

Greetings to all the Saints at Manatee Life,

**SCRIPTURE:**

Matthew 6:25 (MSG) – larger reading, Matthew 6:25-34

*If you decide for God, living a life of God-worship, it follows that you don't fuss about what's on the table at mealtimes or whether the clothes in your closet are in fashion. There is far more to your life than the food you put in your stomach, more to your outer appearance than the clothes you hang on your body.*

**STORY:**

Connie Mack was one of the greatest managers in the history of baseball. One of the secrets of his success was that he knew how to lead and inspire men. He knew that people were individuals. Once, when his team had clinched the pennant well before the season ended, he gave his two best pitchers the last ten days off so that they could rest up for the World Series. One pitcher spent his ten days off at the ballpark; the other went fishing. Both performed brilliantly in the World Series. Mack never criticized a player in front of anyone else. He learned to wait 24 hours before discussing mistakes with players. Otherwise, he said, he dealt with the goofs too emotionally.

In the first three years as a major league baseball manager, Connie Mack's teams finished sixth, seventh, and eighth. He took the blame and demoted himself to the minor leagues to give himself time to learn how to handle men. When he came back to the major leagues again, he handled his players so successfully that he developed the best teams the world had ever known up to that time.

Mack had another secret of good management: he didn't worry. "I discovered," he explained, "that worry was threatening to wreck my career as a baseball manager. I saw how foolish it was and I forced myself to get so busy preparing to win games that I had no time left to worry over the ones that were already lost. You can't grind grain with water that has already gone down the creek."

**REFLECTION:**

Not sure who said it, but it is one of favorite quotes: "*Worry Is Like Interest Paid In Advance On A Debt That Never Comes Due.*" And there it is in a nutshell ... why worry about something that we cannot do anything about?

But here we are allowing worry to consume our energy, our brilliant minds, our spirit, our time, our present and future – in other words, everything that we are or ever hope to be.

Not sure where it falls on the top 10 list of emotional and psychological issues that destroys our being, but my guess it is near the top. Usually when this subject is included in a sermon someone will respond with, "Preacher, you are preaching to the choir."

We all know that we shouldn't worry, but we do. We all know that our trust for today and tomorrow should be placed with God, but we still hold back a little for ourselves to

carry around. We all know that worry can destroy our trusting relationship with God, but there it still remains anyway. We know what we should be doing and how we should be living, but at every turn in our life we confront the reality of the worry which consumes us.

Does this mean that we don't trust God? Not really. Does this mean that our faith isn't strong enough? Probably not. Does this mean that our faith is weak? Well, maybe. As the old farmer once prayed, "Well, God it's just me, old Joe, again. I hate to bother you with my problems because you are so busy running the world and all, but I cannot get my mind off of this particular problem. I would really appreciate you taking care of it for me. I'll try to take care of all my other problems if-in you take care this biggin for me. Thanks. Well, that is all. I be talkin' with you soon."

Maybe old Joe is correct ... we just don't want to bother God with our problems. But maybe old Joe's wife, Sally, has a better approach. She has a worry box on which she has written "Wednesday" which is her "worry day". Whenever something that comes up on which she feels she needs to worry she just writes it down on a slip of paper and places it in her worry box to be dealt with on Wednesday. When Wednesday rolls around. She sits down with her Bible and pours out all of those slips of paper. Much to her surprise most of them have already been answered and those that were not she just places them back in her Worry Box until next Wednesday.

**QUOTE:**

*"If you want to be happy, do not dwell in the past, do not worry about the future, focus on living fully in the present."* – Roy T. Bennett

**PRAYER:**

Yes Lord, it is just us again with the same list of worries that we shared with you yesterday and the day before that and the day before that. We're still carrying them around even though we asked you to do something about them. We don't mean to say that we don't trust you and all, but the burden of life just weighs us down. Please free our spirit from these burdens so that we can begin to live like you want us to live. O.K.? O.K.!

And the faith journey continues, Pastor Jim  
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***See you in worship.***