

# Torrey 2003 Don't worry be happy

By Bill Ingram

Speaker 1:

As a student here, Dr. Bill Ingram was a ball player, and we found out rather quickly in the short time that he was here, that he loved the Lord and he loved the word. There are a lot of different ideas as to how much of the scripture he's memorized. I'll just tell you this. He's memorized a ton of it. Twenty five years ago, he became the founder, nearly founder and still pastor. Maranatha Community Church, downtown in the Crenshaw District, serving Jesus faithfully there, teaches the word a proud alum of Biola and a wonderful friend and brother in Christ.

He's probably the one in the last 10 to 15 years that has done more stellar duty in chapel, spiritual renewal. At least two other conferences. And this slot was kind of was not a premiere slot. I said, Billy, we would love to have somebody kick off the week, but because of the number of guests that we had, I said it isn't a glorious conclusion spot. He said, I'll come and preach it anyway. Praise God. There's really quite a group that's gathered. I think it's in honor of God and his servant. This morning, Bill Ingram sounds a little like Billy Graham does it. Bill Ingram. I didn't tell him it was casual day because he always ducks out so well. So, yeah, but I did give him the privilege to take off his coat, but he probably won't because he's just a preacher. Let's welcome Dr. Bill Ingram as you open to.

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Thank you. This is actually a true story about. Twenty two years ago, I was invited to speak at a church in Philadelphia and they announce that Dr. Billy Graham would be speaking. And when I arrive, a certain individual who was a lawyer said to the pastor, how could you trick me?

You said Dr. Billy Graham was coming to preach. And the night I spoke, he gave his heart and life to Christ, has been and has been walking with God ever since. Ron told me that usually at the conclusion there may or may not be a lot of students who attend, and my philosophy and ministry is. Whoever comes, I will feed them. I've never been interested in or caught up in the crowd, I've spoken to crowds as large as 50 to seventy five thousand at once, but I love the crowd of five the most.

When I was a chaplain for the Lakers, most of the time we had five to 10 players. That's where the action is. And I do appreciate the privilege and the honor for being here on. And it's just a blessing to me to be able to interact with the students and to be able to share God's word.

There was a bus. That was carrying a group of ugly people that crashed. And everyone died, went to heaven. They had to meet their maker, and because of the grief they had experience, God decided to give them all one wish. Before they entered paradise, they all lined up and got ask the first man. What do you wish for? The man said, I want to be tall and stunningly handsome.

Done. He was tall and stunningly handsome. And so each one followed suit, but halfway down the line, there was a man at the end of the line laughing his head off. And there were 10 people to go and each one was doing basically the same thing, I want to be tall and stunningly handsome, so God comes to the last guy, he said. What do you wish for?

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He said, make them all ugly again. The. The world of the occult and the psychic phenomena is making billions of dollars every year, and they thrive on one simple principle, namely our vulnerability to the future.

I remember when I was a youngster, Jean Dixon was the premier psychic. And there have been many who have come along along the way, some years ago, it was the Psychic Friends Network with Dionne Warwick and a host of celebrities. And in recent years, it was. Miss Cleo, call me now. You know why it doesn't work, if I were a psychic, if I had psychic ability every time there was a Powerball or there was three hundred million or whatever and a lottery, I'd win.

In fact, I would break Vegas if I really had that kind of insight, I would do something that counted. They don't know, they don't really know. Didn't Miss Cleo know that she was going to be sued and go out of business? Shows that is really not true and one of the reasons why people flock to madam whose it was, you know, the one who knows all tails nothing is because people are worried. They're filled with anxiety, they're afraid. They want to know what does the future hold.

And so I've entitled my message today, don't worry. Be happy. Walter Kelly wrote, When I don't have anything to worry about, I begin to worry about that. In his generation, he was known as a man of faith. Here's what George Mueller wrote. The beginning of anxiety is the end of faith and the beginning of true faith is the end of anxiety. Mary Crowley wrote this Every evening, I turn worries over to God he's going to be up all night anyway. You see worry. It's like a rocking chair, it will give you something to do, but it won't get you anywhere.

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Now listen to this worry pulls tomorrow's clouds over today. Sunshine worry is wasting time to clutter up tomorrow's opportunities with yesterday's problems. And the problem with worry is that we all do it. I wish somebody would say, hey, man, there's a Swedish proverb that goes something like this where he often gives a small thing, a big shadow.

I love this one, blessed is a man who's too busy to worry in the daytime and too sleepy to worry at night. I think the best advice given on the subject of coping and dealing with worry is found in Matthew Chapter six. And I'd like to read from verse twenty five where Jesus outlines a simple plan for successful living. Matthew, Chapter six. And verse twenty five. Do you have it? I'm sorry they have it all right when you have it, say amen.

