

## WORDS FOR THE WORRIED

*Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.*  
—MATTHEW 6:34

Jesus said, "Do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear." (Matt. 6:25)

This is not about caring, this is about fretting.

This is not about reasonable attention, this is about rising anxiety.

In our stress-saturated world, it is easy to justify worry. "It is not a lack of trust," we rationalize, "it is the presence of concern." But when "concern" begins to furrow our brow, tie knots in our stomach, incite us to nibble on our nails, interfere with our sleep, and cause us to forget that God is our Provider, we can call it what we want . . . but God calls it worry.

Worriers come in at least three levels of intensity. There

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is the Occasional Worrier who seems generally immune to anxiety except for one or two significant areas like finances or children or that odd pain in the back of the left ankle.

Then there are the Chronic (or constant) Worriers. Though busy, these worriers rarely celebrate the fruit of their labor. "Cannot spare the time," they think as they immediately reroute their worry from one resolved crisis to a new, worthy cause. In fact, Chronic Worriers never have a moment where their worry is not needed. They have causes and concerns lined up for years in advance.

Finally there are the Communal Worriers, who have more capacity for worry than their lives can soak up so they also worry for others. They even worry that others do not worry enough . . . which makes them more than a little vulnerable to nagging, but "at least they care enough to be concerned."

In Matthew 6, Jesus identifies three principles that can help us win our war with worry.

### 1. Worry wastes time. It does not stop time.

*Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life? (Matt. 6:27)*

Time is one of our most precious resources, but worry spends it like a fool. Worry takes our time without