

How Do You Defeat Worry?

The *International Sunday School Lesson* for Sunday, August 22, 2010
Philippians 4:2-14

“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God” (Philippians 4:6—NASB-U).

“Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God” (Philippians 4:6—NRSV).

“Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God” (Philippians 4:6—KJV).

The Bible teaches us how to overcome our temptations to worry, and gives us some positive steps we can take instead of worrying. First, we can replace our worrisome thoughts with prayer requests, and we can immediately discuss our situation with God. Regard every care as a call to prayer.

Second, the Bible often shows us the way out of our worries; so, we should begin our times of concentrated prayer by first listening to what God says to us in the Scriptures. Then, God invites us to talk with Him about what we have read, about His promises, about what He wants us to do, and about trusting Him with our concerns.

Third, our prayer requests can take on the urgency of supplications, where we earnestly and humbly (without demanding or whining) ask God to take care of our needs and those of others.

Fourth, we must fill our thoughts with thanksgiving toward God. We can thank God for teaching us truthfully about reality, and about what to expect from living in this world. We thank God for His forgiveness. We thank God for inviting us to talk with Him about everything, for helping us with everything, and for always doing what is best in everything.

Fifth, always remember that you can trust God. When the Philippians helped Paul, he rejoiced in the Lord greatly, for he knew that God had heard his prayers and had moved them to meet his needs (Philippians 4:10). In a similar fashion, God knows the solution to all your worries, and you can learn the solution through the Bible and prayer. — Copyright 2010 L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.

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Questions for Further Thought

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1. Can you think of two people in your church or family who have a deep disagreement (or disagreements)? Do you think Paul’s suggestions (or the suggestions in the commentary) for helping Euodia and Syntyche would help these two people to come into agreement? Why or why not? Take time to pray for these people.
2. Whose names are written in the book of life? How can one come to have their name written in the book of life? Why is this important?
3. What kinds of disagreements can come between those whose names are written in the book of life and those whose names are not written in the book of life? Think of those who crucified Jesus, and persecuted Stephen, and Paul. What are some examples of these kinds of disagreements today? What is the solution? What was the solution for Paul when he persecuted Christians?
4. What is the difference between being gentle and being a sissy? Why is being gentle so difficult that Paul had to write and encourage those in the church to be gentle? When an opponent confuses being gentle with being weak in the one he opposes, what can happen? How should a gentle person respond to an opponent?
5. What thoughts would you like to add on prayer and how to overcome the temptations to worry? What ideas do you find the most helpful when you try to stop worrying?