

On the Present Moment

(By Nadia Bolz-Weber)

We share 98% of our DNA with chimpanzees. But that difference accounts for quite a bit of brain. And with these freakishly large brains, we can reason and argue and create art and obsess about lovers. And some of us can even do Calculus. It's true.

But what do we tend to do much more often with that extra 2% of brain? – WORRY. We even fool ourselves into believing that we need to do this. If we worry enough it will keep bad things from happening.

Now, the human brain is powerful thing, but it ain't that powerful. Not to mention... Jesus said, "Consider the ravens. They neither sow nor reap, and yet God feeds them. Consider the lilies of the field, they neither toil nor spin, and they're freaking gorgeous."

I wonder if he mentions birds and flowers in his tricky little diatribe against worrying because he knows what worrying costs us.

He said to let go of our anxieties about tomorrow because, and here he gets snarky, and I love me some snarky Jesus, he's like: "Who by worrying can add a single hour to the span of their life?"

Because who by worrying can ensure their children make good life choices?

Who by worrying can add a single dollar to their rent check?

Who by worrying can make a spouse love you more?

When all of this swirls through my brain on an endless loop, it does nothing to ensure I'm safe and loved. But what it does do is make me miss every good thing that's in front of me. Namely, it costs us the present moment.

I guarantee that if I'm in my head worrying about something, the last thing I will notice is if a bird is singing around me, and the second to the last thing I will notice are flowers.

So I'd like to think that Jesus' thing about not worrying is both permission to let go, and an invitation to enjoyment. It's like God's plan to avoid burn out. Because the gift of the present is the only thing that's real. Maybe you too live in anxiety or fear of the future.

So I invite you into the reality of this very moment – the place where God is always hanging out. This present moment is a gift to you from God. It is happening right now. And it's more real and more powerful and more eternal than anything you have to fear or resent or regret. It is life eternal.



(*Painting by Amy Lindenberger)