

Gaining Victory over Worry # 18

Matthew 6: 25-34

Tonight we have read a portion of Scripture that we can all relate to. I am sure that some of us are worse than others, but we all have occasions in life when we worry. I know that I am guilty of worrying needlessly many times. We may not like to consider it, but worry is actually a sin. When we worry, we are doubting God, lacking genuine faith in Him.

We are not the first generation to experience worry and anxiety. When we study the Bible we find many occasions where people worried and doubted God. Worry is part of the fallen nature of humanity. We are filled with a sense of self-preservation, and far too often we depend more on ourselves or surrounding influences than we do God. Consider a study that I discovered that is quite interesting, putting things in proper perspective. *“A doctor once made a catalog of the worries of his patients. He found that 40% of them worried over things which never happened. And 30% of the worries were over past matters which were now beyond their control. Then 12% were anxious over their health, although their only illness was in their imagination. And 10% worried over their families and friends and neighbors, although in most cases these people were endowed with enough common sense to look after themselves. Finally, only 8% of the worries had real causes which needed attention. If the doctor's analysis was correct, nine-tenths of our worries are entirely useless and are unworthy of concern.”*¹

Let's take a few moments to consider the teaching of our Lord regarding the [conditions](#) of worry and anxiety as we think on: [Gaining Victory over Worry](#).

I. The Exhortation in the Text (25) – *Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?* Jesus offers an exhortation concerning worry. Consider:

A. The Directive – *Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on.* Here Jesus commands us to take no thought for our lives concerning what we shall eat, drink, or wear. We are well aware that these are not luxurious items, but necessities for all people. We must have food to eat and clothes to wear if we are to survive, but we must not allow those things to consume our being. It is possible to worry so over day to day things that we lose focus of spiritual things. Many times the worries of life are over the day to day things anyway. If we live a life consumed with worry, we will be of little benefit to anyone, and certainly miss out on what the Lord has for us.

B. The Discernment (25a) – We must be cautious as we look at these words of our Lord. We must receive them as they are given. Jesus has instructed that we don't allow worry and anxiety to consume our lives, but this is not a license for laziness. Jesus does not imply that we are to sit around and expect someone else to provide for us. This is not an admonition against planning and making provision for the future. God expects us to do what we can to provide for our daily existence, and He fully expects us to put forth the necessary effort for our families. 1 Tim.5:8 – But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel. 2 Thes.3:10 – For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat. Prov.28:19 – He that tilleth his land shall have plenty of bread: but he that followeth after vain persons shall have poverty enough.

C. The Devotion (25b) – *Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?* As we will discuss in a moment, God is faithful and will provide for His own. Sadly many forsake the things of the Lord for the things of this world. Many focus entirely upon the worldly material possessions in life and fail to seek the spiritual. Food and raiment are necessary, but we must guard against allowing the desire for these things to keep us from that which God desires. Mark 8:36 – *For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?* Phil.3:19 – *Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.)* Is.61:10 – *I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.* The physical man must eat, but we cannot neglect the spiritual man. This physical body is temporal, but the spirit is eternal and will dwell forever.

I. The Exhortation in the Text (25)

II. The Consideration in the Text (26-30) – Here our Lord uses common illustrations to prove the love and care of God for humanity. Notice:

A. The Fowls of the Air (26-27) – *Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?* [27] *Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?* Take just a moment to consider the countless millions of birds that inhabit earth. They do not sow a crop or reap one. They do not gather a great harvest into a barn. They are fed by the Master's hand. Each day they wake their needs are the same and each day their needs are met. They are expected to

search for their food, often spending the bulk of their waking hours feeding, but God is faithful to them nonetheless. He cares for them because they are His creation.

- **Are ye not much better than they?** Surely if God will care for the birds of the air, He will care for those whom He has purchased in redemption. Just as with the birds, we have to put forth the necessary effort many times to receive the provision of God, but He is faithful to us. Each day we wake our needs are much the same and each day He provides for us. How many of us went without a meal today? How many missed a meal this week because there was nothing to eat? We will have to agree that God is good and merciful to us.
- **Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?** Jesus goes on to speak about senseless worry. The word **stature** has the idea of *height*, but it can also refer to *age or time*. I can't add one inch to my height through worry, and I can't add one second to my life through much anxiety. We have to live our lives before the Lord, seeking to please Him, and trust Him to continue His care for us!

B. The Flowers of the Field (28-30) – **And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: [29] And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. [30] Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?** God provides food for the birds and raiment for the field. As I ponder these verses, I picture a field in the spring time, covered with beautiful flowers in bloom. God adorns His creation with beauty and He will care for us in the same way. If He is concerned enough to clothe the fields with beautiful flowers, how much more does He care for us. The flowers of the field last only a short time and they are gone. We have been purchased by His blood. He is preparing a place in heaven for us to dwell eternally. Surely God would meet our needs!

- We must believe and trust Him by faith. Faith in God is the key to overcoming worry. As I look back over my life, I realize that I have been blessed beyond measure. God has never failed me yet, and I have no reason to think He would now.

I. The Exhortation in the Text (25)

II. The Consideration in the Text (26-30)

III. The Expectation in the Text (31-34) – As Jesus closes out His thoughts concerning worry and anxiety, He offers a simple and yet profound expectation for each of us. This involves:

A. A Life of Faith (31-32) – Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? [32] (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. We must not worry over these things. Our Father knows every need we have and He is faithful to supply. We must trust Him by faith to meet our needs as He has in the past.

- I sought to consider the words that our Lord had just shared. The birds are not filled with senseless worry over their next meal. They go about their daily routine expecting to find what they need to survive. The fields of the earth do not lie all winter wondering if the flowers will come up in the spring. We just enjoy the beauty that they add. I know our lives are much more complex than the fowls of the air of the fields of this earth, but we too can rejoice in the provision of our Lord. He cares for us and He will provide for our daily needs.

B. A Life of Focus (33) – But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. God is faithful to His own. If we will seek to put God first in our lives, making Him the priority with a desire to please Him, we can rest assured that He will provide the necessary things in this life.

- Those who seek pleasures and wealth over the Lord often live empty lives. They worry and agonize over what they have obtained and are consumed with a desire for more. Those who put their trust in the Lord and seek to please Him may not have the abundance of this world's riches, but their needs are supplied and they live filled with the abundance of God. I had much rather have the abundance our Lord gives than all this world has to offer!

C. A Life of Fulfillment (34) – Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. Here we discover a profound truth. Don't seek to live in tomorrow while it is yet today. Why worry over the troubles of tomorrow that may never come? Take it a day and a time trusting in the Lord. He has brought us safely through thus far and He isn't about to abandon us now. Today will have enough concerns and trials to deal with without trying to solve the problems of tomorrow even before they arise. We ought to seek to live each day to the fullest, enjoying the richness of God's blessing every day. Contentment in the Lord today will always result in a fulfilled life!

We have discussed very simple and yet very profound truths. I am sure that we can all relate to what our Lord has said. We all face times of worry, anxiety, and doubt. I pray that you have come to a greater realization that all of that is unnecessary. We need to trust in the Lord by faith and rely solely upon Him. Even when you can't see the way clear, trust by faith.

Maybe you are here tonight and you don't have the assurance of salvation. You don't know the peace of God within your heart. Maybe you haven't come to the place that you are able to trust the Lord will all of your needs. I can assure you that He is faithful and He is able. Whatever need you have, He can provide!

¹ Encyclopedia of 15,000 Illustrations: Signs of the Times.