

Rooted Simply Word Study: Worry

Worry is a deeply human experience – but Scripture speaks to it with surprising clarity. The Bible doesn't ignore worry; it names it, explains it, and offers a better way.

The Meaning of “Worry” in Scripture

Old Testament (Hebrew) The English word *worry* does not appear often in the Old Testament, but the *concept* does. Hebrew words connected to worry include:

דָּאָג (da'ag) – “to be anxious, troubled, concerned”

Used in contexts of fear, distress, or emotional heaviness.

Examples:

1 Samuel 9:5 – Saul worries about his father worrying for him.

Jeremiah 17:8 – The person who trusts God “does not *worry* in a year of drought.”

פָּחַד (pachad) – “fear, dread”

Often used when fear overwhelms trust.

רָגַז (ragaz) – “to tremble, quake, be agitated”

Sometimes used for emotional turmoil.

New Testament (Greek)

The New Testament uses a very specific word for worry:

μεριμνάω (merimnaō) – “to be anxious, distracted, pulled apart”

Literally means: “to be divided into pieces” Worry fractures the mind and heart.

Forms include:

merimnaō – to worry, be anxious

merimna – anxiety, care

amerimnos – without worry

This word appears in many key passages.

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Where “Worry” Appears in the Bible

Here are the major passages where the Greek word *merimnaō* or its forms appear:

Jesus’ Teaching

Matthew 6:25–34 – “Do not worry about your life...”

Luke 12:22–32 – “Do not set your heart on what you will eat or drink.”

Jesus directly commands His followers **not to worry**, not as a rebuke, but as an invitation to trust the Father.

Paul’s Letters

Philippians 4:6 – “Do not be anxious about anything...”

1 Corinthians 7:32 – Paul speaks of being “free from anxieties.”

1 Peter 5:7 – “Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you.”

Parable of the Sower

Matthew 13:22 – “The worries of this life choke the word.”

Worry is described as something that **strangles spiritual growth**.

God’s Instructions About Worry

Scripture doesn’t simply say “stop worrying.” It gives **clear, compassionate instructions** for what to do instead.

Trust God Instead of Worrying **Matthew 6:25–34**

Jesus says:

Don’t worry about food, clothing, or tomorrow.

Look at the birds – God provides.

Look at the flowers – God clothes them.

You are worth more than these.

Key truth: Worry is replaced by **trust in God’s character**.

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Pray Instead of Worrying **Philippians 4:6-7**

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition... present your requests to God.”

God’s instruction:

Bring everything to Him

With thanksgiving

And His peace will guard your heart

Worry is exchanged for **peace**.

Cast Your Worries on God **1 Peter 5:7**

“Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you.”

The word “cast” means: **“to throw with force, to release completely.”**

God invites His children to **transfer the weight** of worry onto Him.

Seek God’s Kingdom First **Matthew 6:33**

“Seek first the kingdom of God...”

Worry shrinks when purpose expands. Jesus teaches that worry fades when our focus shifts from survival to **God’s mission**.

Remember God’s Presence **Isaiah 41:10**

“Do not fear, for I am with you...”

Worry often grows when we feel alone. God’s answer is His **presence**, not platitudes.

Renew Your Mind **Romans 12:2**

Transformation comes through renewing the mind.

Worry is often a **thought pattern**, and Scripture calls believers to replace anxious thoughts with truth.

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Summary: What the Bible Teaches About Worry

Biblical Truth	Scripture	Meaning
God commands us not to worry	Matthew 6:25–34	Worry is unnecessary because God provides
Prayer replaces worry	Philippians 4:6–7	Prayer brings peace
God carries our anxiety	1 Peter 5:7	We are not meant to hold it alone
Worry chokes spiritual growth	Matthew 13:22	Anxiety distracts from God’s Word
Trust in God’s care	Luke 12:22–32	God knows what we need
God’s presence removes fear	Isaiah 41:10	We are never alone

The Heart of the Word Study

The biblical message is not:

“Stop worrying.” It is:

“You don’t have to carry this alone.”

Worry divides the heart. God restores it. Worry pulls us apart. God holds us together. Worry focuses on the unknown. God in