

## BREATH PRAYER | *Don't Worry; Be Loved*

Last week we practiced the art of letting go, releasing all of the trouble and turmoil of 2020, and opening ourselves up to the fresh blank page of 2021. But (as this week has already shown) there's still a ton of uncertainty in the air! Maybe some of us last week as we looked at that blank paper, thought "I don't even know what to write on here... WHAT to hope for from the year ahead."

The very good news of a life lived with God, is that even when we don't know what tomorrow will hold, **we know the One who holds tomorrow**. In Matthew 6:25-27, the writer tells us –

***Here is the bottom line: do not worry about your life. Don't worry about what you will eat or what you will drink. Don't worry about how you clothe your body. Living is about more than merely eating, and the body is about more than dressing up. Look at the birds in the sky. They don't store food for winter. They don't plant gardens. They don't sow or reap—and yet, they are always fed because your heavenly Father feeds them. And you are even more precious to God than a beautiful bird. If He looks after them, of course He will look after you. Worrying doesn't do any good; who here can claim to add even an hour to their life by worrying?***

This morning we want to practice a Breath Prayer to help train ourselves to truly **live out of that place of peace and trust in Jesus**. Breath Prayer is an ancient practice that aligns simple phrases with our natural breathing rhythm. That makes it an exercise that not only naturally/physiologically counters anxiety, but also makes it a really easy practice to engage in throughout your regular day.

So to begin, I want you to just start to pay attention to your breathing right now, maybe even slow it down a bit, take your breaths deeper than you were before. Let your shoulders relax, try to release any tension you might be holding in your body (hands, face, etc.) **[DEMONSTRATE]**

Matthew makes it sound very easy, doesn't he? "DON'T WORRY. It's simple, just don't do it." But to let go of worry, we've got to grab onto something else. What if this year you let go of worrying as an Olympic sport and instead grabbed onto **how deeply and dearly you are loved by God**? What if you made it your mission, every time worry starts to crouch at your door, to remind yourself that your job in this life, is to simply **be loved** by God? Knowing that he's got you. Your job is not to **do**, but to **be**.

As you take your next breath in, I want you to say (or think) simply the word "Be" **[DEMONSTRATE]**, and then as you exhale, "Loved" **[DEMONSTRATE]**. (Breathe in) **Be**. (Breathe out) **Loved**. Not perfect, not even good – just LOVED. So keep going with that, let it become a prayer. **[PRACTICE 30 secs]**

**[BLURRY – ON SCREEN: "Be Loved"]**

You're not an insignificant sparrow, you're not forgotten; God's eyes are focused on you. **[PRACTICE 30 secs]**

Now let's change the phrase ever so slightly, so that our prayer is also that we could *become* the Love of God, to those in the world around us. (Breathe in) **Be.** (Breathe out) **Love.** [\[PRACTICE 30 secs\]](#)

**[BLURRY – ON SCREEN: “Be Love”]**

Father I pray you would so permeate our hearts with your love, with your Being, that it transforms us at our very core. In Jesus, we pray, Amen.