

Living well through Advent

Week Two

Tuesday 6 December 2022

Letting Go of Worry

Can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? ... Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; ... If God so clothes the grass of the field, ... will he not much more clothe youyou of little faith?

Matthew 6:27-3

It is worth noting that the word worry is derived from the 14th-century German word for strangle. Closely related to worry is anxiety, which comes from the root word that means to constrict. Worry constricts, perhaps even strangles, our ability to practice simplicity. And worry definitely robs us of living fully in the present moment.

Jesus is making the same point when he asks if any of us can add a single hour to our lifespan by worrying. Research shows just the opposite; the stress from chronic worry and anxiety can shorten our lives. It is best to start with small, simple steps to loosen the hold that worry can have on us. Here is one idea of how to proceed. Name one specific concern you would like to let go of right now. As often as possible, speak this desire to yourself while visualizing what life will look like once you let go of this particular worry.

Some people find it helpful to write down their worries as a way to release them. Try giving your worry to God in prayer. If you find yourself taking the concern back, that's okay; just let go and give it to God again—as many times as you need. Acting our way into a new way of feeling is sometimes the best way to create a change we desire. And finally, notice if, over time, you experience a little more peace and simplicity as you let go of your specific worry.

Making It Personal:

- ◆ Were you able to name a specific worry that you want to release?
- ◆ Did speaking, visualizing, and/or writing about letting go of this worry ease its burden?
- ◆ Do you see a connection between simplicity and letting go of this worry?

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