Relief from worry comes from giving ourselves to GOD - not by halves, but by an all-encompassing love. Thereby we do not go back to the past in fear or ahead to the future in worry, but lie quietly in His hand having no will of our own but His will.

Everyone has some anxiety, but not everyone has an anxiety complex. The anxiety complex is caused by a group of memories or desires of which we are not conscious but which nevertheless affect our personalities. The difference between peace and worry is the kind of anxiety we have. Basic anxiety is a restlessness within time which comes because we have been made for eternity.

When we are anxious to please the LORD and to live in the center of His will, there will be little worry and the result will be a wonderful peace. When we are anxious about the cares of this world and material possessions, we will have much to cause us worry. The real question to face in conquering worry is: Do I really want and accept GOD's will for my life or do I insist on having my own way? The answer to that question will largely determine the presence of worry or peace in your life. You must make your own decision and be prepared for the consequences.

Perhaps a few practical suggestions for the control of worry might help. Just remember that worry won't alter facts. It just clouds your thoughts and makes it harder to make clear decisions.

When you are worried about something, the first thing to do is to "**cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he will sustain thee.**" After that is done, find something active to do. Make it something that will occupy your mind. It might be reading a story, looking at the television, visiting a friend, working out a puzzle or cleaning the garage. Keeping busy will help take your mind off the thing that worries you.

A lot of worry comes from the wrong kind of imagination. Don't let your thoughts go wild in facing things that you must do. Don't lie in bed when you wake in the morning dreading the hard things that you must do that day. It takes more energy to worry than to get up earlier and start doing the unpleasant task.

Try to avoid people who worry and especially those who talk about their worries. One worrier often makes another. One doctor says that worry is the most contagious disease he knows. A person might talk about something that concerns you, about which you forgot to worry, and start you on a new path of anxiety.

Don't discuss your worries with anyone unless you are sure that one is in a position to help you. Many times these so-called "comforters" tell you how serious your problem is or give an illustration of how badly this same thing affected someone else. This will only make you feel worse. At best it will increase your self-pity and impress the trouble indelibly on your mind to rehearse it over and over.

If your worries persist, then find some trained person who can help. It may be a doctor, minister, lawyer or businessman who can help with your special need. When talking to this person, be perfectly honest with the problem or you might not get any help at all.

Once you have made a decision stop speculating about the outcome. Forget it and go on to the next thing. It is far better to make a few poor choices than to be vacillating back and forth, which only produces more worry and poor mental health. The Christian who is sincerely seeking GOD's will is promised that it will be made known; if he is doing what is wrong he can be assured that GOD will check his course in some way.

Try not to think of your problems as difficulties; think of them as a challenge and as opportunities for your best action and strategy.

Don't procrastinate. Putting things off until tomorrow simply allows more time for your

imagination to make a mountain out of a possible molehill, for anxiety to sap your self-confidence and frighten you to the point of not being able to do your best. Do it now!

If you must do a job that is too big for you, try breaking it up into smaller jobs. Then take one part at a time - as you would climb a ladder, taking one rung at a time. Don't let yourself think about the difficulties of the next step until you have successfully completed the one you are working on now. When I start writing a book, I become so frightened at the prospect of turning out a certain number of pages or chapters that several times I almost give up. Yet, when I think in terms of one chapter at a time, or spending an hour or two a day at the typewriter, it is amazing how the chapters begin to pile up.

Don't be discouraged if in spite of all your best efforts, you still worry. Whatever you do a number of times becomes a habit. The longer you let worry go unchecked, the harder it will be to control it. There will naturally be very discouraging days, but don't think that means you aren't progressing in your effort to conquer worry. You might be tempted to give up just before you have made a real victory.

Don't become too confident that you have completely overcome worry even if you have been improving rapidly. This is often the time when we are apt to begin to rely on our own strength instead of on the Lord's power.

That is what happened to Mr. Kelley, the bank president. After a few months, he was so much better that he was sure he was cured for life. He became careless about his devotional time with the Lord. He began to trust himself. Then one day everything went wrong. All the worries came flooding over him again. He got panicky because his pills were at home and he had an important business conference. He looked at the sign, WHY TRUST WHEN YOU CAN WORRY?, and it only seemed to mock him.

In desperation, he threw the sign across the room as hard as he could. Then he put his head down on his desk and wept. As soon as he could get composed a little, he told his secretary not to let anyone in for the next half hour. He spent that time talking to the Lord in earnest, confessing that he had tried to live without the Lord's help and guidance. The sign still has the dent, but even that dent is used to remind Mr. Kelley that we can only walk successfully as Christians while walking in the power of the HOLY SPIRIT.

