

Why Worrying is a Failure to Grasp the Gospel¹

By Trevin Wax²

"Don't be a worry wart!" people say... and those of us prone to anxiety promptly begin worrying about worrying too much.

I know the feeling. I worry too. I'm not the "lie awake at night" kind of person. But I notice that when I have a lot on my plate, I give an inordinate amount of attention to little details. Worry consumes me in a variety of ways: I lose patience quickly, I snap at my wife and kids, or I lose my sense of empathy for others. Worry turns my focus to Me.

For a while, I thought that worry was caused by my failure to seek first the kingdom. If I would only fix my eyes on Jesus more, then I would stop worrying. If I would only think about the kingdom more, then anxiety wouldn't be an issue.

Certainly, those who are seeking the kingdom above all things are not preoccupied with food, and drink, and clothing (as Jesus says in the Sermon on the Mount). And yes, seeking the kingdom first is a good action plan if we find ourselves worrying.

But seeking first the kingdom comes after we have been sought by the King. The root cause of worry is not misplaced priorities. It's misplaced faith. It's a failure to grasp the gospel of a God worthy of our trust.

So worry shows up whenever my view of God is diminished and my view of myself gets too big. I worry because my vision of God is skewed. I rest when my vision is fixed.

"Look at the birds of the air!" Jesus said. "God gives them food, even if they don't work and earn their way." There's more to this parallel than a mere animal-to-human comparison about how much more God will care for us. There's gospel here. God has given undeserved favor to the birds. He blesses them apart from their merits.

God's grace and mercy is sustaining us too. Everything we have comes from God's hand. Salvation belongs to the Lord. And the powerful God who saved us is the loving Father who sustains us.

When I reflect on the gospel of a priceless Savior giving his all for undeserving sinners like you and me, then I am assured that our value in the eyes of God does not shift with the economic tides. Our worth is not measured in what we do for God, but what God has done for us.

This is God the Father who sent his only Son to the cross that we deserved.

This is God the Son who willingly took on flesh, lived among us, and died in our place.

This is God the Spirit who prompts our hearts and brings us back into unending fellowship with our Maker.

It is the costly actions of God that give us our value.



In these difficult times, we - the people of God's kingdom - need to be reminded of our true citizenship and true identity. The uneasiness of worry surfaces in our hearts when we lose sight of the gospel of God's grace to the undeserving. Failure to grasp the gospel is what causes us to take our eyes off the kingdom and forget who we are in Christ.

United to Christ, we are part of a royal family. Our older Brother is the King of the world.

Thou art coming to a King,
large petitions with thee bring,
For his grace and power are such,
None can ever ask too much.
- John Newton

¹ **Source:** Copied in its entirety from <https://www.biblestudytools.com> for the express purpose of ministry by Men In the Hood Ministries at Gardenside Baptist Church, Lexington, KY, www.gbcllex.com.

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