

butterfly box

presents

Overcoming Worry

A 7-DAY DEVOTIONAL

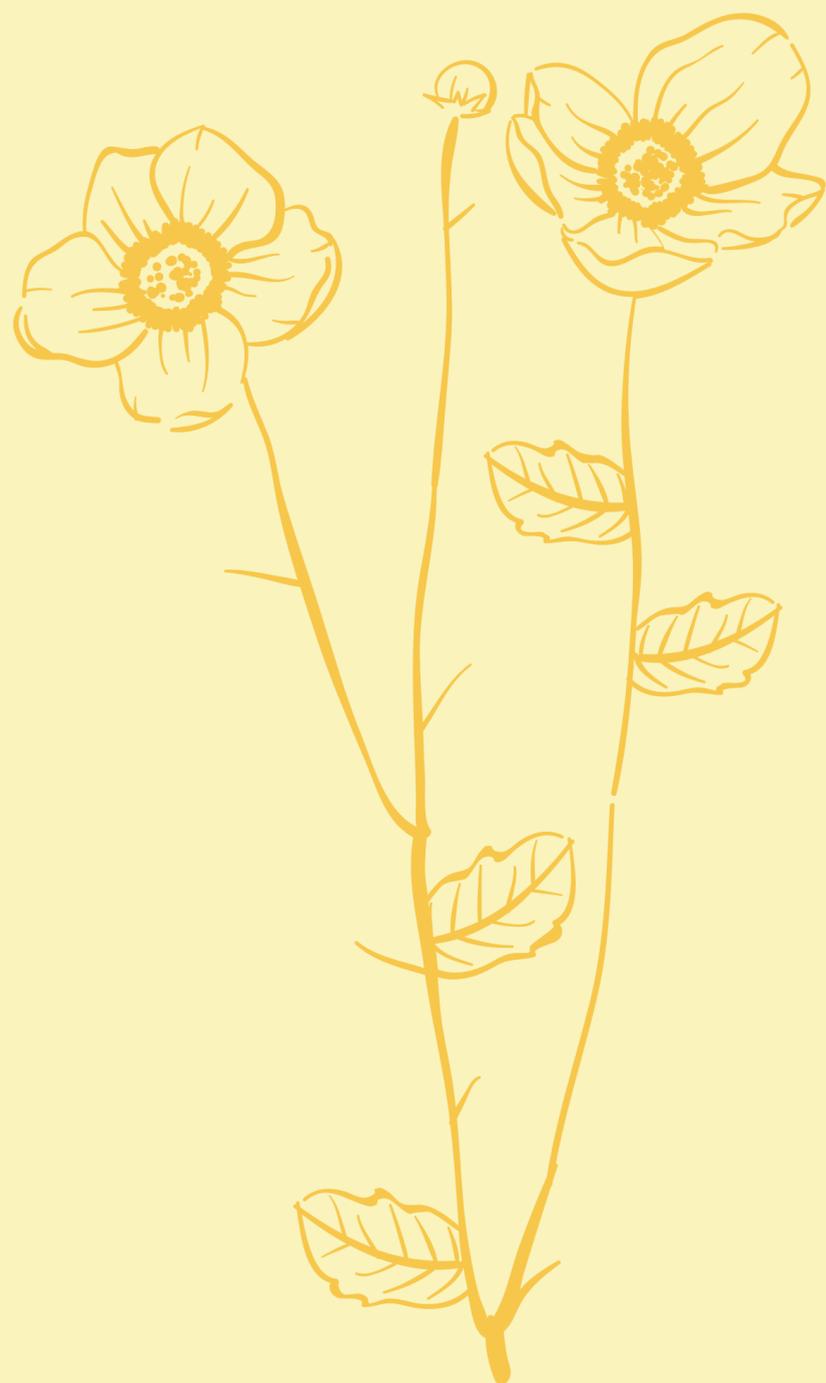


Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

John 14:27

You keep him in perfect peace those whose mind is
stayed on You, because he trusts in You.

Isaiah 26:3



Introduction

What Worrying Does?

Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to your life? Since you cannot do this very little thing, why do you worry about the rest? (Luke 12:25-26)

You can be sitting in the same place for hours yet your mind runs and is thinking all the different scenarios—from bad to worse, until you are physically and mentally tired...this is what worrying does. Worrying affects you mentally, physically, emotionally and spiritually and yet it accomplishes nothing. After hours or even days of worrying you are still in the same situation you started in with nothing resolved. And what's worse than that is the hopeless feelings it leaves you with!

