

The Human Mind

The Discipline of Renewing It Daily

Session 9

1) Worry (Matthew 6:24-34)

According to this passage, when we worry, what two masters (Matthew 6:24) are we attempting to serve?

What is the difference between the security people hope to gain with material possessions and the security Christians can have in righteous relationships with God and each other?

a) Possessions (1 Timothy 6:10, 17-19)

Personal security comes from relationships, not physical possessions. The critical question is what do we treasure in our hearts. There will be no peace trying to serve two masters. Whichever master we choose to serve, by that master we shall be controlled. – Neil Anderson

b) Future (Tomorrow)

Trusting God for tomorrow is a question of our worth. Birds are not created in the image of God, but we are! Birds will not inherit the kingdom of God, but we will! If God takes care of the birds, how much more will He take care of us! “If . . . 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?” (Matthew 6:30).

God lays His own reputation on the line. It is our responsibility to trust and obey. It is His responsibility to remain faithful. This is a question of God’s integrity. Does He care for you, and will He provide for your needs? Yes and yes! Your heavenly Father knows what you need. “Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own” (verse 34). - Neil Anderson

Reflection:

Do you believe that the fruit of the Spirit will satisfy you more than earthly possessions? Do you believe that if you hunger and thirst after righteousness you will be satisfied? Do you believe that God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory?

If you do, then you will “seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well” (Matthew 6:33).

2) Anxiety

In the New Testament, the primary words for anxiety are the noun *merimna* and the verb *merimnao*. Of the 25 uses, 5 indicate a sense of caring, while the other 20 refer to a distracting, negative sense of worry or dread. In the positive sense, we should feel anxious if we have an important responsibility to fulfill, and it should motivate us to take necessary steps to carry out our responsibility. Most of our anxious thoughts, however, are not profitable.

-Neil Anderson

What kind of assumptions do we naturally make when you are anxious about something? In what ways do these assumptions distract us from God?

a) Feedback

It is easier for us to live with “what is” than it is to live with “what if.” When we don’t know what is going to happen tomorrow, we are tempted to make assumptions. It seems to be a peculiar trait of our minds to assume the worst. However, nothing good can come from making negative assumptions and then acting on them as though they were facts.

b) Steps to Battle Anxiety

1. Prayer- Philippians 4:6

Pray, “Lord, I come humbly before Your presence as Your child. I acknowledge my dependence on You, and I ask for Your divine guidance. Show me what I am responsible for and what I am not. Fill me with Your Holy Spirit and guide me into all truth. I ask for Your peace to guard my heart and my mind in Christ Jesus. Amen.”

2. Resolve: Personal & Spiritual Conflict

Submitting to God and resisting the devil. (James 4:7) Displaying genuine repentance ... making sure your heart is right with God and eliminate any demonic influences on your mind.

3. State the Problem

What are you anxious about? In anxious states of mind, people can’t see the forest for the trees. So put the problem in perspective. What matters for eternity? Seek godly counsel if necessary, but do not turn to ungodly counsel or temporary cures.

4. Separate Facts From Assumptions

People are not anxious about what they know; they are anxious about what they don’t know. People may be fearful of the facts, but not anxious.

5. What right or ability can you control?

Remember that your duty in life and your sense of worth are tied only to that for which you are responsible. If you aren't living a responsible life, you should feel anxious. Don't try to cast your responsibility on Christ, for He will just throw it back. However, do cast your anxiety onto Him, because His integrity is at stake in meeting your needs—if you are living a responsible and righteous life.

6. List everything you can do that is related to the situation that is under your responsibility.

What is the noble thing to do? How can you assume your responsibility in a dignified manner that is worthy of respect? What is the right thing to do? What is the morally pure thing to do? What could you do that would promote peace and goodwill? What could you do that would be positive and constructive rather than negative and destructive?

7. Complete Everything On Your List

Commit yourself to be a responsible person and fulfill your calling and obligations to life. Take every thought captive in obedience to Christ and keep your mind focused on what is true.

8. Submit to God in prayer everything that lies outside of your responsibility and your right or ability to control.

If you have fulfilled your responsibilities and believe the truth, the rest is God's responsibility. Any residual anxiety is probably due to your having assumed responsibilities that God never intended you to have.