

Live Well: A Series in Proverbs

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Proverbs 12:25 The Power of a good word.

MPT: Worry produces a burden, but the good word of the Lord produces gladness.

MPS: When worry surfaces, receive the good word of the Lord and speak it.

Introduction

Throughout this Live Well series, we've seen how the book of Proverbs lays out two paths for us, the path of life on one side and the path of death on the other. What we are doing is coming to God's word to get wisdom, "which for us begins with the fear of the Lord" this wisdom will then lead to the good life, to the path of life. We are being encouraged to keep racing, keep driving towards life, towards our risen savior daily growing to be more like Christ.

If you do not know this about me or wonder where my accent comes from, I'm from Kenya, Africa. And over there, we have these things called roundabouts. They are these round island junctions that most Americans find appalling. It's like you get to a roundabout, and you forget how to drive, and everybody driving next to you doesn't know how to drive, and you can't wait to get out of the

roundabout, but you don't know how to get out. And that's just the small roundabout in your neighborhood, now imagine being in a four-lane roundabout in the middle of the city on a rainy day.

That right, there is a picture of what worry looks like. It keeps you keep going round and round and never arriving. You see, Worry is like a roundabout that keeps you from advancing on the path of life. All of us have our roundabouts, we worry about the economy, we worry about whether our children will turn out okay, we worry about finding the perfect spouse, we worry about our health, making the right grade, and it's not lost on me that Tuesday is election day and that is a major cause of anxiety for a lot of people.

This morning I want us to unpack as best as we can, the source of worry, the effects of worry, and God's promise of freedom from worry. I want you to hear me say this right from the onset that "our struggles do not define us but rather our salvation through and by Christ gives us our identity. We all worry and are prone to worry what we will see this morning is God's resolution for this problem is very practical. He calls us to receive His Good word and to then speak a good word because a good word makes the heart glad.

Our guiding passage today is Proverbs 12:25

Proverbs 12:25 anxiety in a person's heart weighs it down, but a good word cheers it up.¹

BODY

The writer of Proverbs tells us that "Anxiety in a person's heart weighs it down," This word translated here as anxiety denotes Worry. It is this "extreme emotional distress caused by fear of losing something vital to life."²

One thing we can all agree on is that we are living in an anxious age. According to 2018 research, 91 percent of GenZ that's people between 8-23 years old — said they had felt physical or emotional symptoms, such as depression or anxiety, associated with stress. And this hits home for me as someone who works with students.

Most people are anxious about making big decisions; many people are afraid of failing, then some are uncertain about the future and are insecure in who they are. In the middle of all this worry in the world, it's easy for us to conclude that worry is only what happens to us, and if that is the only way we define worry, then we will leave ourselves open and prone to more worry. So what is the source of worry? (the first observation we need to make is)

¹ [Christian Standard Bible](#). (2020). (Pr 12:25). Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers.

² Stabnow, D. K. (2017). [Proverbs](#). In E. A. Blum & T. Wax (Eds.), *CSB Study Bible: Notes* (p. 970). Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers.

- **Worry is a condition of the heart before it becomes a response to a situation**

For us to understand this, we have to take it all the way back to the book Genesis. (this is the easiest book of the bible to find btw) Genesis 2:25 tells us ²⁵Both the man and his wife were naked yet felt no shame. ³ Before the fall, Adam and Eve had no fear of the unknown. They lived in a perfect relationship with God; they were not worried. But something changed, look with me Genesis 3:8-10 ⁸ Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. ⁹ So the LORD God called out to the man and said to him, "Where are you? ¹⁰ And he said, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked, so I hid."⁴ What we see here is the beginning of worry and anxiety. Before Adam and Eve listened and trusted the words of the serpent, they were worry-free. They did not realize they were naked; the voice of the Lord did not invoke fear in them. But as soon as they disobeyed the Lord, fear crept in, and they were worried. They trusted the serpent who told them not to trust God, and this brought about fear and worry

³ [Christian Standard Bible](#). (2020). (Ge 2:25). Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers.

⁴ [Christian Standard Bible](#). (2020). (Ge 3:10). Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers.

That's why **Worry is a condition of the heart before it becomes a response to a situation.** Worry is a fruit of our fallen nature, and another way of thinking about this is worry is something that is in us before it is something that happens to us.

(Every peal is an onion, but it's part of the big onion)

Listen again to these words, Proverbs 12:25 **Anxiety in a person's heart weighs it down.** What the writer of proverbs is saying here is simply, worry in someone's heart oppresses him. Anxiety does something to us that affects our behavior, emotions, attitude, approach to life, and even our physical health. We become both physically and mentally oppressed because we are worried. The thing about worry is, it begets more worry. It is a condition that keeps on giving. And there are triggers in life that place us on this roundabout that is worry.

Remember, we defined worry as an "extreme emotional distress caused by fear of losing something vital to life"⁵ The more valuable something is to us, the more we worry about losing it or losing control of it. This could be a job, passing an exam, our children.

