

Living Without Worrying

by Norman B. Harrison

BACK TO THE BIBLE PUBLICATION

A Compact Do-It-Yourself Course

4 units

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Foreword

It gives me real satisfaction to present this course of study to you. It was first written by Dr. Norman B. Harrison under the title *His Peace* but has been adapted for this compact course.

Dr. Harrison first came into my life in August, 1927. As a young man, I was attending the Southwestern Bible and Missionary Conference in Flagstaff, Arizona, with my parents. His lectures gripped my heart as he spoke of the possessions we have in Christ as revealed in Ephesians. The Spirit of God convicted me of lacking these very things in my Christian experience.

I then saw Christ not only as my Saviour but also as my very life. I accepted Him as such, and He brought all of His riches into my life. He also became my Lord and Master. From that day forward I set my face to fulfill His will in the ministry.

Many of the writings of Dr. Harrison have been most helpful to me over the years. Not only did he expound the riches in Christ, including the fact that men can live without worry, but his life fully radiated this truth.

I trust that the study of these lessons will, in some measure, bring to your heart the rest and peace that the author expressed and that he so clearly sets forth for you here.

Theodore H. Epp

INSTRUCTIONS

Please read these instructions before beginning the study of your lessons.

How the Course Is Organized

Unit	Page
1. Why We Worry	6
2. Why We Should Not Worry	11
3. How Not to Worry	17
4. Peace Instead of Worry	23

The Reason for Study

As you enter into the study of God's Word, remember that you are studying the greatest book ever written, because it is inspired by God Himself. Its message has a unique power. If believed and obeyed, it changes a life not only for time but also for eternity. Men have suffered and died that we might have the Bible in our own language. So, let us not neglect it but study it diligently that we might be "approved unto God," workmen who need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth (II Tim. 2:15).

Your study of God's Word should not merely be for accumulating facts but in order to obtain a personal understanding of who God is and what He wants to accomplish through your life.

Study Suggestions

Preparation for Study

If at all possible, find a place where there are no distractions. This will make it easier to concentrate. If you have a particular difficulty in concentrating, you may find it helpful to read the study material aloud.

Pray for God's help. Before each lesson ask God to show you the significance of the truths you are about to consider. Ask God, the author of the Scriptures, to teach you more about Himself and His holy Word.

Materials for Study

A Bible. This is your main textbook. This course is designed to help you know your Bible better. The final authority is not the course but the Word of God on which this course is based.

A dictionary. Use a dictionary whenever necessary to find the meaning of words you do not understand.

A pencil, pen or marker. Underscore important words or phrases. As you scan through the course later, the underlined words will help you to quickly recall the thought of each unit.

Method of Study

Begin your actual study by reading the first unit in this course. You may find it helpful to read the entire lesson quickly, taking special note of the main headings. Then read it again, making a more detailed study of the unit. During your second reading, be sure to look up each Scripture reference. Study the unit until you have mastered it.

Start to learn your new memory verse the day you start a new unit. (The memory assignment is given at the end of each lesson.) Go over the verse several times each day, repeating the reference before and after the verse to help you remember it.

Think over the teaching of the unit and apply the truths to your life. Ask the Lord how you can use these principles to help you live for Him.

Turn to the examination, which is on the last page of the unit. Do not take the examination yet, but look over the questions to determine what areas you need to study further, and then look for the answers in the unit or in your Bible.

Taking the Examinations

Without help from your textbook or any notes you may have made, take the examination. Where Scripture references are given in the question, you may use your Bible to refer to the passages, with the exception of the memory verse. After you have completed Unit 1, check your answers with those in the Answer Key on the last page. When answers do not agree, carefully review that part of the lesson and related Bible verses. Check the memory verse in your Bible.

Follow the same procedure with other units. Continue at your own rate of speed; however, we recommend that you plan to complete one unit each week. Regular study is best.

Do not send the examinations for this Do-It-Yourself Course to us for grading, but keep them in this book. If you have questions concerning this course and have no one to help you, you may write to us at Back to the Bible Correspondence School, Box 82808, Lincoln, Nebraska 68501. We also stand ready to help you with any spiritual problem you may wish to share with us.



Unit 1

Why We Worry

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee" (Isa. 26:3).

Peace! Was there ever a sweeter sound? How unspeakably poor is the person who passes through this earth a stranger to peace.

Our Lord's last will and testament, as He faced the cross, was the bequest of His own peace to His followers as their age-long possession (John 14:27). It is His peace, not ours, except as we appropriate it from Him. The peace that proved to be unfailing under the sting of injustice and ill-will, under the awful stress of the world's sin, under the agonizing suffering of Calvary—such peace can never prove inadequate for our personal needs.

Note the contrasting experience: "In me ... peace. In the world ... tribulation" (16:33). Jesus gives us peace, the world gives us worry. Which is to win? And what is to decide the contest?

The hope of escape is in Jesus' reassuring words: "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (v. 33). The victory is already won for those of us who are in Him. The secret lies in our power to appropriate that victory in such a way that it becomes, potentially and practically, our very own.

Moreover, it is the overcoming life that is to be crowned. In the coming new order of things, Jesus is heard saying, "He that overcometh shall inherit all things" (Rev. 21:7). Overcomes what? Surely the thing that makes up our God-given or God-permitted test. And if worry, as we are about to see, is the answer we are prone to give to life's tests, may we not insert, for our present purposes, that word as the subject of our test: "He that overcometh [worry] shall inherit all things."

