

Do Not Worry (1 of 5)

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 29 March 2020

[0 : 00] Greetings and welcome to the online version of Bramor Baptist Church for March 29th, 2020. We're happy that you've taken some time today to listen and hopefully reflect on God and the Bible and what it has to say to you in the midst of these challenging days.

Rather than presenting the content in one longer message, I want to offer five shorter devotionals, each with its own Bible verses, its own reflection, and its own prayer suggestion.

My hope is that these briefer messages will support you in navigating and coping with what we're dealing with and will offer some direction and encouragement along the way.

Let's get started. Message one from Matthew 6 verses 25 to 34. Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink, or about your body, what you will wear.

Is not life more important than food and the body more important than clothes? Look at the birds of the air. They do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your Heavenly Father feeds them.

[1 : 09] Are you not much more valuable than they? Who of you, by worrying, can add a single hour to their life? And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow?

They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how 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, O you of little faith?

So do not worry, saying, what shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or what shall we wear? For the pagans run after all these things, and yet your Heavenly Father knows that you need them.

But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself.

Each day has enough trouble of its own. I've called this message, Do Not Worry. Part of the human condition is a craving for control. We like to feel that we are in charge of things, ahead of the curve, on top of it.

[2 : 22] So during times of crisis, we translate this craving for control in a number of ways. We prepare, we stock up, we hunker down, we listen to and read all the latest reports, and we worry.

Now, don't get me wrong in this, there is value in preparation and in knowing what's going on in the world. But I think we tend to overvalue this at the expense of our sense of peace.

Jesus, as he often does, turns this way of thinking upside down, saying in effect, prepare, but never lose sight of what is truly significant.

Joseph Guzzoni is an author. He wrote a book a few years ago called Never Alone. I'm going to read a passage from that. He says, One of the most remarkable things about Jesus' life is his tranquility.

When you consider the almost constant turmoil that surrounded Jesus, crowds pressing in on him, his enemies plotting daily to destroy him, and yet see the calmness that pervaded his life, it is remarkable and proves the value of the detachment that Jesus had from whatever could disturb his inner peace.

[3 : 53] That detachment Jesus tried to share with his followers so they too could find the same power and inner peace that marked his life.

If there was one thing Jesus held out to his followers, it was his promise of peace. Quote, This theme threads its way through the whole gospel message.

It is like a trademark of his spirituality and should be a trait that singles out his disciples in whatever age they live. That's Joseph F. Grzzoni in Never Alone.

So how are you feeling these days? I don't just mean how are you feeling in the moment. I mean how do you think you're handling things? Are you taking more time than usual to read your Bible, to pray, to meditate, and to journal?

Or have you let yourself become more immersed in the daily news feed at the expense of your quiet time? As you seek to anchor yourself in the midst of this storm, be sure to anchor to something and someone who is reliable and trustworthy and who never changes, never wavers, and is completely in control of everything that comes your way.

[5 : 24] I want to finish by reading a couple of verses from the song, How Firm a Foundation. You'll be happy to know that I'm going to read it rather than sing it. How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord, is laid for your faith in his excellent word.

What more can he say than to you he hath said, to you who for refuge to Jesus have fled? Fear not, I am with thee.

O be not dismayed. For I am thy God, I will still give thee aid. I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand, upheld by my gracious, omnipotent hand.

Amen.