

Do Not Worry

Matthew 6:25-34

Intro

*As we continue our verse-by-verse study of the Gospel of Matthew this morning, I'd like to share a few verses that highlight the fact that **“God works in mysterious ways”**...*

Let's turn first of all to...

Deuteronomy 29:29 (NKJV)

“The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.”

Now let's turn to...

Isaiah 55:8-9 (NKJV)

**8 “For My thoughts are not your thoughts,
Nor are your ways My ways,” says the LORD.**

**9 “For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
So are My ways higher than your ways,
And My thoughts than your thoughts.”**

Next, please turn to...

Romans 11:33-34 (NKJV)

33 Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!

**34 “For who has known the mind of the LORD?
Or who has become His counselor?”**

*Now what does this all have to do with the title of our message —
Do Not Worry...*

Simply this — since it is impossible for us to fully understand all that God is doing in the life circumstances that we find ourselves in, we have a tendency to *worry...*

- *We can't see how He's **working** — we can't understand where the situation is **going** — so we begin to **worry...***

Now, before we go any further I want to define the word **worry...**

*According to the American Heritage Dictionary, **worry** is defined in the following ways...*

“To feel uneasy about, be troubled; to pull, bite, or tear at something; to cause to feel anxious, distressed; to bother; annoy; to grasp and tug at repeatedly; to touch, press or handle idly; toy with; mental uneasiness; a source of nagging concern...”

Now, it is especially interesting to note that the English word **worry** comes from a German word meaning **“to struggle or choke”...**

This idea connects to what the Lord Jesus taught in the Parable of the Soils...

Matthew 13:22 (NKJV)

“Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful.”

And this is what worry does — it **chokes** the word of God in our lives and we become unfruitful...

Or as the song “Lay It Down” puts it...

***Filled with all those anxious thoughts
And your doubts became your god***

This is what worry does — it so fixes our focus on our troubles so that *our doubts become our god*...

- Thankfully, the Lord Jesus understands all of this — He knows what is in our hearts...

And He offers us the only remedy for a life of worry...

Instead of fixating on our fears, the Lord Jesus commands us to **fix our focus on the Father and His Kingdom**...

- You see, our worries reveal the unflattering truth that we are **focused on our own little kingdoms**...

We want to **control outcomes** — we want things to turn out well for ourselves and for those we love...

But this life, this world, this universe — none of it belongs to us...

I love what Dallas Willard wrote on this subject in Renovation of the Heart...

“Those are surely right who have recognized in pride the root of all disobedience. We think we are ‘big enough’ to take our lives into our own hands and disobey, instead of [humbling ourselves] under the mighty hand of God’ (1 Peter 5:6). And this will certainly be driven by the thought that if we do not take things into our own hands, we will not get what we want—another blow to our pride. Our attitude should be, to the contrary, that there is no particular reason why I should get what I want, because I am not in charge of the universe.”

So, as we consider the words of the Lord Jesus this morning...

We will be called to surrender the false kingdoms of our own making and instead seek first His kingdom and His righteousness...

- As we do so, we will be in a position to receive the things that the Lord wants to give to us...

With this in mind, please follow along as I read the passage that we will be studying this morning...

Matthew 6:25-34 (NKJV)

25 “Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?

26 Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?

27 Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?

28 “So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin;

29 and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

30 Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?

31 “Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’

32 For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.

33 But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

34 Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

Let's move into our first section...

1) You are Valuable (vs 25-30)

*In this section we will see that the Lord Jesus tells us not to worry because we are **valuable** to the Father...*

25 “Therefore

*In order to understand this **Therefore** we must remind ourselves of the context — and we find the context in...*

Matthew 6:24 (NKJV)

“No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.”

This helps us understand what we read as we continue on in vs 25...

Therefore, I say to you, do not worry

The idea is that since **God is our Master** we are not to worry — God is a good Master who cares for His servants — He will provide for all that His servants need...

- Now, the phrase **do not worry** here in vs 25 carries the idea of “*stop worrying and never start again*”... 😬

The Lord Jesus knows that we worry and He is calling us to put an end to this habit *immediately* — *and never start it up again*...

- With that said, I realize that some of us are lifetime worriers...

And you are thinking to yourself that this is an impossible task — that there is no way that you can stop worrying...

- But there is a Calvary Chapel saying that helps us here — and it simply states that **“God’s calling is God’s enabling”**...

In other words, if God commands you to do something then He also gives you the ability to do that thing...

- ***You see, if God calls you to be an author then He will give you a love for words and a story to tell...***
- ***If God calls you to be a surgeon then He will give you a sharp mind and a strong stomach...***
- ***If God calls you not to worry (and He does) then He will give you everything you need to obey that command...***

The Apostle Paul commanded something very similar to the Lord Jesus’ “do not worry” in...

Philippians 4:6-7 (NKJV)

6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;

7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

- [expand on **praying** instead of **worrying** — *prayer does something helpful* — *worry is only harmful...*]

With that said, as we continue on in **Matthew 6** we must *choose to believe that worrying is **optional** — that worry is **not mandatory**...*

- We must admit to ourselves that worrying is a **choice** — we can either ***choose to worry*** or ***choose not to worry***...

