



The **New**CREEations Podcast

You Can't Not Think About It - Episode 23

Over the course of the last several podcast episodes we've been looking at worry in depth. Worry is one of those things that most of us know we shouldn't do. It's destructive to our bodies.

We've talked about how worry triggers the fight or flight response in our bodies. At the same time the things we worry about aren't things we can either fight or run away from. So our bodies get all these stressors flowing through them with no outlet to release their effects.

The long term effects of all these chemicals washing through our bodies because of chronic worrying creates all kinds of damage from muscle tension, depression, aches and pains including headaches, high blood pressure, heart disease, and even death. You can literally worry yourself to death.

Our bodies were not designed to handle all that worry.

Worry is Pointless

Not only is worry destructive to our bodies, but worrying about things doesn't even do any good anyway. Jesus pointed that out to us.

We can't add an inch to our height or one additional second to our lives by worrying. It changes nothing.

In fact, worrying is even worse than useless. It's flat out destructive, both physically and emotionally.

The Antidote of Prayer

Fortunately for us Paul gave us a great antidote to worry. As we've been talking about in the past few episodes, he wrote a powerful prescription for us in Philippians chapter 4.

We talked about how we can catch ourselves when we slip into worry and pass it along to God in prayer based on Paul's instructions. And really that's the only thing that makes sense to do anyway because all that stuff we worry about? It's above our pay grade.

Paul said we should pass all that stuff we worry about on to God and let him deal with it. Then in the last episode we talked about the importance of looking to God for answers instead of looking to ourselves so that we can tap into his infinite reservoir of peace instead of trying to force peace on ourselves with our own limited will power.



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When We Can't Not Think About It

All that said, there are some times when we just can't not think about something. Now I know my English teacher would be appalled by the double negative there, but I don't know how else to say it.

We have a problem. The human brain is wired to think about stuff. So much so, in fact that once something gets in there it can be all but impossible for us to let it go. Our minds are engineered by God to remember things, not to forget them.

Even when we pray about it and feel God's peace come in, whatever the thing is we worried about often is still there. And when it is our minds naturally go back to it because it is impossible for us to not think about something.

Let me prove it to you.

Chocolate Chip Cookies (Mmmmmmm...)

OK. Whatever happens in the next few moments I don't want you to think about chocolate chip cookies. No cookies. Got it? Good.

Because my wife Lisa makes the best chocolate chip cookies that I have ever tested in the world, bar none. They're soft, and chewy. And they come out of the oven they are so ewy-gooy, with the chunks of chocolate all melty soft. Oh, and when she's baking them the whole house smells so wonderful that my mouth always waters in anticipation of getting one of those flavor explosions in my mouth. Mmmmm...

So. What 'cha thinking about?

My guess is that you might be craving a chocolate chip cookie right now.

That's because once a thought is in our minds it's really hard to let go of. Most times we can't not think about it.

Not Worrying

So if all Paul told us in that passage in Philippians 4 was "don't worry" then we'd be in a bad way. Because even with prayer and being blanketed with God's peace, the thought is still hanging there in our brains.

The good news is that Paul gives us the answer in the very next verses. But unfortunately I'm out of time for today so we'll have to look at that next time. Then we'll see how to banish the things we worry about from our minds so those thoughts don't follow us around any longer.