Not only does worrying not add a single minute to your life, it shortens your life, as many studies have shown. It increases your heart rate, blood pressure and lowers your immune system, just to name a few things. Worry also leads to alcohol, drug abuse and many other harmful habits and addictions as a means to numb the negative and often terrifying feelings it causes. There is absolutely no benefit to worrying and yet, many of us remain stuck in the stronghold of this never-ending cycle!

I know this first hand because I am an expert at worrying. I have worried myself sick more times than I will ever admit. I have caused myself so many sleepless nights, lived out the most tragic scenarios in my mind (which, by the way, triggers an incredibly negative chemical response in the human body), I've lost precious moments with my family being mentally absent so I can sit in the presence of worry! This is one thing that if you suffer from as well, I can completely empathize with. Please know that you are not alone, but that Jesus wants to set you free!

Worry is allowing the enemy to continually feed our minds with lies while ignoring God's promises. How do I know this? Because His Word tells us over and over, "DO NOT FEAR." And yet, we do. But through the washing of our minds with His word, we can become warriors instead of worriers!

Worrying gives no solution to our problems while robbing us of our peace...that is reason enough to defeat it! In the next seven days, we will fill ourselves with God's truth and assurance and I pray that it will help you to get your eyes off your worries and onto Jesus.

Day 1

Pray about it.

With everything that's currently happening around the world, it is normal to have a lot of worries right now. There are so many things we are all faced with because of the pandemic; the uncertainties of what's going to happen next, businesses that are closing, jobs that are being affected, constant fear because of the virus, not to mention our normal daily concerns and personal battles.

You see, the world is in chaos right now and it is affecting all of us one way or another. In this devotional, it is my prayer that while the world is begging you to worry, you can have the peace of God that transcends all understanding-- just as He has promised. So let's look at how His peace can be yours!

"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." (John 16:33)

Jesus tells us we will have trouble in this world and troubles can trigger worry, but Paul tells us what we can do about that in the verses below.

Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done.

Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:6-7)

As we can see in this passage, the antidote for worry is prayer and the result is the peace of God. God wants you to lay all of your worries before Him but to do this you must confess them to Him through *prayer*.

As part of this process it is important that you also thank Him for all that He has done. Through expressing gratitude we can be reminded of all God has been faithful to do for us and we can begin to shift our thinking from worry to thankfulness.

If you are thinking that your worries, needs and concerns are insignificant to God, be reassured that whatever concerns you, concerns Him!

Anything that takes away your peace is something you must be diligent in talking to God about. Through this time of prayer with God, you are in His presence, acknowledging His power, realizing His sovereignty and these are the very things that will help you overcome your worries.

Let's get personal

- *Be very specific about the things that are worrying you right now and make a list of each one of those things, no matter how small.*
- *Write down all of the things you have to be thankful for.*
- *Pray for each one of those things.*
- *Find a passage in God's Word that brings you peace and recite it to yourself every time you are tempted to worry today. There is power in God's word to demolish your fears!*

Day 2

Fix your eyes on Jesus.

When we're worried or afraid, it's very easy for our focus to stray from Jesus. This is not new to Jesus, as we can see in the passage below.

"Then He got into the boat and His disciples followed him. Suddenly a furious storm came up on the lake, so that the waves swept over the boat. But Jesus was sleeping. The disciples went and woke Him, saying, 'Lord, save us! We're going to drown!' He replied, 'You of little faith, why are you so afraid?' Then He got up and rebuked the winds and the waves, and it was completely calm." (Matthew 8:23-26)

As you can see, the disciples were in the boat with Jesus but when the storm threatened their safety, they responded in fear-- forgetting Who was with them. In the prior verses, Jesus was healing people and performing miracle after miracle so it wasn't as if the disciples didn't know Jesus' power...and yet they were still afraid. Oftentimes, we are exactly like that. A problem, or a storm, can easily take our focus from Jesus. We become consumed with worry, thinking Jesus will just allow us to drown. Like the disciples, we miss the very fact that Jesus AND HIS POWER are ALWAYS with us. As He did with the disciples, Jesus will calm our storms, we just need faith and

determination to keep our eyes on Him and Him alone...not the waves. No matter how furious the storm is, Jesus has power over it! Have you ever noticed that it is impossible to keep our focus on two things at the same time? Imagine there are two people standing before you and suddenly they both walk in a different direction.