If there is a life that replaces worry with peace, a life protected from irritation by the possession of God's antidote, His own peace—who would not want it? Man's world, as we observe it, tells us that such a life is desperately needed. God's Word, as we study it, tells us that it is gloriously possible.

Life of Peace Only in Christ

This possibility exists not at all in us but wholly in Him. Christians worry. Unfortunately, this is true even though we are commanded to have peace: "Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body" (Col. 3:15). Despite the fact that Christians are explicitly commanded, as a class, to allow the "peace of God," which has been bestowed on us, to rule within us, observation and experience indicate that this peace does not characterize ordinary Christian living.

Whereas Christians should be known, universally, as a people of abiding and unfailing peace, a people who have renounced worry, we must confess with shame that Mr. Average Christian gives himself to worry pretty much like other folks. Humiliated by a sense of failure, he should be led to distrust his own effort and look to a power other than his own. This indeed is God's plan and provision.

Here it is: "The fruit of the Spirit is ... peace" (Gal. 5:22). And for the practical working out of this plan, the Holy Spirit is already the possession of every believer (4:6). As we yield to Him, He brings forth this fruit. It is as though He were saying, "Since the Lord Jesus expects His people to be

characterized by His peace as a constant experience, I will make it My business to see that they have it. I will produce it in them." As we honor the Spirit, He does in us what we could not do in and for ourselves. The Christian life, being a supernatural life, must be lived on supernatural resources. He is preeminently that resource. The peace-possessed life, free from worry, must be "the fruit of the Spirit" (5:22).

The attempt to analyze our worrying yields a threefold answer:

A Personal Habit

Worry is a habit that, once formed, is difficult to overcome. It is largely a mental habit—an attitude of mind toward what happens, may happen, or may not happen. Every time we worry, we make it easier to repeat this action at a later time. Soon we become victims of our own habit.

The very seriousness of life fosters the habit. Here, for instance, is a mother with three small children. She wants to be the best mother on earth. She keeps those children hourly on her mind and heart. Then she has three perfectly good, insistent reasons for worrying. One child may break a limb before the day is over. Another may contract a contagious disease. Who knows what may happen to a child? Or here is a father with a large family, small wages, no margin to fall back on and uncertain health that may fail at any time. As he thinks of his family, why shouldn't he fall into the habit of worrying?

Once the habit is acquired, there is little relief. Every threatened change of circumstances is a signal for a fresh indulgence in worry. Thus thousands are proving themselves incapable of an overcoming life, merely reflecting the poor nature or changeableness of their environment.

Others Worry

Worry is contagious. It is passed from mouth to mouth. Our neighbors are worldly people. They know only the world's philosophy. When things go wrong, or threaten to go wrong, they freely express the world's spirit of fear and anxiety. We catch it from them. We fall into their ways of looking at things. We are bound to do so unless our prayer life, coupled with a constant renewing of our minds through feeding on His Word, makes Christ more real than our neighbors. Prayer and Bible reading will make His philosophy of life, His way of viewing things, more dominant than any human method of thinking. Only in this way can we escape falling into the world's ways of worrying.

Heavenly Father's Care Not Realized

The chief and determining reason for worry among Christians is that they do not realize their Heavenly Father's care. The Fatherhood of our God has been left in the realm of theory. Faith has failed to clothe it with practical reality.

We must truly listen to our Saviour, who is pleading with us to be persuaded of our Father's loving care and to rest in that care. In Matthew 6:25,26, the thought Jesus says is wrong is not the provident thought that results in gathering food for the winter's need but the anxious, worrying thought that saps the spiritual life. He is warning against worry over the simple necessities of life—food, drink and clothing. He gives the birds as an example. They have all these, with no lack. And they have no Heavenly Father; they are merely creatures. "Your heavenly Father feedeth them" (v. 26). That's the kind of a Father Christians have. See what He does for mere creatures? "Are ye not much better than they?" (v. 26). What will He not do for His children?

How the question of clothing vexes the human mind! In Matthew 6:28-30 Jesus tells us to look at the lilies of the field, so beautifully clothed, for a demonstration of our Father's delight in adorning even the humblest of His creations. Solomon, with all of his suit-makers and costly extravagance, was not attired like one of these. If God does this for the grass of the field, which is but for a day, surely we have every reason to trust Him for our needs. Jesus' plea for a worry-excluding reliance on our Father is very emphatic in the original language: "Not much more you, O ye of little faith?" (v. 30).

In Matthew 6:31-34, is there any fallacy or any weakness in the argument on which Jesus rests His double "therefore"? There is none. The case is perfectly conclusive. So He commands us not to worry about these creature necessities, "for after all these things do the Gentiles seek" (v. 32). Who are they? Unconverted people, who have no Heavenly Father, who are just grownups looking after themselves. How different it is with the children of God! "Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things" (v. 32).

What a comfort! What a carefree life! If Jesus wants us to live such a life and shows us the reasonable basis for it, why should not every child of grace rejoice to live it? Note that the phrase "all these things" is stated three times. The unconverted continually seek them; our Heavenly Father is constantly aware that we need them; and as we seek first our Father's interest, He will delight to see that we, His children, have them.

The key to a carefree life, therefore, is a day-by-day trust that leaves the unfolding future wholly and implicitly in our Father's hands.

Memorize John 16:33.