Whoo, bravo on. Therefore, I sang to you, take no fork for your life, what you should eat or what you should drink, nor yet for your body. What you should put on is not the life more than meat and the body that arraignment. Behold the fowls of the air for days. So not neither do they know yet. Gather into barns yet your heavenly father feeds them. Are ye not much better than de which of you by taking Thorn can add one cubitt onto its statue and won't take a thought for arraignment. Consider the lilies of the field. How they grow, they toil. Not neither do they spin. And yet I say to you that even Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these.

Wherefore if God so clothed the grass of the field which today is and tomorrow is cast into the oven, should he not much more clothed you all ye of little faith therefore take no form saying what shall we need or what shall we drink? Or with all shall we be called for after all these things to the Gentiles, seek for your Heavenly Father know it, that you have need of all these things, but

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seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for tomorrow for the morrow should take thought for the things of its self-sufficient until the day is the evil thereof.

Someone said that worry is fierce extravagance. It extracts interests on trouble before its due. It constantly drains the energy God gives us to face daily problems and to fulfill our many responsibilities, worry is a sinful waste of time. Or someone else put it this way. Worry is faith in the negatives. Worry is trust in the unpleasant assurance of disaster and belief in defeat. And there's hardly any sin against which Jesus more reproved, rebuked and reprimanded his disciples than the disturbing, distracting and distrustful cares about life, they regularly and repeatedly ensnare the poor, as well as those who trust in their wealth.

As a gentleman, his name is J. Arthur Rank. He has a very interesting philosophy about worry. I like it. His philosophy is that he decides to do all of his work and one day a week he chose Wednesdays. Here's the reason why. When anything happened that gave him anxiety or annoyed his ulcer, he would write it down and put it in a box and forget about it until the following Wednesday.

The interesting thing he discovered was that the following Wednesday, when he opened his worry box, he found that most of the things that had disturbed him in the past six days were already resolved. It would have been useless to have worried about them. On one occasion, death came and stalked a certain city and a certain man asks, why are you here? What are you doing? And Death said, I'm going to take one hundred people. That's simply horrible. The man replied,

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Yeah, I know. But that's just the way it is set death. That's what I do. The man hurried into town to warn everyone that he could about deaths plan. As evening fell, he met death again. You told me you were only going to take 100 people. So why did one thousand people die? I kept my word, said death.

I only took 100. It was worry. Who took the rest? I love this poem, listen at this. He doesn't need me year by year. Not even day by day, but God leads me step by steps, his path unfolds, my lord directs my way. Tomorrow's plans, I do not know. I only know this minute. But he will say this is the way by faith walk in it. And I am glad that this is so. Today is enough to bear and when tomorrow comes, his grace will far exceed its care.

What need worry then, or fret the God who gave his son holes all my moments in his hand and gives them one by one, the Psalmist said, cast thy burden upon the Lord and he shall sustain thee. He shall not suffer thy foot to be moved. I remember when I was a student here at Biola, in fact, even before I became a student, a very interesting thing happened. Coach Holmquist and I were in Africa and we were on a basketball team at the time and we were in then Saulsberry Rhodesia, which is now Zimbabwe. And I told him some of the struggles I was having because I really felt like God was calling me into ministry, but I didn't know what to do, I didn't know how it was going to work out. And sure enough, God in his providence allowed me to sprained my ankle on this tour.

We were out for about a month and here I am incapacitated and I'm sharing this with him. And I said, you know what? I really need to go to a Bible school where I can lay the foundation for my

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ministry. He makes a call back here, unbeknownst to me, to Biola. And then the late Howard Lyons was the head coach and he told him that I wanted to transfer from the University of Oregon and come and be a student here at Biola, studied the Bible and perhaps even play as well. Dave came back and said he had called, but that there were no more scholarships available for that year.

Two days later, he came to my room and he said, there's an amazing thing that happened. You won't believe what happened. He said there's a family that's a part of Biola. They have put up the scholarship money for you. You can come to Biola if you want to. I made all of the arrangements and sure enough, I enrolled here in Biola now I had a lot to worry about as a student. I don't know how it is with you, but I was poor and I was really, really poor as a student.

