



“Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you” (Matthew 6:33).

The Cure for Anxious Care

Lesson Subject: The Christian must trust and not worry.

L100. Date: October 1983. **Text:** Matthew 6:25-34.

Topic: Jesus: Teachings of; Worry.

Whom do you trust?

To whom do you look for the supply of daily needs? Do you depend upon yourself, your investments, your salary from an employer, or your skill to render a service for which others will pay you? If you look to any of those, your confidence and expectation is misplaced.

To whom do you look for the supply of daily needs? Do you look to God as your heavenly Father who knows and cares? If you look to Him, your confidence is well placed.

One of the most profitable lessons you will ever learn is that God is the source of your supply. He may supply by means of your wise investments or skilled service, but it is He who supplies. He may supply through the benevolent offering of a Christian somewhere, but it is He who supplies.

A businessman had a plaque on the wall of his office that read, “Why pray when you can worry?” He said he looked at it often and was reminded to trust God in the decisions of business and not to fret over them. That is somewhat the message Jesus gives in Matthew 6:25-34. “The Christian must trust and not worry.”

I. BE CONCERNED ABOUT MAJOR ISSUES (Matthew 6:25)

What are the things concerning which most people worry? They worry about having a place to live, enough food to eat, and sufficient clothes to wear. Jesus said those were the very things concerning which we should not

worry.

The term “*take no thought*” (verse 25) might be misunderstood. It does not mean “make no plans; provide no supplies.” It means not to be worried, fretful, or filled with care. The basic meaning of the word is “to be divided.” Here is a person assured one moment and worried the next moment. Jesus is saying, “Do not be anxious; stop worrying; put away anxious thoughts.”

A person who worries will be concerned in two areas: how to sustain life and how to protect the body. The first deals with food and water, the second with raiment and shelter. Neither is a proper subject for Christians to become fretful.

Life is greater than its needs. Any of us would rather live on limited rations than to give up our lives. We would prefer to live without shoes than to have our feet amputated. Worry about food, water, and clothes is concern about the wrong thing.

Jesus said, “*Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?*” (verse 25). Of course! He who worries about food and clothing is majoring on the minors. Let him be concerned rather with serving and pleasing God. Life is greater than its needs.

II. REMEMBER THE PROVIDENTIAL CARE OF GOD (Matthew 6:26-30)

The Bible term providence means “to see before.” It is used to refer to God seeing a need before it arises and providing to meet that need before it comes. And that is just what God has done for us!

The providing before of God is seen in His creation of water before the creation of creatures that live in water, of sky before the winged fowl, of dry land and vegetation before man and animals which live on the land and eat the vegetation. He had seed before birds that eat the seed. And He has provided in advance for every need we have today.

Before you set your heart to worry, remember the providential care of God over you and all His creation.

A. God's providential care is illustrated in fowls and fields (verses 26, 28, 29). Jesus said concerning the birds, “*They sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them*” (verse 26). How does God feed the fowl of the air? He feeds them daily, for they do not store up for tomorrow's need. He feeds them by providing, and they receive His provision by seeking. Someone has said, “God feeds the birds, but He does not place it in their nests.” The birds must make an effort to receive God's provisions for them.

“Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these” (verses 28, 29). “Consider” occurs only here in the Greek text. It means to consider carefully with a view to learning. Anyone who examines God's work in nature will conclude that He is faithful also to provide for mankind.

Birds are not idle, neither are they worried. Lilies grow, but they grow from within by the provision God gives them through the soil.

God will provide for the Christian through his diligence in work for the necessities of life. But those provisions are not an end in themselves. They are only to enable us to preserve and strengthen a life dedicated to the service of God.

B. You will cease to worry and fret when you learn the lesson of God's providential care for His own. Therefore, the truth is applied to you by your Lord Jesus.

Concerning God's care of the birds, Jesus asked, *“Are ye not much better than they?”* (verse 26). Indeed you are! Jesus said, *“Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows”* (Matthew 10:29-31).

You have been made in the image and likeness of God. You have been redeemed by the sacrifice of God's own dear Son. You are precious to God. God will take care of you.

III. EMPHASIZE YOUR PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP TO GOD

(Matthew 6:31, 32) Here is the key, *“Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things”* (verse 32).