EXAMINATION

1. Our Lord's last will and testament, as He faced the cross, was the bequest of His own _____ to His _____ (John 14:27).
2. The chief reason we worry is because we do not _____ our _____ care.
3. In Matthew 6:25,26, the thought Jesus forbids is the anxious, _____ thought that saps the _____ life.
4. If our Heavenly Father cares for the creatures of the field, He will certainly care for His own children, because we are "much _____ than _____" (Matt. 6:26).
5. The key for a carefree life is a day-by-day _____ that leaves the unfolding _____ in our Father's hands.

Write John 16:33 from memory on the lines below.





Unit 2

Why We Should Not Worry

With our Lord's plea for a carefree life resounding in the soul (John 16:33), we turn to the consideration of three reasons why we should not worry.

Most Harmful to Ourselves

It is impossible to point to a single benefit that comes from worrying. When a person indulges in worry, his mental, spiritual and physical forces are depleted, leaving him less capable of suitable action when this is needed.

We must recognize the existence of two well-defined sets of forces in the world. They are aligned with light and its opposite, darkness, and with life and its opposite, death. The one is constructive; the other, destructive. Love, joy, peace, purity, contentment, kindness—these are constructive; they build up; they make better people of those who practice them and those who experience them. Hatred, jealousy, anger, bitterness, anxiety, restlessness of spirit—these are destructive; they tear down; they leave one the worse for their indulgence.

That worry is definitely and unalterably destructive can be proved by observing its purely physical effects. How much more is this true in the sphere of the moral, mental and spiritual! The following demonstration is based on an unwholesome mental state, and that in turn is made possible by a below-normal spiritual state.

The effect of worry, fear and the like on the digestive process involves our entire well-being. Consider a simple laboratory experiment involving a cat. By the introduction into the cat's alimentary tract of subnitrate of bismuth, or an allied substance, darkening the walls of the canal, the progress of the food may be observed, with the help of X rays, from the beginning to the end of the process.

If the subject is in a peaceful, contented state, the peristaltic movement goes on with regularity, extracting nourishment from the food for the upbuilding of the body. But if the animal is suddenly and severely frightened, the peristaltic process will come to a complete stop. Or if there is a milder disturbance of feeling, there is a proportionate slowing down of the digestive process.

Transfer the experiment to the human and the results are just the same. A peaceful, joyous, carefree state of mind and spirit is the best possible aid to digestion. But let a load of fear, fretfulness or anxiety rest on the mind, and immediately it acts as a drag on the digestive process. We become undernourished. Our nervous system is impoverished and deranged. We call a physician. He does his best to cope with the condition that our folly has created. Finally, he advises a change of scenery, involving separation from home and loved ones. Or possibly an operation becomes necessary.

All of this takes a toll in finances as well as in health. And it is all traceable to persistence in the habit of worrying. What an expensive luxury! The writer, when speaking on this matter, has had people come to him and say something like this: "My husband would have been spared the expense of a hospital and surgeon's bill if I had heard and heeded this a few years ago."

Or maybe, while struggling along under this slow form of self-inflicted suicide, you are approached with the suggestion: "I think Christian Science would help you." Why, of course! For what happens? The moment you consult a practitioner of this mind-over-matter system, you are asked the question, "Are you worrying about anything?" You have to confess that you are. "Well, you must stop worrying." And you do. You put on an artificial smile (for your heart has not been changed), and you walk out into life, resolved not to worry again.

Now look at yourself. You would not allow the Son of God, your Lord and Saviour, to do this for you, through your persistent refusal to obey His commands. You would not acknowledge worry to be sin against Him as well as against your body. Yet you have admitted this to be so by following a false system—one that denies the atoning blood with which you were bought (I Pet. 1:18,19). What folly!

But there is a further charge against worry, of still more serious consequence.

Most Injurious to Our Neighbors

The particular injury here is that we have friends, people who know us, who are not Christians and who need to see a vital faith in our lives. Such a testimony to the sufficiency of our Saviour is the supreme debt we owe the gospel (Matt. 5:16).

We may be smiling and bubbling over with happiness when our sky is flooded with sunshine and matters are moving along well with us. But those who observe us are not strongly impressed. They reason somewhat as Satan did concerning Job—that piety and prosperity are inseparably linked together (Job 1:6-11). Anyone ought to smile and act the part under those circumstances.

But let adversity come. Let the Christian have severe financial reverses, let death snatch a dear one, or let ill health dog his steps. The observer is paying attention; he is alert to see how the Christian faith will stand the test. What does he see? He sees the corners of the mouth droop, the light fade from the eyes, the spring leave the step, the joy depart from the heart. He says, "It's just as I thought. There's no reality in Christian faith. These people go to pieces the same as anyone else. They have nothing that I do not have."

Just when the worrying Christian had an opportunity to bear glowing testimony to a Saviour who sustains and satisfies under all circumstances, he failed Him. And in losing his testimony, he robbed his neighbor, who should have seen the overcoming life in its fullest demonstration.

