

Don't Worry, Be Holy

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[0:00] Hey there, my name is Ray Sweep from First Christian Church in Greensburg, Indiana.! And as always, if you'd like to learn a little more about us, you can always go to FCCGreensburg.com or you can check out the FCC Greensburg Facebook page.

But hey, today we are excited to get into the Word of God, but most of all, let this Word get into our hearts. Change us from the inside out. And today we're in the sixth week of our series called Good News.

We're walking through the book of Luke. You can go ahead and turn to Luke 12. And the title of the message is Don't Worry, Be Holy. You know, a very nervous airline passenger began pacing the terminal when bad weather delayed his flight.

During his walk, he came across a life insurance machine. Having no idea these things even existed, it offered him \$100,000 in the event of an untimely death aboard his flight and would even share this with his family if this happened.

The policy was just \$3. He looked out the window at the threatening clouds and thought of his family at home. And in his mind, for \$3, this was foolish not to buy.

[1:13] So he took out the coverage. He then looked for a place to get a meal and he found his very favorite Chinese. It was a nice relaxing meal that kind of calmed his nerves a little, made him feel a little better.

But it all changed when he grabbed his fortune cookie, ripped it open, looked at the fortune, and it said, your recent investment will pay big dividends.

I'll never forget when I was in my mid-20s. I had just been a lead pastor full-time for just a couple years at this point. And there was a lady in the church, probably around 55, who had gone skydiving and she loved it.

She actually went a few times. And I made the mistake of saying that was something that was on my bucket list that I wanted to do, knowing that I'd probably never really spend the money to do it. Okay, kind of talking a big game, but probably wasn't going to do it. Well, the next thing I know, she pays for one and presents me with a gift certificate that was good for one year.

[2:17] I waited like 360 days before that day arrived. Bad weather canceled it. So they gave me another one-year certificate. And I waited until the end of that one before finally doing it.

And my wife has never forgotten this story. Is that I'm getting ready to board the plane, to go do the skydive. She was pretty anxious and she gave me a big hug and kiss.

We said, I love you. And we'd only been married, you know, two, three years probably at this point. And she didn't want to be a widow, of course. And that's when one of the professionals who worked there, but this guy was kind of a rough looking character.

He saw this and he said, what? Don't you have life insurance? And I have to tell you, I have a sweet wife, but she had to restrain herself from powerbombing that dude, okay?

Before you think this is a message also about life insurance, this won't be as easy as getting a policy. Nah, this is something about what most of us struggle with.

[3:18] And that's worry, anxiety, fear, stress. And I'm going to give this disclaimer right off the top. I may struggle with this as much as any of you.

I don't claim to have this figured out. And today I'm asking Jesus to come into my own worry, my own anxious thoughts, which can often steal my peace in Christ, even my worship to him.

So let's be honest here. There are some of us who are more anxious of personalities. That doesn't make it okay to act on it, but we may go there a little easier than others.

And listen, life and its hurts that are happening along the way, they can give us more reason to worry. And many of us just kind of suffer silently because of the shame we feel about it.

Well, good news. Jesus can come into every worry, every anxious thought, every fear, every stressful day, and he can bring his perfect peace.

[4:16] Listen to his powerful words in Matthew 11. Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.

Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.

And if you're like me, you're saying, yes, please, I'll take two scoops of that. Well, hey, if you're a guest listening to this with us today, maybe for the first time, we're thankful that you're here.

And we want to welcome you into the sixth week of our series in Luke, heading toward Easter, where we're simply talking about the gospel, the good news of Jesus that changes everything.

And today, if you'd like to follow along, I just want you to grab your Bibles. If you're able to do that, head to Luke chapter 12, Luke 12, about four-fifths of the way through your Bible, third book of the New Testament, Luke 12, verse 22.

[5:17] And if you'd like to see our sermon outline, you can always go to the YouVersion Bible app, free download, incredible resource. It's a ministry of a church. YouVersion Bible app.

You can download that. You can go to the menu, go to events, go to First Christian Church, Greensburg, Indiana, and then you can see our outline. You can even take notes off to the side. But let's start by talking about the real issue to worry. And the issue is trust. See, we're not talking about putting your trust in yourself and your own abilities, because listen, as most of us know from experience, that doesn't work.

It's not about placing your trust in your favorite pastor and the words of wisdom that they can share, although we're here to help. But listen, we're human too, just like you.

And don't be shocked if somehow we let you down, because we are human. See, we're talking about putting our trust in the one who created everything out of nothing in six days resting on the seventh.

[6:19] The one who parted the Red Sea for Moses and the Israelites to escape the Egyptian army and then sent it crashing down on the enemy as God's plans would not be thwarted.