Can you focus on them both at the same time? No, it's impossible! We must *CHOOSE* what we are going to focus on! We can focus on Jesus and let Him smooth the storm. OR we can focus on all the little (and big) things that worry us. We cannot do both. Today, *let's choose to focus on Jesus!*

To fix your eyes on Jesus, you have to spend time getting to know Him. *"But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you."* (Matthew 6:33)

He promised that all the things that you need (not want) will be given to you but you have to put Him above all else. When your eyes are so focused on Him, He will remind you that He is in control of the surrounding waves in your life. You will know that He loves you and He is with you no matter what you are going through. Of course, all of those things are easier said than done, but know that you have a Helper-- the Holy Spirit, to empower you and to remind you of all that God has promised.

Let's get personal

- *Do activities that keep your focus on God-- read the Bible, listen to some worship songs, read books about God and spend time praying.*
- *Take time to write down all of the instances when God showed you His power and declare that He will do it again for you.*
- *Offer your praise and gratitude to Him for those times that He sustained you. Worship and worry cannot coexist so let's choose WORSHIP!*

Day 3

*Know that His grace and provision are
sufficient every day*

There's nothing wrong with thinking about the future. It is not wrong to plan and to work hard, but oftentimes, it can trigger worry in us. When we think about things like our goals, aspirations, families, finances, jobs, retirement, health and all of the uncertainties around them, our planning can quickly turn to fretting and trying to control things that were not meant for us to control.

God's Word says, *"Do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."* (Matthew 6:34)

God wants to meet us and our needs daily. When Jesus teaches us how to pray, He says, *"Give us this day our daily bread..."*, this is because He does not want us looking past today and worrying over our needs. Jesus knows our propensity to worry about what is ahead and He does not want our minds stuck in that place. This is why He commanded us not to worry about tomorrow, because He'll be there to meet us and all of our needs.

It's time to get off the treadmill of worry that has us going nowhere except toward physical and mental exhaustion!

Rest and trust in His promises that offer us peace in the midst of our daily lives, even when the future is uncertain because Someone who is all knowing and all powerful is guiding us through.

Just as His mercies are new every morning, so shall His grace be sufficient every day.

"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." (John 15:5)

Here's the truth! As long as you keep yourself connected to Him and are living in obedience to His will, then there's nothing you should be worrying about. He promised that if you do this, you'll live a fruitful life. So, live today abundantly and trust Him fully. Acknowledge His presence today and know that you can fully depend on Him. Life is hard enough. Don't live carrying all of its burdens alone-- go to Him. He said that *His yoke is easy, and His burden is light.*

Whatever it is that's worrying you, know that His grace is sufficient to see you through it. It might be hard but never operate according to your own strength; use His. He said His power is made perfect in our weakness, so don't be afraid to be weak.

Go to Him as His child and know that He is your Father who loves to give you good things. You don't need to beg or plead.

It is His own good pleasure to provide for you!

“If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!” (Matthew 7:11)

Let's get personal

- *What future plans trigger worry in you today?*
- *List areas that you need God's instructions so you go with these plans.*
- *Meditate on this verse today; “I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my loving eye on you.” (Psalm 32:8)*

Day 4

Know that God is your Shepherd

The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing; He makes me lie down in green pastures, He leads me beside quiet waters, He refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for His name's sake." (Psalm 23:1-3)

You are probably already familiar with this Psalm, but isn't it great to revisit it? Let's take a deeper look at it today and ask God to reveal more of Him through these passages.

This psalm was written by David who was a shepherd himself, so when he wrote it, he knew what hard work it would require for a shepherd to take care of a sheep. Being a shepherd would require working day and night because the flocks require non-stop care and guidance.

God is a good Shepherd who personally and diligently takes care of us.

David said "... I lack nothing," but this doesn't always mean material gain and life without hardship. Seeing David's life, we know that he experienced more trials than most of us have or will ever experience, yet with contentment, he was able to say that he lacked nothing. This wasn't because he had it all and everything was going well, it was because God was his Shepherd.

Resting in His care

Seeing what's happening around us, we sometimes try to gain control of things, we are restless, striving to gain peace and security on our own.

This causes us a lot of stress and unnecessary worry. Today, I pray that you will see yourself as His sheep and Him as your Shepherd.