It Hurts Heavenly Father's Heart

Keeping in mind our Lord's teachings in Matthew 6:25-34, we can appreciate how much our worrying hurts our Heavenly Father only as we place ourselves in His position of Fatherhood. Here is an illustration concerning the author as a parent:

A few years ago my work as a Bible evangelist took me away from home much of the time. The youngest child in the home was a boy of eight or nine years. Let us suppose that, through my continued absence, my son began to lose his childhood's rightful freedom from care concerning clothing, food, shelter, and so on—things which lie completely within the father's responsibility to provide. (This is just what takes place in the life of the child of God when, through his neglect of prayer and fellowship, the Heavenly Father becomes an absentee.) Upon returning, I find the telltale lines of care in his formerly joyous, happy face. I ask what is troubling him. "Oh," he says, "my clothes are wearing out, and I haven't the money to buy more. Then, too, I'm worried about my food. It may soon be gone, and I haven't the money to buy any more."

What is his real trouble? He has left his place, the place of a child. What is a father for? Assuredly to take care of his children. The boy has stepped into his father's province, robbing his parent of his fatherhood prerogative. What is a small matter to the father's purse may seem mountain high to the boy, bending him low beneath its burden.

So I take him aside and reason with him: "Son, did I ever refuse to buy you a suit when you needed it? Have I ever failed as a father to supply you with ample food? Do you doubt my willingness to continue to do so? Will you not leave these things to your father's love and care?"

But suppose that, in spite of all my pleading, I am unable to change his wrong idea that he must take the responsibility for these things on himself, unwilling to trust his father's loving care and power to provide. Suppose the worry continues to cloud his childish face and to burden his boyish spirit. Do you see how it would hurt the father's heart? It would be like thrusting him through with a dagger if he were forced to think that his boy would not trust him to function as a father!

That dagger has been heedlessly thrust through the Heavenly Father's heart each time a Christian has indulged in worry. It is said to Him that the worrier was unwilling to take his place as God's child or to trust Him to fulfill His part as his Father. Yet He has promised that He will never leave or forsake the believer (Heb. 13:5).

Take time to ask God's forgiveness, to confess that this forgiveness will always be needed as long as one neglects to live a vital, trustful life of prayer. It will be needed as long as the believer fails to fortify his mind against the world's worries by hiding away in his heart the Father's reassuring words about what He stands ready at all times to do. The psalmist saw this and wrote: "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee" (Ps. 119:11).

In the strength of a new resolve, realizing that worrying on the part of a child of God is nothing short of sinning against our Father, let us here and now solemnly promise Him: "By Thy grace, I will not worry." This done, let us set out to find the life that leaves no room for worrying (see Units 3 and 4).

Memorize Matthew 6:30.

All Will Be Well

Through the love of God, our Saviour,
All will be well;
Free and changeless in His favor,
All, all is well.
Precious is the blood that healed us;
Perfect is the grace that sealed us;
Strong the hand stretched out to shield us,
All must be well.

Though we pass through tribulation,
All will be well;
Ours is such a full salvation.
All, all is well;
Happy still in God confiding;
Fruitful, if in Christ abiding;
Holy, through the Spirit's guiding,
All must be well.

We expect a bright tomorrow;
All will be well;
Faith can sing through days of sorrow.
All, all is well.
On our Father's love relying.
Jesus every need supplying;
Or in living, or in dying.
All must be well.

Mary Peters

EXAMINATION

1. By indulging in worrying, a person's mental, _____ and _____ forces are reduced.

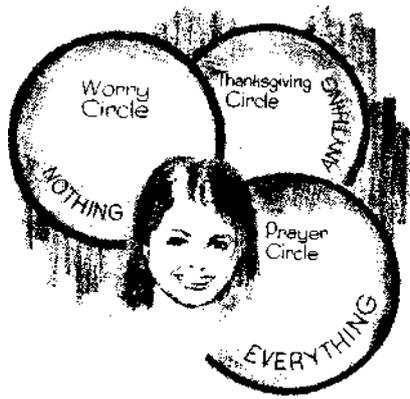
2. In our lives, the unsaved need to see a testimony to the _____ of our Saviour, which is the supreme _____ we owe the gospel (Matt. 5:16).

3. The greatest reason we should not worry is because it hurts the _____ of our _____.

4. Worry is the result of our being unwilling to take our place as God's _____ or to trust Him to fulfill His part as our _____.

5. Worrying on the part of a child of God is nothing short of _____ against our Heavenly Father.

Write Matthew 6:30 from memory on the lines below.



Unit 3

How Not to Worry

If there is a life that is not plagued by worry, that feels free from all necessity of worrying, surely everyone should rejoice to find it and delight to live it. There is not a single argument for the usefulness or propriety of worry. Every consideration we have examined, in its effect on ourselves, on others and on God, argues for definitely casting off every form of worry once and forever.

But now comes the practical question. Is such a life possible? If it is, evidently it is not only our privilege, it is clearly our duty. Then how shall we find it?

We can never hope to come into a carefree life by looking at our circumstances. These change and are unstable and uncertain. We do not know what may occur during any day. Consequently, the centering of one's life in circumstances, the sense of being subject to them, the inability to rise above them—this is the cause of a life of anxiety and worry.

Our sole escape is in God, in bringing Him consciously into the center of our life. This means a life of prayer or a life of trust that feeds on and confidently appropriates the promises of His Word. To daily pursue this course is to experience day by day, moment by moment, a life of victory. Where God and His Word are enthroned, worry cannot crowd in. We have adopted the one means for effectively displacing it. We have supplanted it with His presence and peace.