And because he is the same yesterday, today, and forever, this God of power is available to all who call on his name, all who walk in his glorious salvation.

So let's start here in Luke 12, verse 22. We're going to read down through 28, so kind of stay with me here, but I want you to see this. Then Jesus said to his disciples, Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat, or about your body, what you will wear.

For life is more than food, and the body is more than clothes. Consider the ravens. They do not sow or reap. They have no storeroom or barn, yet God feeds them. And how much more valuable you are than birds.

Who of you, by worrying, can add a single hour to your life? Since you cannot do this very little thing, why do you worry about the rest? Consider how the wildflowers grow.

[7:25] They do not labor or spin, yet I tell you, 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, how much more will he clothe you, you of little faith?

Now, I was curious, so I googled the effects of worry on the body, got a credible medical website to look at, and I asked basically, what are the long-term effects?

There are some short-term, but what are the long-term effects on our body? And I'll just keep this simple. Worry over time can weaken your immune system, basically making you more susceptible to illness.

It can cause digestive issues like indigestion, acid reflex, IBS, I'll let you figure out what that is, stomach ulcers, inflammation.

It can even cause cardio issues, heart issues, because as that blood pressure stays up over time due to stress, due to worry, the heart starts to wear out and we're at a higher risk of heart disease. [8:31] Mental health issues like depression, worsened PTSD, panic attacks, concentration issues, even things like insomnia and poor sleep, or pain like headaches, migraines, and chronic muscle pain.

And right now, several of us are probably thinking through how many boxes we check, right? Especially if you're 40 or over. These bodies will break down when we live constantly in unnecessary worry and stress.

It also robs us of the joy of our salvation. And that's why Jesus is very clear that we don't need to be anxious about how we're going to survive or even the little details of life as if we're in charge of it all. Now, don't run to the opposite extreme and say, Oh, he's going to provide, so I'll just quit my job and make some boneheaded decisions. Uh-uh. The Bible is also very clear that God has created us to work, to provide for our families.

He even goes as far to say, if you won't work, you won't eat. Or if a man doesn't provide for his family, he's worse than an unbeliever. So yeah, be smart. Live for the glory of God according to his word.

[9:42] But when you've honored him with your work ethic and your life that is lived for him, then leave it all in his hands because he's got you under control.

And that comes down to trust. And Jesus gives us a couple examples here. First, consider the raven. He can't sow, reap, or store food like humans, but God provides.

Now, here's the cool thing. In the first century Israel, those listening to Jesus, they knew about birds. As well. Bound on the east by barren desert, on the west by the Mediterranean Sea, Israel was a major flyway for migratory birds.

It's been estimated that hundreds of millions of birds pass through Israel every year. And the raven was sort of a despised and unclean bird according to the Old Testament Levitical law.

And yet they survive solely because God has wired them a certain way and he gives them the food that they need. And then Jesus says in the second part of verse 24 that goes into verse 25, Listen, I'm not here to say animals aren't important because we love our pets.

[10:58] My dad raises a few cows at a time and he kisses those things on the head every morning, okay? But the Bible is clear that there's a difference between animals and us made in the image of God.

And if he takes care of a raven, then he's got his child under control. Jesus even adds that we can't do any good by worrying. In fact, it reveals the real issue.

And listen, I admit this. Oftentimes, it's my lack of trust. You know, that well-known promise in Proverbs 3 puts it like this, verses 5 and 6.

Trust in the Lord with all of your heart and lean not on your own understanding. Man, I do that all the time. In all your ways, submit to him and he will make your paths straight.

Trust in the Lord. And Jesus even gives a second example of this. Verses 27 and 28, he says, Consider how the wildflowers grow. They don't labor or spend. Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these, like one of these wildflowers.

[12:03] If that's how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today, and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, how much more will he clothe you, you of little faith? So if he can clothe a wildflower, and we all can picture that in our minds, if he can clothe a wildflower in way more beautiful clothing than anything King Solomon could have ever had made.

And listen, this guy had the resources to have the finest materials, the best seamstresses. If the Lord cares that much over something that doesn't last very long like a flower, how much more will he take care of you and I who have been made in his image?

Think about that. How much more does he have every single detail of your life under control? And then Jesus brings the heat, saying, You of little faith.

And what he's doing is stepping on my toes. He's saying, If we as followers, disciples of Christ, are filled with the Holy Spirit, and we are still consumed with fear and doubt and worry, which are all signs, sadly, of an unbelieving world, then we have trust issues with God.

In fact, I like how Pastor Louis Giglio put this. He said, Worry and worship cannot exist in the same space. One always displaces the other. Choose worship.

[13:28] And as I was praying through the preparation part of this message, I felt like the Holy Spirit was saying, Go back and share that same paragraph from last week's message because we all need this reminder often.