Parents, you know your children are pretty much the center of your life, your entire calendar is planned around your children, your decisions are mostly made based on how they will affect your children. We can all agree that we value our children a lot. So, what happens when their health or wellness is threatened?

(Illustration) Within the first 10 minutes of being born, our third child Ezra was placed in the newborn intensive care unit. He could not breathe on his own, and so they had all these machines helping him out. What followed were 9 of the longest days of our lives. I remember looking at our little boy and feeling so helpless "talk about not being in control" there is nothing I could do to fix this situation.

I know you have been there too. You got called into the office and you were told you no longer have a job, you received that call, and someone close to you had passed, or it was your son or daughter who had to be rushed to the hospital, all these situations can lead us into a state of worry which in turn oppresses our hearts and our bodies.

But please listen to me,

Placing our trust in anything temporary triggers worry.

If you place your Hope, security, and sense of peace in anything temporary, including all the wonderful and good gifts from God in our lives you will feed anxiety. If you worry about losing your job, not making that good grade, which might lead to a scholarship, not getting married at the right time, you will be continuously worried because those things and those relationships were not meant to give you ultimate peace and rest, they were meant to point you to the one you should find your Hope and security in.

⁵ Stabnow, D. K. (2017). [Proverbs](#). In E. A. Blum & T. Wax (Eds.), *CSB Study Bible: Notes* (p. 970). Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers.

I know the fear of the unknow and “losing control” triggers worry in us but one pastor says it this way,

"We walk into the future in God-glorifying confidence, not because the future is known to us but because it is known to God. And that's all we need to know." - Kevin DeYoung

And please hear me; I'm not saying you should pretend that the situation is not real. And that the situation is not painful. What I'm saying is don't worry about things you cannot control. And that means don't worry about anything because there is nothing you can control.

(side note) I believe in praying on my way to the hospital. I recognize that there are issues we are struggling with that need special attention from a therapist or licensed professional, and I encourage you to seek help. Our equip ministry would love to help you make those steps. But most of our worry and anxiety is brought on by a misdirected perspective. We let our circumstances, misinformed expectations, and misfortune rob us of the joy and peace that is ours in Christ.

Now with that said, I do believe worry offers us an opportunity. What do I mean by this? Look at the things that trigger worry in your heart, which bring anxiety to your soul; could it be that those are the things, the areas, the trials, and the challenges you haven't fully trusted God with. You are still holding on to them, still trying to control the situation, still trying to figure it out. You tell yourself you can do it all by yourself, listen, rest will only come when you bring that thing to the Lord and leave it with Him because our God is able to do all things and all

things work for the good of those who love him and are called according to his purposes.

Also, God has made it that the church, the people of God walk together hand in hand, encouraging and carrying each other's burdens, so please do not carry the load by yourself; bring it to the people of God and let God work through your brothers and sisters to both encourage you when situations trigger worry in your heart and also offer tangible help with the situations that might trigger worry in your heart.

This is what we have seen about worry

- 1. Worry is a condition of the heart before it becomes a response to a situation**
- 2. Placing our trust in anything temporary triggers worry.**

Now let's look at the second part of this proverb.
Proverbs 12:25

Anxiety in a person's heart weighs it down,
but a good word cheers it up

The good word here suggests speech that effectively offsets the threat that produces anxiety in us. Think of it this way, anxiety knocks us out of commission, but a personal, kind, pleasant, sweet, timely, and thoughtful word restores us with encouragement and Hope.

The last thing you want when you are anxious or worried about something is a word that makes the situation worse or ignores the source of the worry. When we are worried, we need to hear a word that promotes life and creates life, and guess what? That's exactly what other people need from you when they are going through anxiety. For those around us to regain a proper perspective on life, we have to give them this good word that makes the heart glad. Proverbs 15:30 tells us ³⁰ **Bright eyes cheer the heart; good news strengthens the bones**⁶ (The first thing we need to observe about a good word is that)

- **A good word gives us the courage to face every situation.**

Listen to the word's of 2 Corinthians 1:4 ⁴ **He comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any kind of affliction, through the comfort we ourselves receive from God.**⁷ People around us are going through many different difficult situations; depression is on the rise, stress and all the other symptoms of worry are on the rise, and we have an opportunity to breathe life into people's hearts with a good word.

You have gone through somethings in life that were painful and troubling, but the Lord got you through, and you can look back and see his hand in all of it. There is a good word there.

⁶ [Christian Standard Bible](#). (2020). (Pr 15:30). Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers.

(Illustration) One of the major sources of worry for me is our firstborn's (Anaiya) health. She has ulcerative colitis, and she is on some immune suppressant medication. Every time she coughs, I can feel my heart being prone to worry, but I have seen God restore her health from being in the intensive care unit, two colonoscopies before she was five. I can use that to encourage someone going through something like that.

