

## **Why Worry?**

**Contributor: Annie**

### **Scriptures:**

Matthew 6:25-34

Luke 9 (whole chapter)

How easily can the whole meaning of a sentence or statement be completely changed by the translation of one word from its original language. Until I began looking at the definition of "worry", I had not realised the implications of mistranslating the Greek "merimnēsēte" as "do not worry", instead of "take no anxious thought".

There is a huge difference between being worried and being anxious. Anxiety triggers physiological responses throughout our body that can, unless dealt with, take over our life. Worrying about something that may or may not happen is far less invasive and usually temporary. Worrying can result in problem solving, whereas anxiety can result in mental paralysis and physical sicknesses.

In that wonderful teaching in Matthew 6, Jesus talks about not being anxious, that is the true meaning, He doesn't tell us not to be worried. It is a specific command that Jesus knows we need to heed and obey because of what anxiety can lead to.

We all worry about day to day things. Based upon our past experiences, our imagination conjures up scenarios when similar circumstances happen. As a really trivial example, having been caught out so many times, I worry if I see clouds approaching when I'm pegging washing on the line, what if I end up having to make a mad rush to get half dry laundry back inside if it should start raining. But I'm not anxious about it. I don't feel physically sick or start shaking at the thought of impending rain.

And here lies the trap that our sneaky enemy would have us fall into. When we read that we are not to worry, we can get ourselves knotted up in desperately trying to live an unrealistic, humanly impossible life. Worrying is, for humanity, a normal state of thinking. What Jesus was teaching us was not to be anxious, feeling sick and hopeless.

Jesus never sets us unreachable goals. He was fully human, whilst also being fully Divine; He knows every emotion we feel and gives us answers for how we can deal with them. And in the Sermon on the Mount, He is teaching us how to deal with the potentially overwhelming, the stuff that can wreck our peace and make our lives miserable. He is being specific.

A slightly wrong interpretation of these words of Jesus can cause people to expect God to direct them to what to wear for the day or what to cook for dinner. But what Jesus was telling us is that, when all seems lost, when the money in the bank looks as if it simply isn't going to stretch far enough despite our best efforts, when our loved ones are on a path of self-destruction, God's love is there to enfold, sustain and strengthen us. It is His heartfelt desire that we take no anxious thought, that we keep our eyes fixed on Him in the firm

knowledge that He knows the end from the beginning. He is Jehovah Jireh, our Provider and our Provision.

There is a huge difference between worrying and being anxious, learning how to let go of both and lay our burdens at the foot of the Cross is our daily path. As Jesus told us, we are to deny our self will, take up our cross daily and follow Him.

**Prayer:** Father God, as we take up Your yoke and place all our trust in You, we will know freedom from worry and petrifying anxiety. In Jesus precious Name, Amen.