

A Word on Wednesday from Pastor Tonia

"What Is Yours to Control?" 6/14/23

"Therefore, don't worry about tomorrow, because tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own." (MT 6:34)

This is where I live. Each day has its own troubles. We can't carry yesterday's and worry about adding on tomorrows, while dealing with today's problems: deadlines at work, meetings, traffic, new assignments, personal problems, relational situations, political unrest, shopping, raising teenagers, economic downturn, housework, not to mention cleaning the cat box. It goes on and on and we want to go back to bed and pull the covers up over our heads.

With the length of our every expanding to-do list – how can we handle worrying about tomorrow? It's too much! Yes, it IS too much. One can't handle tomorrow's trouble today – we don't even know what it'll be. It's out of our control. Scripture tells us not to worry about tomorrow. Jesus gives us peace, but we'll blow it if we insist on making up stuff to stew over. We have only grace enough to face today.

Stop. Think. Can I do anything about it? Is it something I have to deal with now? Is this even mine to control? Then focused your energy on what you do have influence over, ignore everything else. Make a realistic to-do list. Don't lose sleep worrying about made-up stuff or other people's stuff. This is so easy to say and difficult to follow.

Some stuff is under our control and some stuff is someone else's to control. We can only take care of what is within our purview. If there's nothing we can do about it – if our yelling and fist shaking won't accomplish anything – let it go, work around it, figure out what we can do to mitigate a disaster. While it is not easy – it's better for our blood pressure.

Take care of what is yours to care for. Leave the rest to someone else. Let it go if it's not your responsibility.

I want to control my stuff and yours. I stay awake at night thinking up stuff to worry about. How stupid is that? I'd get a lot more sleep if I'd get my stuff under control and let go of your stuff. We need to put our energy into what we CAN control.

We can't make traffic move faster, so do what you can, calm down, don't become a case of road rage or cause someone else to do anything foolish. Being a type A driver, I need to hear this. If the plane is late, it's late. We can shake our

fist or yell at the agent – but we can't make the plane arrive any sooner than it will.

We need to breathe, count to 10, calmly figure out what is under our control and handle it to the best of our ability and leave the stuff we can't control in the hands of whoever can control it.

We make our plans, but the LORD establishes our steps. (Prov 16:9) Life happens, but God is still in control. God watches over us. God delivers us from our enemies. In God we find refuge. We can lean on Him; our own understanding is not all that reliable.

James tells us, "What do we know about tomorrow? How can we be so sure about our lives? It is nothing more than mist which appears for only a little while before it disappears." (James 4:13–14) Wise words. We wouldn't need to take so many aspirin, maybe our shoulders wouldn't be so tight.

We need to acknowledge what is under our control and leave the other stuff alone. Don't waste a good worry on something you have no control over. The wind will blow where it will. There's no way we can cut out government red tape. One can't change the outcome of a game while they watch it on TV, not that we don't try.

It's arrogant to think we are in control. A very wise man once wrote, "God is in control. How can we understand God's plan?" (Prov 20:24)

So do the best you can with what is yours to control. Let the other stuff go. Jesus longs to step into your life and say, "Peace be with you."

Please Pray with me:

God of Peace, help us to put our lives in Your hands. To measure the importance of all the stuff which comes our way, to see what is ours to handle and what we can let pass us by? We long to serve You and to reflect Your love through all we do.

Amen.