Maybe you're doing better than I did, but I was really poor as a student, I struggle. And I remember this family who with whom I am now friends for over 25 years, they would send me a check anonymously once a month for a hundred bucks. You thought be rich. A check for 100 bucks for me. Oh. And they purposefully didn't want me to know who they were because they wanted to simply be a blessing in my life. Here's here's the amazing thing about it. Now I'm on scholarship. This private family is supporting me. They put up the scholarship money. They're give me a hundred bucks a month. I'm taking a Bible course, Bible literature. I think it was the late Dr. Curtis Mitchell was my professor and unfortunately, he's now with the Lord. You really miss studying with him. The first exam and I studied hard, man, I was serious about my walk with God and studying the word of God, I got a D. I thought. I can't believe it. This is not possible. I am I know the will of God, I was devastated. I got to get to be in Bible English

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maybe, but God's word, no way I can flunk out. I'm going into the ministry. I'm going to be use of God. I got a D. You know what I discovered about God? You want to know what I discovered about God? I discovered that God really cares about us.

All the stuff I was worried about all those years as a student and whatever, whatever. They worked out I was I was telling the basketball team earlier that there was one occasion I was in the chapel and it's the same chapel I used to spend a lot of time and that little chapel up there. One day I was in there alone. And this is the honest truth. I needed 10 bucks to buy a book for a class. I was in the chapel by myself.

I was facing in that direction on my knees when I was done praying, there was a ten dollar bill right next to me. There's no one in the room, no one came, no one left. You say, well, how did the money get there? I don't know, but I put it in my pocket. It's mine now. The Bible says casting all your cares upon him. Why, because he cares about you. I think we have a tendency to forget, God cares that God is interested in all of the assignments and all of the reading and all of the reports and all of the requirements and all the pressures of being a student in a Bible school.

Sometimes we forget God still cares about me. He does. That's what I remember, that God didn't forget about me. Now, I forgot to tell you that that course that I got my first dán, I passed. In fact, I graduated from Biola. And it's thought you want to know that I'm, you know. The Bible also says, let your conversation be without covetousness and be content with what you have, because God has said I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.



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So that we may boldly say the Lord is my help or I will not fear what man shall do unto me. You know, it's interesting, the average person. It's worried about things like and they say 40 percent of the things that we worry about will never happen, 40 percent, 30 percent of the things that we worry about are in the past and we can change them anyway. 12 percent of the things we worry about are the criticism from others, and they're not true. 10 percent, we worry about our health, and the more we worry, it exacerbates the health that we had in our health gets worse because we're worried about it. Only eight percent of the things in life are legitimate concerns, and we will eventually face them anyway. Plus, my whole point, we're worried too much, we're worried about stuff that's not going to happen. We're worried about stuff that's in the past. We can't change. We're worrying ourselves into ill health.

In fact, the National Mental Health Committee reported a few years ago, half of all the people in America's hospitals are constant worriers, a person question. I'm sorry, can I ask you a personal question? See, in my church when I'm preaching, I just talk to the current congregation just like that. We just have a conversation. I don't yell and scream. I don't stomp. I don't spit. I don't sweat.

We just talk and we try to communicate. Let me ask you this. You don't have to answer if you don't want to, but I want to ask anyway. What do you worry about? What are you worried about? What has your mind and heart filled with anxiety? What can't you seem to settle the score over? I mean, continue. It should be noted that mental distress can lead to migraine headaches. This is from the National Mental Health Committee.

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Arthritis. Heart trouble, back aches, ulcers, depression, digestive disorders and, yes, even death. Adding to that, the mental fatigue of sleepless nights and days without peace, and we get a glimpse of the havoc worry plays and destroying the quality and quantity of our lives. Worry is and always will be a fatal disease of the heart for its beginning signals the end of faith.

It intrudes on God's compassionate ability to provide for us. Listen, when we allow our problems to overshadow God's promises, we unknowingly doom ourselves to a defeat that was never a part of God's eternal plan. That's a good place for any man right there. All right, since I'm a cool guy, I'm a give you a second chance. When we allow our problems to overshadow God's promises, we unknowingly doom ourselves to a defeat that was never a part of God's eternal plan. Right on.

There's a promise in the Bible which affirms an answer to every prayer. It goes like this. Be careful for nothing. You know it Philippians for verse six, but in everything by prayer and supplication. With Thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God, the peace of God which passes all understanding. Keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Listen, in other words, don't sweat the small stuff.

Don't sweat it. God's got it, he can handle it. Do you know that God is bigger than you by only experience? And he's bigger than your inability to figure out what you're going to do when you leave. I used to always used to frustrate me because people would say to me when I was here, man, God has his hand upon your life. And that's all they would say, and I'm like, OK, tell me more. I really want to know what that means in terms of what I'm going to do with God's hand on my life.

