



## Part 12 – Do not worry, you of little faith

### Matthew 6:25-34

This section concludes chapter six and builds upon the previous section as the logical consequence of understanding Jesus' teaching on storing up treasures in heaven. The Christian who understands the reality of the transient nature of all earthly things, as well as the inability of humans to exercise control over the few resources they have, is forced to conclude that it is futile to worry and instead endeavors to trust God more and more for every need. Jesus' kindness to his people is especially evident in

passages such as this one, as he graciously and patiently gives abundant reason to rest in God our Father through faith.

<sup>25</sup> Therefore I tell you. Jesus introduces this section as the logical conclusion of the previous passage. Recognizing one's lack of control over possessions, and the futility of storing up temporary, corruptible treasures on earth, as well as being reminded that our call is to serve God alone, should produce a calm confidence in those who put their faith in God. But this is not the case, as Jesus makes clear by directing his teaching to "you of little faith."

### Do not be anxious

Do not be anxious. Anxiety is all too common, but is not benign, either physically or spiritually. Matthew 13:22 tells of the person who initially received Jesus' teaching, but "the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful." Perhaps a helpful perspective on anxiety is that it is "white noise" that keeps us from the stillness that faith affords—the stillness required to appreciate Jesus' teaching here.

### Anxious about what?

About your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Notice that Jesus does not simply mention food and clothing, but specifically *your life* and *your body*, by which he redirects our attention to the Author of our lives, and the Creator of our bodies. We tend to focus on the immediate needs we feel, instead of the greater reality of a created body, into which God breathed the breath of life! Jesus mentions the immediate needs as well. We are not to worry about food and clothing. Following the argument from the previous passage, we ought to arrive at this conclusion: You can't keep the weevils and the beetles out of your flour and rice, or the ants from finding your sugar. Nor can you keep the moths from finding your wool suit or dress. Ultimately, you have no power over the *keeping* of those things. So don't fret over the *getting* of those things.

Is not...? Jesus asks a rhetorical question, one that naturally produces a 'yes' answer. He essentially says, "Don't you agree that life [is] more than food, and the body more than clothing?" This is readily apparent when we stop and think but still we worry? Worry, then, is an inversion of the importance of these things. Food and clothing become more prominent in our minds. Complaining about not having the food you're in the mood for, or the clothing you prefer in front of certain people, is also an inversion. God made the body and gave it life. *That* truth should inform our emotions more than a frantic attitude toward food and clothing.

### God's tender care

In other places Jesus offers a strong rebuke to his disciples for lack of faith (see Matthew 8:26; 14:31; 16:8 for other instances of "you of little faith"), but this passage is saturated with tenderness. Not only does Jesus encourage his disciples not to worry—which they should already understand by faith—but he graciously adds two examples of God's tender care of His creatures. He encourages us to contemplate creation.

The birds of the sky. V. 26- Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. God who made them and gave them life, is the very one who feeds them and sustains the life He gave them. His follow up question, "are you not of more value than they?" requires us to conclude that the very One who gave humans bodies and the breath of life, did so with the intention of sustaining that life. A person can neither cause life to begin, nor control its duration. Thus, Jesus's question in v. 27 "And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life?" further illustrates the futility (and the distracting nature) of worry.

The flowers of the field. V. 28- And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin.

### Solomon's glory

V. 29- yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory. This statement is surprising, is it not? Consider 2 Chronicles 9:13-28, which describes Solomon's revenue as being 22 tons of gold each year and his throne unlike any other throne, made of ivory overlaid with gold. Even silver "was not considered as anything in the days of Solomon." 1 Kings 10, describes the reaction of the Queen of Sheba: "And when [she] had seen all the wisdom of Solomon, the house that he had built, the food of his table, the seating of his officials, and the attendance of his servants, their clothing, his cupbearers, and his burnt offerings that he offered at the house of the Lord, there was no more breath in her."

And yet Jesus says that King Solomon was not arrayed like one of these. That is significant because it highlights that the glory of man is as the flower of the field, and God does not marvel at man's riches the way that people do. The craftsman and the artist can only make works of beauty with what the Creator made first. But who can make a flower? Only the hand of God. We do well to marvel more at the works of God and less at the glory of man. Marveling at earthly treasures reveals an inclination to store up treasures on earth and produces worry for the getting of those things. Furthermore, marveling at the One who so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, leads to a deeper trust that he [will] much more clothe you.

O you of little faith? A lack of faith keeps us from dwelling on the obvious—that God is our good Father who cares for our every need—and causes us to ruminate on the many cares that reverberate in our hearts and minds and we miss the lessons of the birds and the flowers.

Faith is the answer to the questions that anxiety produces. V.31-Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' Those are practical questions that we must ask and answer every day. But in Christian homes, those questions are not to come from a worried mind. V. 32- For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. Who are the Gentiles? Those who have no saving knowledge of the true God, and do not know Him as their Father.

### True productivity

Jesus does not desire lackadaisical Christians. We are to work. V. 33- Our work is to be a conscious endeavor to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. Our more pressing concern is to know our God and Father and live lives that conform to His righteousness, trusting that what we need along the way will be provided by Him.

V. 34- Jesus already reminded his disciples that worry cannot increase one's lifespan. Here He gives another perspective on our relationship to time. "Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble. We are given one day at a time to do what is within our power to do. Anxiety would have us attempt to exercise power over a tomorrow, which is impossible (and which we may not even see). Jesus would have us remember our heavenly Father, serve him faithfully today, seeking his kingdom.

### Some concluding thoughts

- Do not worry about your life. Jesus came that you would have life abundantly.
- Do not worry about your body. Jesus came and offered his body for you. He shed his blood for you. Your heavenly Father will clothe you, in the righteousness of Christ, which is yours by faith.
- So do not worry, but seek first God's Kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you.
- You know this is true, because of Romans 8:32, "He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?"