All scripture, studied in simple faith, assimilated into our spiritual being, and turned back to God in trusting prayer, is well calculated to produce peace in the soul. The Holy Spirit provided for our sinful tendency to worry by giving certain promises covering this need. The examination of a few of them will serve to stimulate the student to search the Scriptures for further assurance for a life free from worry. And a consistent prayer life will make what is revealed a reality in his everyday experience.

"Peace Be Unto You"

Three times our crucified, now-risen Christ spoke this triumphant declaration of peace to His own (John 20:19,21,26). What relief for troubled hearts! What hope for dejected spirits! And He showed them His hands and His side, leaving no room for doubt that it was He who bore the shame and suffering of their sin on the cross.

Not only "were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord" (v. 20); then and there came stealing into their hearts the sense of peace with God.

Peace, to be abiding, must be founded on fact. If God has not solved the sin problem, and the ancient question, "How should man be just with God?" (Job 9:2) is still bothering a person, the fires of unrest will continue to flame up in his soul. But when the believer knows that Christ died and rose again, when he can affirm that it was indeed for him, when he, too, can say, in some true sense, "I have seen the Lord"—this is peace.

With this fact settled, it does not matter how far afield we have wandered, even though it be into sins of deepest depth and darkest hue. This furnishes the contrasting background that imparts a yet greater warmth of coloring to the soul's peace in the sense of His matchless, undeserved forgiveness.

This was true of David. Stricken speechless with overwhelming shame, the peace that came to him was all the more amazing, causing him to cry, "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity" (Ps. 32:1,2).

But whether we have any great sense of sin or not, our peace will be deep and undisturbed, the sort that satisfies in proportion as we meditate on the cross, on our risen Lord, and on His perpetual presence with the Father as our Advocate, our Peace.

"Grace to You and Peace"

"To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 1:7).

It thrills one to think through the New Testament and discover similar words of heartfelt greeting at the beginning of every one of the church and pastoral epistles (Rom. 1:7; I Cor. 1:3; II Cor. 1:2; Gal. 1:3; Eph. 1:2; Phil. 1:2; Col. 1:2; I Thess. 1:1; II Thess. 1:2; I Tim. 1:2; II Tim. 1:2; Tit. 1:4; Philem. 1:3).

These recurrent words are not just a mere formula; they describe the Christian life. They give the order of the essential contents of Christian experience. It is "grace and peace," never the reverse. Peace cannot be found apart from grace; and grace cannot be appropriated without a consequent peace.

Grace is not merely saving grace, it is keeping grace, it is sustaining and upholding grace, it is guiding grace, it is teaching grace, it is sweetening and softening grace. It is grace to endure, grace that "giveth songs in the night" (Job 35:10; see Ps. 42:8). Grace covers every need.

How wonderful it is to know such grace—that it did not merely give Christ *for* us but is constantly giving Him to us, that it constantly undergirds with strength and sufficiency for every need! Such an experience is not only grace but "grace and peace."

We need peace *with* God and peace *from* God; but more than that, we must know the peace *of* God.

"The Peace of God"

"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:6,7).

Analyzed, these words present a threefold command, which, when obeyed, is followed by the assured promise of the peace of God as an actual yet supernatural experience, possessing mind and heart.

There is not a single Scripture passage that warrants worry on the part of a child of God. If there were, the Bible could be charged with contradicting itself.

"Be careful [anxious] for nothing" (v. 6). Nothing is made up of no thing. It is impossible to put anything into nothing. Nothing is a circle with everything excluded. Your child's sickness, your boy's waywardness, your neighbor's meanness—all are excluded. They are but tests of your willingness to obey God rather than the promptings of human nature.

There is a reason. Worry is incompatible with a life of prayer. It prevents us from praying and God from working. Do not worry. Adopt the prayer method instead: "In every thing by prayer and supplication." Now we understand God's ways with us. Everything is excluded from care and is included in prayer. God, our Father, wants the opportunity of caring for the things that concern us.

This is to be mingled "with thanksgiving." Remembering past mercies is the key to unlocking further benefits. If we fail to recognize what God has done for us, why should He do more?

We are told to regard the Christian life, shall we say, as comprised of three circles. First, the Worry Circle: To be scriptural, its contents must be nothing. Second, the Prayer Circle: Into it must be brought everything. Third, the Thanksgiving Circle: It must be filled with anything that gratitude calls to mind.

When these three are faithfully followed as the prescribed ingredients of a life of trust, the promised result—His peace—is bound to be our experience. This peace Jesus proved and passed

down to us as our rightful inheritance, saying, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you" (John 14:27). His peace will guard our minds and hearts in a manner that is beyond our understanding. We have refused worry. Now His peace is there to bar its every approach. Worry cannot set foot on the ground that He is occupying, the sacred citadel of a surrendered, trustful heart.

"All Your Care Upon Him"

The emphasis is on "all" (I Pet. 5:7). Some, however much, will never do. It is the principle God is concerned with. Worry or trust, care or prayer—which? There is no middle ground. So to test us, He sends a tiny care. If we worry about it, we will feel free to worry about any and all other cares, for we have not come into the place of pleasing Him. So He says, "My child, until you can trust Me with all your care, you may keep it all." We have robbed ourselves and Him.

Can God not persuade you that He is caring for you and that His marvelous, supernatural care is all sufficient under all circumstances?

O Lord! how happy we should be,
If we could cast our care on Thee,
If we from self could rest;
And feel, at heart, that One above,
In perfect wisdom, perfect love,
Is working for the best!

