

In October 2018, I visited the Belle Tout Lighthouse atop the Seven Sisters chalk cliffs in Eastbourne England (pictured below). The Belle Tout is almost 200 years old now and it has seen plenty of destructive storms, yet it stands. A lighthouse is a great reminder of what to do with our focus in a storm that would otherwise be easily captured by worry. Worry is defined by Google as allowing one's mind to *dwell* on difficulty or troubles. Where is your mind dwelling these days?

Worry has been a newer battle for me the last few years I've had to learn to fight. Worry is sin, it is easy to justify in myself as small or that I have a good reason to do it, I mean come on look at what's happening to me and around me right? It's easy to ignore it in my own heart and yet see it in others and label people as worriers rather than calling them out of worry. So I invite you to ask 3 questions with me and search the scriptures for possible answers. (The ones listed are not an exclusive list)

What causes my heart to worry?

- Being world-centered (Matt 6:25-34, Luke 21:34)
- Lacking confidence in God (John 14:1, Luke 8:22-25)
- Fear (Matt 14:25-32, Prov 12:25)

What results do I see in my life when I am worrying?

- Leads me away from God (Psalm 37:7-8, Luke 8:14, Luke 10:40-42)
- Emptiness/futility (Matt 6:27, Ecc 2:22-23)
- Hypocrisy - (Luke 12) - those who don't know the Lord that see me dwelling in worry regularly how does that jive with faith/trust, how do our kids process what they see/hear when we worry - will they come to us with their problems of life if they "know" it'll make mom or dad worry?

What are some go to weapons for worry?

- Prayer with thanksgiving (James 5:13, Phil 4:6-7, Psalm 55:22, 1 Peter 5:6-7)
- Speaking truth to ourselves from verses memorized (Prov 2:1-5) - my go to 3 (Phil 4:4-8, Psalm 46:1-3, and John 16:33)
- Slay it with a song (Psalm 59:16-17, Acts 16:22-25, reference 3/22/20 MBC sermon)
- Obedience (John 14:15, James 4:17) - If you've read the passages above you've read God saying "Do not worry, Do not be afraid, Do not fret, Do not fear, Do not be anxious about anything"

Let's pray together, Psalm 139:23 "Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts"

The shipmaster who fixes his or her attention on the waves, the dwindling provisions, or sick feeling in their stomach leads the boat and crew likely to places of damage. The shipmaster however who looks above the storm to the lighthouse helps realign where the hope of the boat and crew are set. It's not about denying or ignoring the storm but looking beyond it.

In the middle of a storm, the view from the lighthouse is different than that from the boat. The lighthouse remembers the last storm survived and can see the sun coming up past the clouds. Let's look beyond the waves and wind and set our hearts and minds on things above. (Colossians 3) Grab a weapon with me and let's (by His power) turn our worry into worship.