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And that was it. Do you know that if God had revealed just one day of what he had for me while I was here as a student, I would have quit. According to Vanderlyn. Not at all. You see, it's on a need to know basis. Let me tell you something about the future. Would you mind me telling you about the future? Can I tell you just the way I would tell my congregation? It ain't none of your business.

The future is God, let him handle it. That's his specialty. What what we need to do is figure out, OK, how do I live in the here and now, how do I maximize the moment that I'm in? Here's what the scripture says, whatever it is that's troubling you and bothering you.

Listen, one word, A. S. K. You know, you know to him what a friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear, what a privilege it is to carry what every thing to God in prayer, all what peace we often forfeit.

Oh, what needless pain we bear. Why all? Because we do not carry everything to God. And prayer. Some of us would be that close. To rupturing and puncturing the bubble of worry if we just prayed. Yeah, if we just prayed. But for many of us, we have a tendency to think that God is only interested in the big things in our lives, it's a little things that become big things.

I love what Robert Frost wrote. It's an amazing philosophy, he said. I have reduced to three words, everything I've learned about life. Listen, this is good. It goes on. Life goes on, it's got to deal with it. Sometimes when we pray, God will say no. You know why God says no? I'm sorry, you know, my God says no. Well, no one, he says no because he's God. Is that as obvious? We

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probably can't see this, but I have here pictures of my twenty three month old twin sons, Samuel and Solomon, that Samuel, that Solomon and see, that's that's Samuel Solomon. That's me. They are such a delight. They're such a joy. I can't imagine not having them in my life. You know what I've what I've learned from them and learn about them. Yes, that's what I'm talking about. When it comes time for dinner or if they wake up at night, they're not Dad. You sure you're going to pull this off and get us some milk? You'd be really going to hook us up this time, you got it covered.

You sure? Are we going to eat tonight? They're not worried about a thing, if I could trust God the way they do. The way they trust me. I'd really be doing something of a care in the world. They have no idea how much pressure is on me to provide for them and how much stress I'm going through trying to keep pace with their growth. So even then, we have to buy two of everything. And even things that they take from one another, we buy two of them and it's not like they want their own, they want what their brother has.

But we want to provide for them, and yet they continue to trust us, but there are some things that they want from us and, you know, when I tell them no. They want my car keys. There they're just now mastering the walk. Somewhere down the line in their lives, they'll have a car, not now, not now. And sometimes God says to us, because it is providential care, in his infinite wisdom, he sees that if he gave to us what we will eventually need now, it would be disastrous for us. So sometimes he says no, sometimes he says not now wait. And that's where we get into trouble because everything in our society is instant. We don't have to wait for anything anymore. I go

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online, man, I can go anywhere in the world and get information I need just at the click of a mouse, just like that.

We have eight teams, we have Jack in the box, everything's drive through, everything's quick, everything instant, because society understands that we are impatient. We don't want to wait. We have not learned how to wait. But listen, with God, you had better wait. Because if you don't, you're going to be frustrated. Between you and I, lean forward, I really need to tell you this. Come on, lean forward. God, it's not going to change for you.

He's going to be gone and he's not applying for the job. You may want to remember this worrying is insulting to God. Because Jesus declares our tendency to welcome stress through worry is an insult, that is, it fails to honor the fact that God is sovereign. He's in control of everything, everything and everyone. And the reason why it's such an insult is because the God that we embrace is our lord and savior, he's the creator of the heavens and the earth.

I want to read something that I don't fully comprehend, but it goes something like this. That in the creation of God's vast universe, the heavens declare the glory of God, the firmament show this handywork, Psalm 19 one. That there are at least a hundred million solar systems like ours. And there are billions of galaxies and there millions of. Sun's larger than the sun in our solar system. The scientists who are on the case who are doing the research haven't come that close to exhausting what God has created.

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Now, listen, if God could speak that into existence and sustain it by his power, then don't you think he can handle your little pieces? Puny planetary problems? I think so. He gave his life and he is also sustaining life. He knows exactly what we need. And listen, the wonderful thing about it. He's promised to supply all our needs. Worry is inaccurate, half of the things people worry about never come to pass. As I said a moment ago, another 40 percent of life's troubles couldn't be averted by worry if we worried all of our lives.

Worry, I really want to hear this one worries in mature. In fact. Between us, there are two days and every week you should never worry about, you want to know what they are. Yesterday and tomorrow. Don't worry about yesterday and don't worry about tomorrow. Worry will not empty tomorrow of its troubles, and it will rob today of its focus and energy, it distracts us from our present responsibilities and creates problems that otherwise could have been avoided.

You see, worry disregards the logic of life. Was that mean? There are birds that fly every day. One day I sat on my porch and I watched. And I was amazed that there were no special assistance to help birds who had had massive strokes and heart attacks because of the anxiety of not knowing where their next meal was coming from.

