

# Matthew 6:25-26 Commentary

PREVIOUS

NEXT

**CLICK VERSE**

To go directly to that verse

Matthew 6:1  
Matthew 6:2  
Matthew 6:3  
Matthew 6:4  
Matthew 6:5  
Matthew 6:6  
Matthew 6:7  
Matthew 6:8  
Matthew 6:9  
Matthew 6:10  
Matthew 6:11  
Matthew 6:12  
Matthew 6:13  
Matthew 6:14  
Matthew 6:15  
Matthew 6:16  
Matthew 6:17  
Matthew 6:18  
Matthew 6:19  
Matthew 6:20  
Matthew 6:21  
Matthew 6:22  
Matthew 6:23  
Matthew 6:24  
Matthew 6:25  
Matthew 6:26  
Matthew 6:27  
Matthew 6:28  
Matthew 6:29  
Matthew 6:30  
Matthew 6:31  
Matthew 6:32  
Matthew 6:33  
Matthew 6:34

MATTHEW CONTAINS 15 PARABLES 20 MIRACLES

KEY VERSES: 1:1 "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham."

2:2 "Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him."



Click chart to enlarge  
Charts from Jensen's Survey of the NT - used by permission  
Another Chart from Charles Swindoll

**THE LIFE OF JESUS AS COVERED BY MATTHEW (shaded area)**



Click chart to enlarge

Jesus Birth and Early Years  
Leading up to the Sermon on the Mount  
Matthew 1-7



Source: Ryrie Study Bible

Matthew 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? ([NASB: Lockman](#))

**Greek:** [Dia touto lego](#) (1SPA) [umin](#), [me merimnate](#) (2PPAM) [te psuche umon ti phagete](#) (SPAAS) [[e ti piete,](#)] [mede to somati umon ti endusesthe](#); (2PAMS) [ouchi e psuche pleion estin](#) (3SPA) [tes trophes kai to soma tou endumatos?](#)

**Amplified:** Therefore I tell you, stop being perpetually uneasy (anxious and worried) about your life, what you shall eat or what you shall drink; or about your body, what you shall put on. Is not life greater [in quality] than food, and the body [far above and more excellent] than clothing? ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

**KJV:** 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?

**NLT:** So I tell you, don't worry about everyday life—whether you have enough food, drink, and clothes. Doesn't life consist of more than food and clothing? ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

**Phillips:** That is why I say to you, don't worry about living - wondering what you are going to eat or drink, or what you are going to wear. Surely life is more important than food, and the body more important than the clothes you wear. ([New Testament in Modern English](#))

**Wuest:** On this account I am saying to you, Stop worrying about your life, what you shall eat, or what you shall drink, and about your body, with what you will clothe yourself. Is not the life more than food and the body more than clothing?

**Young's Literal:** Because of this I say to you, be not anxious for your life, what ye may eat, and what ye may drink, nor for your body, what ye may put on. Is not the life more than the nourishment, and the body than the clothing?

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: [Dia touto lego](#) (1SPA) [humin](#), [me merimnate](#) (2PPAM) [te psuche humon ti phagete](#) (SPAAS) [[e ti piete,](#)] [mede to somati humon ti endusesthe](#); (2PAMS)

- Mt 5:22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28; Luke 12:4,5,8,9,22) (Mt 6:31,34; 10:19; 13:22; Psalms 55:22; Mark 4:19; 13:11; Luke 8:14; 10:40,41; Luke 12:22,23,25,26,29; 1Corinthians 7:32; Philippians 4:6; 2Timothy 2:4; Hebrews 13:5,6; 1Peter 5:7
- [Matthew 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Matthew 6:25-34 Overcoming Materialism - Study Guide](#)- John MacArthur
- [Matthew 6:25-34 Overcoming Materialism](#)- John MacArthur
- [Matthew 6:25-30a: Overcoming Financial Worry 1 - Study Guide](#)- John MacArthur
- [Matthew 6:25-30a: Overcoming Financial Worry 1](#)- John MacArthur
- [Matthew 6:25-30a: Overcoming Financial Stress](#)- John MacArthur
- [Matthew 6:25-34: Overcoming Financial Worry 2 - Study Guide](#)- John MacArthur
- [Matthew 6:25-34: Overcoming Financial Worry 2](#)- John MacArthur

Therefore I tell you, stop being perpetually uneasy (anxious and worried) about your life what you shall eat or what you shall drink; or about your body, what you shall put on. ([Amplified](#))

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. (KJV)

That is why I say to you, don't worry about living - wondering what you are going to eat or drink, or what you are going to wear. ([Phillips](#))

On this account I am saying to you, Stop worrying about your life, what you shall eat, or what you shall drink, and about your body, with what you will clothe yourself.

## Related Resources

- [Philippians 4:6 Commentary](#) - includes many illustrations

- Anxiety (merimna), Anxious, be anxious (merimnao)
- Fear, How to Handle It
- RBC Devotional -- [Overcoming Worry](#)
- RBC Devotional - [What Can I Do With My Worry?](#)

## G Campbell Morgan...

IN this section of our Lord's Manifesto; continuing His revelation of the principles which are to govern His people in their relation to the things of this life, He enjoins on them the necessity for a super-earthly consciousness in touching earthly things. Towards super-abundance, as we have seen, they are to be without covetousness. We will now consider their attitude towards necessary things, which is, that they are to be without care.

In this connection one injunction is thrice repeated. "Take no thought." "Therefore I say unto you, take no thought" (Mt 6:25). "Therefore take no thought" (Mt 6:31). "Take therefore no thought" (Mt 6:34).

This is the all-inclusive word. It is illustrated, emphasized, argued, with inimitable skill by the great Master and Teacher Himself. It accurately defines the whole attitude of mind which His disciples should maintain toward necessary things. All His argument as to our attitude being characterized by anxiety, is based upon the fact of our ability to take thought. He does not hint for a single moment that we are to be careless or improvident. That against which He charged His disciples, and still charges us, is taking care, the care which means fretting, worry, restlessness, feverishness; or perhaps, better than all, in the most simple terms, "Anxiety;" "Be not anxious."

There are things of this life which are necessary, which, so far as we know, have no place in the larger life toward which we go. Food, drink, raiment, are necessary things, but are not provided for us by GOD apart from our own thought, our own endeavor, our own activity. But none of these things is to produce anxiety in the hearts of the subjects of the King.

"Take no thought." The Lord argues for this injunction by three positions. "Therefore I say unto you, take no thought;" the first proposition occupying Mt 6:25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30. "Therefore take no thought;" the second proposition found in Mt 6:31, 32, 33. "Take therefore no thought;" the third proposition of illustration and enforcement found in Mt 6:34.

There are three movements and one message; three methods of emphasis and illustration and enforcement; and one matter of importance.

Our Lord not only says, "Take no thought;" but " Take therefore no thought." Thus, in each new movement of emphasis and illustration He drives us back to something preceding. This is the word of the King.

Let us see how He enforces it:

- First, He declares anxiety to be unnecessary in the children of such a Father.
- In the second movement He declares anxiety to be unworthy in the subjects of such a Kingdom.
- In the third movement He declares anxiety to be unfruitful.

First, then, our Lord teaches us that anxiety is unnecessary.

Look at the **"therefore (Ed: NASB = "for this reason")"**. **"Therefore I say unto you."** We are compelled to ask wherefore? On what is JESUS basing this appeal? You will remember two truths brought before us in the previous section.

In showing what our attitude ought to be toward superabundance, He first made the truth about values perfectly clear. He insisted on the necessity for the single eye which sees things properly focused; sharp, clear, true; in proportion and perspective. The point of view is everything.

- The evil eye is that which sees things obliquely; its vision is distorted, nothing is sharp, nothing is true, everything is out of proportion and perspective.
- CHRIST emphasized the necessity for the single eye, truly focused.

He told His disciples in effect that they had that single eye when they lived for the glory of GOD, and that the true view-point of life is that of seeing things in their relation to the Infinite, to the Divine, to GOD Himself. The eye, single for GOD's glory, admits true light into the life.

Further, we noticed how JESUS declared the unification of life in worship to be necessary. We cannot serve GOD and Mammon. Whomsoever we worship will demand the whole of our service. Life is unified by the principle of worship which governs it. He takes it for granted that these men have found the unifying principle in the service of GOD; that because they are serving GOD they cannot serve Mammon.

Now, He says, "**Therefore**," upon the basis of the true vision of values, upon the basis of the fact that your life has become unified in the service of GOD;

**"Therefore . . . Take no thought."**

Thus He defends the word; charging His own to be free from fret and friction and feverishness; upon the fact that, being in His Kingdom, they have found the true viewpoint, they have found the true principle, unifying and making life consistent.

From that He proceeds to work out in detail the truth of the love and the care of GOD.

"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?"

Declaring the care of the Father for the birds, He asks, "And why take ye thought for raiment?"

Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow."

The lilies to which JESUS pointed were not, of course, our lilies of the valley, but the great huleh lilies of Palestine, the most gorgeous and beautiful of all the flowers growing there. They grow in cultivated districts, or amongst the rankest verdure.

**As a lily among thorns,  
So is my love among the daughters.**

Of this gorgeous flower the Master said, "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow."

Mark this again: "they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet" even though they do not toil or spin "yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these."

The King comes where the children can accompany Him, and among the birds and flowers, in sweetest and tenderest of illustrations, He teaches the sublimest truths for the comfort of the heart of His people. ([Matthew 6:25-34 Commentary](#))

**C H Spurgeon's** comments...

Therefore, " in order that our one Master may be served, we must cease from serving self, and from the carking care which self-seeking involves.

Read the passage, "Be not anxious for your life. " Thought we may take; but anxious, carking care we must not know. Our most pressing bodily wants are not to engross our minds. Our life is more important than the food we eat, or the clothes we wear. God who gives us life will give us bread and raiment. We should much more care how we live than how we eat: the spiritual should go before the bodily, the eternal before the temporal. What we wear is of very small importance compared with what we are. Therefore let us give our chief care to that which is chief, yea, our sole thought to the one all-absorbing object of all true life, the glory of God. ([Commentary](#))

**For this reason** ([1223](#)) (**dia**) can also be translated therefore, for this cause, because or on account of. In this case "*because of the fact that*" you cannot serve both God and mammon, stop being continually torn in these two directions, toward God and toward the necessities of life. **Worry and/or anxiety** is the natural result when our hopes are centered in anything short of God and his will for us. When believers make heavenly treasure, light for our eyes, God as our Master, then, and only then, can we **stop worrying** which is what Jesus commands us to do.

**ESV Study Bible...**

If one makes the right choices (Mt 6:19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24), there is ("**therefore**") no reason that one should be anxious. ([ESV Online Study Bible Crossway](#))

**Dwight Pentecost** explains that...

When a man sets aside the God of righteousness and accepts the god of material things, he soon conforms to materialistic standards. He becomes greedy, covetous, and totally preoccupied with material possessions. If a

man becomes preoccupied with material things and they become the goal of his life, he soon becomes **anxious** about his physical needs. He becomes preoccupied with what he will eat, what he will drink, what clothing he will wear, where he will live. This **anxious care** comes because of a lack of trust in God. When a man ceases to trust God for his needs, he eventually becomes enslaved to material things. Our Lord taught those who were concerned with righteousness that one cannot serve God and material things at the same time. (Design for living: Lessons in Holiness from the Sermon on the Mount) (Bolding added)

**Matthew Henry** says that...

There is scarcely any one sin against which our Lord Jesus more largely and earnestly warns his disciples, or against which he arms them with more variety of arguments, than the sin of disquieting, distracting, distrustful cares about the things of life, which are a bad sign that both the treasure and the heart are on the earth; and therefore he thus largely insists upon it...It is the repeated command of the Lord Jesus to his disciples, that they should not divide and pull in pieces their own minds with care about the world... **the thought here forbidden is, 1. A disquieting, tormenting thought**, which hurries the mind hither and thither, and hangs it in suspense; which disturbs our joy in God, and is a damp upon our hope in him; which breaks the sleep, and hinders our enjoyment of ourselves, of our friends, and of what God has given us. **2. A distrustful, unbelieving thought**. God has promised to provide for those that are his all things needful for life as well as godliness, the life that now is, food and a covering: not dainties, but necessaries. He never said, "They shall be feasted," but, "Verily, they shall be fed." Now an inordinate care for time to come, and fear of wanting those supplies, spring from a disbelief of these promises, and of the wisdom and goodness of Divine Providence; and that is the evil of it. As to present sustenance, we may and must use lawful means to get it, else we tempt God; we must be diligent in our callings, and prudent in proportioning our expenses to what we have, and we must pray for daily bread; and if all other means fail, we may and must ask relief of those that are able to give it. He was none of the best of men that said, To beg I am ashamed (Lu 16:3 "*And the steward said to himself, 'What shall I do, since my master is taking the stewardship away from me? I am not strong enough to dig; I am ashamed to beg.'*"); as he was, who (Luke 16:21 "*and longing to be fed with the crumbs which were falling from the rich man's table; besides, even the dogs were coming and licking his sores'*") desired to be fed with the crumbs; but for the future, we must cast our care upon God, and take no thought, because it looks like a jealousy of God, who knows how to give what we want when we know not how to get it. Let our souls dwell at ease in him! This gracious carelessness is the same with that sleep which God gives to his beloved, in opposition to the worldling's toil, Ps. 127:2 (*It is vain for you to rise up early, To retire late, To eat the bread of painful labors; For He gives to His beloved even in his sleep*). ([Matthew 6](#))

**J Vernon McGee** introduces this section noting that "Matthew 6 concludes with our Lord talking about other things that are material. He tells us that we are not to give much thought to our material needs. ([Thru the Bible Commentary](#))

**Do not be worried** - Stop fretting, being weighed down with cares, being distracted and distressed, being troubled. Clearly God's will for His children is not to worry which is an important truth to recall to your mind, for whatever God wills (His desire is we do not worry and fret), He always enables by His grace and His Spirit.

One remedy for this negative practice is to beseech the Almighty, the Sufficient One, to...

Ps 139:23 ([Spurgeon's note](#)) **Search** me, O God, and **know** my heart. **Try** me and **know** my **anxious** thoughts. And **see** if there be any hurtful way in me, and **lead** me in the everlasting way. (All verbs in **red** are commands)

**Eat** ([2068](#)) (**phago**, English phagocyte, phagocytic) means to eat, to take in through the mouth as food, to ingest, chew, and swallow in turn.