The Shepherd provides for His sheep, He guides and does all the work for them, they simply need to stay close to the Shepherd. Sheep are never worried about where the green pasture is or where the quiet waters are, because they are totally dependent on their Shepherd, knowing that He has gone ahead and prepared for every need.

In the same way, He is always with you and is taking diligent care for you.

"For the LORD God is a sun and shield; the LORD bestows favor and honor; no good thing does he withhold from those whose walk is blameless." (Psalm 84:11)

Let's get personal

- *Do you believe that God is your good Shepherd?*
- *Take time to sit and imagine Him as your Shepherd, going before you and preparing for each and every need you have. Allow His peace to wash over you.*
- *Write down all the many ways the Lord has cared for each of your needs, especially when you couldn't have done it on your own. Offer these instances as praises to Him and reminders to yourself of His faithfulness to care for you.*

Day 5

*You are His child and His plans for
you are GOOD*

In overcoming your worries, it is so important that we know our right standing before God. The moment we accept Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior and we start trusting Him for our salvation, not our good works, we automatically become children of God.

"Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God." (John 1:12) And as children of God, Romans 8:28 becomes yours to claim, "For we know that in ALL things, God works for the good of those who love Him and who are called according to His purpose."

Personally, these truths have brought me so much security in my relationship with Jesus. I always remind myself that He is my Father who will always be with me and has a good plan for my life. When you know that you have the King of kings as your Father and you live as His child, you can be assured that there is nothing to worry about.

You see, the enemy will always try to steal our joy and peace. He wants us to live as if we have a Father whose power is limitless. But we can defeat that lie by understanding that our Father in Heaven has a plan for our lives.

Though the enemy's plan is to kill, steal and destroy, God's plan is that we would have an abundant life. We see this in verses like Jeremiah 29:11 that says, *"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."* We need not be slaves to worries and fears, we are His children and we can trust His plan.

This doesn't mean we will not face hardships, but that He promises to use our hardships for good. God promises that He will work ALL things for the good of those who love Him and who are called according to His purpose. It is these promises that we can cling to when we worry over the unknown because our loving Father wants good for us more than we do.

Run to your Father

"God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore, we will not fear, though the earth gave way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging." (Psalm 46:1-3)

Run to Him for refuge and strength. When everything seems to be falling apart, know that you can go to Him as you are and allow Him to give you the strength that you need to get through. He is the Rock higher than every worry, concern or need that you have. It's so helpful for me to remember His heart toward me as a Father, which is revealed in the passages below.

"If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!" (Matthew 7:11)

"And do not set your heart on what you will eat or drink; do not worry about it. For the pagan world runs after all such things, and your Father knows that you need them." (Luke 12:29-30)

If earthly fathers love to take care of their children's needs, how much more will the God of Heaven who gave His only Son for us, grace us with His good gifts!

He is the most loving, gracious and perfect Father. We can tell Him everything and know that He loves to listen and respond to us with His perfect plan.

Let's get personal

- *If you are a child of God, then you can be certain that He will provide for you. Have you gone into His presence today to tell Him what you need? Even though He already knows our needs He still wants us to bring them to Him in prayer, surrendering our wants for His ways, exchanging our fears for His peace and putting our trust in Him each day. ·*
- *Confess any areas that you have not trusted that God's plans for you are good and have tried to take over the outcome for yourself.*

Day 6

Humble yourself before God

To humble yourself before God means admitting that you can't do life on your own. It's surrendering your independence for dependence on Him, acknowledging that you need help and that you don't have all the answers. It is ultimately laying down everything at Jesus' feet and giving Him the authority to take over. What a great way to release worry and embrace peace!

"Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that He may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you." (1 Peter 5:6-7)

The word "cast" that Peter used in this verse is the act of throwing. Just as Peter cast (or threw) the net when he is fishing, we must cast our needs upon Him to fulfill. We can't do that unless we humble ourselves and release our grip from what we are holding onto so tightly. Pride will tell us that we can fix things on our own, that we don't need help, or that we will look weak if we ask for prayer or support. But humility causes us to accept that we need help, then ask the Lord to intercede.

Worrying will weigh you down but God is there and willing to take those worries from you, all you need to do is ask Him!

You see, God gave us the gift of choice, that is free will! It means that though He loves us so much, He is still giving you the right to choose Him and His peace or reject it. You can choose to carry those burdens, or you can lay them all down and surrender them to Him.

TRUST is key!