Moving on in Matthew 6:25 we read...

do not worry about your life,

life — *all of who you are; physical, mental, emotional, spiritual...*

You see, when we worry about our **life** we are focused on the survival of these parts of ourselves...

- But these aspects of ourselves — the physical, the mental, the emotional and the spiritual — were not made for **worry** — they were made for **worship**...

This is made clear as the Lord Jesus shared the Greatest Commandment in...

Luke 10:27 (NKJV)

...“ **You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart [emotional], with all your soul [spiritual], with all your strength [physical], and with all your mind [mental],’ ...”**

- The difficult truth is that *worry misdirects our focus* — instead of spending our energy in **God-focused worship** we degenerate into **self-focused worry**...

Continuing on in Matthew 6:25 we read...

do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?

Here the Lord Jesus focuses on necessities of life — *food, drink and clothing...*

*And as we move into vs 26 we see why we are not to worry about these things — because we are **valuable** to the Father!...*

26 Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?

Here the Lord Jesus reminds us that **birds** are *not farmers* — birds do not **sow** and they do not **reap**...

*Even so, **the birds** find food on a daily basis — because they go looking for it...*

- [expand on **the birds** being a picture of daily dependence on God...]

Remember what the Lord Jesus taught us to pray in the Model Prayer...

“Give us this day our daily bread.”

*So we are not to **worry** — but we are to **work**...*

2 Thessalonians 3:10 (NKJV)

For even when we were with you, we commanded you this: If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat.

The Lord is calling us to **work** — but He is commanding us not to **worry**...

We are not to worry — we are to trust that God will honor our work and provide for us because we are valuable to Him...

John 16:26-27 (NKJV)

26 “In that day you will ask in My name, and I do not say to you that I shall pray the Father for you;

27 for the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from God.”

The idea is that since the Father provides for the birds of the air, He will provide for those who are made in His image and who have been born-again by His Spirit — because He loves them...

As we move into vs 27, the Lord Jesus gives another reason not to worry...

27 Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?

I think the ESV more accurately translates this verse as...

“And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life?”

Here the Lord Jesus is telling us not to worry because worry **does not do anything constructive — worry is not additive...**

- In fact, far from **lengthening** life, worry actually **shortens** life...

Dr. Charles Mayo of the famous Mayo Clinic wrote...

“Worry affects the circulation, the heart, the glands and the whole nervous system. I have never met a man or known a man to die of overwork, but I have known [many] who died of worry.”

Moving on to vs 28 & 29 we read...

**28 “So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin;
29 and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.**

The idea is that the best clothing cannot compare with what God creates — and all human clothing eventually falls out of fashion or wears out...

APPLICATION — We are to have perspective when it comes to clothing — our life is not about what we wear — it is about who we are...

Continuing on to vs...

30 Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?

In context, the Lord Jesus is including **the lilies of the field** that He just spoke about...

- The idea is that the beautiful flowers of the field die quickly and are used for fuel in bread ovens...

And if the Lord so clothes **temporary** flowers, won't He clothe us, people who will live **forever** with Him?...

*For more on this subject of being **clothed** by our Heavenly Father, would you please turn to...*

2 Corinthians 5:1-4 (NKJV)

1 For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

2 For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven,

3 if indeed, having been clothed, we shall not be found naked.

4 For we who are in this tent groan, being burdened, not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life.

- So, since we trust the Lord to clothe us with a resurrected body — we should trust Him to clothe our earthly body...

*Now, as we turn back to Matthew 6:30 please notice how the Lord Jesus finishes this verse with the phrase — **O you of little faith?**...*

And this is a common phrase used by the Lord Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew...

- He uses it in **Matthew 8** when He and the disciples were caught in a storm...

He uses it in **Matthew 14** when Peter got his eyes on the waves and began to sink...

- He uses it in **Matthew 16** when warning the disciples about the Pharisees' teaching...

And it seems safe to say that the Lord Jesus could use this phrase in reference to **us** as well...

Because we are those of little faith — we trust God for forgiveness, for salvation, for deliverance from death and hell, for entrance into heaven...

And yet we often do not trust Him for our daily food & drink, for our shelter & clothing...

- That just doesn't make sense — if we trust Him for the **greater** — for the **spiritual** and the **eternal** — then we should trust Him for the lesser — for the **physical** and the **temporary**...

*But how do we move from being those of **little faith** to those of **great faith**?...*

Romans 10:17 (NKJV)

So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

As we learn to trust the **Word of God** more than **our own feelings** we will find our faith growing...

With that said, let's move now to our second section — here we will see that you are not to worry because...

2) You are Believers (vs 31-32)

31 “Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’

32 For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.

Gentiles — *lit. “people” or “multitude”; refers to unbelievers...*

seek — *eagerly seek, strive after, long for...*

In other words, unbelievers are characterized by their **pursuit of stuff** — and this pursuit doesn't stop when their needs are met...