**Drink** ([4095](#)) (**pino**) means to take liquid into the mouth for swallowing.

**Life** ([5590](#)) (**psuche** from **psucho** = to breathe, blow, English, psychology) refers to whole person particularly inner, immortal person who lives in the mortal body. **Psuche** denotes life in two chief respects, the breath of life or the natural life and the seat of personality.

**Put on** ([1746](#)) (**enduo** = to clothe from **en** = in + **dúo** = to sink, go in or under) means to put on as a garment, to clothe or dress.

Most people in Jesus' day had little beyond basic necessities—food, clothing and shelter. Because their acquisition of these necessities often depended especially in rural areas on seasonal rains, they had plenty of cause for stress even about food and clothing.

**Worried** (3309) (**merimnao** [word study] from **merimna** [word study] from **merizo** = divide - draw different directions - which is exactly what **anxiety** does to most of us!) means literally to stop letting yourself **present imperative** with a negative - stop something in progress!) be drawn in different directions!

There is a subtle distinction between worry and concern, for whereas worry tends to "paralyze" us and decreases initiative, genuine concern tends to motivate us to take the initiative. Worry fears the worse and tries to control the future, whereas godly concern hopes for the best and redeems the future. Worry does not give God the glory due Him (Mt 5:16-note) and tends to take our mind off of the things that are important, whereas genuine concern tends to direct our focus to those things that are truly important. A good antidote for present worry is to maintain a "future focus", continually contemplating the things above (Col 3:1-note, Col 3:2-note) and the things to come, especially our blessed future hope (Titus 2:13-note). "Amid fret and worry a hope of heaven is an effectual balm." (Spurgeon)

**Corrie Ten Boom** offered a great prescription for anxiety, worry and fretting...

**Look around and be distressed.**

**Look inside and be depressed.**

**Look at Jesus and be at rest.**

It should be noted that most translations render **merimnao** in one of two ways -- "**be anxious**" and "**be worried**". Indeed many English dictionaries will define **anxiety** as **worry** and vice versa. With that in mind here is a summary of English dictionary definitions of each word (as well as the related verb "**fret**")...

**Anxious:** Characterized by extreme uneasiness of mind or brooding fear about some contingency (Webster, modern). Worried and tense because of possible misfortune, danger, etc. (Collins) Experiencing worry, nervousness, or unease. (Oxford) Concern or solicitude respecting some event, future or uncertain, which disturbs the mind, and keeps it in a state of painful uneasiness. it expresses more than uneasiness or disturbance, and even more than trouble or solicitude. it usually springs from fear or serious apprehension of evil, and involves a suspense respecting an event, and often, a perplexity of mind, to know how to shape our conduct. (Webster, 1828) A state of restlessness and agitation, often with general indisposition and a distressing sense of oppression at the epigastrium. (Webster, 1913)

**Worry:** feel or cause to feel troubled over actual or potential difficulties. Expressing anxiety. (Concise Oxford). To choke or strangle - to harass by tearing, biting, or snapping especially at the throat. Mental distress or agitation resulting from concern usually for something impending or anticipated. Worry suggests fretting over matters that may or may not be real cause for anxiety (Webster) To be or cause to be anxious or uneasy, esp. about something uncertain or potentially dangerous. To disturb the peace of mind of (Collins)

**Fret:** ([See David's antidote for fretting](#)) The etymology like that of "worry" (below) is fascinating and gives us an incredible "word picture" of the potential effect of fretting. Fret is from Middle English = to devour, fret (In turn from Old English *fretan* to devour; akin to Old High German *frezzan* = to devour, *ezzan* = to eat) Fret means to eat or gnaw into and figuratively to cause to suffer emotional strain, causing one to become vexed or worried. Fret describes running water = to become agitated or disturbed. To rub; to wear away a substance by friction. "Temporal prosperity is too small a matter to be worth **fretting** about" (Spurgeon)

**Worry** has a fascinating etymology summarized below

Worrying may shorten one's life, but not as quickly as it once did. The ancestor of our word, Old English **wyrgan**, meant "to strangle." (**Ed note:** Isn't this what worry does to our joy?)

Its Middle English descendant, **worien**, kept this sense and developed the new sense "to grasp by the throat with the teeth and lacerate" or "to kill or injure by biting and shaking." This is the way wolves or dogs might attack sheep, for example.

In the 16th century worry began to be used in the sense "to harass, as by rough treatment or attack," or "to assault verbally," and in the 17th century the word took on the sense "to bother, distress, or persecute." It was a small step from this sense to the main modern senses "to cause to feel anxious or distressed" and "to feel troubled or uneasy," first recorded in the 19th century. ([American Heritage Dictionary](#))

**Vine** writes that...

**merimnao** denotes to have a distracting care. This is to be absent entirely from the believer. Anxiety harasses the soul; it enfeebles, irritates, ruffles the temper, is a sign of mistrust and of failing obedience, and distracts

the mind from communion with God. (Vine, W. Collected writings of W. E. Vine. Nashville: Thomas Nelson)

**Barclay** gives some examples of use in secular Greek writings explaining that **merimnao** means...

means to **worry anxiously**. Its corresponding noun is merimna , which means **worry**. In a papyrus letter a wife writes to her absent husband: "I cannot sleep at night or by day, because of the **worry** (merimna ) I have about your welfare." A mother, on hearing of her son's good health and prosperity writes back: "That is all my prayer and all my **anxiety** (merimna)." Anacreon, the poet, writes: "When I drink wine, my **worries** (merimna) go to sleep." (Ed note: this is not true in the Bible however!)." (Barclay, W: [The Gospel of Matthew The New Daily Study Bible](#))

## **WORRY DESCRIBED**

**Worry...**

- ...gives a small thing a big shadow
- ...is the interest we pay on tomorrow's troubles.
- ...over tomorrow pulls shadows over today's sunshine.
- ...is like a rocking chair; it will give you something to do, but it won't get you anywhere.
- ...is an indication that we think God cannot look after us. (O. Chambers)
- ...is putting question marks where God has put periods. (J R Rice)
- ...is the interest we pay on tomorrow's troubles. (E S Jones)
- ...is an intrusion into God's providence. (J Haggai)
- ...is a guest admitted which quickly turns to master.
- ... never robs tomorrow of its sorrow, it only saps today of its strength (A J Cronin)
- ... is the interest paid by those who borrow trouble (G W Lyon)
- ...is practical atheism and an affront to God (R. H. Mounce)

**June Hunt** writes that...

Worry shifts the focus of attention from the all sufficient power of Christ (cp 2Co 12:9+note) to your human insufficiency and insecurity (cp 2Co 3:5, 6). Ultimately, worry can undermine your Christian witness by presenting God as impotent and unworthy of praise....

A specific characteristic of worry is a negative focus on the future. If you are a worrier, you are spending time speculating on what may or may not happen and then fearing the worst. (Biblical Counseling Keys - Worry: The Joy Stealer)

Besides **anxiety** (be anxious) another word that is synonymous with **worry** is the verb **fret** (derived from Old English word *fretan* meaning to devour or consume), which literally means to eat or gnaw into and figuratively pictures causing one to suffer emotional strain, be distressed, or feel vexation. Again the etymology or origin of the word **fret** so perfectly describes the detrimental, destructive effect of the emotional state of worry and anxiety.

**Quotes on Worry:**

- Worry is a small trickle of fear that meanders through the mind until it cuts a channel into which all other thoughts are drained.
- Winston Churchill said: Worry is an emotional spasm which occurs when the mind catches hold of something and will not let it go.
- A church sign said: Worry is the darkroom where negatives are developed.
- George Washington reportedly said: Worry is the interest paid by those who borrow trouble.
- Worry is today's mice nibbling on tomorrow's cheese.
- Worry is a complete cycle of inefficient thought revolving around a pivot of fear.
- The American physician, Charles Mayo, called worry the disease of doubt. He said it affects the circulation, the heart, the glands, the whole nervous system. I have never known a man who died from overwork, but many who have died from doubt.
- But the great Christian leader, George Müller, knew the antidote: Many times when I could have gone insane from worry, I was



at peace because my soul believed the truth of God's promises.

David gives an antidote for **fretting**, exhorting us...

**Psalm 37:1 Do not fret** (Command) because of evildoers, Be not envious toward wrongdoers.

2 For they will wither quickly like the grass And fade like the green herb.

3 **Trust** (Command) in the Lord and do good; **Dwell** in the land and cultivate faithfulness.

**Spurgeon comments: Fret not thyself because of evildoers.** To fret is to worry, to become vexed. Nature is very apt to kindle a fire of jealousy when it sees lawbreakers riding on horses and obedient subjects walking in the mire; it is a lesson learned only in the school of grace, when one comes to view the most paradoxical providences with the devout complacency of one who is sure that the Lord is righteous in all his acts.

**Neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity.** When one is poor, despised, and in deep trial, our old Adam naturally becomes envious of the rich and great; and when we are conscious that we have been more righteous than they, the devil is sure to be at hand with blasphemous reasonings. Evil men, instead of being envied, are to be viewed with horror and aversion; yet their loaded tables, and gilded trappings, are too apt to fascinate our poor half-opened eyes. Who envies the fat bullock the ribbons and garlands which decorate him as he is led to the slaughter?

**Trust in the Lord. Faith cures fretting. Sight is cross-eyed, and views things only as they seem, hence her envy; faith sees things as they really are, hence her peace.**

**And do good. True faith is actively obedient. Doing good is a fine remedy for fretting. There is a joy in holy activity which drives away the rust of discontent.**

**So shalt thou dwell in the land** In the land which flows with milk and honey; the Canaan of the covenant. Thou shalt not wander in the wilderness of murmuring, but abide in the promised land of content and rest (Hebrews 4:3). Where there is heaven in the heart there will be heaven in the house.

**And verily thou shalt be fed**, or "shepherded." The good shepherd will exercise his pastoral care over all believers. In truth they will be fed, and fed on truth. The promise of God will be their perpetual banquet. Some read this as an exhortation, "Feed on truth"; certainly this is good cheer, and banishes forever the hungry heart-burnings of envy.

**Psalm 37:7 Rest** (Not a suggestion but a command which calls for us to be silent or still in Jehovah's presence) in the LORD and **wait patiently** (Another command) for Him; **Do not fret** because of him who prospers in his way, Because of the man who carries out wicked schemes. (Psalm 37:7)

**Spurgeon comments: Rest in the LORD.** This fifth is a most divine precept, and requires **much grace** to carry it out (**Ed:** Amen! Try waiting in your own strength, when everything in you says "Don't just sit there, do something!"). To hush the spirit, to be silent before the Lord, to wait in holy patience the time for clearing up the difficulties of Providence -- that is what every gracious heart should aim at. "Aaron held his peace:" (Lv 10:3, context = Lv 10:1, 2!) "I opened not my mouth, because thou didst it." (Ps 39:9-[note](#)) **A silent tongue in many cases not only shows a wise head, but a holy heart.**

**And wait patiently for Him.** Time is nothing to Him; let it be nothing to thee. God is worth waiting for. "He never is before His time, He never is too late." In a story we wait for the end to clear up the plot; we ought not to prejudge the great drama of life, but stay till the closing scene, and see to what a finish (end, conclusion) the whole arrives.

**Fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass** There is no good, but much evil, in worrying your heart about the present success of graceless plotters: be not enticed into premature judgments -- they dishonour God, they weary yourself. Determine, let the wicked succeed as they may, that you will treat the matter with indifference, and never allow a question to be raised as to the righteousness and goodness of the Lord. What if wicked devices succeed and your own plans are defeated! there is more of the love of God in your defeats than in the successes of the wicked. ([Notes](#))

As alluded to above (**merizo** = draw different directions), **anxiety** is a very picturesque word, which means to be pulled in different directions. Our hopes pull us in one direction; our fears (see topic: How To Handle Fear) pull us the opposite direction; and we are pulled apart! The English word "**anxious**" has a very "telling" derivation from the Latin word **Latinanxius** which is akin to Latin **angere** which means to strangle (compare with "worry" below)! Isn't that what **anxiety** does to most of us?

The **present imperative** with a negative is a command from Jesus calling for the listeners (and readers) to stop an action already in

progress.

As **Harry Ironside** explains...

It is the will of God that His children should live without worry or anxiety. When Jesus said, "Take no thought," He did not mean that His disciples should be careless or improvident. But they are forbidden to be anxious, to become distressed and perplexed as they face the future. He who has saved and cared for us thus far can be depended on to undertake and provide for us to the end.

The **KJV** rendering of **merimnao** is "**take no thought**" which should not be interpreted as a prohibition against planning for one's future. (see Pr 6:6-8, 1Ti 5:8)

The Amplified Version renders it...

Therefore I tell you, stop being perpetually uneasy (anxious and worried) about your life,

**Merimnao** expresses a strong feeling for something or someone, often to the point of being burdened. Although this can be a "positive" concern, in most of the NT uses it refers to an anxious concern, based on apprehension about possible danger or misfortune, and so it means to be worried about, to be anxious about, to be apprehensive (viewing the future with anxiety or alarm), to be unduly concerned, to be burdened with anxious care or cumbered with many cares and in simple terms to **worry**.

**Anxiety** is an overwhelming feeling of a combination of worry, dread and fear. Worrying about food and clothing should never take priority over serving God. Food and clothes are less important than the life and body that they supply. When we worry over lack of food or inadequate clothing, we immobilize ourselves and focus on the worry. We refuse to trust that God can supply these most basic needs. Worry immobilizes us, but trust in God moves us to action

The classic Biblical example of a "worry wart" is Martha...

Luke 10:38-42 (see commentary) Now as they were traveling along, He entered a certain village; and a woman named Martha welcomed Him into her home. 39 And she had a sister called Mary, who moreover was **listening** (imperfect tense = over and over - Jesus would speak a word and Mary like a "baby bird" would grab it - this is the picture!) to the Lord's word, **seated** (parakathizo - seated beside) at His feet. 40 But Martha was **distracted** (perispao - from peri = around + spao = to draw -- Thus idea = drawn different ways at the same time Having one's attention directed from one thing to another! The imperfect tense = this was happening to Martha over and over) with all her preparations; and she came up to Him, and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to do all the serving alone? Then tell her to help (to assist, to aid) me." 41 But (Note contrast - He did respond to Martha's request) the Lord answered and said to her, " Martha, Martha (Jesus' repetition adds emphasis and emotion), you are **worried** (**merimnao** - in the **present tense** = her continual state of mind) and **bothered** (turbazo = to cause to be stirred up or in a state of disorder {Latin = *turba* = confusion!}) The **present tense** again identifies this as Martha's usual practice!) about so many things; 42 but only one thing is necessary, for Mary has chosen the **good** (agathos [word study] - inherently good and also profitable, beneficial) **part** (portion, share), which shall (absolutely) not be taken away from her."