Surely we see that a constant and consistent life of prayer is the only portal through which we can enter into the privileged freedom from care that is here encouraged.

Memorize I Peter 5:7.

I'll Hold Thy Hand

I'll hold thy hand when the storm clouds gather,
I'll hold thy hand when the thunders roar.
When the deluge breaks in all its fury,
I'll hold thy hand till the storm is o'er.
I'll hold thy hand when the days are lonely,
And cares of life press on the soul.
I'll hold thy hand in the deepest shadows,
As on you press toward the heavenly goal.
I'll hold thy hand then—child take courage,
For thou art always in My care.
My hand shall lead thee on triumphant
Through pearly gates to that land so fair.

Mrs. M. J. Christie

EXAMINATION

1. The cause for a life of anxiety and worry is one's inability to _____ above the _____ of life.
2. Our peace will be undisturbed to the extent that we _____ on the cross, on our risen Lord and on His perpetual _____ with the Father as our Advocate, our Peace,"
3. The words, "Grace to you and peace," give the _____ of the essential _____ of Christian experience (I Thess. 1:1; II Tim. 1:2).
4. Remembrance of past _____ is the key to the unlocking of _____ benefits.
5. The content of the Worry Circle should be _____. Into the Prayer Circle must be brought _____. The Thanksgiving Circle must be filled with _____ (Phil. 4:6,7).

Write I Peter 5:7 from memory on the lines below.



Unit 4

Peace Instead of Worry

Unit 3 discussed the fact that healthy, consistent prayer habits are necessary for worry-free living. Hebrews 12:2 gives additional insight into having real peace.

"Looking Unto Jesus"

These words become exceedingly significant and peace imparting when we catch the complete thought conveyed by the original language. The participle "looking" has a prefix which the translators thought too awkward to insert. What it says is "looking away unto Jesus."

The meaning is evident. If we are to run the race successfully, to be counted an overcomer and to obtain the victor's crown, our eyes must not be allowed to rest on objects nearby, which serve to disturb and distract. What a secret for Christian living! Is there anything that tempts us to anxiety, that threatens to rob us of our spiritual poise and peace? The instructions are: Refuse to keep looking at it, brooding over it, pondering it and mulling it over in your mind until you have cudged your brains with it. Look away from it. Look away to Jesus, who is never disturbed. In Him is no suggestion of worry. He Himself faced every test, even the severest—that of the cross—and was crowned as our Overcomer. Today "he is our peace" (Eph. 2:14).

There is Christian psychology at the basis of this. If we allow ourselves to continually dwell on troubles, either threatened or actual, it is utterly impossible for us to maintain a peaceful state of mind and heart. We live under psychological laws that preclude it. Our dwelling constantly on our troubles allows them to burn themselves into our consciousness.

Anyone can convince himself of this in a very simple, everyday manner. The following personal experience provides an example: On a certain afternoon, while in the State of Washington, we drove to the woods to gather wild blackberries. Several hours passed pleasantly in the task. On returning home we found it necessary to spend the evening sorting and preserving them. When we went to bed and closed our eyes, we still saw blackberries. We had looked at them so continuously that they had registered on the retina of the mind. They refused to withdraw and were real to us even though they were absent. So will it inevitably be with the worrier's much brooded-over, troublesome circumstances.

But when we "play the part" of a Christian, the same law works for us. When we fill our eyes with Jesus, in whom is peace and strength, when through a life of prayer He has first place in our lives, we have fixed Him on the retina of the soul. Then how amazing it is to discover that "things" are deprived of their power to disturb.

"Keep Him in Perfect Peace"

"Perfect peace" (Isa. 26:3) is the translation of a Hebraism, literally, "peace, peace." It means: "You will keep him in a continuous, uninterrupted experience of peace—peace today, peace tomorrow, peace the next day." Peace, peace, peace forever. It is the unbroken flow of the river's current (Isa. 48:18).

To whom is this experience promised? To the one whose circumstances are just right, never fluctuating, never troublesome, never disappointing? Quite the contrary—to "him whose mind is stayed on thee" the more because his circumstances threaten to break through on his peace. It is the same lesson as was noted in Hebrews. The secret of life is inward, not outward. If only we will turn our minds trustingly to Him, He can control our inner beings, and all outward circumstances will be shorn of power to trouble us.

Therefore we have this appealing exhortation that should prompt in every child of God, for his own satisfaction and that of his Heavenly Father, an earnest, ceaseless life of trustful, mind-stayed-on-Him relationship (Isa. 26:4).

"Fret Not"

Psalm 37 encourages the righteous to live a peaceful life, in calm and quiet confidence, though surrounded by the wicked and harrassed by their evil deeds. The outcome is certain and assured (w. 9-40). In view of this we are encouraged to live victoriously, whatever the present, permitted testings, in restful, rejoicing reliance in the Lord our God (w. 1-8). It pictures the security of the righteous and the insecurity of the wicked, arguing for a life of trust.

These verses constitute a brief, beautiful, yet effective sermonette on the subject of worrying. The text is the two words, "Fret not." It points out the steps leading to a life that does not worry. These successive steps are found in the emphasized verbs of command and exhortation.

"Fret not" (v. 1). This is one of the clear commands of scripture, wholly in harmony with the spirit and purpose of God's Word throughout. Let us assume that a Christian accepts the Bible as his rule of faith and practice. That being the case, for him to see its teaching is gladly to submit to it, so let us consider a Christian's questionnaire:

"Do you steal?"

