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Heavenly Father, I ask now that you please speak to the hearts of my brothers and sisters here. Please fill each and every one of them with your truth, fresh revelation of your truth. Please kill anything in me that is going to get in the way of what you want them to hear today. Let me be a backdrop for you, God. Good morning. I'm going to continue talking about little foxes because I keep finding them in my own life and I'm going to keep talking about them until I can't find any more. If any of you are new or guests, what we're talking about is there's a verse in Song of Songs that says, "Catch for us the little foxes, the little foxes that spoil the vines." The vines are a place of fruitfulness and so we are catching and dealing with the little things that spoil our fruitfulness. I can't believe I went back and listened to how many and we've been doing this for like this is the sixth week. I'm like, "Wow." But we've talked about gossip and we've talked about pride. We've talked about prayerlessness and selfishness. And then this week, we had open worship last week. That's why you only counted four. This week we're going to talk about worry. Worry is to cause yourself anguish by dwelling on possible future hurts or losses. We all know what worry is. Worry can be about something real or something imagined. For example, when I pull out of my apartment complex, I look both ways because I live on Alsondale Road and there's a lot of traffic and you don't pull out without looking. That's a very real thing to worry about. Imagining worry was when I was a little boy and I would walk around the edge of a pool before I got in to see if there were any sharks. That was imagined. Worry can also be about something we have control over or it can be something we don't have control over. You could be worrying about whether you left the oven on back home and that's something that you may have done and you may need to go back and flip it off. Some of you are now worrying about whether you left the oven on. But we can also worry about things we don't have control over like whether an asteroid is going to crash into the earth. I'm pretty sure I wrote that before this news this week. I thought that was kind of funny. I told my mom that I was going to be speaking on worry and she said, "There was this guy named Bishop Fulton Sheen." Some of you are nodding your heads. I had to look him up because I was two months old when he died. She said that he had a very famous quote that she always remembered. He said, "All worry is atheism because it is want of trust of God." All worry is atheism because it is want of trust of God. Let's go to the Bible and read what it says about worry. First verse you probably guess if you're a regular Bible reader is going to be out of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 6 verses 24 to 34. "No one can serve two masters, for he will hate one and love the other or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon, meaning the personification of wealth. Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow. They neither toil nor spin, and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not a raid like one of these. Now if God so clothes the grass of the field which today is and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying what shall we eat or what shall we drink or what shall we wear. For after all these things the Gentiles seek, for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sleep for the day is its own trouble. Couple things to talk about in that verse. First of all most people start reading about worry. In fact probably there's a little heading down around verse 25 or 26 starting with "therefore I say to you do not worry." But I started back at verse 24 because when Jesus starts talking about worry the first thing he starts saying is so many of you people are chasing after money and you can't chase after money and chase after God. And then he says therefore do not worry about your life. But what he's trying to tell the people there is you are God's children and God will take care of you like his little children and your children may not have every luxury that you want to give them but they have food and they have clothing and they have what's necessary for life. And Jesus is saying God is going to take care of the things you need for life. Don't worry about that. He says instead the thing you should be focusing on is seek first the kingdom and of God and his righteousness. The kingdom of God is when God's order and his way of doing things is established in our lives and around us. Some people read that as seek first the kingdom of God means seek first your salvation. And I mean there's probably some truth to that but I think that actually applies more to the second part and his righteousness. You should be seeking to live a righteous life that's a good thing. But I believe based on the other references in the Bible where he says the kingdom of God and how the kingdom of God is among you uses this phrase the kingdom of God is among you. What he's saying is seek God's way of doing things in our lives here and today. So Jesus says don't worry about the little things about eating and drinking and what you're going to wear. Seek your focus righteousness and establishing the kingdom of God in this world. In other words your life should be a scramble to build God's kingdom not your own kingdom. The second verse we're going to read about worry is Matthew chapter 10 verses 16 through 20. Behold I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves therefore be wise as serpents and