**Comment:** From this familiar story, what is really important in life - serving or sitting? On what should we focus? What effect will not focusing on the "good part" tend to have on our mind and our actions (including our serving Him)? So what is the solution? Are you daily sitting at the Master's feet, looking up to Him, anticipating His Words with a sense of eagerness and a desire to lovingly obey? Or are you continually distracted by your "busy-ness", too often finding yourself worried and bothered? Take some time today and sit at His feet, perhaps reading Mt 6:24-33 out loud (even in several translations), allowing the Spirit of Christ to speak to your heart and to give you His rest. But you must come to Him. He won't force or coerce you, but He will lovingly beckon you to "Come, take My yoke" and when we willingly surrender, we will begin to experience a deep rest for our souls, a rest that no earthly discipline can produce (cp Mt 11:28, 29, 30). "Freedom is found not by fretting over the temporal, but by focusing on the eternal." (June Hunt)

One of **Paul's "antidotes"** for **worry** is found in his letter to the saints at Philippi...

Philippians 4:6 (see notes) **Be anxious** (**merimnao** - in the present imperative = With a negative this is a command to stop something in progress) for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 (see notes) And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. 8 (see notes) Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things. 9 (see notes) The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of

peace will be with you.

**Comment:** Paul says first we are not to worry. Instead we are to express our concerns to Him in prayer and we are to bring everything to Him. Paul says we are to have the right attitude - a heart of praise and thankfulness. As Bengel said "**Care** (anxious) and **prayer** are as mutually opposed as fire and water." God promises to give us incomparable peace of heart and mind. Paul goes on to say that we should choose not to focus on the negative thoughts but on those thoughts that are truth, honorable, right, pure, lovely, admirable and praiseworthy. What does Paul say we should act? In Php 4:9, he says we are to act in a way that reflects God's character. Notice that Php 4:8 is especially valuable in addressing those things that worry you. Evaluate every worry by Php 4:8 - Is the worry true, honorable, right, pure, etc. The more you think about God's goodness, the less you'll think about your worries (cp Mt 6:33-note)

**C H Spurgeon comments:** No care but all prayer. No anxiety but much joyful communion with God....Carry your desires to the Lord of your life, the Guardian of your soul. Go to Him with two portions of prayer and one of fragrant praise. Do not pray doubtfully but thankfully. Consider that you have your petitions, and, therefore, thank God for His grace.... We ought not to be anxious, for that dishonors the Lord, and can never secure his favor... Satan will assail us, the world will **worry** us, doubts will annoy us, and all through our own fault. Solomon's departure from God raised up enemies against him, and it will be so with us; but if our ways please the Lord He will make even our enemies to be at peace with us.

**Eadie** commenting on Php 4:6 notes that

The solicitude (anxiety) guarded against is that state of mind in which one frets himself to know more than he is able, or reach something too far beyond him, or is anxious to make provision for contingencies, to guard against suspected evils, and nerve himself against apprehended failures and disasters. The spirit is thrown into a fever by such troubles, so that joy in the Lord is abridged, and this forbearance would be seriously endangered. **Not that the apostle counsels utter indifference, for indifference would preclude prayer,** but his meaning is, that no one of them should tease and torment himself about anything, when he may get what he wants by prayer. There is nothing any one would be the better of having, which he may not hopefully ask from God. **Why then should he be anxious?— why, especially, should any one prolong such anxiety, or nurse it into a chronic distemper?** ([Online Commentary on Philipians](#))

**Warren Wiersbe** adds that

From the spiritual point of view, **worry** is **wrong thinking** (the mind) and **wrong feeling** (the heart) about circumstances, people, and things. **Worry** is the greatest thief of **joy**. It is not enough for us, however, to tell ourselves to "*quit worrying*" because that will never capture the thief. **Worry** is an "*inside job*," and it takes more than good intentions to get the victory. The antidote to **worry** is the **secure mind**: (**Ed note:** A mind that chooses to seek first God's Kingdom and His righteousness - Mt 6:33) "And the peace of God... shall keep [garrison, guard like a soldier] your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Phil 4:7-note). When you have the secure mind, the peace of God guards you (Phil 4:7-note) and the God of peace guides you (Phil 4:9-note). **With that kind of protection—why worry?"** (Also see Phil 4:6-note) ([Wiersbe, W: Bible Exposition Commentary. 1989. Victor](#))

**Peter** offers similar advice on how to handle **worry and anxiety** writing to saints who were being severely tested, issuing like a superior officer in wartime, the following command ...

**Humble** (aorist imperative = command to do this without delay. It's urgent! **Why?** See 1Pe 5:8-note!) yourselves (assumption of the right response maximizes reception of the right remedy, God's grace, cp Jas 4:6- note), therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, **casting** (Casting is connected with humbling. No humbling = No casting! If we are not willing to trust God enough to humble our selves before Him, we won't be willing to trust God with our cares. The result is that we will "miss" His all sufficient amazing grace.) **all** (**How much?** God's commands always include God's enablements. This is not "mind over matter" or "the power of positive thinking" but is a supernatural work of God's Spirit and His grace which alone can enable us to obey) **your anxiety upon Him (Why?), because He cares for you.** (1Pe 5:6, 7-notes) (cp Ps 55:22-[Spurgeon's comments](#))

**Søren Kierkegaard** ([bio](#)) put **worry** and **anxiety** in an poignant perspective writing that..

No Grand Inquisitor has in readiness such terrible tortures as **anxiety**

**J C Ryle** sums up this section writing that Jesus

forbids us to keep up an anxious spirit about the things of this world. Four times over he says, "Do not worry" (Mt 6:25, 28, 31 and 34). About life, about food, about clothing, about tomorrow, "do not worry." Do not be over-careful, over-anxious. Prudent provision for the future is right; wearing, corroding, self-tormenting anxiety is wrong. ([Matthew 6:25-34 Expository Thoughts](#))

**Ray Pritchard** writes that

**Worry** is excessive concern over the affairs of life. The key obviously is the word "excessive." Worry happens when you are so concerned about the problems of life that you can think of nothing else. It is an all-consuming feeling of uncertainty and fear. And it is a sin. Worry is a sin for two reasons: First, because it displaces God in your life. When you commit the sin of worry, you are living as though God did not exist. And you are living as though you alone can solve your problems. Second, because it distracts you from the things that really matter in life. As long as you are worrying, you can't do anything else. You are strangled by worry.

But how can we tell when the legitimate concerns of life have become sinful worries? Here are three practical guidelines. **You are probably well into worry...**

1. When the thing you are concerned about is the first thing you think about in the morning and the last thing you think about at night.
2. When you find yourself thinking about it during every spare moment.
3. When you find yourself bringing it up in every conversation you have.

Seen in that light, most of us worry a lot more than we would like to admit! [Matthew 6:25-34 Three Things Not To Worry About](#) ) (Bolding added)

Someone has written that worry is a small trickle of fear that meanders through the mind until it cuts a channel into which all other thoughts are drained.

Illustration of how **worry** affects one's sleep...

Today if you visit Thomas Carlyle's famous home in London, they will show you an almost soundproof chamber that Carlyle had built so the noise of the street could be shut out and he could work in silence. One of his neighbors, however, kept a rooster that several times in the night and in the early morning gave way to vigorous self-expression. When Carlyle protested to the owner of the rooster, the man pointed out to him that the rooster crowed only three times in the night, and that after all could not be such a terrible annoyance. "But," Carlyle said to him, "if you only knew what I suffer waiting for that rooster to crow!" (Clarence Macartney, *Macartney's Illustrations* Nashville: Abingdon, 1945)

**Worry** and **anxiety** is the plague of our modern age as observed by **Time** magazine (in 1961) which said...

Not merely the black statistics of murder, suicide, alcoholism, and divorce betray **anxiety** ... but almost any innocent everyday act: the limp or overhearty handshake, the second pack of cigarettes or the third martini, the forgotten appointment, the stammer in mid-sentence, the wasted hour before the TV set, the spanked child, the new car unpaid for. (Time Magazine, March 31, 1961)

**MacDonald** writes that...

In this passage Jesus strikes at the tendency to center our lives around food and clothing, thus missing life's real meaning. The problem is not so much what we eat and wear today, but what we shall eat and wear ten, twenty, or thirty years from now. Such worry about the future is sin because it denies the love, wisdom, and power of God. It denies the love of God by implying that He doesn't care for us. It denies His wisdom by implying that He doesn't know what He is doing. And it denies His power by implying that He isn't able to provide for our needs. This type of worry causes us to devote our finest energies to making sure we will have enough to live on. Then before we know it, our lives have passed, and we have missed the central purpose for which we were made. God did not create us in His image with no higher destiny than that we should consume food. We are here to love, worship, and serve Him and to represent His interests on earth. Our bodies are intended to be our servants, not our masters. (MacDonald, W., & Farstad, A. [Believer's Bible Commentary : Old and New Testaments. Nashville: Thomas Nelson](#))

**Think about it** - Never be afraid to trust an unknown future to a known God. Any concern too small to be turned into a prayer is too small to be made into a burden.

### **A Strategy For Winning Over Worry =**

- (1) Identify specific worries.
- (2) Work to change what you can.
- (3) Leave what you can't change with God.

When we put our cares in God's hands, He puts His peace in our hearts. ([ODB](#))

I like **D L Moody's** strategy for confronting **worry**...

Be careful for nothing, prayerful for everything, thankful for anything.

**Corrie Ten Boom** also had some similar advice on **worry** stating that...

If a case is too small to be turned into a prayer it is too small to be made into a burden.

Take courage: if God doesn't choose to remove an obstacle, He will help you plow around it!

Even though you can't control your circumstances, you can control your attitude.

**Anxiety** is a thin stream of fear trickling through the mind. If encouraged, it cuts a channel into which all others thoughts are drained.  
- Arthur Somers Roche

Never attempt to bear more than one kind of trouble at once. Some people bear three kinds—all they have had, all they have now and all they expect to have. - Edward Everett Hale

As we refuse to worry about the "tomorrows" and begin to trust God for the "todays," we find grace and guidance for each step of the way. We don't need to see beyond what God shows us today. When we follow His leading, we have enough light for each step of the way

June Hunt has an excellent summary of the worthlessness of worry based on the parallel passage in Luke 12:22-34...

## **Worry Is Worthless!**

**If you worry...**

1. Remember, life is more than food and clothes (Luke 12:22)
2. You'll miss the meaning of life (Luke 12:23)
3. Remember, God feeds the birds and will be sure to feed you (Luke 12:24)
4. You can't extend the length of your life (Luke 12:25)
5. It is an exercise in futility (Luke 12:26)
6. You waste your time and energy (Luke 12:27)
7. You exhibit a lack of faith (Luke 12:28)
8. You set your heart on tangibles instead of trust (Luke 12:29)
9. You are like unbelievers, refusing faith in God (Luke 12:30)
10. You are not making God's kingdom your priority (Luke 12:31)
11. You are forgetting what the Father has already given you (Luke 12:32)
12. You are thinking more of yourself than of others (Luke 12:33)
13. You are treasuring the temporal over the eternal (Luke 12:34)

From a work I would highly recommend because it tends to stay close to Scriptural wisdom with a minimum of secular wisdom (**June Hunt's collection of 100 Biblical Counseling Keys**)

## ILLUSTRATIONS

[See also commentary](#) on Php 4:6 for multiple related illustrations.

Author A. B. Simpson told about an old farmer who plowed around a large rock in his field year after year. He had broken one cultivator and two plowshares by hitting it. Each time he saw that obstacle, he grumbled about how much trouble the rock had caused.

One day he decided to dig it up and be done with it. Putting a large crowbar under one side, he found to his surprise that the rock was less than a foot thick. Soon he had pried it out of the ground and was carting it away in his wagon. He smiled to think how that "big" old rock had caused him so much needless frustration.

Not every trouble can be removed as easily as that stone. But prayer is an effective way to handle difficulties of all sizes. Using the leverage of prayer with our problems can keep us from becoming victims of worry. —D. J. De Haan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

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### FERVENT PRAYER DISPELS ANXIOUS CARE.

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**How Will My Worry Look?** - Hans Christian Andersen, author of such well-known fairy tales as "The Emperor's New Clothes," had a phobia of being buried alive. As a result, he always carried a note in his pocket telling anyone who might find him unconscious not to assume he was dead. He often left another note on his bedside table stating, "I only seem dead." Such was his anxiety until he finally succumbed to cancer in 1875.

We may think such a fear is strange, but do we have fears that will someday look just as irrational? Is it possible that the day will come when we look back and marvel at our own anxieties? Will we one day wonder at that foolish person who chose to worry rather than to pray? Will time eventually cast us as a pitiful person who was plagued by fear because we did not face life with the resources lavished on us by the Almighty Lord of the universe?

Worrying doesn't change anything. But trusting the Lord changes everything about the way we view life.

Forgive us, Lord, for our inclination to worry. Help us to see how foolish it is for us to worry about what You have promised to provide. Don't let us bury ourselves alive with fears. — Mart De Haan

A Strategy For Winning Over Worry  
Identify specific worries.  
Work to change what you can.  
Leave what you can't change with God.

**When we put our cares in God's hands,  
He puts His peace in our hearts.**

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**TOO WET OR TOO DRY:** While waiting for a tire to be repaired, I began talking with a man who farmed nearby. "Sure need rain," he said. "Don't know what we're gonna do if it doesn't rain."

"A lot different from last year," I said.

"A year ago it was so wet I couldn't get in the field," the man replied. Then he paused and said, "You know, I've been farming around here for 41 years and its always the same—either too wet or too dry. I don't know why I bother to talk about it in the first place!"

We laughed together and I went on my way, pondering what he had said and its relation to all the things I was worried about that day. For every essential element in our lives today, God would be pleased to have us trade worry for trust and say, "Thank You, kind heavenly Father. You already know what I need. So I'll trust You to take care of me." —D. C. McCasland ([lbid](#))

The way to be anxious about nothing is to be prayerful about everything.