Try to arrange your schedule so you will not have to hurry! Hurry is a blood brother of worry! It shatters poise and self-confidence and only adds fear and anxiety. If you insist on living a life of frenzied activity, trying to cram too many jobs into too little time, I can promise you right now that your life will be full of worry no matter how easygoing your personality.

Marie Phillips was still quite young and very attractive. She had a nice husband and three lovely children. She came to visit me to get help in planning a program for our women's group. Right in the middle of our work, she said, "I've got to stop worrying; it's killing me." I waited a second to see if she would explain. "I really don't have anything to worry about; Ron is a good husband and the children are a real joy. I don't worry about any of the big things that my friends worry about, just about little things. What can I do about that?"

I knew that this was much more important than planning a program and was probably why she

had come to see me in the first place. I suggested that she jot down the things that bothered her. When I looked at the list I was floored for a minute, as everything seemed so disconnected. Worry usually follows a regular pattern. These are some of the things she had written: Worried about the way I dress, about getting a ticket from a policeman, about the children getting hurt, about being late to church, about not having meals on time, about an automobile accident, about upsetting Ron, etc. Suddenly a flash of understanding came to me.

"Do you ever hurry?" I asked. "All the time," was the answer. "But what has that got to do with worry?" "Everything, I believe!"

Marie had been brought up in a family that was very strict about being on time, whether to meals, school or church. She had gotten into the habit of being just a little late all the time. Hurry breeds worry. She was the easiest case of counseling I have ever had. She started by getting up fifteen minutes earlier every morning. That gave her time to get dressed properly and commit the day's activities to the Lord. Breakfast was now on time so she didn't have to worry about getting her husband to work on time or the children to school. She allowed herself cushions of time between each important activity for emergencies that often arise with children and for long telephone calls. Now she always arrives at school when the children are let out so they are not in danger of being hurt. She starts to her meetings and to church in plenty of time so she doesn't exceed the speed limit, which took care of the worry of getting a ticket or having an accident. They are a happy family now, all because Marie faced her problem and did something about it.

The most practical way to handle any problem, and this definitely includes worry, is to face it. Never sidetrack it!

It might not be as simple as Marie's or as complicated as Mr. Kelley's, but it can be helped by finding out just what you are worrying about. Write down each worry. It might take you several days to remember them all. When you are sure that you have listed them all, divide them under two headings. In one column put all the things that you know you can do nothing to change, and in the second put all the worries that you might be able to change. For example, if you must live with your relatives and that worries you, put that in the first list. If you have an unexplained pain and are afraid that something serious is wrong with you, put that in the second list.

Each item on the first list should be individually and definitely committed to the Lord. Ask Him to change them or to give you the grace you need to put up with the situation. Then leave them with His loving power. Then begin do something about the second list. Start by getting an appointment with a good doctor even though he might charge more than you think you can afford. You will probably find that the pain meant nothing and the sense of relief and the pressure taken from your body and mind will be so wonderful that it will be worth more than the sacrifice to pay the bill. Even if the pain is a sign of trouble, the sooner you are under medical care, the sooner the trouble will be corrected.

If you wish further help, you will find it helpful and interesting to write down all your worries over a period of a week or a month. Then go back and check off all the things that never happened. You will be amazed how much misery you have spent in worrying about things that never, occurred.

I had done what I suggested to you because I always thought I had a lot to worry me. To my

surprise, though I thought it for sometime, I really only worry about one thing. All the little worries can be put under that one heading. Now instead of vainly fighting against what seemed to be a maze of vague worries whirling around in my brain, I have faced the one big issue and can conquer that in the Lord's strength. Put the book down right now and try it yourself. You will be amazed how little you have to worry about and what a relief you will know when you see clearly what worries you. Then you are in a position to do something positive about a problem you have faced honestly.

Worry is forbidden in the Bible. It shows a disbelief in GOD's provision and care for our every need. We are self-centered when we are overcome with anxieties because these come from trying to be something that we really aren't or trying to have more worldly possessions than GOD has planned for us. In your pyramid of values, put GOD at the top and let the other things in your life take their rightful places. GOD has promised that when the preferences of our lives are in the order He desires, material blessings come to pass as GOD intends. with GOD in the center of your life, there will be peace and contentment too.

"This is the day the Lord hath made.
Why should I doubt or be afraid of what it may bring forth for me?
My time within GOD's hands shall be.
Lord, let Thy will, not mine, be done, and let me live days, one by one.
Nor let me grounds for worry borrow from yesterday nor tomorrow.
Nor give the future anxious thought, but live by rules that Faith hath taught."

- Julian C. Hyer

~ end of chapter 6 ~