So I'm going to hit rewind 168 hours and see if this rings a bell if you listen last week. Who's Jesus to you? Fully man and fully God at the same time.

I know that's hard to grasp. Messiah. He is a miracle worker. He is the creator of all things. He's the head of the church. He's the Holy One, the Judge, the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords.

He is the light of the world who lights my path. He is my Prince of Peace. He's the Word of God.

He's the beginning and the end, the Alpha and the Omega, the Emmanuel, God with us.

He's the great I Am. He's the true God and the author and perfecter of my faith. He's the bread of life. He's the living water. He's deliverer and good shepherd.

[14:32] He's the Lamb of God. He's the rock and the Savior. He is the true vine. And He is the way, the truth, and the life. The only way to the Father.

And we could keep going, but let me ask you, who's Jesus to you? So that was from last week's message, and I thought it fits so well here. So listen, our view of our Savior matters.

And I don't mean just what we speak out loud. I mean what we truly believe down deep that always comes out in how we live. And here Jesus makes it clear that worry is a direct reflection of not truly believing that He is who He says He is.

So the issue for probably all of us at times, and we're just going to be real and transparent with things that we struggle with, but the issue for all of us can be a lack of trust. And one day at a time, on this discipleship journey, as Jesus shows Himself faithful, we step out in obedience, letting Him be God.

Listen, I've messed up letting doubt, fear, and worry control me way, way too many times. But when I actually step out in faith, it's amazing to see how the Holy Spirit moves, and even the peace that passes all understanding that guards my heart and my mind in Christ Jesus.

[15:49] So the issue is trust. Now here's the solution. Kingdom focus. Kingdom focus. By now you should know probably how weird I am, even communicated through audio like this.

And as I kept repeating to myself this idea of don't worry, there was a song that came to my mind, and maybe this is happening for you too. When I say don't worry, I want you to think about a song, and how would you finish that phrase?

Don't worry. Be happy. And then the biblical doctrine side of it kicked in, and I changed it. Don't worry.

Be holy. See, that means we as followers of Jesus are set apart from the world around us. And while I get that worrying is easy to do, I get that if you work around a lot of people who don't know Jesus, man, there's a lot of worry and complaining and all that junk that happens that you hear constantly.

But listen, we as believers are called out of that life into a life of holiness. And what is it that set apart, and what is that set apart holy life?

[17:02] Well, it's a life focused on the kingdom of God. Because when I say yes to Jesus, I'm saying no to my own selfish ways. When I say yes to Jesus, I'm saying that my thinking, my words, my lifestyle, my compassion, my stand that I take on truth, my integrity, all conform to the image of Christ.

And you know what? When I die to self, and I clothe myself in Christ, there's no better place to be. Look at how Jesus puts this, starting where we left off here in verse 29.

He says, Matthew even adds a touch more to that last phrase when Matthew 6.33 says, but seek first his kingdom and his righteousness.

And all these things, all these needs will be given to you as well. 2026 marks 20 years of full-time ministry for me, less than only by God's grace.

And I've met a lot of Christians along the way who never get off of spiritual milk, sadly putting their faith in a pastor, or the way a certain church has always done things, or even in a building or a sanctuary, instead of a intimate, personal, life-changing relationship with Christ, that's always anchored in the truth of God's word.

[18:42] And I don't know if you've noticed, but there's not always just one way the church has went about some different methods of worshiping and honoring Christ, as long as it's all biblical.

And I'll never forget years ago, unintentionally, ticking off a lady in the church who, honestly, I was extremely close to. We did what many smaller churches do, where they open up the floor for praises and prayer requests.

And you know what? It worked when we were a church of, you know, 50, 75, maybe even 100. But as the church grew and has added in a second service, it started to consume too much time fielding everyone's requests and also turned in, sadly, into a gossip session sometimes, because we're human.

I even once had, this is funny, I still laugh about this, it wasn't funny in the moment. I even once had two people argue during a prayer time whether an accident we were supposed to be praying for really happened.

So, I felt on my heart to just start fading that part of the service out and just having someone just pray over whatever request people may have.

[19:53] And I tried to be smart, I tried to do it a little bit at a time, offering other opportunities to pray for individual needs because that's really, really important. But there was just a lady in the church who was not okay not having a public and interactive praise and prayer time.

I mean, that's just what it came down to. And boy, she never spoke to me again as my name became a curse word. And as much as things like that hurt, the solution is to always stay kingdom focused.

What did John the Baptist say? Less of me, more of Jesus. What did we study last week? Luke 9, 23, Jesus says to his disciples, deny self, take up your cross daily and follow me.