"Do you lie?"

"Do you swear?"

"Do you get drunk?"

Instantly and indignantly you reply, "Why, of course I do not. I am a Christian, ordering my life by God's Word. I would not do any of these things."

Then, encouraged by your reply, we add a further question.

"Do you worry?"

Why do you hesitate and perhaps falteringly answer, "Well, I'll have to think about that"? Why make a distinction where God's Word makes none?

Without hesitation you condemn a man for falling into the former sins. Why do you not condemn yourself for the latter? Do you believe that drunkenness on the part of an unsaved man is as great a sin in God's sight as is worrying on the part of His Spirit-born, Spirit-indwelt child? Assuredly not.

"Trust in the Lord, and do good" (v. 3). You have no time to worry with a Christian's call to service sounding in your ears. Moreover, the two are mutually exclusive. You cannot worry and trust at the same time. Such spiritual acrobatics are as impossible as for a man to stand on his feet and sit restfully in a chair at one and the same time. The two acts are mutually exclusive. So are fretting and trusting the Lord. When we are fretting, we are not trusting. When we are trusting, we are not fretting. And worrying, being an indulgence of the flesh, fights against and suppresses the spiritual attitude of trusting.

"Delight thyself also in the Lord" (v. 4). Do not remain on the dead level of duty, merely endeavoring to avoid worry because it is wrong. Here is an antidote for it—a delightful one at that. Set your mind and heart on the Lord, to delight in Him and in His dealings with you. Two things will follow: Not only will you feel no provocation to worry, but you will enable the Lord to "give thee the desires of thine heart" (v. 4). This is a glorious step of advancement. We are well on the road to peace.

"Commit thy way unto the Lord" (v. 5). As the command of verse 4 cares for our inner estate, so this command fully covers our outer estate. Whatever the circumstance, as we commit it to Him and trust Him, He accepts our case and sets to work. "He shall bring it to pass" (v. 5).

How wonderful! How reassuring! The particular promise is for days when we are misjudged and our good name is at stake. Such days drive us to our knees, to a trustful life of prayer. When scandal and abuse are abroad and our reputation is assailed, this is preeminently the place in God's Word to which we should turn. Put the finger of faith on Psalm 37:5,6 and live in it. The inner calm of quiet committal will be followed by a gracious outer stilling of the storm.

"Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him" (v. 7). Let us see how reasonable and wholly possible this exhortation is at this point. For our inner need we have learned to delight ourselves in the Lord—now we can rest in Him. For our outer need, we have definitely committed our way to Him, and He is working—we can patiently wait for Him and His time of full deliverance.

"Fret not" (w. 7,8). The sermonette concludes by repeating the text twice—"Fret not." Step by step it has led us into the life that has no worry, the life that is free from the tendency to worry. It is the life of peace and rest; from it we have no desire to descend to our former low, unspiritual level.

When we highly resolve to trust in Him for strength and determine to abide in Him in a way that leaves no room in our lives for sinful, Christ-dishonoring worry, He meets us in this resolve. He pours His own heaven-sent peace into our minds and hearts. In this abiding answer to our trust we are kept.

In conclusion, note three practical considerations: First, there must be a life of prayer. We must consistently and constantly lay hold of God through His Word. This is to take the place of the fitful, purposeless efforts usually made to meet the changing needs that face us daily. A planned and consistent prayer life is the only way whereby we can let the peace of Christ rule in our hearts, even that experience of peace to which we are called (Col. 3:15).

Second, to stop short of attaining this peace is to threaten our whole spiritual life with failure. Worry involves deadly forces that are destructive to faith. Prayer cannot mount up on wings of faith when the clouds of fretful doubt obscure the Father's face. To be victorious in daily living we must leave behind the plains of worry and press on to the citadel of peace.

Third, this done, we find that peace is by no means the only result in the life. Peace never comes to us alone; it has companion graces. The gains are many. In excluding worry, we have pleased the Lord and opened our hearts to His unhindered operation. A Spirit-filled life is unfolding to us. What will He not work in us? Not just peace, for "the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control" (Gal. 5:22,23, NASB).

A life of peace makes possible the loosing of the power of God in the soul. The possibilities of such a life are limitless: "For it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work, for His good pleasure" (Phil. 2:13, NASB). It means a life more and more approaching, even here, the likeness to which we are destined over there. May our God create in us such cravings for peace, for power to overcome and for holy, victorious living that we will be constrained to seek new paths of daily devotedness.

Peace for the Future

The most certain experience of life is death. In all of history only two have escaped. Every day, so we are told, 100,000 persons die. An allowance of 25 sorrowing for each, through a period of only four days, say, in which grief grips the heart, means an army of a million people mourning, somewhere, all the time.

The one and only way of victory is the Christian faith, with its view of the beyond. Jesus says to all who trust Him, "Let not your heart be troubled" (John 14:1). Then follows the picture of the homeland, the place He has gone to prepare, with the purpose of gathering us there into His presence—"that where I am, there ye may be also" (v. 3).

Nearly everyone has lost a loved one. Remember that God loved them, too, and in His love He longed to have them with Him. Reflect on His prayer of love: "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me" (John 17:24). Since their home-going brought the answer to His prayer, and since they are now experiencing His glory, what peace concerning them should possess the heart of the bereaved.