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When I was a little boy," wrote H. P. Barker, "I used to help my mother store away apples. Putting my arms around ever so many, I tried to carry them all at once. I managed for a step or two, but then out fell one, and then another, and two or three more, till the apples were rolling all over the floor. Mother laughed. Putting my tiny hands around one apple, she then suggested that I take that

one and then carry the others in the same way"

Mr. Barker made the following application: "Don't try to put your arms around a year or even a week. Rather say, 'Here is another day begun. Lord, help me to live it for You. Give me just now the help and strength that I need.

What good advice! How foolish it is to borrow trouble from tomorrow! We can trust God to meet our needs every day. So let's take just one "apple" at a time. —R. W. De Haan ([Ibid](#))

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**Worry is carrying a burden God never intended us to bear.**

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**AWAKE ALL NIGHT!:** A was story is told of a man who raised chickens. Among them was a rooster whose occasional crowing greatly annoyed a neighbor. Early one morning the disgruntled neighbor called the farmer and complained, "That miserable bird of yours keeps me up all night!"

"I don't understand," came the reply "He hardly ever crows; but if he does, it's never more than two or three times."

That isn't my problem," retorted the neighbor. "It's not how often he crows that irritates me! What keeps me awake is not knowing when he might crow!"

Many of us are like that man. We worry about the difficulties and distressing circumstances that could arise tomorrow. Rather than living a day at a time and rejoicing in the Lord's sufficiency for the present, we become anxious by borrowing trouble from the future. Friend, stop foolishly "waiting for the rooster"! —R. W De Haan ([Ibid](#))

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**Worrying is paying interest  
on troubles that may never come due!**

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**Unopened Tomorrows** - (Read - Matthew 6:25-34) We often wish we could see what lies around the corner in life. Then we could prepare for it, control it, or avoid it.

A wise person has said, "Though we can't see around corners, God can!" How much better and more reassuring that is!

Recently my 10-year-old granddaughter Emily and I were boiling eggs for breakfast. As we stared into the boiling water and wondered how long it would take to get the eggs just right, Emily said, "Pity we can't open them up to see how they're doing." I agreed! But that would have spoiled them, so we had to rely on guesswork, with no guarantee of results.

We began talking about other things we would like to see but can't--like tomorrow. Too bad we can't crack tomorrow open, we said, to see if it's the way we would like it. But meddling with tomorrow before its time, like opening a partly cooked egg, would spoil both today and tomorrow.

Because Jesus has promised to care for us every day--and that includes tomorrow--we can live by faith one day at a time (Mt. 6:33, 34).

Emily and I decided to leave tomorrow safely in God's hands. Have you? — Joanie Yoder

Though I know not what awaits me,  
What the future has in store,  
Yet I know the Lord is faithful,  
For I've proved Him off before. --Anon.

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**You're only cooking up trouble when you stew about tomorrow.**

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**THE SIN OF ANXIETY:** Matthew 6:25, 32 Phil 4:6 Of all God's creatures, only people are full of worry concerning the future. Animals show no indication of this inner tension. A few years ago in one of its bulletins, the United States Public Health Service declared:

"No fox ever fretted because he had only one hole in which to hide. No squirrel ever died of anxiety over the possibility that he should have laid up more food for winter. And no dog ever lost any sleep over the fact that he had not enough bones laid aside for his declining years."

In a way it isn't fair to use this argument to praise animal behavior, because such creatures do not have the intelligence it takes to be a worrier. However, the fact remains that to engage our more fertile brains with such anxious care is both foolish and sinful. It is foolish for the Christian because it doesn't help the situation, and it is sinful because all anxiety is practical atheism, a lack of genuine trust in God. Jesus pointed out that we have a Heavenly Father who provides for birds and lilies, and that He places a far

greater value upon us than upon them. Therefore, the antidote to anxiety is a childlike trust in God which enables us to live one day at a time. We are not to be heedless about tomorrow, but we are to be free from undue concern over it (Mt 6:34-note)

Unfortunately, the more a person possesses of material blessings, the more prone he is to worry. I have seen emaciated Haitian Christians smile with genuine gratitude when given only a small portion of grain. Even when supplies are meager, they do not faithlessly worry about tomorrow's food. However, their American brothers and sisters in Christ are frequently overanxious and concerned about whether they will be able to live on a pension they expect to receive forty years hence!

Are you a "worrier"? Confess it as sin — as unbelief — and start trusting. Remember, "your heavenly Father knows that you have need of all these things." (Mt 6:32-note)--H G Bosch ([Ibid](#))

For all His children, God desires  
A life of trust, not flurry!  
His will for them each day is this:  
That they should trust, not worry!  
—Anon.

Have you ever noticed that "I" is always found in the center of anx-I-ety?

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**THE WORRY BOX:** I heard about a woman who kept a box in her kitchen that she called her "Worry Box." Every time something arose that troubled her, she would write it down on a piece of paper and place it in that box. She resolved that she would give these problems no thought as long as they were in the box. Every so often she would open it, take out the slips of paper, and review the concerns written on them. Following this procedure enabled the woman to put troubles out of her mind completely. She knew that they could be dealt with later. Then, because she had not been drained by anxiety over her difficulties she was in a relaxed frame of mind and better able to find solutions to her problems. Many times, however, she discovered to her delight that most of the troubles she had been worried about no longer existed.

Writing your worries on paper and putting them in a box may be helpful, but how much better to place them in the hands of God and forget about them! Worry robs us of joy, drains us of our energy, stunts our spiritual growth, stifles our testimony, and worst of all, dishonors God. —R. W De Haan ([Ibid](#))

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Our **anxiety** does not empty tomorrow of its sorrow, but only empties today of its strength. --**Charles Spurgeon**

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**A WORRY FILLED VACATION:** When a couple left for vacation, their newly married son and daughter-in-law promised to watch the house, take in the mail, and keep the lawn mowed. The couple hadn't been gone very long before they began to worry. What if the young people were careless about locking the doors, and all their possessions were stolen? What if they didn't pick up the mail, and some checks were stolen? And what if the lawn weren't mowed? What would the neighbors think? The couple nearly ruined their vacation with worry, and they even cut it short a couple days. When they returned, however, they found the lawn mowed, the mail taken care of, and the house in perfect order. They realized how foolish they had been, because their children had kept their word.

So it is with God. **He keeps His word.** (Nu 23:19, Titus 1:2-note, He 6:18-note, Ps 89:35-note) This brings us great comfort and can free us from worry. Why? Because it means that every promise of God will be kept. (Josh 21:45, 23:14) Here are just a few...

Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the LORD delivers him out of them all (Ps. 34:19) .

No weapon formed against you shall prosper (Isa. 54:17).

I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you (Isa. 41:10).

No good thing will He withhold from those who walk uprightly (Ps. 84:11).

Are you fretting or doubting unnecessarily? If so, it's time you laid hold of a promise and reminded yourself that God always keeps His word. (2Pe 1:4-note) Those who tend to fret or doubt unnecessarily, can lay hold of a promise and remind themselves that God always keeps His word. —D. C. Egner ([Ibid](#))

**Worry** means we believe more in our **PROBLEMS**  
than in God's **PROMISES!**

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**ADVICE TO THE ANXIOUS:** Those things which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do. Philippians 4:9-note



One should never reject the advice and example of a truly godly person. Paul, though a humble follower of Christ, urged the Philippian Christians to listen to him and to emulate his conduct. You see, he was in prison when he wrote this letter, and had experienced the peace of God that results when one casts his care upon the Lord through "prayer and supplication with thanksgiving." (Phil 4:6-note) He also knew the blessing that came to his own heart when he meditated upon things that are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report.

Are you a worrier? If you are, let me tell you something that may add to your list of anxieties. Worry is a major factor in the breakdown of personal health and may shorten your life! It is also a sin to brood over your troubles, for you are implying that the Lord is either unable or unwilling to meet your needs.

When worrisome thoughts cloud your mind, why not take the tested and proven advice of the apostle Paul? Talk to the Lord and trust Him to do what He knows is best for you. The old adage is still true

The devil trembles when he sees the weakest Christian on his knees. (cp Jas 4:8-note)

Then after you have prayed, proceed to empty your mind of your worries by setting your thoughts upon "whatever things are true,... honest,... pure,... lovely,... [and] of good report" (Phil. 4:8-note). This is the kind of "positive thinking" that pleases the Lord, and He will give peace, strength, joy, and victory to all who will obey Paul's inspired injunction. H G Bosch ([Ibid](#))

For all His children, God desires  
A life of trust, not flurry;  
His will for them each day is this:  
That they should trust, not worry!  
—Anon.

**It is comforting to know that the Lord Who guides us  
sees tomorrow more clearly than we see yesterday!**

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**VICTORY OVER WORRY:** I once read about an unusual woman who had learned the secret of victory over worry. Although a widow for years, she had successfully raised not only her own six children but twelve adopted ones as well. When a reporter asked how she managed to remain so calm and poised with her busy schedule, she said, "Oh, I'm in a partnership." "What kind of partnership?" he asked. She replied, "One day, a long time ago, I said,

‘Lord, I'll do the work, and You do the worrying.' I haven't had a worry since.

What a wonderful partnership! Our daily duties and responsibilities won't be a burden if we let God do His part. When we give Him the "worrying," we become free from fear and anxiety. When we allow Him to be part of all we do, our weak efforts are supported by His divine power. When we are willing to do what He has assigned, we can present our need to Him and trust Him for His help. We can let Him do the worrying! —R. W De Haan ([Ibid](#))

**If we worry, we cannot trust.  
If we trust we won't worry.**

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**DO YOU WORRY LIKE "CLOCKWORK"?** Did you hear about the clock that had a nervous breakdown? At first everything was fine—it was keeping good time and operating in excellent fashion. But then it started to think about how many ticks would go through its mechanism before it died of old age. Two ticks a second would add up to 120 ticks a minute, 7,200 per hour, 172,800 per day, 1,209,600 per week, and 62,899,200 ticks for the year. Troubled by these staggering statistics, the poor clock collapsed from nervous exhaustion. The owner took it to a clock doctor who probed until he learned what was worrying the timepiece. "I have to tick so much," said the clock. "But just a minute," replied the doctor, "how many ticks do you have to produce at a time?" "Oh, I operate one tick at a time," responded the clock.

A fanciful story? Yes, but many of us think that way We borrow trouble from tomorrow rather than trusting God for each day. Faith in the ability of our Heavenly Father to supply every need and meet every emergency will enable us to live triumphantly (Ed: Paul learned this secret Phil 4:11, 12-note, Phil 4:13-note) We can confidently place tomorrow in His hands. —Paul R. Van Gorder ([Ibid](#))

Put your cares in God's hands.  
He'll put His peace in your heart!  
(cp Ps 55:22-note)

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The story is told about a man whose store was destroyed by fire. And to make matters worse, he had failed to renew his fire

insurance. Later that day, an old friend asked how he was coping with the shocking loss. The answer was both surprising and pleasing.

"I'm getting along just fine," he said.

"I had breakfast this morning, and it isn't time to eat again."

With a thankful heart for his previous meal, that man wasn't worried about the next one. Not only was he taking one day at a time as he faced the seemingly impossible task of starting all over, but he was also taking one hour at a time.

Jesus said, ". . . do not worry about tomorrow" (Matt. 6:34).

He doesn't want us to be burdened with the needless weight of anxiety about the future. We have enough to do to deal with the present. We must refuse to fret about things over which we have no control. Then we can rejoice in God's sustaining grace—one day at a time. —R. W De Haan ([Ibid](#))

**God never asks us to bear  
tomorrows burdens with today's grace**

**Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?: ouchi e psuche pleion estin (3SPA1) tes trophes kai to soma tou endumatos?:**

- Luke 12:23; Romans 8:32
- [Matthew 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Matthew 6:25-34 Overcoming Materialism - Study Guide](#)- John MacArthur
- [Matthew 6:25-34 Overcoming Materialism](#)- John MacArthur
- [Matthew 6:25-30a: Overcoming Financial Worry 1 - Study Guide](#) John MacArthur
- [Matthew 6:25-30a: Overcoming Financial Worry 1](#)- John MacArthur
- [Matthew 6:25-30a: Overcoming Financial Stress](#)- John MacArthur
- [Matthew 6:25-34: Overcoming Financial Worry 2 - Study Guide](#)- John MacArthur
- [Matthew 6:25-34: Overcoming Financial Worry 2](#)- John MacArthur

As David said "*My times are in Thy hand*" (Ps 30:12a, KJV)

**Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?** - Of course it is. Those things are important, but there is much more to life than what we eat and what we wear. And if God has given us life (which He has), will He not take care of our life? Jesus says He will. Food and clothing are necessary but only the means and not the end, which is life

To worry about our daily needs for food and clothing, both of which are important, is not the most important thing. God is leading up to His concluding command to think about the big things (Mt 6:33 "Seek first...") and leave the details about food, clothing, etc to God.

**Life (5590)** (**psuche** or **psyche** from **psucho** = to breathe, blow, English = psychology, "study of the soul") is the breath, then that which breathes, the individual, animated creature. However the discerning reader must understand that psuche is one of those Greek words that can have several meanings, the exact nuance being determined by the context. It follows that one cannot simply select of the three main meanings of psuche and insert it in a given passage for it may not be appropriate to the given context. The meaning of **psuche** is also contingent upon whether one is a dichotomist or trichotomist. Consult Greek lexicons for more lengthy definitions of psuche as this definition is only a brief overview. (Click an excellent article on [Soul](#) in the Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology; see also ISBE article on [Soul](#))

**BAGD's** lexicon makes the point that...

It is often impossible to draw hard and fast lines in the use of this multivalent word. Generally it is used in reference to dematerialized existence or being... Without psuche a being, whether human or animal, consists merely of flesh and bones and without functioning capability. Speculations and views respecting the fortunes of psuche and its relation to the body find varied expression in our literature. ([A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature](#))

**Lawrence Richards** adds that as...

As with many biblical terms, the basic meaning of psyche is established by its OT counterpart, rather than by

its meaning in Greek culture. "Soul" refers to personal life, the inner person. Of its over one hundred NT uses, **psyche** is rendered by the NIV as "soul(s)" only twenty-five times...While there is much overlap in the NT uses of psyche and pneuma (spirit), there seems to be some areas of distinction as well. Often the focus of contexts in which these terms appear overlaps. Thus, both are used in speaking of personal existence, of life after death, emotions, purpose, and the self. But psyche is also used of one's physical life and of spiritual growth, while pneuma is associated distinctively with breath, worship, understanding, one's attitude or disposition, and spiritual power ([Richards, L O: Expository Dictionary of Bible Words: Regency](#))

Three nuances of psuche:

(1) **One meaning** is reference to the principle of life generally, the vital force which animates the body which shows itself in breathing, the "life principle" (the breath of life) as found even with animals (cf Luke 12:20 "...this very night your **soul** is required of you...", Acts 3:23 "every **soul** that does not heed that prophet shall be utterly destroyed") . To the Greeks the psuche was the principle of physical life. Everything which had physical life had psuche. Everything which is alive has **psuche**; a dog, a cat, any animal has **psuche**, but it has not got **pneuma** or spirit. Psuche is that physical life which a man shares with every living thing; but pneuma or spirit is that which makes a man different from the rest of creation and kin to God.