harmless as doves but beware of men for they will deliver you up to councils and scourge you in their synagogues. You will be brought before governors and kings for my sake as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles. But when they deliver you up do not worry about how or what you should speak for it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak for it is not you who speak but the spirit of your father who speaks in you. So from this verse we learn that I think a lot of times in Christianity we preachers have a tendency to give this message that says your life is miserable you need to come find Jesus and then your life will be great and that is not in the Bible at all. Jesus says you don't have to worry about what you're going to eat or what you're going to drink but if you can trust him when he says that then you also need to trust him that says they will deliver you up to councils and scourge you in their synagogues you will be brought before governors and kings for my sake. We don't need to worry in those situations but we also don't need to lie to ourselves and say that those situations aren't going to exist. There was a poem when I was in Japan that they had put up on the wall and it said God never promised us life without pain joy without tears or sun without rain but he did promise us strength for the day comfort for tears and light for the way. God Jesus did not say that your life was going to be charmed or wonderful or beautiful when you became a Christian but he did say I will never leave you or forsake you and that's why in your bulletins I put a list of promises and I encourage you to tape those up somewhere and just every time you walk past like on the bathroom mirror or something and just remind yourself of some of the true promises of God. You're not going to find on that list everything's going to be sun shining roses and gumdrops but you are going to find I will never leave you or forsake you. So the bad times will come but Jesus will be there with you. I have a few more verses to read to that end. This is also from the Sermon on the Mount. Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for my sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad for great is your reward in heaven for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you. And then in John 15 Jesus says if the world hates you you know that it hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world the world would love its own yet because you are not of the world but I chose you out of the world therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you a servant is not greater than his master. If they persecuted me they will also persecute you. If they kept my word they will keep yours also but all these things they will do to you for my name's sake because they do not know him who sent me. So hang on to the good and true promises not that the troubles won't come but that God will see you through them. If you are struggling with worry this probably means one of three things. Number one you have not dealt with it in prayer. So the first thing is you need to start praying. If you've prayed and you're still worrying then the second problem is probably that you don't believe that your prayers will be answered and that means you've been offering up worthless prayers. You need to start offering up prayers that come from a heart that believes that God hears and answers. And then finally the third thing that might be causing you to continue to worry is that you think God doesn't love you or doesn't care and you need to get into the scripture and start reading the truth that says I will never leave you or forsake you. One final little point I want to make before I close is that Jesus promised that if we are following in his footsteps that there will be suffering and persecution and if you're not experiencing that I would honestly hope that during this week you say a prayer and say God reveal to me why I am not being persecuted for your name's sake. A lot of that for me personally is that I have a hard time opening my mouth in the situations where I need to speak but it may be that for me, maybe that for you, maybe different, I don't know. But if you're not living in that promise, if your life really is all sunshine and roses and there's nothing difficult about being a Christian for you, you need to say a prayer about that and ask God to reveal. It doesn't mean that your life is going to be miserable. Let me be clear about this. You can still have joy in the midst of your trials. The trials will still be difficult. There will still be tears but there will be strength and joy in your heart from the Spirit of God. But if you're not suffering that persecution then really spend some time in prayer and saying God why am I not seeing this? Why am I not apparently following in your footsteps? So pray, have faith, pray the prayer of faith and don't worry. Let's pray. Heavenly Father we thank you that someday we will be saved from this world and we will be brought to a place that is wonderful and beautiful and happy forever. But we know that we are not in that place just yet. We ask that while we are left here in this world that as we go through those trials and those difficulties that you will please speak to our hearts, remind us of the truth that you were there with us, give us the strength and the comfort to face those storms and those difficult times, take away our worry, put in our hearts the faith that is necessary to overcome those worries, help us to trust in you and to walk with you and show us the place where you are leading us. Pray in Jesus name, Amen. [BLANK\_AUDIO]