Comedian Carl Hurley tells the story about trying to throw a trash can away. He said think about it… it’s the one thing you can’t get the garbage man to pick up. He said I set my old rusty garbage can out at the street one morning thinking the garbage man would understand it needed to be thrown away. But when I came back that afternoon the can was stacked up with the rest of my empty trash cans. Well the next week I put it out again and this time I turned it upside down, so they could see the bottom had several holes in it and it needed thrown away. When I came home it was stacked up next to the empty cans again. The next week I took a sledgehammer and beat the can up pretty good and left it out front… but when I came home not only was it stacked up next to the other empty cans but the garbage man had actually tried to beat it back into shape for me. So he said finally I did the only thing I could, I went to the hardware store and bought a heavy duty chain and padlock and chained the old can to a large tree in my front yard. And sure enough, that night somebody stole it. You know guys I think worry is a lot like that old trash can. We know we need to get rid of it… but it’s easier said than done. We seem to have this false notion that if we worry about it then we’ll still be in control of it and if we are in control of it then everything will be okay. The fear of losing control of our situation or circumstance can cause all kinds of unhealthy emotions. Well we are in a series of 5 messages called I Quit. As we start a new year and think about New Year’s Resolutions, what are some of the things in our life that we need to let go of… some things we need to stop doing? So far, we have talked about how important it is to Quit Cynicism & to Quit Complaining, today we are going to talk about how important it is to Quit Worry. You know as a pastor I’m constantly encouraging people to trust God no matter what. I can quote scripture without even taking a breath. But when the night sets in, there are times I stare at the ceiling, feeling alone and full of worry. Now again I know I’m not supposed to worry, I try not to worry, but sometimes it’s just hard. And yet the question we need to ask ourselves is are we trusting God or not? And obviously if I’m worrying about it in the middle of the night… then I’ve not surrendered every area of my life to the Lord. Someone once said the ignorant worry because they don’t know enough. The knowledgeable worry because they know too much. The rich worry because they are afraid of losing what they have. The poor worry because they don’t have enough. The old worry because they are facing death. The young worry because they are facing life. I read that 40% of the things we worry about will never happen and 30% of the things we worry about can’t be changed. This article went on to say that only 8% of the things we worry about are legitimate concerns and usually are the things we can do something about. So I think the first thing we need to understand is that worry is the opposite of faith. While faith says I trust God… worry says I don’t. In Matthew 6 we see 5 things Jesus had to say about worry. #1 Worry is Unreasonable. Vs 24-25. He says look no one can serve 2 masters, so you have to decide if your master is going to be God… or is it going to be material things? His point is that you don’t need to worry about the material things in your life, what you will eat or drink or what you will wear. Because God has promised to supply our needs! Not to mention that life is more important than food and the body is more important than cloths? And at the same time making a decision not to worry does not mean that you’re not going to take action. In other words if you said I’m not going to worry about food anymore or I’m not going to worry about what I wear anymore. It doesn’t mean that you’re not going to plan meals or provide for the needs of your family or that you won’t have nice cloths. It just means that you’re going to stop fretting over these things. You see to worry about something you can’t change is useless and to worry about something you can change well…it’s kind of dumb. If you can change it then change it, don’t sit and worry about it. Worry is also unreasonable because it always exaggerates the problem. Let’s say there is a rumor that with the present state of the economy there’s a possibility that your company might have to downsize this year. Well the more you think about it the bigger the concern becomes in your mind… until you’ve convinced yourself you are out of a job. On the other hand, faith says if it happens God has another plan for my life. #2 Worry is unnatural. Vs 26, 28-29. Jesus gives us a lesson from nature. Now I have to admit I don’t know a lot about birds, but they have to be at the top of God’s welfare role, they really don’t do a whole lot. And yet God says hey, if I take care of the birds of the air don’t you think you are a lot more valuable to me than they are? Then he talks about flowers. Have you ever looked at the beauty of a flower… the detail that God put into making something that won’t last 6-weeks. So here’s His point, animals don’t worry, plants don’t worry, the only thing in all creation that worries are people. Have you ever heard someone say, worry just comes natural for her. Well actually it doesn’t, worry is a learned behavior, we learn it from our parents, our peers, and our partners. But friends hear me just as you have learned to worry you can learn to trust God; God didn’t create us to be worriers, in fact worry can cause all kinds of health problems such as heart disease, cancer, migraines, ulcers, hives and even diabetes. The Mayo Clinic actually estimates that more than 80% of their total caseload is directly related to worry on the parts of their patients. One medical doctor said that he believes if people could learn to stop worrying, a large percentage of disease would be cured. One doctor tells about a woman who worried for 40 years that every cramp she got was the beginning of stomach cancer. And yet when she was 73 she died of pneumonia. He said she wasted 40 years worrying about the wrong disease! Were like the patient in the mental hospital, holding his ear close to the wall, listening intently. The nurse finally approaches him and says “what are you doing?” The patient says shhh and continues listening. Finally the patient motions for the nurse to come over and listen. So the nurse puts her ear to the wall for a long time. She finally says, “I can’t hear a thing” The patient says, I know it’s been like that all day!” #3 Worry is unhelpful. Vs 27. Friends worry will not make you taller or shorter and it won’t extend your life in fact if anything it will shorten it. Simply put worry doesn’t work, it’s stewing without doing. It’s like revving a car engine while it’s in neutral. It uses up a lot of energy, but