(2) A **second** meaning refers to the earthly, natural life in contrast to supernatural existence (Mt 6:25 'do not be anxious for your **life**...', Ro 11:3 "...they are seeking my **life**..."). This refers to So that the word denotes "life in the distinctness of individual existence" (Cremer).

(3) A **third** meaning of **psuche** is in reference to the inner nonmaterial life of man for which the physical body serves as the dwelling place often with focus on various aspects of feeling, thinking, etc and thus can refer primarily to the mind, to the heart, to desire (Lk 10:27 "love the Lord...with all your **soul**", Mk 14:34 "My **soul** is deeply grieved...", Eph 6:6 "doing the will of God from the **heart** [psuche]", Heb 12:3 "so that you may not grow weary and lose heart"). One might say this meaning refers to the inner self, the essence of life in terms of thinking, willing, and feeling. Here psuche describes the seat and center of the inner human life in its many and varied aspects.

It should be noted that there is an additional meaning of a derivative of psuche (**psuchikos**) which is used to described a "soulish" person, one who is still unregenerate and in Adam, and thus a person whose life is dominated by the unredeemed nature (1Cor 2:14, 15:44, 46, James 3:15, Jude 1:19)

**Wuest** says **psuche** (corresponding to meaning #3 above) is

"that part of man which wills, and thinks, and feels, or in other words, to the will power, the reason, and the emotions, to the personality with all his activities, hopes, and aspirations."

**Vincent** says

**psuche** denotes life in the distinctness of individual existence, "the centre of the personal being, the I of each individual.

**Henry Alford** writes that

The **psuche** is the centre of the personal being, the 'I' of each individual. It is in each man bound to the spirit, man's higher part, and to the body, man's lower part; drawn upwards by the one, downward by the other. He who gives himself up to the lower appetites, is sarkikos (fleshly): he who by communion of his pneuma (spirit) with God's Spirit is employed in the higher aims of his being, is pneumatikos (spiritual). He who rests midway, thinking only of self and self's interests, whether animal or intellectual, is the psuchikos (sensual), the selfish man, the man in whom the spirit is sunk and degraded into subordination to the subordinate psuche (soul).

**Ryle** writes that **Jesus** here in Matthew 6...

reminds us of the providential care that God continually takes of everything that he has created. Has he given us "life" (verse 25)? Then he will surely not let us lack anything necessary for its maintenance. Has he given us a "body" (verse 25)? Then he will surely not let us die for lack of clothing. He calls us into being and will doubtless find meat to feed us.

**Food** ([5160](#)) (**trophe** from **trépho** = to feed, eat) refers to nourishment or sustenance.

**Clothing** ([1742](#)) (**énduma** from **enduo** = to clothe from **en** = in + **dúo** = to sink, go in or under, to put on) refers to a garment, raiment or clothing.

**Edward Everett Hale** (1822-1909), former US Senate chaplain

"Never attempt to bear more than one kind of trouble at once. Some people bear three kinds--all they have had, all they have now, and all they expect to have."

**Oswald Chambers** wrote that

A warning which needs to be reiterated is that the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the lust of other things entering in, will choke all that God puts in. We are never free from the recurring tides of this encroachment. If it does not come on the line of clothes and food, it will come on the line of money or lack of money; of friends or lack of friends; or on the line of difficult circumstances. It is one steady encroachment all the time, and unless we allow the Spirit of God to raise up the standard against it, these things will come in like a flood.

"Take no thought for your life." 'Be careful about one thing only,' says our Lord—'your relationship to Me.' Common sense shouts loud and says—'That is absurd, I must consider how I am going to live, I must consider what I am going to eat and drink.' Jesus says you must not. Beware of allowing the thought that this statement is made by One Who does not understand our particular circumstances. Jesus Christ knows our circumstances better than we do, and He says we must not think about these things so as to make them the one concern of our life. Whenever there is competition, be sure that you put your relationship to God first.

"Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." How much evil has begun to threaten you to-day? What kind of mean little imps have been looking in and saying—'Now what are you going to do next month—this summer?' 'Be anxious for nothing,' Jesus says. Look again and think. Keep your mind on the 'much more' of your Heavenly Father.

**David** exhorts us...

**Cast** your **burden** (Hebrew = yehab = an interesting word to use here as it means lot, burden or what is given as a gift the implication being that it is a gift given in & by the Providence of God! **Septuagint/LXX** translates with merimna = anxiety) upon the LORD and He will **sustain** (maintain, nourish, guide, make provision for) you; He will never (actually two Hebrew words "lo" = no and "owlam" = everlasting, so idea is "never ever") allow the righteous to be **shaken** (be off course, fall, be brought down)

**Spurgeon** commenting on **Psalm 55:22** in **Morning and Evening** writes...

Care, even though exercised upon legitimate objects, if carried to excess, has in it the nature of sin. The precept to avoid anxious care is earnestly inculcated by our Saviour, again and again; it is reiterated by the apostles; and it is one which cannot be neglected without involving transgression: for the very essence of anxious care is the imagining that we are wiser than God, and the thrusting ourselves into his place to do for him that which he has undertaken to do for us. We attempt to think of that which we fancy he will forget; we labour to take upon ourselves our weary burden, as if he were unable or unwilling to take it for us. Now this disobedience to his plain precept, this unbelief in his Word, this presumption in intruding upon his province, is all sinful. Yet more than this, anxious care often leads to acts of sin. He who cannot calmly leave his affairs in God's hand, but will carry his own burden, is very likely to be tempted to use wrong means to help himself. This sin leads to a forsaking of God as our counselor, and resorting instead to human wisdom. This is going to the "broken cistern" instead of to the "fountain;" a sin which was laid against Israel of old. Anxiety makes us doubt God's lovingkindness, and thus our love to him grows cold; we feel mistrust, and thus grieve the Spirit of God, so that our prayers become hindered, our consistent example marred, and our life one of self-seeking. Thus want of confidence in God leads us to wander far from him; but if through simple faith in his promise, we cast each burden as it comes upon him, and are "careful for nothing" because he undertakes to care for us, it will keep us close to him, and strengthen us against much temptation. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee."

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**Our Daily Bread** has the following devotional on the related idea of "fret"

**Fret** (derived from an Old English word *fretan* meaning "to eat") means to affect something as if by gnawing or biting, to cause to suffer emotional strain, to become vexed or worried, (of a road surface) to become loose so that potholes develop (think about that definition as a word picture of what happens to the one who frets and

worries); a state of irritation or anxiety. To corrode, rub, chafe, fray, vex, agitate, ripple, grate, stew, fume, brood, eat one's heart out, agonize, anguish, lose sleep over, obsess about, upset or distress oneself, worry, erode, gall, wear, wear away, annoy, bother, disturb, chagrin, goad, grieve, harass, irk, irritate, nag, nettle, provoke, rankle with, rile, ruffle, torment, trouble. Whew!

"Cease from anger, and forsake wrath. Do not fret, it leads only to evildoing" (Ps 37:8-[note](#))

The older we get, the shorter life seems. Author Victor Hugo said, "Short as life is, we make it still shorter by the careless waste of time." There's no sadder example of wasted time than a life dominated by fretting. Take, for example, an American woman whose dream of riding a train through the English countryside came true. After boarding the train she kept fretting about the windows and the temperature, complaining about her seat assignment, rearranging her luggage, and so on. To her shock, she suddenly reached her journey's end. With deep regret she said to the person meeting her, "If I'd known I was going to arrive so soon, I wouldn't have wasted my time fretting so much." It's easy to get sidetracked by problems that won't matter at life's end—difficult neighbors, a tight budget, signs of aging, people who are wealthier than you. Moses acknowledged the brevity of life and prayed, "Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom" (Psalm 90:12-[note](#)). Instead of fretting, feed on God's Word and apply it to yourself. Strive to grow in God's wisdom every day. Stay focused on eternal values. Make it your goal to greet your waiting Savior one day with a heart of wisdom, rather than a heart of care. —Joanie Yoder

Day by day and with each passing moment,

Strength I find to meet my trials here;

Trusting in my Father's wise bestowment,

I've no cause for worry or for fear. —Berg

**Worry casts a big shadow behind a small thing.**

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**Our Daily Bread** has the following devotional on "**worry**"...

**Worry** is merely unbelief parading in disguise! The Scriptures repeatedly warn us against this grievous sin. Ian Maclaren ex-claims, "What does your anxiety do? It does not empty tomorrow of its sorrow, but it does empty today of its strength. It does not make you escape the evil; it makes you unfit to cope with it when it comes. God gives us the power to bear all the sorrow of His making, but He does not guarantee to give us strength to bear the burdens of our own making such as worry induces."

An experienced physician decided to analyze the "worriers" who were his patients. He found that 40 percent of them were apprehensive over things that never happened. About 30 per-cent concerned themselves with past matters now beyond their control. Another 12 percent anxiously feared the loss of their health, although their only illness was in their imagination. And the rest worried about their families, friends, and neighbors, but in most cases he discovered no basis for their fears.

A bassoon player once came to the great conductor Toscanini with furrowed brow and complained that his instrument would not sound the high E flat. Toscanini smiled and replied, "Don't worry. There is no E flat in your music tonight." The musician had been needlessly apprehensive. Many of our worries are like that — unfounded and unnecessary.

Worry is both unprofitable and ungodly. God's grace will be sufficient for each day's need. Take comfort in this thought, and tread the pathway of life with faith, not fear!

I walked life's path with "Worry,"  
Disturbed and quite unblessed,  
Until I trusted Jesus;  
Now "Faith" has given rest. — G.W.

**Satan seeks to crush our spirit  
by getting us to bear tomorrow's burdens  
with only today's grace!**

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Dr E Stanley Jones wrote

I am inwardly fashioned for faith, not for fear. Fear is not my native land; faith is. I am so made that **worry** and **anxiety** are sand in the machinery of life; faith is the oil. I live better by faith and confidence than by fear, doubt and **anxiety**. In **anxiety** and **worry**, my being is gasping for breath—these are not my native air. But in faith and confidence, I breathe freely—these are my native air. A John Hopkins University doctor says, “We do not know why it is that worriers die sooner than the non-worriers, but that is a fact.” But I, who am simple of mind, think I know; We are inwardly constructed in nerve and tissue, brain cell and soul, for faith and not for fear. God made us that way. To live by **worry** is to live against reality.

[Day by Day](#)

[\(Play hymn\)](#)

Day by day, and with each passing moment,  
Strength I find, to meet my trials here;  
Trusting in my Father's wise bestowment,  
I've no cause for worry or for fear.  
He Whose heart is kind beyond all measure  
Gives unto each day what He deems best—  
Lovingly, its part of pain and pleasure,  
Mingling toil with peace and rest.

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**Put Off Worry and Distress**

(A Bed Time Prayer)

Ere thou sleepest, gently lay  
Every troubled thought away;

Put off worry and distress,  
As thou putttest off thy dress;

Drop thy burden and thy care  
In the quiet arms of prayer.

Lord, Thou knowest how I live,  
All I've done amiss forgive;

All of good I've tried to do  
Strengthen, bless and carry through;

All I love in safety keep  
While in Thee I fall asleep.

—Henry Van Dyke

**ANXIOUS CARE**

**Mt 6:25**

**Alexander Maclaren**

Foresight and foreboding are two very different things. It is not that the one is the exaggeration of the other, but the one is opposed to the other. The more a man looks forward in the exercise of foresight, the less he does so in the exercise of foreboding. And the more he is tortured by anxious thoughts about a possible future, the less clear vision has he of a likely future, and the less power to influence it. When Christ here, therefore, enjoins the abstinence from thought for our life and for the future, it is not for the sake of getting away from the pressure of a very unpleasant command that we say, He does not mean to prevent the exercise of wise and provident foresight and preparation for what is to come. When this English version of ours was made, the phrase ‘taking thought’ meant solicitous anxiety, and that is the true rendering and proper meaning of the original. The idea is, therefore, that here there is forbidden for a Christian, not the careful preparation for what is likely to come, not the foresight of the storm and taking in sail while

yet there is time, but the constant occupation and distraction of the heart with gazing forward, and fearing and being weakened thereby; or to come back to words already used, foresight is commanded, and, therefore, foreboding is forbidden. My object now is to endeavour to gather together by their link of connection, the whole of those precepts which follow my text to the close of the chapter; and to try to set before you, in the order in which they stand, and in their organic connection with each other, the reasons which Christ gives for the absence of anxious care from our minds.

I mass them all into three. If you notice, the whole section, to the end of the chapter, is divided into three parts, by the threefold repetition of the injunction, 'Take no thought.' '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.' The reason for the command as given in this first section follows:—'Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?' The expansion of that thought runs on to the close of the thirtieth verse. Then there follows another division or section of the whole, marked by the repetition of the command, 'Take no thought,'—saying, 'What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?' The reason given for the command in this second section is—'(for after all these things do the Gentiles seek): for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God.' And then follows a third section, marked by the third repetition of the command, 'Take no thought—for the morrow.' The reason given for the command in this third section is—'for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself.'

Now if we try to generalise the lessons that lie in these three great divisions of the section, we get, I think, first,—anxious thought is contrary to all the lessons of nature, which show it to be unnecessary. That is the first, the longest section. Then, secondly, anxious thought is contrary to all the lessons of revelation or religion, which show it to be heathenish. And lastly, anxious thought is contrary to the whole scheme of Providence, which shows it to be futile. You do not need to be anxious. It is wicked to be anxious. It is of no use to be anxious. These are the three points,—anxious care is contrary to the lessons of Nature; contrary to the great principles of the Gospel; and contrary to the scheme of Providence. Let us try now simply to follow the course of thought in our Lord's illustration of these three principles.

### **I. The first is the consideration of the teaching of Nature.**

'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?' And then comes the illustration of the fowls of the air and the lilies of the field.

