

**Matthew 6:25-34****6:25**

**For this reason I say to you, do not be worried about your life, as to what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, as to what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?**

Matthew 6:19-24 challenged us to look at three pairs of alternatives: two treasures, two visions, two masters. We are to weigh them carefully before we commit ourselves to any, for whatever we choose will radically affect our attitude toward the other. "For this reason" ties verse 25-34 to these alternatives; just as earthly possessions can potentially depose God from His rightful position in our lives (6:24), so can worry.

As a child of God we have a single goal, a single vision, a single Master; therefore, we must not become distracted by a preoccupation with the world. We should not be anxious about the master we rejected, but focus our attention on the one we have chosen, for from Jesus' perspective attempts at divided loyalty don't reveal partial commitment, but betrayal.

Verses 26-34 teach us how we should put an end to worry.

**6:26**

**Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they?**

Verse 26 is an argument from lesser to greater, taken from God's providential care of inferior creatures and their dependence upon God.

"The Scriptures teach that irrational animals are the objects of God's providential care. He fashions their bodies, He calls them into the world, sustains them in being, and supplies their wants. In his hand is the life of every living thing (Job 12:10). The Psalmist says (104:21), "The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God." Verses 27, 28, "They all wait for You To give them their food in due season. You give to them, they gather it up; You open Your hand, they are satisfied with good." Matt. 6:26, "Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them." Acts 17:25, "He gives to all life and breath, and all things." Such representations are not to be explained away as poetical modes of expressing the idea that the laws of nature, as ordained of God, are so arranged as to meet the necessities of the animal creation, without any special intervention of his providence. . . . but that his creatures depend on the constant exercise of his care. He gives or withholds what they need according to his good pleasure. When our Lord put in the lips of his disciples the petition, "Give us this day our daily bread," He recognized the fact that all living creatures depend on the constant intervention of God for the supply of their daily wants" (Hodge, Systematic Theology, I, 587).

To worry about food and drink is to have learned nothing from creation. Birds live each day without any care or work of their own; they don't sow, they don't reap, they don't gather into barns. "They make no provision for the future themselves, and yet every day, as duly as the day comes, provision is made for them, and their eyes wait on God, that great and good Housekeeper, who provides food for all flesh" (Henry).

People are of much greater value than birds; if God cares for them, He will surely care for us. In a similar way Jesus said, "'Are not two sparrows sold for a cent? And yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. . . . So do not fear; you are more valuable than many sparrows.'" (Matt. 10:29, 31)

"There is a great deal of good to be learned from what we see every day, if we would but consider it (Prov. 6:6; 24:32)" (Henry).

### **6:27**

**And who of you by being worried can add a single cubit to his life?**

The KJV translates verse 26 as "Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?" Although this is a possible translation, the Greek word for stature" can also mean "life." This is preferred for the intent is to show that even the smallest things are out of our control. Since a cubit is a measurement of about 18 inches, and adding a "mere" 18 inches to one's height is not some small thing that people normally worry about, it seems best to assume that it is not a person's height that is in view. Rather, the "cubit" is probably metaphorical referring to a length of time added to one's life span (Carson, 180). A similar usage is in Psalm 39:4-5: O LORD, make me know my end and what is the measure of my days; let me know how fleeting I am! Behold, You have made my days as handbreadths, and my lifetime as nothing in Your sight; Surely every man at his best is a mere breath. Selah."

God has decreed a time when every man's life must end (Ps. 104:29-30; 139:16; Job 14:5) and no amount of worry can change that decree, so why worry at all?

### **6:28-30**

**And why are you worried about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin, yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, will He not much more clothe you? You of little faith!**

Clothing, like food, can also be a source of worry. However, once again the observation of the goodness of God in creation should teach us not to be anxious. Flowers do not work and yet they are beautifully clothed, and their beauty even surpasses that of Solomon (one of the most resplendent kings the world has ever known).

Again Jesus argues from lesser to greater. God clothes the grass with spectacular arrays of flowers even though it is destined to be cut down and burned up. If God clothes the grass, He will surely clothe His children.

"A Biblical cosmology coupled with observant eyes engender real trust in God. No wonder Jesus calls those who do not perceive these lessons, 'men of little faith' (6:30)." (Carson)

**6:31-32**

**Do not worry then, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear for clothing?' For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.**

In light of God's bountiful care, worry is really a personal affront to God. In fact, worry places the believer at the same level as the person who doesn't even know God.

First of all, worry shows that we are pursuing the same things that the unbelieving are pursuing and by doing so ignoring the values of the kingdom. But worry is also a denial of our profession that God is aware of our daily needs. The Gentiles worry because they are without God and do not understand His benevolent providence. When we worry we are living as if we believed like they do.