You cannot give it to God unless you trust that He will act. You may be in the most uncertain situation right now, or you may be struggling to see what you should do next...perhaps you are even praying for a miracle. I pray that whatever it is that's weighing you down, you'll have the faith to surrender it. God is good, He is faithful, and He loves you-- trust who He says He is.

The same God who made a way for the Israelites when they were at the dead end of the Red Sea is the same faithful God who will make a way for you today. His character doesn't change, His heart towards you is the same as it was for the Israelites.

Will you trust Him with your whole heart?

Let's get personal

- *Are there areas in your life that you need to surrender? What worries do you need to continue to surrender? What future plans do you need to release the reigns of control on and surrender?*
- *Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal it to you and give you the grace to lay these things and the foot of the cross and LEAVE THEM THERE allowing Him to work and be glorified.*

Day 7

His Name is Peace

Jehovah Shalom is one of the many names of God in the Bible. It was revealed when God called Gideon to save the Israelites from the Midianites after the Lord heard their cries about the oppression that they were experiencing.

God called Gideon, but since Gideon was an unlikely warrior, he asked for a sign that it was actually God speaking to him. Gideon was just a small boy who did not believe he was capable of doing what God called him to do. Gideon was considered the least in his family and his clan was the weakest among the Manasseh (*Judges 6:15*). God did indeed reveal Himself to Gideon through an angel of the Lord and that same night God asked Gideon to tear down an altar created for Baal, a false god of the land, and create a new altar for God and call it Jehovah Shalom.

"Then Gideon built an altar there unto the LORD and called it Jehovah Shalom." (Judges 6:24)

This is significant because whenever God declared His name, it meant that He was revealing His attributes or His character. In those dark times for the Israelites, He revealed Himself as "their Peace," and since God's character doesn't change, He is still our God of Peace today.

This is important for us to know because in the midst of whatever trials or worries we are facing God wants us to call upon Him and He wants to reveal Himself to us as *Jehovah Shalom*.

Maybe you have been battling with worries, anxiety and fears, but let me tell you this, God understands whatever you have been going through, He knows you are having a hard time, He knows what you need to let go of and He is there to help you do that. You have the power to rise above any chaos, challenge or trial and have complete peace because your Jehovah Shalom, is beside you, behind you, He goes before you and lives in you!

Whatever is causing you worry and taking away your peace, be encouraged that you are not fighting for victory, you are fighting as a recipient of victory. It's already yours...just claim it!

Because of what Jesus did on the cross, you are already declared victorious, blessed, favored and loved. Every time life gets overwhelming, see to it that you fix your eyes on all that you have learned in the last seven days.

This doesn't mean that you have to suppress your emotions or pretend there aren't real circumstances surrounding you. You can acknowledge that those emotions are valid and the battles are real then fix your eyes on Jesus, not the waves splashing around you.

It is resting in the boat that is being tossed about by the storm and knowing with all confidence that Jesus will calm your storm in His time...He just asks you to have faith in Him.

Peace isn't the absence of chaos, but it is the presence of God.

Let's get personal

- *In this season of your life, do you know that God wants to reveal His character to you the same way He did to Gideon? You may feel insecure like Gideon but do not be afraid to ask God for the favor and for Him to increase your faith.*
- *In what areas do you feel ill-equipped? Ask God for His favor today. He wants to meet you right where you're at and equip you for whatever He allows to touch your life.*

Let's recap what we learned:

- 1.) You can take your worries to God in PRAYER.
- 2.) Keep your FOCUS on Jesus.
- 3.) His GRACE and PROVISION are there for you daily.
- 4.) He is your SHEPHERD who continually GUIDES you.
- 5.) You have a DAD with GREAT PLANS for your life.
- 6.) You must remain HUMBLE and SURRENDERED.
- 7.) He is your God of PEACE!



I want to personally thank you for spending the last 7 days with me in God's Word, acknowledging areas of worry, getting to know God's character more deeply and surrendering your worries and fears to Him. It has been an honor to share in this area that deeply affects so many women, including myself.

If you would like ongoing encouragement from Butterfly Box, please follow us on Facebook and Instagram or sign up for our subscription boxes that are curated with monthly reminders to keep you in God's Word and focused on Him.



<https://www.yourbutterflybox.com/>



www.facebook.com/YourButterflyBox/



[@yourbutterflybox](https://www.instagram.com/yourbutterflybox)