The whole of these verses fall into these general thoughts: You are obliged to trust God for your body, for its structure, for its form, for its habitudes, and for the length of your being; you are obliged to trust Him for the foundation—trust Him for the superstructure. You are obliged to trust Him, whether you will or not, for the greater—trust Him gladly for the less. You cannot help being dependent. After all your anxiety, it is only directed to the providing of the things that are needful for the life; the life itself, though it is a natural thing, comes direct from God's hand; and all that you can do, with all your carking cares, and laborious days, and sleepless nights, is but to adorn a little more beautifully or a little less beautifully, the allotted span—but to feed a little more delicately or a little less delicately, the body which God has given you. What is the use of being careful for food and raiment, when down below these necessities there lies the awful question—for the answer to which you have to hang helpless, in implicit, powerless dependence upon God,—'Shall I live, or shall I die? shall I have a body instinct with vitality, or a body crumbling amidst the clods of the valley?' After all your work, your anxiety gets but such a little way down; like some passing shower of rain, that only softens an inch of the hard-baked surface of the soil, and has no power to fructify the seed that lies feet below the reach of its useless moisture. Anxious care is foolish; for far beyond the region within which your anxieties move, there is the greater region in which there must be entire dependence upon God. 'Is not the life more than meat? Is not the body more than raiment?' You must trust Him for these; you may as well trust Him for all the rest.

Then, again, there comes up this other thought: Not only are you compelled to exercise unanxious dependence in regard to a matter which you cannot influence—the life of the body—and that is the greater; but, still further, God gives you that. Very well: God gives you the greater; and God's great gifts are always inclusive of God's little gifts. When He bestows a thing, He bestows all the consequences of the thing as well. When He gives a life, He swears by the gift, that He will give what is needful to sustain it. God does not stop half way in any of His bestowments. He gives royally and liberally, honestly and sincerely, logically and completely. When He bestows a life, therefore, you may be quite sure that He is not going to stultify His own gift by retaining unbestowed anything that is wanted for its blessing and its power. You have had to trust Him for the greater; trust Him for the less. He has given you the greater—no doubt He will give you the less. 'The life is more than meat, and the body than raiment.' 'Which of you, by taking thought, can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment?'

Then there is another thought. Look at God's ways of doing with all His creatures. The animate and the inanimate creation are appealed to, the fowls of the air and the lilies of the field, the one in reference to food and the other in reference to clothing, which are the two great wants already spoken of by Christ in the previous verses. I am not going to linger at all on the exquisite beauty of these illustrations. Every sensitive heart and pure eye dwell upon them with delight. The 'fowls of the air,' the lilies of the field,' 'they toil not, neither do they spin'; and then, with what an eye for the beauty of God's universe,—'Solomon, in all his glory, was not

arrayed like one of these!' Now, what is the force of this consideration? It is this— There is a specimen, in an inferior creation, of the divine care which you can trust, you men who are 'better than they.' And not only that:— There is an instance, not only of God's giving things that are necessary, but of God's giving more, lavishing beauty upon the flowers of the field. I do not think that we sufficiently dwell upon the moral and spiritual uses of beauty in God's universe. That everywhere His loving, wooing hand should touch the flower into grace, and deck all barren places with glory and with fairness—what does that reveal to us about Him? It says to us, He does not give scantily: it is not the mere measure of what is wanted, absolutely needed, to support a bare existence, that God bestows. He 'taketh pleasure in the prosperity of His servants.' Joy, and love, and beauty, belong to Him; and the smile upon His face that comes from the contemplation of His own fairness flung out into His glorious creation, is a prophecy of the gladness that comes into His heart from His own holiness and more ethereal beauty adorning the spiritual creatures whom He has made to flash back His likeness. The flowers of the field are so clothed that we may learn the lesson that it is a fair Spirit, and a loving Spirit, and a bountiful Spirit, and a royal Heart, that presides over the bestowments of creation, and allots gifts to men.

But notice further, how much of the force of what Christ says here depends on the consideration of the inferiority of these creatures who are thus blessed; and also notice what are the particulars of that inferiority. We read that verse, 'They sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns,' as if it marked out a particular in which their free and untoilsome lives were superior to ours. It is the very opposite. It is part of the characteristics that mark them as lower than we, that they have not to work for the future. They reap not, they sow not, they gather not;—are ye not much better than they? Better in this, amongst other things, that God has given us the privilege of influencing the future by our faithful toil, by the sweat of our brow and the labour of our hands. These creatures labour not, and yet they are fed. And the lesson for us is—much more may we, whom God has blessed with the power of work, and gifted with force to mould the future, be sure that He will bless the exercise of the prerogative by which He exalts us above inferior creatures, and makes us capable of toil. You can influence to-morrow. What you can influence by work, fret not about, for you can work. What you cannot influence by work, fret not about, for it is vain. 'They toil not, neither do they spin.' You are lifted above them because God has given you hands that can grasp the tool or the pen. Man's crown of glory, as well as man's curse and punishment, is, 'In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread.' So learn what you have to do with that great power of anticipation. It is meant to be the guide of wise work. It is meant to be the support for far-reaching, strenuous action. It is meant to elevate us above mere living from hand to mouth; to ennoble our whole being by leading to and directing toil that is blessed because there is no anxiety in it, labour that will be successful since it is according to the will of that God who has endowed us with the power of putting it forth.

Then there comes another inferiority. 'Your heavenly Father feedeth them.' They cannot say 'Father!' and yet they are fed. You are above them by the prerogative of toil. You are above them by the nearer relation which you sustain to your Father in heaven. He is their Maker, and lavishes His goodness upon them: He is your Father, and He will not forget His child. They cannot trust: you can. They might be anxious, if they could look forward, for they know not the hand that feeds them; but you can turn round, and recognise the source of all blessings. So, doubly ought you to be guarded from care by the lesson of that free joyful Nature that lies round about you, and to say, 'I have no fear of famine, nor of poverty, nor of want; for He feedeth the ravens when they cry. There is no reason for distrust. Shame on me if I am anxious, for every lily of the field blows its beauty, and every bird of the air carols its song without sorrowful foreboding, and yet there is no Father in heaven to them!'

And the last Inferiority is this; 'To-day it is, and to-morrow it is cast into the oven.' Their little life is thus blessed and brightened. Oh, how much greater will be the mercies that belong to them who have a longer life upon earth, and who never die! The lesson is not— These are the plebeians in God's universe, and you are the aristocracy, and you may trust Him; but it is—They, by their inferior place, have lesser and lower wants, wants but for a bounded being, wants that stretch not beyond earthly existence, and that for a brief span. They are blessed in the present, for the oven to-morrow saddens not the blossoming to-day. You have nobler necessities and higher longings, wants that belong to a soul that never dies, to a nature which may glow with the consciousness that God is your Father, wants which 'look before and after,' therefore, you are 'better than they'; and 'shall He not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?'

## **II. And now, in the second place, there is here another general line of considerations tending to dispel all anxious care—the thought that it is contrary to all the lessons of Religion, or Revelation, which show it to be heathenish.**

There are three clauses devoted to the illustration of this thought: 'After all these things do the Gentiles seek'; 'your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things'; 'seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.'

The first clause contains the principle, that solicitude for the future is at bottom heathen worldly-mindedness. The heathen tendency in us all leads to an overestimate of material good, and it is a question of circumstances whether that shall show itself in heaping up earthly treasures, or in anxious care. These are the same plant, only the one is growing in the tropics of sunny prosperity, and the other in the arctic zone of chill penury. The one is the sin of the worldly-minded rich man, the other is the sin of the worldly-minded poor man. The character is the same in both, turned inside out! And, therefore, the words, 'ye cannot serve God and Mammon,' stand in this chapter in the centre between our Lord's warning against laying up treasures on earth, and His warning against being



full of cares for earth. He would show us thereby that these two apparently opposite states of mind in reality spring from that one root, and are equally, though differently, 'serving Mammon.' We do not sufficiently reflect upon that. We say, perhaps, this intense solicitude of ours is a matter of temperament, or of circumstances. So it may be: but the Gospel was sent to help us to cure worldly temperaments, and to master circumstances. But the reason why we are troubled and careful about the things of this life lies here, that our hearts have taken an earthly direction, that we are at bottom heathenish in our lives and in our desires. It is the very characteristic of the Gentile (that is to say, of the heathen) that earth should bound his horizon. It is the very characteristic of the worldly man that all his anxieties on the one hand, and all his joys on the other, should be 'cribbed, cabined and confined' within the narrow sphere of the visible. When a Christian is living in the foreboding of some earthly sorrow coming down upon him, and is feeling as if there would be nothing left if some earthly treasure were swept away, is that not, in the very root of it, idolatry—worldly-mindedness? Is it not clean contrary to all our profession that for us 'there is none upon earth that we desire besides Thee'? Anxious care rests upon a basis of heathen worldly-mindedness.

Anxious care rests upon a basis, too, of heathen misunderstanding of the character of God. 'Your heavenly Father knoweth that you have need of all these things.' The heathen thought of God is that He is far removed from our perplexities, either ignorant of our struggles, or unsympathising with them. The Christian has the double armour against anxiety—the name of the Father, and the conviction that the Father's knowledge is co-extensive with the Father's love. He who calls us His children thoroughly understands what His children want. And so, anxiety is contrary to the very name by which we have learned to call God, and to the pledge of pitying care and perfect knowledge of our frame which lies in the words 'our Father.' Our Father is the name of God, and our Father intensely cares for us, and lovingly does all things for us.

And then, still further, Christ points out here, not only what is the real root of this solicitous care—something very like worldly-mindedness, heathen worldly-mindedness; but He points out what is the one counterpoise of it—'seek first the kingdom of God.' It is of no use only to tell men that they ought to trust, that the birds of the air might teach them to trust, that the flowers of the field might preach resignation and confidence to them. It is of no use to attempt to scold them into trust, by telling them that distrust is heathenish. You must fill the heart with a supreme and transcendent desire after the one supreme object, and then there will be no room or leisure left for anxious care after the lesser. Have inwrought into your being, Christian man, the opposite of that heathen over-regard for earthly things. 'Seek first the kingdom of God.' Let all your spirit be stretching itself out towards that divine and blessed reality, longing to be a subject of that kingdom, and a possessor of that righteousness; and 'the cares that infest the day' will steal away from out of the sacred pavilion of your believing spirit. Fill your heart with desires after what is worthy of desire; and the greater having entered in, all lesser objects will rank themselves in the right place, and the 'glory that excelleth' will outshine the seducing brightness of the paltry present. Oh! it is want of love, it is want of earnest desire, it is want of firm conviction that God, God only, God by Himself, is enough for me, that makes me careful and troubled. And therefore, if I could only attain unto that sublime and calm height of perfect conviction, that He is sufficient for me, that He is with me for ever,—the satisfying object of my desires and the glorious reward of my searchings,—let life and death come as they may, let riches, poverty, health, sickness, all the antitheses of human circumstances storm down upon me in quick alternation, yet in them all I shall be content and peaceful. God is beside me, and His presence brings in its train whatsoever things I need. You cannot cast out the sin of foreboding thoughts by any power short of the entrance of Christ and His love. The blessings of faith and felt communion leave no room nor leisure for anxiety.

### **III. Finally, Christ here tells us, that thought for the morrow is contrary to all the scheme of Providence, which shows it to be vain.**

'The morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.'

I interpret these two clauses as meaning this: To-morrow has anxieties enough of its own, alter and in spite of all the anxieties about it to-day by which you try to free it from care when it comes. Every day—every day will have its evil, have it to the end. And every day will have evil enough to task all the strength that a man has to cope with it. So that it just comes to this: Anxiety,—it is all vain. After all your careful watching for the corner of the heaven where the cloud is to come from, there will be a cloud, and it will rise somewhere, but you never know beforehand from what quarter. The morrow shall have its own anxieties. After all your fortifying of the castle of your life, there will be some little postern left unguarded, some little weak place in the wall left uncommanded by a battery; and there, where you never looked for him, the inevitable invader will come in. After all the plunging of the hero in the fabled waters that made him invulnerable, there was the little spot on the heel, and the arrow found its way there? There is nothing certain to happen, says the proverb, but the unforeseen. To-morrow will have its cares, spite of anything that anxiety and foreboding can do. It is God's law of Providence that a man shall be disciplined by sorrow; and to try to escape from that law by any forecasting prudence, is utterly hopeless, and madness.

And what does your anxiety do? It does not empty to-morrow, brother, of its sorrows; but, ah! it empties to-day of its strength. It does not enable you to escape the evil, it makes you unfit to cope with it when it comes. It does not bless to-morrow, but it robs to-day. For every day has its own burden. Sufficient for each day is the evil which properly belongs to it. Do not add to-morrow's to to-day's. Do not drag the future into the present. The present has enough to do with its own proper concerns. We have always strength to

bear the evil when it comes. We have not strength to bear the foreboding of it. 'As thy day, thy strength shall be.' In strict proportion to the existing exigencies will be the God-given power; but if you cram and condense to-day's sorrows by experience, and tomorrow's sorrows by anticipation, into the narrow round of the one four-and-twenty hours, there is no promise that 'as that day thy strength shall be.' God gives us (His name be praised!)—God gives us power to bear all the sorrows of His making; but He does not give us power to bear the sorrows of our own making, which the anticipation of sorrow most assuredly is.

Then: contrary to the lessons of Nature, contrary to the teachings of Religion, contrary to the scheme of Providence; weakening your strength, distracting your mind, sucking the sunshine out of every landscape, and casting a shadow over all the beauty—the curse of our lives is that heathenish, blind, useless, faithless, needless anxiety in which we do indulge. Look forward, my brother, for God has given you that royal and wonderful gift of dwelling in the future, and bringing all its glories around your present. Look forward, not for life, but for heaven; not for food and raiment, but for the righteousness after which it is blessed to hunger and thirst, and wherewith it is blessed to be clothed. Not for earth, but for heaven, let your forecasting gift of prophecy come into play. Fill the present with quiet faith, with patient waiting, with honest work, with wise reading of God's lessons of nature, of providence, and of grace, all of which say to us, Live in God's future, that the present may be bright: work in the present, that the future may be certain! They may well look around in expectation, sunny and unclouded, of a blessed time to come, whose hearts are already 'fixed, trusting in the Lord.' He to whom there are a present Christ, and a present Spirit, and a present Father, and a present forgiveness, and a present redemption, may well live expatiating in all the glorious distance of the unknown to come, sending out (if I may use such a figure) from his placid heart over all the weltering waters of this lower world, the peaceful seeking dove, his meek hope, that shall come back again from its flight with some palm-branch broken from the trees of Paradise between its bill. And he that has no such present has a future dark, chaotic, a heaving, destructive ocean; and over it there goes for ever—black-pinioned, winging its solitary and hopeless flight—the raven of his anxious thoughts, which finds no place to rest, and comes back again to the desolate ark with its foreboding croak of evil in the present and evil in the future. Live in Christ, 'the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever'; and His presence shall make all your past, present, and future—memory, enjoyment, and hope—to be

**Matthew 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? (NASB: Lockman)**

**Greek:** **emblepsate (2PAAM)** eis ta peteina tou ouranou [hoti](#) ou speirousin ([3PPAI](#)) oude therizousin ([3PPAI](#)) oude sunagousin ([3PPAI](#)) eis apothekas, kai o pater [humon](#) o ouranios [trephei](#) ([3PPAI](#)) auta; ouch umeis mallon diapherete ([3PPAI](#)) auton?

