

# TEN THINGS

## JESUS “WORRIED” ABOUT



Learn to share *His* deepest concerns.

Commit to living out *His* kingdom priorities.

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## Introduction

I am very well aware that Jesus commands us:

*“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.”*

So, worry must be a sin, right? Surely Jesus did not “worry” about anything, otherwise he could not be sinless. Well, I agree, in the sense that Jesus never suffered from a lack of faith, or a lack of complete trust in God. But even the most casual reading of the gospels will reveal to you that there were some deep concerns on the heart and mind of Jesus. Apparently he spoke about them often, preaching, and even praying about them repeatedly. These concerns, “worries” if you will, were not evidences of a lack of faith—they were fueled by faith.

That fact is very interesting. Deep concerns about the *right* things must not qualify as sinful worry. The distinction can't be just semantics. Jesus cares more about theology than he does terminology. Yes, Jesus clearly has identified some questions that he does not want to constantly plague our hearts and minds (*'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'*). But it is not our vocabulary that Jesus wants to censor. He wants to edit, even correct, our worries.

Notice that Jesus' command, “Do not worry about your life,” is really about choosing a god to serve. It was preceded with the assertion:

*“No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.”*

Godless people, materialistic people, worry about all the wrong things—and fail to be concerned about all the right things. Well, can a believer quit worrying (about all the wrong things), but still fail to adopt deep concern about all right things? It is a common

approach, but Jesus contends that it is a fool's game—and God is not the fool! Authentic devotion to God demands attention toward God. Unless one adopts a care about God and His kingdom, then there remains a material god that continually captures the concern and devotion of that person. As far as Jesus is concerned, no one can worry after two masters.

There are some issues that Jesus would have us to cultivate and maintain a healthy concern about. There are some *right* things to “worry” about. If I quit worrying about food, shelter and clothing, but demonstrate no real concern for the kingdom, have I really freed myself from the sin of worry? I continue in sin by failing to “worry” about all the *right* things. If we swap worry for apathy, we have missed the point, and are only kidding ourselves. We are not kidding God. Apathy toward the kingdom of God and his righteousness demonstrates continued devotion to another god.

Jesus is teaching that we actually serve God by possessing some ongoing concerns. There were indeed some matters that disquieted the Savior. He spoke out about them to his disciples, preached about them to the masses, and prayed about them to God the Father. These concerns remained with him throughout his life. He wanted his disciples to share them as well. That is what this study is really all about. What concerns does Jesus want us share with him?

Let's see how the deepest concerns of Jesus are exemplified in multiple episodes of Jesus' works, his preaching and his praying. Of course he didn't “worry” about these things in the sense that he lacked faith and trust in God over them, but there is no question about it, he was never apathetic about these things, nor did he want any of his disciples to be.

We will see in this study that Jesus often offered alternative concerns that he wanted his disciples to share with him (rather than sharing the world's concerns, the “*worries of this life*”). For instance, watch Jesus attempt to steer people toward healthy fear and concern in Luke 12:

*"I tell you, my friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body and after that can do no more. But I will show*

*you whom you should fear: Fear him who, after the killing of the body, has power to throw you into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him.”*

The One who so often commands, “Fear not...,” is here telling us to be greatly afraid. Of course he is saying, “Don’t fear men. Fear God.” In the key text we started with in this introduction (from the Sermon on the Mount) Jesus says, “*Do not worry... But seek first....*” He is not only condemning *worry*; he is commanding disciples to *seek*, to be concerned about something else. Yes, he does not want me to constantly *worry* about food, shelter and clothing, but he does want me to constantly *seek* the kingdom of God and his righteousness. Jesus demands that his disciples exchange one set of disquieting questions for a set of better ones. How would you articulate the right questions that ought to repeatedly come to our minds as we continually seek God, his kingdom and his righteousness?

This study endeavors to get us started on a quest to identify the *right* concerns by looking into the sermons and the prayers of Jesus. As well as looking at Jesus, we can also contemplate how a possession of his deep concerns might be fleshed out in our own behavior and speech before God and man.

Jesus invites all of us:

*“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. **Take my yoke upon you and learn from me**, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”*

Let’s consider what it might mean to truly take his yoke upon ourselves—to exchange our heavy burdens for the ease of sharing his. Let’s attempt to learn together from him what it’s like to possess the right deep concerns, and at the same time possess his peace, the peace that passes all understanding.

- Do we really share Jesus’ greatest interests? His priorities?
- Do we, as disciples, operate out of the same motivations and overriding concerns that Jesus did?

- Do we, as a church, preach and pray for the things he did?  
Do we emphasize what he did?

When it was all said and done, it was obvious what really mattered to Jesus. What really matters to us? Who, or what, are we worrying after?

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