You can encourage someone going through something right now with what God did when you went through your situation. And even if you have never gone through anything as a Christian you know the truth that God loves his creation, he become a man and suffered and so there is a truthful word in His word that you can share with someone to bring gladness into their heart and heal their bones.

Now for us to be able to speak life, we have to be grounded in the life-giving words and promises of God. Our words devoid of God's spirit are but empty words, we speak life because our Lord and Savior speak life over us. This brings me to my last point

- **A good word from God, applied by faith, makes the heart glad**

Because of the reality of sin and our fallen nature, we sometimes respond with fear instead of faith. We think we are in control instead of recognizing God is the one in control. In moments of forgetfulness, we stop trusting in

⁷ [Christian Standard Bible](#). (2020). (2 Co 1:4). Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers.

and relying upon the goodness of God. We stop trusting in the Sovereignty and faithfulness of God. Therefore, we need to hear the good word of the Lord. His word is able to break the bondage of fear and worry. If we hide his word in our hearts then we will be prepared when situations threaten to trigger worry in us. His word is able to shower us with a peace that surpasses all understanding so that when the pressures of this world trigger worry in us, we can find rest and comfort in our Lord and His goodness.

You might be listening to me this morning and you are like Allan, I get it, but my source of worry is not situational, I'm really worried that I'm not in good standing with God. Is this source of anxiety for you? The greatest comfort I have regardless of what I'm going through, the thing that gives every Christian in the world the confidence to face the pressures of life is knowing we belong to God. We are His children. There is nothing in this world that gives me more comfort and confidence than that. Ephesians 1:5 tells us that God **He predestined us to be adopted as sons through Jesus Christ for himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,**⁸

Remember, when we started, we went to Genesis and saw the origin of worry? Listen to what God's word says In Genesis 3:15, **I will put hostility between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring.**¹⁵ **He will strike your head, and you will strike his heel.** After Adam and Eve disobeyed God, and worry and fear

⁸ [Christian Standard Bible](#). (2020). (Eph 1:4–5). Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers.

become part of their reality, the Lord did not just kick them out of the garden without hope; he extended grace by giving them a good word. This verse is often referred to as the first gospel, the first good news. Right here at the beginning of human history, we see God's redemptive purpose. God promised that He would provide a savior to reconcile all humanity to himself.

Your worry is valid, your relationship with God is broken, but hear this good word, Jesus has done everything necessary for you to be reconciled to God. You do not have to work for your salvation. You only need to believe in your heart and confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord, and you will be saved. If you are ready to make that decision or you want to hear more on this please let us know, we would love to walk with you as you take the next steps.

Here is the thing, God's good word is the remedy for anxiety and worry, and we can cast all our burdens and cares on Him because He cares for us.

- **A good word gives us the courage to face every situation.**
- **A good word from God, applied by faith, makes the heart glad**

APPLICATION.

So what should our response be this morning? I have two applications for us. Receive God's good word for you and Speak a good word. And these two have to be in this order because if you do not receive God's good word for you, you will only speak a good word so you can receive it back, and the thing that was supposed to bring you joy and bring a blessing to others will become a source of worry for you.

You know what I'm talking about right, it's like I tell you I like the new shoes hoping you will say to me you like my new shirt. My motivations are wrong, and my words are empty.

1. Receive God's good word.

This world is filled with all kinds of bad news; you only need to watch the news. If we listen to our thoughts and the words of others, we will be constantly worried. We need to listen to the words of our God. Focus on the promises of God and let your heart rest in the faithfulness of the Lord. God takes care of the wild animals; he takes care of the wildflowers; he will surely take care of you. Matthew 6:31-34³¹ So don't worry, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear?'³² For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them.³³ But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be provided for you.³⁴ Therefore don't worry about tomorrow, because tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

He calls you my son and my daughter; you have been adopted into the family of God. He fully knows you and fully loves you. Receive his good word and let it make your heart glad. Receive God's good word and let it cheer your heart. Let it fill you with gladness. Let it help you exit the roundabout of worry and on to the path of life.

2. Speak a good word.

Last week pastor Spence talked to us about the importance of our words, how they have the power of life and death. Every day we have an opportunity to speak life into someone. Students are you posting on social media words that bring life to others; parents, are you uplifting your children with encouraging words, spouses? Let me tell you, even the simple, truthful word of telling your spouse they look beautiful or handsome can really make their heart Glad.

#soulwork This week, I want to challenge you to speak a good word of encouragement to at least three people in your life.

Let your words founded in the truth of God's good word make their hearts glad. Ephesians 4:29 No foul language should come from your mouth, but only what is good for building up someone in need, so that it gives grace to those who hear. So as you speak good words to encourage three people this week, remember these words have to be founded in the truth of God's words, I'm not asking you to be nice, I know you are already nice, I'm asking that you speak gracious words that will build up those around you and make their hearts glad regardless of what they are going through. Pray.