**Amplified:** Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they? ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

**KJV:** 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? ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

**Philips:** Look at the birds in the sky. They never sow nor reap nor store away in barns, and yet your Heavenly Father feeds them. Aren't you much more valuable to him than they are? ([New Testament in Modern English](#))

**Wuest:** Consider the birds of the heaven. They are not sowing seed, nor reaping, nor even are they collecting into granaries. And yet your heavenly Father is feeding them. As for you, do you not surpass them?

**Young's Literal:** look to the fowls of the heaven, for they do not sow, nor reap, nor gather into storehouses, and your heavenly Father doth nourish them; are not ye much better than they?

**Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, nor reap nor gather into barns: **emblepsate (2PAAM)** eis ta peteina tou ouranou hoti ou speirousin ([3PPAI](#)) oude therizousin ([3PPAI](#)) oude sunagousin ([3PPAI](#)) eis apothekas**

- Mt 10:29-31; Genesis 1:29, 30, 31; Job 35:11; 38:41; Psalms 104:11,12,27,28; Psalms 145:15,16; 147:9; Luke 12:6,7,24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31
- [Matthew 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Matthew 6:25-34 Overcoming Materialism - Study Guide](#)- John MacArthur
- [Matthew 6:25-34 Overcoming Materialism](#)- John MacArthur
- [Matthew 6:25-30a: Overcoming Financial Worry 1 - Study Guide](#)- John MacArthur
- [Matthew 6:25-30a: Overcoming Financial Worry 1](#)- John MacArthur
- [Matthew 6:25-30a: Overcoming Financial Stress](#)- John MacArthur

- [Matthew 6:25-34: Overcoming Financial Worry 2 - Study Guide](#)- John MacArthur
- [Matthew 6:25-34: Overcoming Financial Worry 2](#)- John MacArthur

**Spurgeon** comments that with these words "Our Savior intended faith to be our quietus concerning daily cares, or He would not have (spoken Matthew 6:25-26)."

**C H Spurgeon** - The birds are fed by God; will he not feed us? They are free from the fret which comes of hoarding and trading; why should not we be? If God feeds the fowls of the air without sowing, or reaping, or storing, surely he will supply us when we trustfully use these means. For us to rely upon these means and forget our God would be folly indeed. Our King would have his subjects give their hearts to his love and service, and not worry themselves with groveling anxieties. It is well for us that we have these daily wants, because they lead us to our heavenly Father; but if we grow anxious, they are turned from their design and made into barriers to shut us out from the Lord. Oh, that we would be as good as the birds in trustfulness, since in dignity of nature we are so "much better than they"! ([Commentary](#))

**Look** (1689) (**emblepo** from **en** = in or on + **blépo** = to look) means to look in the face, fix the eyes upon and so to stare at. It includes the idea of to contemplate or consider. The **orist imperative** is a command calling for one to "look now", "look effectively", and can even convey a sense of urgency. One of the most dramatic NT uses is when "The Lord turned and looked at Peter" (Lk 22:61) after he had denied Him three times!

**Friberg** - literally, as an attentive looking on someone or something fix one's gaze (earnestly) on, look at attentively (Lk 22:61); absolutely see clearly ( Mk 8.25); be able to see (Acts 22.11); figuratively, as giving careful attention consider, think about (Mt 6.26)

**Gilbrant** - It usually signifies a look of love, concern, or interest, as in the account of the rich young ruler (Mark 10:21). It can mean "to fix one's gaze upon" or "look at intently" as when the servant girl looked at Peter (Luke 22:56), or when Jesus looked directly at the crowd after telling a parable (Luke 20:17). Jesus turned and looked directly (*emblepō*) at Peter after Peter's third denial (Luke 22:61). *Emblepō* also has a figurative meaning of "to look at" in a spiritual sense, or "to consider" (Matthew 6:26; John 1:36). There is also the possibility that *emblepō* can mean "able to see." Acts 22:11 says Paul was unable to see after he was exposed to the light on the road to Damascus. *Emblepō* is used to describe the sight of the formerly blind man after Jesus healed him (Mark 8:25).

**Gilbrant** - In classical Greek **emblepō** is not used extensively but means "to look in the face" or "to look at someone," in the eyes, for example (Plato Republic 10.608D). *Emblepō* can mean "to look into" in the sense of "to investigate." The Septuagint uses *emblepō* to translate three Hebrew words: *nāvaṭ*, "to look, to behold, to consider" (Genesis 15:5); *pānâh*, "to turn toward, consider" (Psalm 40:4 [LXX 39:4]); and *râ'âh*, "to look at, consider" (1 Samuel 16:7).

**Emblepo** - 10x in 10v - look(1), looked(5), looking(3), see(1).

Matthew 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?"

Matthew 19:26 And **looking** at them Jesus said to them, "With people this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

Mark 10:21 **Looking** at him, Jesus felt a love for him and said to him, "One thing you lack: go and sell all you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."

Mark 10:27 **Looking** at them, Jesus said, "With people it is impossible, but not with God; for all things are possible with God."

Mark 14:67 and seeing Peter warming himself, she **looked** at him and said, "You also were with Jesus the Nazarene."

Luke 20:17 But Jesus **looked** at them and said, "What then is this that is written: 'THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE CHIEF CORNER stone'?"

Luke 22:61 The Lord turned and **looked** at Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had told him, "Before a rooster crows today, you will deny Me three times."

John 1:36 and he **looked** at Jesus as He walked, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God!"

John 1:42 He brought him to Jesus. Jesus **looked** at him and said, "You are Simon the son of John; you shall be called Cephas" (which is translated Peter).

Acts 22:11 "But since I could not **see** because of the brightness of that light, I was led by the hand by those who were with me and came into Damascus.

**Emblepo** - 15x in 15v -

1 Sam. 16:7; 1 Ki. 8:8; Ps. 39:5; Job 2:10; Isa. 5:12; Isa. 5:30; Isa. 8:22; Isa. 17:7; Isa. 22:8; Isa. 22:11; Isa. 51:1; Isa. 51:2; Isa. 51:6

But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look at (Lxx = epiblepo) his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for God sees not as man sees, for man **looks** (Lxx = emblepo) at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."

**Birds** (4071) (**peteinon**) is a flying animal or fowl.

**Not** (3761) (**oude** from **ou** = not + **dé** = but) describes absolute negation.

**Sow** (4687) (**speiro**) means to scatter seed. Sowing, usually accomplished by broadcasting seed, which could precede or follow plowing. Fields or individual plants were fertilized with dung and the rain and sun brought different crops to maturity at different times. Following the winter rains and the 'latter' rains of March-April, barley was ready to be harvested in April and May, and wheat matured three or four weeks later.

Very few birds make a living from farming. You hardly ever see a red robin planting some corn. God feeds the birds. And aren't you worth more than the birds to God?

Said the robin to the sparrow:  
"I should really like to know  
Why these anxious human beings  
Rush about and worry so."  
Said the sparrow to the robin:  
"Friend, I think that it must be  
That they have no heavenly Father,  
Such as cares for you and me."

**Reap** (2325) (**therizo** from **théros** = summer, harvest time) means to cut ripe grain and to gather bundles of such grain together and thus to harvest.

**Gather** (4863) (**sunago** from **sún** = with, together + **ágo** = lead) means to lead together and then to gather or collect.

**Barns** (596) (**apotheke** from **apotíthemi** = to put away) describes a place where anything is laid up, such as a repository of arms or arsenal, a treasury or in the present case a granary or storehouse.

Men can sow, reap and gather, but are still to be like a little bird, trusting in God to take care of them.

**J C Ryle** says Jesus "sends us to the birds of the air for instruction. They make no provision for the future: "they do not sow or reap or store away in barns"; they do not store food for the future. They literally live from day to day on what they can pick up by using the instinct God has put in them. They ought to teach us that no one doing their duty in the position to which God has called him, will ever be allowed to come to poverty. ([Matthew 6:25-34 Expository Thoughts](#))

### **His Eye is on the Sparrow**

**by Civilla Martin**

Why should I feel discouraged, why should the shadows come,  
Why should my heart be lonely, and long for heaven and home,  
When Jesus is my portion? My constant friend is He:  
His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me;  
His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me.

#### ***Refrain***

***I sing because I'm happy,  
I sing because I'm free,  
For His eye is on the sparrow,  
And I know He watches me.***

"Let not your heart be troubled," His tender word I hear,  
And resting on His goodness, I lose my doubts and fears;

Though by the path He leadeth, but one step I may see;  
His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me;  
His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me.

**Refrain**

Whenever I am tempted, whenever clouds arise,  
When songs give place to sighing, when hope within me dies,  
I draw the closer to Him, from care He sets me free;  
His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me;  
His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me.

**Refrain**

**and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they: kai o pater humon o ouranios trephei (3PPAI) auta; ouch humeis mallon diapherete (3PPAI) auton?**

- Mt 6:32; 7:9; Luke 12:32
- [Matthew 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Matthew 6:25-34 Overcoming Materialism - Study Guide](#)- John MacArthur
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- [Matthew 6:25-34: Overcoming Financial Worry 2 - Study Guide](#)- John MacArthur
- [Matthew 6:25-34: Overcoming Financial Worry 2](#)- John MacArthur

**Much more** - Jesus gives two a fortiori (“how much more”) examples—“look at the birds” (Mt 6:26), “consider the lilies” (Mt 6:28)—to show that, since God cares even for the birds and the lilies, how much more will he care for his own. To be anxious, then, demonstrates a lack of trust in God, who promises that he will graciously care for “all these things” (Mt 6:33; cf. Ro 8:32). ([ESV Study Bible Crossway](#))

**G Campbell Morgan...**

**Let us ponder His teaching, first about the birds.**

He says in effect: These birds of the air neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, but your Father feedeth them; you can sow and reap and gather, therefore much more does your Father care for you. The Lord's argument here is not that we are to cease our sowing and reaping and gathering, but that if He takes care of those who cannot do such things, much more will He take care of those who can. These birds of the air are without rational forethought. By comparison with men there can be no toiling, no sowing, no reaping, no gathering. But JESUS says, GOD has given you the power of rational forethought, and much more will He take care of you. It is not that we are to neglect the use of reason, or forethought, or preparation. It is not that we are to worry - but that we are to take thought for the morrow without anxiety, knowing that, as GOD cares for the birds, He will more perfectly take care of us. ([Matthew 6:25-34 Commentary](#))

Believers know God as their "**heavenly Father**" and since He is our Father He will take special care of us. Why? We are the bearers of His Name, and if He did not take care of His family, what would the unsaved pagans think about Him as a Father? Would they ever be interested in knowing about Him?

**Spurgeon** writes that...

You know what Luther said the little bird said to him. He sat on the spray of the tree and sang,

**Mortal, cease from toil and sorrow  
God provideth for tomorrow.**

And it chirped and picked up its little grain, and sang again. Yet it had no granary. It had not a handful of wheat stored up any-where, but it kept on with its chirping

**Mortal, cease from toil and sorrow;  
God provideth for tomorrow**

A little London girl who had gone into the country once said, "Look, mamma, at that poor little bird. It has no cage!"

That would not have struck me as being any loss to the bird. And if you and I were without our cage, the box of seed, and the glass of water, it would not be much of a loss if we were cast adrift into the glorious liberty of a life of humble dependence on God. It is that cage of carnal trust and that box of seed we are always laboring to fill that make the worry of this mortal life. But he who has grace to spread his wings and soar away and get into the open field of divine trustfulness may sing all the day, and ever have this for his tune:

**Mortal, cease from toil and sorrow;  
God provideth for tomorrow.**

**Matthew Henry** offers some excellent advice on how to deal with worry and anxiety writing that...

One would think the command of Christ was enough to restrain us from this foolish sin of disquieting, distrustful care, independently of the comfort of our own souls, which is so nearly concerned; but to show how much the heart of Christ is upon it, and what pleasures he takes in those that hope in his mercy, the command is backed with the most powerful arguments. If reason may but rule us, surely we shall ease ourselves of these thorns. **To free us from anxious thoughts, and to expel them, Christ here suggests to us comforting thoughts, that we may be filled with them.** It will be worth while to take pains with our own hearts, to argue them out of their disquieting cares, and to make ourselves ashamed of them. They may be weakened by right reason, but it is by an active faith only that they can be overcome. ([Matthew 6](#)) (Bolding added)

**Spurgeon** has the following devotional on "**Your heavenly Father**"...

God's people are doubly his children, they are his offspring by creation, and they are his sons by adoption in Christ. Hence they are privileged to call him, "Our Father which art in heaven." Father! Oh, what precious word is that. Here is authority: "If I be a Father, where is mine honour?" If ye be sons, where is your obedience? Here is affection mingled with authority; an authority which does not provoke rebellion; an obedience demanded which is most cheerfully rendered—which would not be withheld even if it might. The obedience which God's children yield to him must be loving obedience. Do not go about the service of God as slaves to their taskmaster's toil, but run in the way of his commands because it is your Father's way. Yield your bodies as instruments of righteousness, because righteousness is your Father's will, and his will should be the will of his child. Father!—Here is a kingly attribute so sweetly veiled in love, that the King's crown is forgotten in the King's face, and his sceptre becomes, not a rod of iron, but a silver sceptre of mercy—the sceptre indeed seems to be forgotten in the tender hand of him who wields it. Father!—Here is honour and love. How great is a Father's love to his children! That which friendship cannot do, and mere benevolence will not attempt, a father's heart and hand must do for his sons. They are his offspring, he must bless them; they are his children, he must show himself strong in their defence. If an earthly father watches over his children with unceasing love and care, how much more does our heavenly Father? Abba, Father! He who can say this, hath uttered better music than cherubim or seraphim can reach. There is heaven in the depth of that word—Father! There is all I can ask; all my necessities can demand; all my wishes can desire. I have all in all to all eternity when I can say, "Father." (Spurgeon, C. H. Morning and evening : Daily readings. January 26 AM)

#### [This Is My Father's World](#)

This is my Father's world, and to my listening ears  
All nature sings, and round me rings the music of the spheres.  
This is my Father's world: I rest me in the thought  
Of rocks and trees, of skies and seas;  
His hand the wonders wrought.