you are not getting anywhere. Let me ask you friends when you worry about your past does anything change? Or when you worry about the future does that control it? No. The only thing worry does is cause you a great deal of heartburn. #4 Worry is unnecessary. Vs 30. He says there is no need to worry, God has promised to take care of you if you will just trust Him. You know when I was a child and my parents bought me a toy for Christmas I never once asked them how they could afford to buy this for me. And when I asked them for money… if they gave it to me I spent it, no questions asked. Well friends God is saying hey I’m your heavenly father, if you’re not worried how your earthly father will supply your needs then why in the world are you worried how your heavenly father will supply your needs! Phil. 4:19NIV. The bottom line is that worry is an indicator that you have a misunderstanding of the heart of God. And if I do have a misunderstanding of His heart then I’m not likely to trust Him. And if I can’t trust Him then guess what, I’m going to worry. You know we cry out and say God please, forgive me of my sins and save my soul… but I will take care of my own finances thank you very much. Do you see how silly that is? If God can forgive your sins and give you the promise of eternal life, then he can certainly take care of any other problem I might have. Friends listen, God said He would supply all our needs, emotional, physical, spiritual, and relational, if we will just trust Him. And then #5 Worry is Unchristian. Vs 31-32. In one sense when you worry you’re acting like an atheist or like God doesn’t exist. You see I get it when an unbeliever worries because they have no promise of a future hope. I get it when they are confused or feel helpless over a situation they have no one to rely on except themselves. But the believer has thousands of promises in God’s word to stand on; they have a blessed hope of where they will spend their future. There are thousands of promises in God’s word that will help in the circumstances of life. God promises us in Rom. 8:28. So again, when we worry we are acting like unbelievers. In fact you are assuming responsibility that God never intended for you to bear. Friends it doesn’t matter how many seminars or self-help books you read that say you are the master of your own fate. You are not! Certainly we have the freedom to make choices but you don’t have control over everything around you. It’s like when someone tells you that you can be anything you want to be, well that’s just not true, but I can certainly be all that God wants me to be. Listen I think the epitome of worry is when everything is going well and yet you are still thinking ‘what if’? I mean things are just going to well, when is the other shoe going to drop? Friends it’s certainly not God’s desire for you to live like that. Now before I give you the antidote to worry I want you to write down what you think your greatest worry is right now. And by the way if your greatest worry is the one sitting next to you… just draw an arrow pointing in their direction. Okay do you have it written down? Let me tell you how Jesus said to get rid of worry. #1 Make God the Center of every area of my life. Vs 32-33. Friends we need to be reminded that worry is an indication of mixed values. Whenever I start worrying it means that something that is dear to me is outside of my relationship with Christ. Listen friends I’m trying to get you to see that Jesus should be the source of your life. If I want to experience peace of mind, then He must be a part of everything I care about. If I haven’t included Christ in my finances, then it will become a source of worry for me. If I haven’t included Him in my marriage, then my marriage will be a source of worry for me. Does that make sense? Any area that you don’t include God… will eventually become a source of worry for you, regardless whether that’s your job, your kids, your health, whatever it doesn’t matter. That’s what Jesus is trying to get us to see in this 33rd vs., in every area of your life focus on Jesus and He will see you through any and every situation. #2 Live just one day at a time. Vs 34. In other words, don’t open up your umbrella until it starts to rain. You know friends I have always been told there are two days of the week you should never worry… and that’s yesterday and tomorrow. Because when you fret over yesterday’s problems and worry about what might happen tomorrow you will miss the blessings of today. Matt. 6:11NIV. When the Lord taught us to pray he didn’t say give us our month’s allotment of bread. No… He wants us to depend on Him or trust Him one day at a time. #3 Trust God to care for the things beyond my control. I said it earlier but worry and trust are the exact opposites; they can’t survive in the same heart. When you allow worry into the front door of your heart… faith is sliding out the back. There are a lot of things in life that are beyond our control, but there is nothing that’s beyond God’s control. Phil. 4:6-7NLT. Friends if you don’t think your situation is worth praying about then it’s certainly not worth worrying about. But if you have something that’s causing you any kind of anxiety then you need to turn it over to God. Listen there are over 7,000 promises in His word, I think that will just about cover any struggle you might have. If God loves me enough to send His own son to die for me don’t you think He loves me enough to care for every other need that I might have? In 2 Chronicles there is a story about King Jehoshaphat of Israel, they were going out to battle and they were outnumbered 3 to 1, there was absolutely no way they could win this battle. And yet just as they were ready to go into battle God speaks through one of the men and says 2 Chronicles 20:15bNLT. Guys… what has you worried this morning? Finances, your health, a conflict in a marriage or relationship, your kids, what is it? Listen you are not a bad person if you worry, we are all guilty of it at times. And I know that some of you have going through some pretty difficult things in your life right now… so it’s hard for me to stand up here and say, “Don’t worry.” And yet guys at the same time Jesus told us to cast our care upon Him because He cares for us. So I would challenge you in 2019 to Quit Worry. God loves you and He wants the best for you to decide to trust Him. And why don’t you start today by giving him that one area of worry you wrote down earlier. Release the regrets from yesterday, refuse the fears of tomorrow and receive the peace he has for you today. Pray

God forgive me for allowing worry to take hold of my life, today I decide to Quit worry, to let go of my fears, to trust you with this area of my life, and God I would ask for your peace, a peace that passes all understanding, a peace that only comes with trusting you. In Jesus Name, Amen!