Trusting God for physical needs gives the Christian the opportunity to live a life distinct from unbelievers who never learn to trust God for basic necessities (Lk. 10:41, 42; Heb. 13:5, 6).

**6:33**

**But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.**

In Greek, the imperative 'seek' suggests an unceasing quest. The word translated "first" means "first in a line of more than one option." Of all the priorities of life, seeking God's kingdom should consistently be our number one priority.

Seeking God's kingdom means that we are doing what we can to promote God's rule over His creation; we should personally desire to enter it, submit to its norms, and live in such a way that we store up treasures there.

God's righteousness here must be understood as it is found in 5:6, 10, 20; 6:1 etc. To seek God's righteousness is to submit to the will of God as outlined in the Sermon on the Mount.

**6:34**

**So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.**

In view of God's promise to provide for His children, we should not worry about tomorrow. Jesus recognizes that each day will have problems that will occupy our time. Focus on today's problems today, tomorrow's problems tomorrow.

Each day has enough trouble of its own, but each day has enough grace for the day's troubles.

John 1:14-16 make this clear:

**14 And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.**

...

**16 For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace.**

"For" of verse 16 explains how we know that Christ is the full of the grace (v 14); namely, because "of His fullness we have all received grace upon grace."

"Of His fullness" is a theological expression referring to the fullness of the divine attributes which belong to Christ (Col. 1:19; 2:9). From the fullness of the attributes of God found in Christ, we have received grace.

The word translated as "upon" is *ἀντί* (anti) in Greek which (among other things) means "instead of" or "in place of". It carries the idea of substitution and was used of the exchange in a sale (Luke 11:11: "a serpent *for* a fish"). The idea here is that new grace comes and supersedes the old grace. As the days come and go a new supply of grace takes the place of the grace already bestowed as a wave follows a wave upon the shore - there is no limit to its supply (Robertson, Gramm. 574; Bruce, 43; Morris, 110).

Today's grace is for today's troubles; tomorrow's grace for tomorrow's troubles, but there is always a supply of grace to meet the needs of each day. God told Paul, "'My grace is sufficient for you" (2 Cor. 12:9), and Lamentations 3:22-23 promises that the Lord's lovingkindness and compassions never cease or fail. They are "new every morning."

Don't be anxious about tomorrow's troubles, for troubles and mercies are only appointed one day at a time. God only supplies grace as it is needed to meet the trouble at hand; He does not supply it in advance. In Hebrews it says, "Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help *in time of need*" – not "that we may find grace before we need it" (Heb. 4:16).

We must never forget that there's something different between the experience of faith for tomorrow's grace, and the actual experience of grace itself. Faith is the confidence that God will supply grace when it is needed. But in spite of the peace that God can provide to us today for tomorrow's trials, we do not *experience* tomorrow's grace until tomorrow's trials actually come. This is why there is such a battle that goes on in our minds. "We want the feeling of adequacy today for what we will have to go through tomorrow. But God says, Trust me. I will give it to you when you need it" (Piper).

Many of us have fears about the future. Would we reject God if He took our children from us? Would we continue to trust Him if, like Job, we lost all we had? Could we die for Christ or be tortured without denying our faith?

The point that Jesus is making is that you don't have to know the answers to these questions now. As you sit reading this paper, God is not asking you to have confidence that you will be strong in the midst of death.

That is not today's trouble for you. It may be tomorrow's trouble. What God calls you to do is to trust that when your time of testing comes, He will give you the strength when you need it.

"So we must not compound today's load with fretting over tomorrow's. We must not doubt God and say, "I have no more strength; so tomorrow will be impossible to live." That's not true. You will not be asked to live tomorrow on today's strength. What you need today is not tomorrow's strength, but today's faith that tomorrow's mercies will be new and will be enough" (Piper).

- "He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might he increases strength" (Isaiah 40:29).
- "May you be strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy" (Colossians 1:11).
- "Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy" (1 Timothy 6:17).

#### CONCLUSION:

In these verses Jesus gave us at least 5 reasons not to worry:

- 1) If God cares for lesser creation, we can be confident that He will surely care for us, too.
- 2) The future is in God's hands –we can't change even the smallest things- so why worry?
- 3) The Gentiles worry because they do not believe in a benevolent, powerful, all-knowing God- worrying makes us no different than they are – don't be like them.
- 4) Worry distracts us from our ability to seek first God's kingdom and His righteousness; it is being enslaved to the old master.
- 5) Each day has an allotted amount of trouble and grace. God will provide the grace we need when the trouble arises, so we don't need to worry. Tomorrow's grace will show up on time