

## DON'T WORRY

In *Fearless*, a book by Max Lucado, he tells the following story:

A friend saw an example of perpetual uneasiness in his six-year-old daughter. In her hurry to dress for school, she tied her shoelaces in a knot. She plopped down at the base of the stairs and stared at her thoughts on the tangled mess. The school bus was coming, and the minutes were ticking, and she gave no thought to the fact that her father was standing nearby, willing to help upon request. Her little hands began to shake and tears began to drop. Finally, in an expression of total frustration, she dropped her forehead to her knees and sobbed.

That's a child-sized portrait of destructive worry. A knot fixation to the point of anger and exasperation, oblivious to the presence of our God, who stands nearby. My friend finally took it upon himself to come to his daughter's aid.

Why didn't she request her father's help to start with?

We could ask the same question of ourselves when faced with a problem. "A legitimate concern morphs into toxic panic. Jesus doesn't condemn legitimate concern for responsibilities but rather the continuous mind-set that dismisses God's presence."

- Where would you place the boundary between worry and legitimate concern for responsibilities?
- How can you tell when you have developed a mind-set that continually dismisses God's presence?
- Why do you suppose we don't immediately turn to God when faced with a concern?

In John 15:7 Jesus says, *"If you stay joined to me and my words remain in you, you may ask any request you like, and it will be granted."* (NLT)

- What does it mean to abide or remain in Jesus?
- What does it mean for Jesus' words to abide or remain in you?
- What promise does Jesus make in this passage to those who follow his commands? How does the context affect your understanding of this promise?

Max Lucado suggests the following:

If you want to battle your fear [of lack] and instead enjoy a deep sense of peacefulness, then for a least one week try the following regimen:

**1. Pray first.**

**2. Easy, now.** Be still before God and wait patiently for him. Don't fret when people act wickedly.

**3. Act on it.** The moment a concern surfaces, deal with it. Don't dwell on it. Head off worries before they get the best of you. Be a doer, not a stewart.

**4. Compile a worry list.** Focus on the good.

**5. Evaluate your worry categories.** *"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. Are you not much more valuable than they? Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?"* Matthew 6:26-27

**6. Focus on today.** *"Therefore, do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."* Matthew 6:34

**7. Unleash a worry army.** Ask friends to pray for you.

**8. Let God be enough.** Don't worry about clothes or what you will eat or drink. God knows that you need him.

Lucado: "Feed your fears, and your faith will starve. Feed your faith and your fears will."