

EVANGEL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (PCA)

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Sunday Worship 8:30 AM and 11:00 AM

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Faith or Worry

Jesus said, "Do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear... Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life? But seek first God's kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well." (Matthew 6:25, 27, 33)

But we do worry, don't we? We worry about our business, family, health, savings, the weather and so forth. How do we deal with this problem? We're Christians and we're being pulled apart by worry. Someone has said, "Most people are crucified between two thieves, regrets of yesterday and worrying about tomorrow."

Worry is needless, useless and even injurious. Worry cannot affect the past, for the past is past. Worry about the future is useless. I read of a doctor in England who was paralyzed and bed-ridden, but extremely cheerful and had a radiant smile, so that no one thought to feel sorry for him. His children adored him and when one of his boys was leaving home the father gave him this advice: "The thing to do is to always carry your own weight and do it with dignity and always remember the biggest troubles you will ever face are those that never come." The future we experience is seldom as bad as the future we fear.

It's a medical fact that he who laughs most lives longest. Worry destroys the body. Worry which wears out the mind also wears out the body. Worry often results in digestive problems as well as heart problems.

I know that many insist that the person who doesn't worry just isn't paying attention to what's happening in our world. Someone quipped, "Whoever isn't schizophrenic these days isn't thinking clearly." But the nature of worry hasn't changed. When we try to deal with tomorrow's problems today we worry and it tears us apart.

In his circuit-riding days, Abraham Lincoln and his companions, riding to the next session of court, had crossed many rivers. But the Fox River was still ahead of them; and they said one to another, "If these streams give us so much trouble, how shall we get over the Fox River?" When darkness fell they stopped at a log tavern, where they met the Methodist presiding elder of the district, who rode through the country in all kinds of weather and knew all about the Fox River. They gathered about him and asked him about the present state of the river. "O yes," replied the circuit rider, "I know all about the Fox River. I have crossed it often and understand it well. But I have one fixed rule with regard to the Fox River-I never cross it till I reach it."

Worry is not caused by external circumstances. In the same circumstances one person can be absolutely serene and another full of worry. Both worry and peace come, not from circumstances but from the heart.

One day the German mystic Tauler met a beggar. "God give you a good day, my friend," he said. The beggar answered, "I thank God I never had a bad one." Then Tauler said, "God give you a happy life, my friend." "I thank God" said the beggar, "I am never unhappy." Tauler, in amazement said, "What do you mean?" "Well," said the beggar, "When it is fine, I thank God; when it rains I thank God; when I have plenty, I thank God; when I am hungry, I thank God; and since God's will is my will, and whatever pleases Him pleases me, why should I say I'm unhappy when I am not?" Tauler looked at the man in astonishment. "Who are you?" he asked. "I am a king," said the beggar. "Where then is your kingdom?" asked Tauler. And the beggar said quietly: "In my heart."

This man knew the truth of God's word. He thought in eternal categories. He knew Jesus Christ who said, "Seek first God's kingdom and His righteousness and all these things you need will be given you as well." Isaiah wrote, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind stayed on Thee: because he trusteth in Thee."