

**INTRODUCTION.**

- A. Scripture text: **Matthew 6:25-34.**
- B. The story is told of a grandmother and her granddaughter. The granddaughter said that grandmother's driver's license said she got an "F" in sex.
- C. Somewhere between that age of childhood innocence and now, life has become a grim marathon of frowns-a major downer for far too many adults (Swindoll, LA, xv).
- D. Tonight's lesson will deal with some things that steal our joy, how to face tomorrow, and how to break the worry addiction. With X's help you can face tomorrow with joy and courage.

**I. THREE JOY STEALERS.**

- A. There are three main joy-stealers. If they reside in your heart they will keep you from being happy and joyful.
- B. Stress is a joy stealer.  
Stress is an intense strain over a situation we cannot change or control. We try to control something we cannot control. Instead of turning lose of it to God, we churn over it. And it's never as severe as we make it out to be. What we need to realize is that the safest place for something is OUT OF OUR CONTROL (Mt. 11:28-30).
- C. Fear is a joy stealer.  
Fear is a dreadful uneasiness over the presence of danger, evil, or pain. The Bible says "be not afraid" or "fear not" 365 times. I've no right before God, to be His child, and let fear steal my joy (Jn. 14:1,6).
- D. Worry is a joy stealer.  
Worry is an inordinate anxiety about something that may or may not occur. It has been my observation that what is being worried about usually does not occur. Worry is an acid that eats away our joy until we know the outcome of our situation (Mt. 6:25-34).  
"Worry is an old man with bended head, With a load of feathers he thinks is lead."
- E. Some critics would be quick to point out that our times do not lend themselves to such an easygoing philosophy. They would ask, "Under these circumstances, how could I be anything but grim?" Our reply is, "What are you doing UNDER the circumstances, a Xian is to live ABOVE the circumstances!" (Swindoll, LA, 5).

**II. PRAYING, THINKING, AND LIVING RIGHT.**

- A. Our scripture text says that we are to put the kingdom and righteousness as top priorities in our life. That means we must learn to practice praying right, thinking right, and living right (Mt. 6:33).
- B. Have you ever noticed the difference between Jas. 4 and Phil. 3?  

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|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| <u>Jas. 4:1-8</u>           | <u>Phil. 3:4-9</u>    |
| 1. Wrong praying (v3).....  | Right praying (v6,7). |
| 2. Wrong thinking (v8)..... | Right thinking (v8).  |
| 3. Wrong living (v4) .....  | Right living (v9).    |
- C. How many of us, looking for greater joy and happiness, have prayed:  

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|---------------------------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. If I only had...more <u>money</u> ,            | I'd laugh more.      |
| 2. If I only had...more <u>talent</u> ,           | I'd enjoy life more. |
| 3. If I only had...more <u>beauty</u> ,           | I'd laugh more.      |
| 4. If I only had...a more <u>fulfilling job</u> , | I'd be happier. .    |
| 5. If I only had...more <u>physical health</u> ,  | I'd be content.      |
- D. But JOY and HAPPINESS are not things to be prayed for! Happiness, laughter and joy is a choice! Look again at Mt. 6:33.

### III. CHRIST CAN FREE YOU FROM THE WORRY ADDICTION.

- A. What qualifies as a worry? Anything that drains your tank of joy!  
It may be something... ..you cannot change o  
...are responsible for, ...you are unable to control  
...or agitates you, ...that frightens or torments you.
- B. Why is worry such an enemy of JOY? Because:  
worry forces us to focus on all the wrong things.
- C. Jesus has come to set us free from worry (Lk. 4:16-21; Jn. 8:31-36).
- D. We must try to give each worry--one by one--to God. Take the things ' off of your "worry list" and put them on your "prayer list."

### IV. YOU DON'T HAVE TO WORRY--YOU CAN FACE TOMORROW.

- A. I want to close our lesson with some advice from Paul, in Philippians.
- B. The apostle says to do three things:
  - 1. REJOICE (4:4).  
Rejoicing is clearly a scriptural command. Can we afford to ignore it? In place of worry, start spending your time enjoying the release of your humor and joy.
  - 2. RELAX (4:5).  
We would say, "easygoing." It is a "sweet reasonableness"...the idea of a relaxed, easygoing lifestyle. A worry-filled world can increase tension to a dangerous level.
  - 3. REST (6:6,7).  
Prayer allows a person to rest. Notice, TLB translation of 4:6-7:  
Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything;  
tell God your needs and don't forget to thank Him for his answers. If you do this you will experience God's peace, which is far more wonderful than the human mind can understand. His peace will keep your thoughts and your hearts quiet and at rest as you trust in Christ Jesus.
- C. Learn to think straight:
  - 1. Feed your mind with positive thoughts (4:8).  
It is easy to think negatively. Learn to become an optimist.
  - 2. Focus your attention on encouraging examples (4:9a).  
Find people who are calm under pressure and imitate their life.
  - 3. Find God as a "God of Peace" in your life (4:9b).  
The more you practice giving your burdens to God, the more exciting life will become in watching Him work in your life.

### CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

- A. You can break the worry addiction and replace it with joy.
- B. Because of JC, you can face tomorrow.
- C. Plan of salvation for non-Xians; erring Xians.