

A Topical Study Example: Worry and Anxiety

Written by Bob Stone

To illustrate what such a **Topical Study** might yield, this outline will give the results of a rather extensive topical study on worry and anxiety that has actually been turned into a sermon. It will give you a good idea of how a study can look when it is complete, and reading through it might also give you some wisdom about the problem of worry and anxiety.

Anxiety and Worry

We may need to offer healing counsel to help relieve anxiety and worry - Matt. 6:31; 13:22; Luke 10:41; 12:11,22,25,26; 21:34; 1 Cor. 7:32,33,34; II Cor. 2:4; 11:28; Phil. 2:20; 4:6; I Pet. 5:7; Ps. 94:19; Prov. 12:25; Eccl. 2:22-23; 11:10.

1. **What do anxiety and worry mean?** Both words translated from the same Greek word.

Some have differentiated the words as follows:

a. **Anxiety** is a feeling of dread, apprehension, uneasiness, shakiness, but often
In contemporary terms/complementary subjects, worry is described by apprehension,

b. **Worry** is a state of being fretful, overly concerned, or anxious expectation. Worry is asking,

2. **What are the effects of anxiety and worry?**

a. **They can be a legitimate emotion when expressing concern for** are necessary and/or for

One author has said: "not all anxiety is destructive. There is a creative form of anxiety

b. **Anxiety and worry have a limit to their value, however, when the** "worries of
Worry will choke our spiritual life and the Word of God like thorns wrapped around the

A Topical Study Example: Worry and Anxiety

Written by Bob Stone

- c. Anxiety and worry can cause us to feel that there are no obvious reasons why we are experiencing something
- d. Anxiety can be a heavy weight that immobilize us. Proverbs 12:25
- e. These two emotions can also profoundly affect our health--Ps. 55:4-5.

Note:

People suffering from this kind of anxiety can have a sense that

- 1) **John Altrock** the author of *Abnormal Behavior* describes the physical effects that worry, a
- 2) **Gary Collins** continues the Christian Counseling Study, 1980: pA60). degree of anxie
- 3) **Norm Wright** lists the following physical symptoms (see, 1982, p. 55). perspiration, w

Other effects of worry/anxiety:

- f. **It causes us to misjudge God's gifts** by imagining the worst possible circumstance, that
- g. **It keeps us from praying and thanksgiving to God** for our praise--Ps. 38:8-14; Phil. 4:6.

h. **It distracts us from the friendship, instruction, and fellowship of the Lord**

i. **It causes an inappropriate and unhealthy concern for--the necessities of life**

Here are the principles to remember from the above passages:

- 1) **Principle #1:** Our life is superior to food--Matt. 6:25.
- 2) **Principle #2:** Our body is more significant than the clothes covering it--Matt. 6
- 3) **Principle #3:** We are much more valuable than all of God's creation? and thus H

Martin Luther writes something similar in "Yates by Hansjakob Reiter"; in vol. 21 of Luther's works, *Sonchod*

4) **Principle #4:** Worry is futile--Matt. 6:27. Jesus proves worry is a worthless eve

What do we worry about?

- a) Things that never happen
- b) Things that can't be changed by worry
- c) Needs worries about health

A Topical Study Example: Worry and Anxiety

Written by Bob Stone

- d) Petty, miscellaneous worries
- e) Real, legitimate worries

Summary : It's easy to see worry and anxiety for the most part are a waste of our time

3. **What causes worry and anxiety?** Several sources create anxiety;
- b. Unrealistic standards set for us or by us can create anxious tension;
 - c. Situations in which a person must make a choice can create anxiety;
 - d. Unresolved or undealt-with guilt also creates tremendous upheaval.
 - e. Likewise, a lack of faith in ourselves and/or God's purposes is a frequent cause. (We'll return to this later.)

4. **How can we help others relieve the debilitating help.** Some will benefit

Begin with a simple, but profoundly helpful suggestion.

- a. **First, pray about the source of it.** prayer. It is focused on finding the source of the problem.
- b. **Second, admit it and cry out.** Admitting rejection just admitting out loud what has happened.

Note: When we admit this, the solution is more easily seen.

- c. **Third, share it.** Encourage your fellow worrier to share their worry with you or someone else.

For best results the sharing should be:

- 1) **With someone who is kind.** Be aware that when you are helping an anxious person, your kindness is essential.
- 2) **With someone who has a bucket.** purposes of a man's heart are to help others, but at the same time to help himself.

Question : What do we need? As we have seen earlier, we get to the need a bucket.

Note : We'll talk about how to acquire the skill of bucket drawing later.

A Topical Study Example: Worry and Anxiety

Written by Bob Stone

In addition to prayer, admission to others and sharing the depths of the heart:

d. **Fourth, faith** Matt. 6:30c--"Oh you of little faith, the crux of the problem is and at the same time

- 1) Our job is to put the worry alongside of God's promises.
- 2) Our job is to evaluate the worry and compare it to God's character.

Summary: As we put the worry alongside of God's promises, and evaluate the worry

To aid us in prayer, admission to others, sharing the depths of the heart and the rekindling
e. **Fifth, cast it, pray about it, snap it, don't fret it, & substitute for it.**

- 1) **Cast it on Jesus** Pet. 5:7-- "Cast all your (Sorrows, Ps 55:22, and 9) By linking legitimate cares for you."
- Definition** : Cast means to give up, or as one translation puts it, "Unload all your

Why should anyone do that? Because He cares for us.

