

In John Chapter 14 Jesus said to his disciples, "Do not let your hearts be troubled".

Related to these words is a debate in some Christian circles about how many times the bible tells us not to worry or to be troubled.

Some Christians say there are 365 references to "Do not worry". One "Do not worry" for every day of the year. Others expand their search and argue there are more than 500 references in some way telling us not to worry.

No matter what you think about this argument, it is quite obvious that the bible sees worry and fear as something that stops us from becoming the people God would want us to be. Whether it's mentioned 365 times or more, it is obviously an important lesson the bible wishes to teach us.

The questions we then need to ask is "Do we worry?" and "Why do we worry?"

I can only answer those questions for myself. And I must admit to being a terrible worrier.

Despite this, as I have got older I have become more able to cope with the debilitating nature of worry and was hugely helped by a conversation I once had with my late father-in-law.

One thing I used to admire about him was his ability not to worry. One day I asked him about this and he simply said that most things people worry about don't happen, so why worry? And if things are going to happen, worrying isn't going to change anything and could make things worse. So there is no need to worry. He was absolutely right.

As Christians we also live in the light of God's love for us, and ultimately believe that no matter what happens to us in this world it is always God who has the final say.

I finish by quoting Mother Julian of Norwich. After a heavenly vision Mother Julian wrote, *'It was necessary that there should be sin; but all shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well.'*

This is a truth that is the same yesterday, today and forever.

Martin