A. You are not alone to feed, water, and clothe yourself as the heathen think themselves to be alone. *“After all these things do the Gentiles seek”* (verse 32).

Pagans have no concept of one God who is a loving Father. To them there are many gods. Each god is jealous, vengeful, and unpredictable. Ancient mythology tells that life was dreary for man before he had fire. Prometheus took fire and brought it to man. The chief god Zeus was so angry that he had Prometheus bound to a rock on an island in the sea. He was exposed to heat in the day and cold at night. A bird of prey would come to tear out his liver, for it to grow back again to be torn out again. That is the way the gods would treat a god who dared help man. No wonder the pagans thought they were on their own in getting food and raiment.

B. The Christian has a heavenly Father; who knows each need and prepares each provision even before He is asked. What a reason to rejoice and cease from all worry!

The Christian does not have to fret about food. He just prays, “*Give us this day our daily bread*” (Matthew 6:11). Of such a request Jesus said, “*What man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?*” (Matthew 7:9-11). All frettings cease when the Christian remembers that God is his Father.

As a loving father, God assumes responsibility for us. “*Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him*” (Psalm 103:13). “*No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly*” (Psalm 84:11).

“Said the Sparrow to the Robin, 'I would really like to know / What makes these human beings rush about and worry so! / Said the Robin to the Sparrow, 'Friend, I think that it must be / That they have no heavenly Father, such as cares for you and me' “ (Anonymous).

IV. GIVE PRIORITY TO THE KINGDOM OF GOD (Matthew 6:33)

You will not worry if you will place affairs of God's kingdom as more important than the affairs of your personal life. Jesus said it this way, “*Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you*” (Matthew 6:33).

There are three elements in that verse. (1) You are to be concerned about the reign of God — the will of God — on earth. You are to seek His kingdom first. (2) You are to live as a recipient of the imputed righteousness of God which you received at your conversion to Christ. (3) You are to draw upon your inheritance as an heir to the riches of God for the supply of all your needs. Those three truths put us on shouting ground!

What are the riches of God which are available to provide for the children of God? To a church fussing over favorite preachers, Paul wrote, “*Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are your's; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are your's; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's*” (1 Corinthians 3:21-23). Everything belongs to you (even the world and all it has) because you belong to Christ and Christ belongs to God. That is what Jesus meant when He said, “*Blessed are the meek: for they shall*

inherit the earth” (Matthew 5:5). And indeed they have in Jesus Christ!

V. TRUST EACH DAY TO GOD (Matthew 6:34)

Do not fret over what shall be the need tomorrow; tomorrow can take care of itself. Each day has its own troubles, and it is useless and senseless to heap the troubles of one day into another. That is the meaning of Matthew 6:34. Apply it to your own circumstances.

Jesus warns us not to be fretful about the future. Today is that tomorrow we worried about yesterday. Each tomorrow will have its provisions from our heavenly Father *“who daily loadeth us with benefits”* (Psalm 68:19). Jeremiah wrote of God, *“His compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness”* (Lamentations 3:22, 23).

Why do people worry? *“It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows”* (Psalm 127:2). That does not change one thing to good or bad. *“Be careful (fretful, anxious, worried, filled with doubt or dismay) for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus”* (Philippians 4:6, 7).

Are you filled with anxious care? You can come to God, *“casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you”* (1 Peter 5:7). Why not do it now? Whatever is worrying you — all your anxieties, worries, and concerns — cast them once for all upon Him. He cares for you affectionally and cares about you watchfully. He is your Father!

The Christian must trust and not worry. To trust honors God and strengthens man. To worry dishonors God and weakens man. Worry adds nothing but more worries. Faith grows as it sees God prove himself faithful. *“Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the LORD JEHOVAH is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation”* (Isaiah 12:2).

QUESTIONS

1. How does Philippians 4:19 relate to this study?
2. What does it mean to *“take no thought”* in verse 25?
3. What does it mean that *“the life-is more than meat”* in verse 25?
4. What is the providence of God?
5. How does God's providence in nature call us to trust Him?
6. What assurance is there in seeing God as your Father?

7. What advantage does the Christian have over the non-Christian in times of need?
8. What assurance is there in Philippians 4:6?
9. How can you live in the spirit of Isaiah 12:2?