The Apostle Paul confirms us in this peace by reminding that "to be absent from the body" is "to be present with the Lord" (II Cor. 5:8). At home—what an end to earth's pilgrimage! Not a mere

place, but home, because there are the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit and the dear ones we love who, like us, have accepted Christ as Saviour.

But we dare not look only to the future to read the meaning of His hand thus on us. The dark and difficult days are brimming with purposed blessings for the present. Sorrow, sickness, suffering, separation—these are His agents to purify the heart and set it free to rest in Him. Even the storm ministers peace when the heart is opened to hear His whispered "This is from Me."

Not till the loom is silent
And the shuttles cease to fly
Shall God unroll the canvas
And explain the reason why.

The dark threads are as needful
In the Weaver's skillful hand
As the threads of gold and silver
For the pattern He has planned.

Peace abides with the man who, not questioning or fretfully prying into God's purpose, confidently accounts each circumstance to be one of His "all things" that "we know . . . work together for good to them that love God" (Rom. 8:28). As a daily message of peace this motto should hang on the wall of every heart:

Our life is like the dial of a clock. The hands are God's hands passing over and over again. The short hand is the hand of discipline; the long hand is the hand of mercy. Slowly and surely the hand of discipline must pass, and God speaks at each stroke; but over and over passes the hand of mercy, showering down sixtyfold of blessing for each stroke of discipline or trial; and both hands are fastened to one secure pivot, the great unchanging heart of a God of love.

Memorize Isaiah 26:3.

EXAMINATION

1. The meaning of Hebrews 12:2 is that we are to be looking _____ unto Jesus rather than at the _____ circumstances nearby.
2. "Perfect peace" means a _____, experience of peace.
3. We are not to remain on a level of duty (avoiding worry because it is wrong), but we are to go beyond that, for the psalmist has commanded, "_____ thyself in the _____" (Ps. 37:4).
4. Peace for the future is presented in John chapter ____ verses ____ to ____.
5. List four of the six steps given in the "fret not" sermonette, which lead to a life that has no worry.
 1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____
 4. _____

Write Isaiah 26:3 from memory on the lines below.

ANSWER KEY

After completing each examination, check your answers with these. Check memorized verses in your Bible.

UNIT 1

1. Peace, followers.
2. Realize, Heavenly Father's.
3. Worrying, spiritual.
4. Better, they.
5. Trust, future.

UNIT 2

1. Spiritual, physical.
2. Sufficiency, debt.
3. Heart, Heavenly Father,
4. Child, Father.
5. Sinning.

UNIT 3

1. Rise, circumstances.
2. Contemplate, presence.
3. Order, contents.
4. Mercies, further.
5. Nothing, Everything, Anything.

UNIT 4

1. Away, disturbing or distracting.
2. Continuous, uninterrupted.
3. Delight, Lord.
4. 14,1,3.
5. (Any four)
"Fret not" (v. 1).
"Trust in the Lord and do good" (v. 3).
"Delight thyself also in the Lord" (v. 4).
"Commit thy way unto the Lord" (v. 5).
"Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him" (v. 7).
"Fret not,... fret not" (vv. 7,8).

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Verses

Unit 1 – WHY WE WORRY

Isa. 26:3 You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in you.

John 14:27 Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

John 16:33 I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.

Rev. 21:7 He who overcomes will inherit all this, and I will be his God and he will be my son.

Col. 3:15 Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.

Gal. 5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

Gal. 4:6 Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, “*Abba*, Father.”

Matt. 6:25-26 Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? 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?

Matt. 6:28-30 And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you that 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, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?

Matt. 6:31-34 So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

Unit 2 – WHY WE SHOULD NOT WORRY

1 Pet. 1:18-19 For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.

Matt. 5:16 In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.

Job 1:6-11 One day the angels came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came with them. The LORD said to Satan, “Where have you come from?” Satan answered the LORD, “From roaming through the earth and going back and forth in it.” Then the LORD said to Satan, “Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one on earth like him; he is blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil.” “Does Job fear God for nothing?” Satan replied.

“Have you not put a hedge around him and his household and everything he has? You have blessed the work of his hands, so that his flocks and herds are spread throughout the land. But stretch out your hand and strike everything he has, and he will surely curse you to your face.”

Heb. 13:5 Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, “Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.”

Psa. 119:11 I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.

Unit 3 – HOW NOT TO WORRY

John 20:19 On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!”

John 20:21 Again Jesus said, “Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.”

John 20:26 A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!”

Job 9:1- 2 Then Job replied: “Indeed, I know that this is true. But how can a mortal be righteous before God?”

Psa. 32:1-2 Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man whose sin the LORD does not count against him and in whose spirit is no deceit.

Job 35:10 But no one says, ‘Where is God my Maker, who gives songs in the night.

Psa. 42:8 By day the LORD directs his love, at night his song is with me - a prayer to the God of my life.

Phil 4:6-7 Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

1 Pet. 5:7 Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

Unit 4 – LIVING WITHOUT WORRYING

Heb. 12:2 Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Eph. 2:14 For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility.

Isa. 26:3 You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in you.

Isa. 48:18 If only you had paid attention to my commands, your peace would have been like a river, your righteousness like the waves of the sea.

Isa. 26:4 Trust in the LORD forever, for the LORD, the LORD, is the Rock eternal.

Psa 37

Gal. 5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

Phil. 2:13 for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose

John 14:1-3 Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.

John 17:24 Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.

2 Cor. 5:8 We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord.

Rom. 8:28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.