- Theirs is a insatiable desire for the best food and clothing, the latest vehicles and electronics, the finest homes and most luxurious vacations...

The Apostle Paul warned against this sort of misdirected focus in...

1 Timothy 6:6-8 (NKJV)

6 Now godliness with contentment is great gain.

7 For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.

8 And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content.

Look again if you would at the last part of Matthew 6:32...

For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.

The Lord Jesus reminds us as believers that our Father knows that we need all these things and as a good Father He will be sure to provide for us...

- Our Father knows that we need food & drink, clothing & shelter so we are to trust Him for it...

I love what the Lord Jesus said earlier in this chapter...

Matthew 6:7-8 (NKJV)

7 “And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words.

8 Therefore do not be like them. For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him.”

This brings us now to our final section...

3) You are Focused (vs 33-34)

In this section we will see that we are not to worry because we are to be focused on God and His kingdom...

33 But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

But — *used in the sense of “rather” or “instead”...*

In other words, instead of making food, drink and clothing our primary focus, we are to make God’s **kingdom** and His **righteousness** our primary focus...

- *It takes a passion to conquer a passion — **our passion for God’s kingdom and His righteousness** must replace **our passion for worry**...*

Faith in God and His **kingdom** and **His righteousness** must replace the **fear** we have regarding what we are afraid of losing...

- The key to success in this area of life — as in all areas of life — is **focus**...

If we are to overcome **the sin of worry**, we must cultivate **a single-minded focus on God, His kingdom and His righteousness**...

*As we continue to look at **Matthew 6:33** I want to draw your attention to the word...*

seek — *to try to gain, to strive after with determination...*

first — *first of all, first in importance...*

- [ex. in an emergency situation first responders **seek first** to save people — property is not their concern — if they have to cut your car open or ruin your clothes to save you that's what they are going to do...]

Moving on in Matthew 6:33 we read...

seek first the kingdom of God

*And to help us make better sense of this vital issue, let's consider a 3-part focus related to **seeking** the kingdom of God...*

Focus #1 — seek to make disciples — *when a person is born-again, God comes into their life and establishes His kingdom within them...*

- [ex. believers are mobile outposts for the kingdom of God — everywhere we go, the kingdom of God comes near...]

Focus #2 — seek personal sanctification — *as we submit to God in more and more areas of our lives, God's kingdom is expanded in our lives and we become more of a blessing to others...*

Focus #3 — seek Jesus' return — *as we set our hope on the return of Christ we will be continually reminded that His kingdom is what matters...*

Continuing on in Matthew 6:33 we read...

seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness,

Righteousness speaks of that which is *right* — that which is *just*...

*As we seek the Father's will to be done on earth as it is in heaven we are seeking God's **righteousness**...*

- We are desiring that God's **purposes**, **plans** and **priorities** be foremost in *our lives* and in *the lives of others*...

Seeking God's righteousness also leads to **worship** — we worship God because He is completely *right* and therefore worthy of our worship...

- And His righteousness — as we recognize how beautiful it is — prompts a desire in us to be like Him — we will want to be righteous as well...

Now to the last part of vs 33...

and all these things shall be added to you.

As we **seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness**, God will make sure that all our needs are taken care of...

Philippians 4:19 (NKJV)

...my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

- [expand on the need for faith in putting the **spiritual** before the **physical** — naturally we do the opposite...]

Let's move on to our final verse...

34 Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

The big idea is that **today** is the only day that we can do anything about...

- With that said, we should take time to **learn from the past** and **plan for the future** — but **today** is the only day that we can do that...

Today is the only day that we can **seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness** — no one has ever lived in a *yesterday* or in a *tomorrow* — we can only live in *today*...

CS Lewis in Screwtape Letters

“...humans live in time but [God] destines them to eternity. He therefore, I believe, wants them to attend chiefly to two things, to eternity itself, and to that point of time which they call the Present. For the Present is the point at which time touches eternity. Of the present moment, and of it only, humans have an experience analogous to the experience which [God] has of reality as a whole; in it alone freedom and actuality are offered them. He would therefore have them continually concerned either with eternity (which means being concerned with Him) or with the Present—either meditating on their eternal union with, or separation from, Himself, or else obeying the present voice of conscience, bearing the present cross, receiving the present grace, giving thanks for the present pleasure.”

The big takeaway is that we are to be faithful stewards of **today**...

- **Today** is the only day that we can obey the will of God...

Today is the only day that we can seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness...

*Let us do what God has called us to do **today**...*

Conclusion

*So, as we close our time together — I want to challenge myself — and you as well — with the words of the Lord Jesus — “**Do not worry**”...*

And the Lord Jesus gives us 3 reasons why we are not to worry...

1) Do not worry because you are valuable to the Father...

2) Do not worry because you are believers and the Father knows what you need...

3) Do not worry because you are to be focused on the Father’s Kingdom and righteousness...

Let’s pray...