

What matters will free us from worry



CITY BIBLE FORUM

What matters in life – Sermon on the Mount - Session 7ⁱ ¹

To explore how being a follower of Jesus means we don't need to worry because God will look after us and provide for our needs (from Matthew 6:25-34)

Matthew 6:25-34 ²⁵ “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes?

²⁶ Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? ²⁷ Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?

²⁸ “And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. ²⁹ Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. ³⁰ If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith?

³¹ So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ ³² For the pagans² run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. ³³ But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

³⁴ Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

Q1. What do you find yourself worrying about?

Q2. What are some common solutions you or others you know have for worry?

¹ Scripture taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version, NIV, Copyright 1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society.

² pagans: (in this context) people who do not believe or trust in God

Jesus knows that we worry. Like most friends, he tells us not to worry. But unlike most people, he gives special reasons why we should and need not worry – reasons that we can be confident in.

Before we find out what Jesus' answer is to our worries, let's do a quick review of what we have learnt so far.

From previous weeks

You will remember from the last few weeks that what matters to God is where our heart lies. The Pharisees, who were part of the religious leadership in Jesus' day, were extremely zealous in their devotion to God and were focused on keeping the 613 laws.

However, Jesus reminds us that God is concerned about our heart and that following God is not a matter of having to keep rules, but to truly follow him from your heart.

Jesus then gives examples of how God looks at the heart. For example, it's not about whether you murder someone, but about whether you are angry with someone. And it's not just about whether you love your neighbour – it's about whether you love your enemy.

Instead of doing things in front of other people to gain their approval, Jesus teaches us to do things in secret. Secrecy safeguards sincerity, because it shows that you are willing to do something when only God can see what you do. And God will reward you as he sees what is done in secret because he cares about where your heart truly lies.

Last session we saw Jesus teaching about money and possessions. If this is your focus, then this is what you value. You can either focus on the accumulation of wealth, or you can follow and serve God – but you can't be focused on both.

Jesus understands where our heart is and the struggles we have. He reminds us however, that if we have chosen to follow God, then we do not need to and should not worry. He gives us several reasons for this.

Reason 1: _____

There is more to life than the things we worry about.

Matthew 6:25 ²⁵ “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes?”

Q3. Do you agree that there’s more to life than food and clothes? Why or why not?

There is more to life than the things we worry about.

Reason 2: _____

God cares well for all of his creation, and you are the most valuable part of his creation.



Matthew 6:26-30 ²⁶ Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? ²⁷ Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?

²⁸ “And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. ²⁹ Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. ³⁰ If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and

tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith?

Q4. Why don't you need to worry?

Because God cares well for all of his creation, and you are the most valuable part of his creation.

Q5. Directly before this passage, Jesus says²⁴ “No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.” (Matthew 6:24) What is the connection here? (Hint: it's to do with the “therefore” in verse 25)

If you make the decision to serve God rather than money, then that could put you in a vulnerable position. If you're not going to pursue money in order to look after your needs, then who will look after your needs? Answer: God will!

Q6. Do you think worrying helps? Why does Jesus say worrying is useless?

We think worrying helps – but it doesn't really. Worry takes from us rather than giving to us.

Reason 3: _____

Because God knows what we need and will provide it.

Matthew 6:31-33³¹ So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’³² For the pagans³ run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them.³³ But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

Q7. Is Jesus saying that food, drink and clothes are not important?

³ pagans: (in this context) people who do not believe or trust in God

No, he's talking about priorities – what's more important than these things.

Q8. What do you think it means to seek God's kingdom and his righteousness?

Pursue the things God cares about.

Q9. Why is God's kingdom much more important than food or drink? Think back to what we discussed in the previous weeks.

Because it's something that's eternal – it lasts.

Q10. "All these things will be given to you as well" – is Jesus promising us material wealth if we seek God's kingdom?

No, our material needs will be met to some degree, but not necessarily our wants and desires.

Reason 4: _____

Because we do not know what worries tomorrow will bring, so worrying about the future is fruitless.

Matthew 6:34³⁴ Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

Q11. What are Jesus' words of advice here?

We shouldn't worry about things that are still in the future – because we don't know what that future will look like!

Q12. What makes it hard for us to trust that God will provide what we will need?

For a number of reasons: we don't quite think that God will deliver, we don't quite believe that what he gives is best etc. So we hedge our bets and worry and try to fix things ourselves.

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