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“Worry & Trust” Series: “Trust More, Worry Less”

When it's your task to calm and soothe a crying infant, what's your technique? What worked for me, when I was a young father – and what seems to still work for me as a grandfather – is a simple three-step process: (1) hold the baby tight; (2) walk around slowly in a dark room; and (3) softly sing reggae music.

My go-to song is “Three Little Birds,” by Bob Marley and The Wailers. Many times I've used these immortal words to soothe a screaming bambino: “Don't worry about a thing, 'cause every little thing gonna be alright.”

How many of you know that classic? How many of you can picture me getting a baby to sleep with that song? How many of you knew I was a reggae music fan? You learn something every time you come to church, don't you?

Today our God wants us all to learn a thing or two about worrying. Today our loving heavenly Father is wrapping his arms around you, promising you, “Don't worry about a thing, 'cause every little thing gonna be alright.” God's desire is for you and me to trust more, and worry less. Trust God more and more, and worry less and less.

Now, let me just admit, right off the bat, as we start this sermon series on worry, I need to trust more, and worry less. I worry. I think we all worry. I worry about the New York Yankees. They need more starting pitching. I worry about my tomato plants. Five healthy plants, but so far just one puny tomato.

And, of course, I worry about many more serious things. We all do. Experts tell us that the most common worries, among American adults, are money, relationships, family members, aging, and work stress. Sound familiar? American teens have their own set of common worries. I think we all have our own sleepless nights, our anxious moments, and our own personal worries, big and small.

But are Christians like us, believers in God, supposed to worry? Is it a sin to worry? Well, the Bible never says that worry is sinful. But sometimes, the Bible says, worry can lead us to spiritual trouble. Sometimes we worry so much that we stop trusting God; and that's incredibly dangerous.

The Bible actually has a lot to say about this relationship between worry and trust. Let's start diving into this topic today, and look at some Bible verses.

We begin with an important Bible principle about worry. Some worries we bring on ourselves. Some things that we worry about are completely out of our control. But often it's our own actions, or lack of action, that cause us stress or worry.

Let's read together Job 4:8. "Those who plow iniquity and sow trouble reap the same." In other words, we create troubles for ourselves, when we're greedy, angry, selfish, stingy, lustful, lazy. We reap what we sow.

Here's another verse. Let's read Proverbs 27:12. "The prudent sees danger and hides himself, but the simple go on and suffer for it." If you're wise, it's saying, you avoid trouble and danger; but if you're foolish, you walk right into trouble, and you end up suffering. Boy, I could have used that proverb in my college days.

Here's one more, Proverbs 13:4. "The soul of the sluggard craves and gets nothing, while the soul of the diligent is richly supplied." Sometimes we just sit around and wish for this, and worry about that, instead of getting off of our rear ends and tackling the problem.

So God wants us to see, today, first, that sometimes it's our own actions, or lack of action, that compound our worries and cares. Do a little soul-searching this week, and be honest about this stuff. Examine your worries, objectively, and see if they're not self-inflicted.

Let's go on. What does the Bible say about dealing with worry in our lives?

Read Philippians 4:5-6 with me. "The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, ..." Such an important reminder! When you're worried, God is at hand. He's always by your side. So don't be overly concerned about what's going to happen to you. Don't worry so much about what's taking place around you, because the Lord God Almighty is right there with you! Don't be anxious, it says, about anything. Because nothing is bigger or badder than God.

Read with me 1 Peter 5:6-7. "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you."

The Bible word for "anxieties" is the Greek word *merimna*. *Merimnas* are cares, concerns, worries, things we get anxious about. Peter is encouraging Christians: people like us, who know God's love; people like us who have every reason to trust God. He tells us, "Cast all your *merimnas* on God." Why? Because your God really, truly cares about you.

See, God knows that your *merimnas*, your worries, can really pile up. God cares about the balance you have going – or the imbalance – between worry and trust.

Read Jesus' words with me, from Luke 21:34. "But watch yourselves lest your hearts be weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and cares of this life, and that day come upon you suddenly like a trap." He's talking about Judgment Day, and how easy it is for us to be so caught up in our worldly worries and everyday cares that we're not ready in our hearts to meet our Maker.

See, God cares about you. He cares about your worried days, and your angst-filled nights. He wants to hold you close today, to rock you in his arms, and to soothe you with his words and promises. "Don't worry about a thing ..."

But you're not a little baby, are you? So today God calls you to trust him. Trust his love. Trust his concern. Trust his watchful eye, his compassionate heart, and his eternal plan for you. Trust his Savior, Jesus Christ. Trust in the salvation Jesus won for you on the cross. Trust that you are a baptized, forgiven child of the King. Trust that your life is more than the days you'll spend on this earth, and that your connection with God is meant to last for all eternity. Trust that, no matter what happens or doesn't happen, in this world, your God will see you through.

We'll talk more, in the weeks ahead, about the worries that we all wrestle with. But, for today, let's hear the voice of our God, and take it to heart. "Trust more," he says, "And worry less." Amen.