- a) Review His Promises and character --Is. 26:3; 40:31; 42:3; Deut. 33:27; Psa
- b) Review His names . Then find a way to take their/your concerns, worries, an

The following names for Jesus and the Godhead may be helpful to generate the faith

- 1. **Jehovah-Tsidkenu** righteousness
- 2. **Jehovah-Melek** our King
- 3. **Jehovah-Shalom** peace
- 4. **Jehovah-Shammeh** our presence
- 5. **Jehovah-Rophe** our healer

A Topical Study Example: Worry and Anxiety

Written by Bob Stone

6. **Jehovah-Nireh** will provide

7. **Jehovah-Nissi** banner

7. **Jehovah-Nissi** banner

8. **Jehovah-Rohi** shepherd

9. **I am the bread of life** reveals God as the source of nourishment for our spiritual life; without Him

10. **I am the light of the world** reveals God as the One who enables us to see through the dark nights of our

11. **I am the good shepherd** reveals God as the One who will make us to lie down in green pastures. Some

12. **I am the resurrection and the life** reveals God as the guarantor of our eternity. There is a life beyond this one,

13. **I am the vine** Jesus reveals God as the source of all life and vitality. He

Summary: Finding a way to cast their/our concerns, worries, and

anxieties on

In addition, 2) **Pray immediately and let the following anxieties begin to help.**

Application: STOP/THINK/PRAYER Card

a) Take a 3x5 card and write on one side, "STOP"

b) On the other side write out "Phil. 4:6-9"

c) Carry it wherever you go

d) When you begin to worry, take out the card and look at "STOP." Say the word twice, out loud. (If you're not a

* Turn the card over and read Phil. 4:5b-9 twice. There is a significant difference

e) Then pray about what you are worried about--cast it on Him.

An unusual way to deal with their/our worries and anxieties is:

3) **Snap it.**

Application: RUBBER BAND SNAP

With this method you put a rubber band on your wrist, and every time

a worrisome

Note: Studies reveal that it takes 15-20 repetitions before a person

can get a

A very effective and needed action to dispel worry is to:

A Topical Study Example: Worry and Anxiety

Written by Bob Stone

- 4) **Substitute for Matt. 6:33-34) Concentrate on seeking the kingdom of God** energy that can be
 - Seek to have His kingdom come.
 - Seek His rule inwardly (in you), outwardly (in others), externally (forever and e
 - Seek His righteous character and ethics.
- b) **Concentrate on the concerns of each day** generate its own worries, let alone the ones
 - Each day has its own problems, so we and/or the one we are attempting

The next helpful suggestion for the anxiety prone person is:
5) **Don't fret it**

Application: PSALM 37 "Fret not..."

We should teach others and ourselves to do as the definitions state! If you use this option, read throu

- a) **Definition of fret** means to eat away, gnaw, to gall, to vex, worry, agitate, wear away.
- b) **Definition of trust** rely on, be dependent, and be confident in.
- c) **Definition of do good** do good deed, but move in a way that helps others. This takes
- d) **Definition of delight** delight, praise God.
- e) **Definition of commit** a complete letting go, the flinging of oneself upon God. R
- f) **Definition of make still** not be anxious, to submit in silence to what He orders.
- g) **Definition of refrain from anger** to find the solution to your need in your strengt

Summary: Psalm 37 is encouraging us to refrain from allowing anger to drive us

Therefore, teach the one you are counseling they can express anger, but it is to be v

- Initially acknowledge the anger to God. After it is admitted to Him, then encour
- Next, instruct the person to examine their heart to see if they have contribute
- Whatever the case, make it clear it is essential they refrain from allowing the
- Ultimately, anger should always be turned into forgiveness and not bitter

A Topical Study Example: Worry and Anxiety

Written by Bob Stone

Summary: Finally in summary, we can now say we have looked our anxiety and wo

In the future, each time worry reoccurs a. pray about the source of it; b. admit it and name

f. **Address it** . II Cor. 2:4--"For I wrote ~~you in anguish of heart~~ ~~with many~~ tears, not to grieve you but to le

- 1) Paul did a wise thing by addressing his worry and fear in this letter.
 - 2) He used at least three of the above options, i.e., he obviously prayed about the
 - 3) Likewise, no one needs to be so incapacitated by their worry that they don't ad
 - 4) We can prevent harmful effects or worry in us and others by our wise use of the
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Summary and reflection: The preceding options aren't the only solutions to worry, but they are a beginning place. As we noted, sometimes just exposing worry for what it is will end it. Other times it will be more persistent. Whatever the case, stay with a worrying friend and help them to refocus their thoughts on good and proper things.

Why is all this important? Norman Wright explains the need to change our thinking habits. He says: "What we choose to think about will affect our actions and inner calmness. Those who suffer with worry choose to wrestle with negative thoughts or anticipate the worst. What goes on within our imagination creates the anxiety feelings. If our imagination is centered about God what He has done and will do for you if it is centered upon the promises of Scripture, peace of mind is inevitable. But you must choose to center your thoughts in this way. God has made the provision, but you must take action. Freedom from every worry and anxiety is available but you must lay hold of it. The principle here is: Learn to direct your thoughts toward God and His teachings and you will never worry"--Norm Wright, *The Healing of Fears*.

- A. With that end in mind, read all the following verses. In your journal, give a few summa
1. Matthew 6:25-34
 2. I Peter 5:7
 3. Isaiah 26:3; 40:31
 4. Deut. 33:37
 5. Psalm 23; 46:1,11
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A Topical Study Example: Worry and Anxiety

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6.Romans 8:31,38-39

7.Phil. 4:11,13,19

8.II Tim.1:7

9.II Cor. 12: 9,10

10.Psalm 103:13

BMake up a stop/think card for any anxiety or worry you might have. Try using it. In addition, try to