So, I'm going to seek your kingdom, Jesus. Your righteousness before my own selfishness, and my own opinions. And I love how Romans 12, 2 puts this into perspective as it says, do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

Then you'll be able to test and approve what God's will is, his good, pleasing, and perfect will. Do you know what else the kingdom tells us to focus on?

[21:05] What we should care about? The Great Commission. You ever heard of that? It's Matthew 28, 19, and 20 where Jesus gives us some of his famous last words to the church that we are to care deeply about, that we are striving to live out for the glory of God.

He says, therefore, go, so that's the command, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you and surely I am with you always to the very end of the age.

It's amazing when our minds are focused on kingdom agenda, growing in our walk with Christ, leading others to the cross where they find hope, caring deeply about where others spend their eternity and how they're growing in their faith walk, sitting at Jesus' feet through his word, through prayer, letting the Holy Spirit move in our lives, following him step by step.

See, when our minds are being conformed to the image of Christ, no matter whether you're a nervous, worrywart personality like me, that's me very naturally, or maybe you're not, but we can learn to trust our awesome God walking in his joy and his peace.

So, don't worry, be holy. The issue is trust. The solution is my mind is kingdom focused. That changes everything.

[22:37] And then last, the blessing is heavenly treasure. And although people kind of clam up whenever money comes up, I think it's really cool how this passage is bookended with talk of money and greed and what true treasure looks like.

Because let's be real, a large part of what we worry about is connected to money. Make a list of everything you let consume your mind, and I bet money plays a big part in that.

For us, we're entering a new season as parents as we just put braces on our oldest this week. And it's easy to worry about the money because it's pretty expensive.

It's easy to get caught up in thinking that I have to drive this kind of vehicle. I have to have a house this big, vacation at all these exotic places, wear this sort of clothing. But we see here that focusing on worldly treasures and worrying ourselves to death about these things, which we do, leads down a very dangerous path.

Look at how Jesus says this. Luke 12, we'll pick up where we left off, verse 32. Do not be afraid, little flock, for your father has been pleased to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions and give to the poor.

[23:50] Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will never fail, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

So hear me. When the kingdom of God is really our greatest treasure, the things of this world fade as we walk in his joy and his peace that the world can't understand.

Money and possessions no longer consume me. I'm not defined and my value is not determined by what I have or what others think about what I have. In fact, I want to store up treasure in heaven.

So as weird as this is to those who don't know Jesus, who cares? I'm okay going with less so I can impact more lives for Christ, so I can make a kingdom impact.

I'm committed to tithing to my local church first while also supporting other godly causes with my offerings. I am kingdom focused. I am heavenly rich and I reject worry and anxiousness in the name of Jesus because where my treasure is, there my heart will be also.

[24:55] So, euangelion. You remember that word? We've used it multiple times in this series. That's where you get the word gospel. That's the Greek word for gospel which means good news.

So church, let me just leave you with this good news today. We can overcome worry by trusting God's provision, prioritizing His kingdom above our own, and walking in His heavenly blessings.

So, don't worry. Be holy. Let's pray together. Father, we are so, so very grateful for how good you are.

We're thankful for the word of God and how you have opened that up before us today. And God, we know that this is something that most people struggle with in one way or another.

And some of us, like me, struggle with it a lot. Worry, anxiousness, stress, just letting those things consume us instead of letting you be the God of our life like you want to be.

[26:03] And Father, I'm sorry and we're sorry that we don't always trust you the way we should. So right now, we just ask for you to come into our hearts stronger and to give us that kingdom focus.

Help us to focus our minds and our hearts on you completely and help us to walk in the blessing of these heavenly treasures that you provide.

Jesus, you are so good. I thank you for dying on the cross, your innocent life given for our guilty ones. your blood trickling down that cross, your innocent blood covers our sins when we, by faith, surrender these hearts, repent and surrender these hearts to you.

So Jesus, we just ask that you will do an incredible work in each of our hearts. I pray over anyone listening to this right now. Lord, I just pray over them that if they don't know you that right now there will be a time of surrender to your lordship.

That they will pray and seek your heart, repent of their sins, get baptized into you just like you teach. And so, Father, help us. Help us here at FCC to come alongside them and to be a support system for them.

[27:20] Thank you for your powerful word. And we pray all of this in Jesus' holy and precious name. And God's people said, amen and amen. Hey, real quick, once again, my name is Ray Sweet from First Christian Church in Greensburg, Indiana.

And if you have questions about your faith, about what it means to truly follow Jesus, about really anything church related as well, you can reach out to us in a couple different ways.

You can call us in the office, 812-663-8488. That's 812-663-8488. Or you can email me at ray at FCCGreensburg.com.

Hey, thank you so much for tuning in today. God bless you. And remember, don't worry, be holy.