There were no birds who had to be summonsed and special counseling or a 30 day detox because of drug overdoses. You know what they did first thing in the morning, you know what birds do every day they sing praises to their creator. Jesus said, behold the fowls of the air. It's not a casual statement, it means that we should study the fowls of the air. We should study and examine how they live. They've mastered it. They understand that their creator, who shed his blood for us and

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not them, provides for them. And if he provides for every sparrow that falls to the ground, then certainly he will also provide for you.

Worry disregards the value of life, worry disregards its own limitations, worry disregards God's faithfulness, worry disregards the love of God. Worry disregards the president. See, all the water in the world, however hard it tried, could never, never sink the ship unless it got inside. All the hardships of this world where you pretty thin, but they won't hurt you not one bit unless you let them in.

There is actually a coronary and ulcer club. And I thought you might. Be interested in their philosophy of life. This is from the coronary and also club, they list the following rules for all its members. Number one, your job comes first. Forget everything else. No, two Saturdays, Sundays and holidays are fine times to work at the office, that will be nobody else there to bother you. Number three, always have your briefcase with you when you're not at your desk.

This provides an opportunity to review completely all the troubles and worries of the day.

Number three, never say no to a request. Always say, yes, I can do it, I'll do it. Yes, I will.

Number five, accept all invitations to meetings, banquets, committees, et cetera. Number six, all forms of recreation are a waste of time. I'm a seven, never delegate responsibility to others carrying the entire load yourself. Number eight, if your work calls for traveling, work all day and travel at night to keep that appointment you made for the next morning.

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Finally, number nine, no matter how many jobs you are already doing, remember, you can always take on one more.

That is the surest and the quickest way. They have heart problems and to be a part of the ulcer club. In his sermon entitled How to Worry, Ralph Phelps tells the story about the clock that had a nervous breakdown. This new clock was ticking away on the shelf, two ticks to the second as any good self respecting clock should tick when it began to think about how many times it was going to have to tick. Two ticks to the second mint, 120 ticks to the minute. That's seven thousand two hundred ticks per hour. That's one hundred and seventy two thousand eight hundred ticks per day. That's one million two hundred and nine thousand six hundred ticks per week for 52 weeks, a total of sixty two million eight hundred and ninety nine thousand two hundred ticks per year straightway. The clock. Had a nervous breakdown. The clock was ticking to a psychiatrist who patched up the mainspring, as well as he couldn't even ask the clock, what are your troubles, what are your problems? What is wrong with you?

Oh, doctor. Well, the clock I have to tick so much, I have so much on my plate, I have to tick two times as much as all the other clocks that the psychiatrist said, cut it out. How many ticks do you have to tick at a time? Oh, I just have to tick one at a time, was the reply. Then let me make a suggestion, replied the doctor, you go home and tried ticking one tick at a time. Don't even think about the next tick until it's time to tick.

That's all Jesus is saying here, just. Biologists tick one tick. Just take it one step at a time, it's just one moment at a time. Just just live here and now tomorrow's gone, yesterday's gone, tomorrow



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might not come, and when it does, God will give you the grace and the strength and the capacity to handle whatever it is that comes. But you don't want to miss out on what he's given to you right at the very moment. And so he says, take no thought. Don't worry about the moral.

For tomorrow has sufficient evil difficulties, vicissitudes, challenges within itself. You know, what would be God honoring and God pleasing? Is if you thank you for that. I'm glad you're with me. I appreciate that... Is if you release to the Lord today all of your burdens, all of your worries, all of your cares, maybe some of your concerns transcends just your experience here at Biola. Maybe they go to your family. At home, maybe they were issues with the health of a loved one or deeper issues than that, maybe they go to your country, whatever the case might be, take them and release them to God.

He can best handle them. You know, one thing you need to know about my messages, all of my messages are they're like links, sausages, and you just cut them off anywhere. I'm through.

Appreciate you listening. And actually, I was talking to myself.

Let's pray. Father only, you know what? Troubles and anxieties and apprehensions and fears and worries and frustrations are heavy on the hearts of these your people, we are ever so mindful of your invitation, come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest, take my yoke upon you and learn of me for our meek and lowly of heart. And you'll find rest until your souls from our yoke is easy and my burden is light. May we make that exchange with you right now Lord. May we give you our difficulties. May we give you our financial fears? May we give you our educational fears? May we give you those things that we struggle with now because

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you can handle it. May we exchange it for the peace that passes, all understanding that will keep our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Thank you for that Lord in Jesus name. All of God's people said a man, God bless you.