

THE BIBLE VIEW

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Theme: Discouragement

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Un-Discouraged

Bill Brinkworth

"And he said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on." Luke 12:22

We all have been vexed by what we have perceived as problems. Worrying over life's troubles consumes too much time for many. Sometimes the anxieties are legitimate; sometimes, they are only imagined and never come to fruition.

God has much to say about the sin of worrying in His Word. Matthew 6:34, along with Luke 12:22, compels us not to worry about our needs and to take life's obstacles on a day-by-day basis.

We have a lot on our plate for today; do not worry about what may or may not happen tomorrow. Besides, what situation has worrying ever improved?

"Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." Matthew 6:34

Looking at all the possible challenges that could happen on another day is very frustrating. I remember the same feeling when told to weed a 40-foot garden when I was younger.

My mother gave me the chore of weeding a backyard flower patch. I worked a short time and then looked to the end, where I was to finish. It seemed so far away and impossible.

I worked a little more and then looked to the far end. I felt I would never get finished and that it was almost a hopeless task that would never be completed.

Then I came up with a different strategy. Instead of looking at the whole task, I looked no further than two feet in front of me.

Looking up, I saw my short goal and weeded hard to reach it. When I achieved that mark, I looked up two feet further and made that my next mission.

Never did I look to the end again. I kept making short commitments.

I do remember at one point, which did not seem that long after starting, where I did permit myself to look back at where I had started.

The beginning point was far, far behind me. I did accomplish something. I was beginning to realize that the task was obtainable.

Again, I returned to my two-foot tasks. Before long, my next look at the two-foot objective made me realize it was the end.

Small bites at the task and not fretting over the overall picture made the job seem faster to complete and less agonizing. I learned from that chore to set shorter goals and keep plodding at them until the main goal was reached.

Life has many challenges that we will face. God does not give us more than we can handle. Be concerned with what God gives us to do today. When tomorrow comes, he will also give us the grace to meet the challenges we face on that day.

“Anxiety springs from the desire that things should happen as we wish rather than as God wills.” — Author Unknown

Limit the Griping. Increase the Praising!

Bill Brinkworth

One reason people should daily read their Bible is to understand how to handle even the “little” problems. In II Corinthians 2, we read that Paul learned a principle from experiences and shared it with his Corinthian friends. He did not want them to learn the same lesson he did the hard way. What he realized can be known by today’s Christians when the situation is also faced.

“But I determined this with myself, that I would not come again to you in heaviness. 2 For if I make you sorry, who is he then that maketh me glad, but the same which is made sorry by me?...”

II Corinthians 2:1-4

There is time to share one’s problems with friends and acquaintances, but it is not all the time! Paul learned that if he griped, complained, and shared all his sorrows all the time, there would be consequences. When it came time for his friends to encourage him, none would be left to help him (II Corinthians 2:1-4). They would all be too sorrowful and discouraged to console him.

Everyone knows a constant griper. They complain about their job, parents, finances, politics, and much more.

After the grumbler shares their load of concerns and worries, their friends will often be depressed and discouraged. The source of the complainer’s “pick-me-ups” will be sadder than the complainer. There will be no one to encourage the person when he needs it.

After a while, many listeners soon realize that listening to the other person’s moaning and groaning gets them so depressed that they avoid being around that person. The complainer’s problems increase when his circle of confidants is ducking for cover when he comes around.

Constant complaining grows tiresome to some. It does more damage if the griper is a Christian.

When a Christian is heard grumbling, it also sends a message to the listener. It leaves an impression to the complainer that God cannot handle the person's problems. The person appears defeated because God seemingly could not help them in their situation. That is not the message that anyone should intentionally want anyone to learn. Does that mean one should "hold it in" all the time? No, it is a consideration that should be weighed when negative comments are spoken.

If more gave their difficulties and trials to God, there would be less need to be running to people to share one's troubles. God desires to be our first source of defense, not our last. Go to Him instead of spreading ideas that God is limited in areas of help. One can then share the goodness of God by telling others how the Lord delivered and helped them. God can help anyone with anything!

"Pelopidas, when informed that the number of the enemy was double that of his army, replied, "So much the better. We shall conquer so many the more." His confidence and positive outlook were more encouraging than a thousand spears."

— Author Unknown

"Hold the Fort, for I Am Coming!"

D. L. Moody

I am told that when General Sherman went through Atlanta towards the sea, he left in the fort in the Kennesaw Mountains a handful of men to guard some rations that he brought there.

General Hood got into the outer rear and attacked the fort, driving the men in from the exterior works into the inner works. For a long time, the battle raged fearfully.

Half of the men were killed or wounded. The general, who was in command, was wounded seven different times. When they were about ready to run up the white flag and surrender the fort, Sherman got within fifteen miles. Through the signal corps on the mountain, he sent the message, "Hold the fort. I am coming. W. T. Sherman." That message fired up the soldiers' hearts, and they held the fort until reinforcements came. The stronghold did not go into the hands of their enemies.

Mr. Bliss wrote a hymn entitled, "Hold the Fort for I am coming." We need to hold our "fort" and not give up serving the Lord. Our Saviour is in command, and He is coming.

Ho! My comrades, see the signal
Waving in the sky!
Reinforcements now appearing.
Victory is nigh!

Refrain:

*"Hold the fort, for I am coming,"
Jesus signals still,
Wave the answer back to heaven,
"By Thy grace we will."*

See the mighty hosts advancing,
Satan leading on;
Mighty men around us falling.
Courage almost gone.
Refrain.

See the glorious banner waving.
Hear the bugle blow.
In our Leader's name we'll triumph
Over every foe.
Refrain.

Fierce and long the battle rages,
But our Help is near;
Onward comes our Great Commander,
Cheer, my comrades, cheer!
Refrain.