**Feeds** ([5142](#)) (**trepho**) means to nourish, feed or nurture.

If we worry constantly about having these essentials, we show that we have not yet learned the basic lesson nature teaches that God provides for His creatures' needs. Have you ever seen a bird try to build more nests than its neighbor. No fox ever worried because he had only one hole in which to live and hide. No squirrel has ever been overcome by anxiety that he did not have enough nuts stored for two winters instead of only for one.

Birds work, hunting for the worms, etc God provides and then bring it back to their baby birds, but they don't worry.

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**Forget Worry** - Perhaps you've participated in an experiment where you were given a phrase like "red car" and then were asked to put it out of your mind. But the harder you tried, the more the "red car" dominated your thoughts. This kind of exercise shows that we can never forget something by concentrating on it.

Anxious thoughts, our natural response to the cares of life, are like that. Many of us spend sleepless nights trying to solve complex problems, and all we accomplish is fixing them more firmly in our minds.

The Bible says that instead of being weighed down by our concerns, we should give them to God. The apostle Peter put it this way: "[Cast] all your care upon Him, for He cares for you" (1 Peter 5:7). And in Philippians 4:6, the apostle Paul gave similar instruction.

Jesus told His disciples not to worry about the necessities of life, because "your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things" (Matthew 6:32).

The way to forget our worries is to concentrate on the goodness and loving care of God, not on the problems that plague us. Then we can say with the psalmist, "In the multitude of my anxieties within me, Your comforts delight my soul" (Psalm 94:19). —David C. McCasland

When we give all our cares to God,  
Our worries will depart;  
He gives to us a peace of mind  
That calms our anxious heart. —Sper

**The more you think about God's goodness,  
the less you'll think about your worries.**

## WORRY: WHAT IS IT?

### Worry...

- ...gives a small thing a big shadow
- ...is the interest we pay on tomorrow's troubles.
- ...over tomorrow pulls shadows over today's sunshine.
- ...is like a rocking chair; it will give you something to do, but it won't get you anywhere.
- ...is an indication that we think God cannot look after us. (O. Chambers)
- ...is putting question marks where God has put periods. (J R Rice)
- ...is the interest we pay on tomorrow's troubles. (E S Jones)
- ...is an intrusion into God's providence. (J Haggai)
- ...is a guest admitted which quickly turns to be master.
- ... never robs tomorrow of its sorrow, it only saps today of its strength (A J Cronin)
- ... is the interest paid by those who borrow trouble (G W Lyon)
- ...is practical atheism and an affront to God (R. H. Mounce)

**Worry** is wrong and is in essence sin. Worry is unnecessary (cp "the birds"). Worry is useless (it cannot add an hour to your life or an inch to your height). Worry is blind (to the lessons taught by God's providential care of the birds and flowers). Worry is at its very core being, a failure to trust God.

When worry is present, trust cannot crowd its way in. (Billy Graham)

Only one type of worry is correct: to worry because you worry too much. (Jewish Proverb)

Worms eat you when you're dead; worries eat you when you're alive. (Jewish Proverb)

Happy is the man who is too busy to worry by day, and too sleepy to worry at night.

To carry care to bed is to sleep with a pack on your back. (T C Halliburton)

Don't tell me that worry doesn't do any good. I know better. The things I worry about don't happen. (Anon)

Worry is a species of myopia—nearsightedness. (E. Stanley Jones)

If we bring into one day's thoughts the evil of many, certain and uncertain, what will be and what will never be, our load will be as intolerable as it is unreasonable. (Jeremy Taylor)

So shaken as we are, so wan with care. (William Shakespeare)

**Michael Green** records the following story from the life of the fourteenth-century German Johann Tauler, which aptly demonstrates something of the attitude Jesus is calling His disciples to maintain...

One day Tauler met a beggar. 'God give you a good day, my friend,' he said.

The beggar answered, 'I thank God I never had a bad one.'

Then Tauler said, 'God give you a happy life, my friend.'

'I thank God', said the beggar, 'that I am never unhappy.'

In amazement Tauler asked, 'What do you mean?'

'Well,' said the beggar, 'when it is fine I thank God. When it rains I thank God. When I have plenty I thank God. When I am hungry I thank God. And, since God's will is my will, and whatever pleases him pleases me, why should I say I am unhappy when I am not?'

Tauler looked at the man in astonishment. 'Who are you?' he asked.

'I am a king,' said the beggar.

'Where, then, is your kingdom?' asked Tauler.

The beggar replied quietly, 'In my heart.' (**Ed**: Case closed on the need to worry!)

**E. E. Wordsworth** wrote that...

There is a little motto that hangs on the wall in my home that again and again has rebuked me: "Why worry when you can pray?" We have often been reminded of the words of the Psalmist, "Fret not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity" (Ps. 37:1 - [see Spurgeon's note](#)). Mr. Wesley used to say that he would just as soon swear as to worry. Worrying is evidence of a serious lack of trust in God and His unfailing promises. Worry saddens, blights, destroys, kills. It depletes one's energies, devitalizes the physical man, and enervates the whole spiritual nature. It greatly reduces the spiritual stature and impoverishes the whole spirit.

**Warren Wiersbe** -All of nature depends on God, and God never fails. Only mortal man depends on money, and money always fails. ([Bible Exposition Commentary. 1989. Victor](#))

**Worth more** (1308) ([diaphero](#) from **dia** = transition or separation + **phéro** = carry, bear) means literally to carry or bear through, then to be different from someone or something and finally to be of considerable value in view of having certain distinctive characteristics.

**There's not a bird with lonely nest,**

*In pathless wood or mountain crest,*

*Nor meaner thing, which does not share,*

*O God, in Thy paternal care.*

Do you believe that you are worth much more than the birds to God? If so it would not be surprising that you might have difficulty trusting God. Remember God still loves us when we fail. We could never earn His love. We could never make Him stop loving us. Regardless of your past or your present, if you are a child of God, you are worth much more than the birds, which are creatures of God but not children.

**Max Lucado** has the following devotional on Mt 6:26...



Consider the earth! Our globe's weight has been estimated at six sextillion tons (a six with twenty-one zeroes). Yet it is precisely tilted at twenty-three degrees; any more or any less and our seasons would be lost in a melted polar flood. Though our globe revolves at the rate of one-thousand miles per hour or twenty-five thousand miles per day or nine million miles per year, none of us tumbles into orbit....As you stand ... observing God's workshop, let me pose a few questions. If he is able to place the stars in their sockets and suspend the sky like a curtain, do you think it is remotely possible that God is able to guide your life? If your God is mighty enough to ignite the sun, could it be that he is mighty enough to light your path? If he cares enough about the planet Saturn to give it rings or Venus to make it sparkle, is there an outside chance that he cares enough about you to meet your needs? ([Lucado, M., & Gibbs, T. A. Grace for the Moment: Inspirational Thoughts for Each Day of the Year Nashville, Tenn.: J. Countryman](#))

## **George Mueller** **A Man Who Trusted God** **For All His Needs**

**George Mueller** (1805-1898) is an example of the life of a man of faith, the likes of which this world has seldom seen. He took Jesus' words to heart and lived by His Lord's assurance that His heavenly Father would provide all of his basic necessities. The following section has a few of the vignettes from the life of this humble saint of God and perhaps would whet your appetite to read his free online biography ([George Mueller of Bristol: and His Witness to a Prayer-Hearing God](#)).

Three weeks after their marriage, they decided to depend upon God alone to provide their needs as already indicated. They carried it to the extent that they would not give definite answers to inquiries as to whether or not they were in need of money at any particular moment. At the time of need, there would always seem to be funds available from some source, both in regards to their private income, and to the funds for his vast projects soon to be discussed. No matter how pressing was the need, George simply renewed his prayers, and either money or food always came in time to save the situation... A well known story about Mueller indicates the kind of life that he lived.

One morning the plates and cups and bowls on the table were empty. There was no food in the larder, and no money to buy food. The children were standing waiting for their morning meal, when Mueller said, "Children, you know we must be in time for school." Lifting his hand he said, "Dear Father, we thank Thee for what Thou art going to give us to eat." There was a knock on the door. The baker stood there, and said, "Mr. Mueller, I couldn't sleep last night. Somehow I felt you didn't have bread for breakfast and the Lord wanted me to send you some. So I got up at 2 a.m. and baked some fresh bread, and have brought it." Mueller thanked the man. No sooner had this transpired when there was a second knock at the door. It was the milkman. He announced that his milk cart had broken down right in front of the Orphanage, and he would like to give the children his cans of fresh milk so he could empty his wagon and repair it. No wonder, years later, when Mueller was to travel the world as an evangelist, he would be heralded as "the man who gets things from God!"

By March, 1843, he felt the need for a second home for girls. On July, 1844, the fourth house on Wilson Street was opened--the total of his homeless waifs now being 130. A letter received on October 30, 1845, changed his entire ministry...he was now age 40. Basically, it was a letter from a local resident complaining that the noise of the children was a nuisance. They were vastly over-crowded and there was not enough space for land cultivation, washing clothes, etc. He gave the letter much thought, listing the pros and cons. If he were to leave, he would have to build a structure to hold at least 300 orphans at a cost of \$60,000. On his 36th day of prayer over the dilemma, the first \$6,000 came in for a building program. By June, 1848, he received all of the \$60,000 which he needed. He had begun to build the previous year on July 5, 1847, at a place called Ashley Downs as the bulk of the money had been sent in. Building Number 1 was opened in June, 1849, and housed 300 children with staff sufficient to teach and care for them. It was a seven-acre site and finally cost about \$90,000 as legal expenses, furnishings, and land purchase brought the price up higher than anticipated. The old houses on Wilson Street emptied and everyone was now under one roof.

Mueller was becoming a well known Christian leader. He answered some 3,000 letters a year without a

secretary. Besides his orphanages, the four other objectives of his Scriptural Knowledge Institution claimed his attention and he continued his pastoral work at Bethesda Chapel also.

In 1850, he felt the need for a second orphanage. Donations began to come in miraculously again and finally, on November 12, 1857, a second building housing 400 children at a cost of \$126,000 was built. Number 3 opened on March 12, 1862, housing 450 children, and costing over \$138,000. It was housed on 11 1/2 acres. Number 4 was opened November 5, 1868, and Number 5 on January 6, 1870. These last two cost over \$300,000 and housed 450 each.

From 1848 to 1874, money came in to improve and expand the work which went from 130 orphans to 2,050 during this time and up to 13 acres. Mueller describes these days, writing in 1874:

But God, our infinite rich Treasurer, remains with us. It is this which gives me peace. Moreover if it pleases Him, with a work requiring about \$264,000 a year...would I gladly pass through all these trials of faith with regard to means, if He only might be glorified, and His Church and the world benefited...I have placed myself in the position of having no means at all left; and 2,100 persons, not only daily at the table, but with everything else to be provided for, and all the funds gone; 189 missionaries to be assisted, and nothing whatever left; about one hundred schools with 9,000 scholars in them, to be entirely supported, and no means for them in hand; about four million tracts and tens of thousands of copies of the Holy Scriptures yearly now to be sent out, and all the money expended...I commit the whole work to Him, and He will provide me with what I need, in future also, though I know not whence the means are to come.

His own personal income varied around \$12,000 a year, of which he kept for himself \$1,800 giving the rest away. (Adapted from the booklet by [Ed Reese. The Christian Hall of Fame series. Reese Publications, P.O. Box 5625, Lansing, IL 60438](#) )

**Here is a youtube video biography I highly recommend - [George Muller](#) (1 hour)**

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**Dandelions And Dollars** - Several years ago I was a missionary home on furlough, feeling anxious about my mounting financial needs. One morning at the farmhouse where I was staying, I talked with the Lord and finally handed over these needs to Him.

Later I was strolling through a field full of dandelions. Glancing down, I saw at my feet a crisp one-dollar bill! As I picked it up, I sensed that God wanted me to know that He would take care of me and my needs. If He wanted to, He could turn dandelions into dollars! I've carried that dollar bill with me ever since as a reminder of God's power to provide.

In Matthew 6, Jesus referred to His Father's care of the "birds of the air" and the "lilies of the field" to illustrate His eagerness to meet our material needs (Mt 6:26,28, 29). He also taught that we will have what we need if we focus on spiritual priorities. Instead of being preoccupied with worry about personal needs, we should be occupied with God's kingdom and His righteousness. And when we are, we can be assured that not some, not most, but all things that we need will be supplied.

Let's ask ourselves often: Am I preoccupied with material concerns or occupied with God's kingdom and His righteousness? We can't do both. —Joanie Yoder ([Ibid](#))

The One who feeds the birds  
And clothes the lilies fair  
Will surely meet our needs  
If we His purpose share. --DJD

**If all we want is to please the Lord,  
we'll have everything we need.**

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**Of Pigs And Sheep** - When author and preacher David Field arrived at the country church where he was to be the guest speaker, he was introduced to a choir member. He asked her what she did. "I keep pigs," she replied. "How many do you have?" he inquired. Without hesitation she answered, "A hundred and ninety-two at the moment." Laughingly he responded, "Really? Are you certain of that?" With indignation she retorted, "Of course I'm sure. I've got names for all of them, haven't I?"

Imagine knowing the names of 192 pigs! But why not--if you regard them with the fondness that woman had for her herd?

What about the Creator, who has a name for each of the countless stars in the sky? (Isa. 40:26). That Creator is also our Good Shepherd, whose love for us rises far above the level of our human affection. And that Good Shepherd calls His sheep by name (Jn 10:3).

We may be tempted to think that Almighty God, who upholds galaxies upon galaxies, can't possibly be concerned about us and our problems. But Jesus said that the heavenly Father notices and cares for the needs of even the smallest animals, and that we are of much greater value (Mt. 6:26). He knows our names and meets our needs. — Vernon C. Grounds

The King of love my Shepherd is,  
Whose goodness faileth never;  
I nothing lack if I am His,  
And He is mine forever. --Baker

**God is big enough to care for our smallest need.**