

3. God has proved his loving care and his almighty ability:
“Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies.” (Psalm 23:5.)

VI. THERE IS HUMAN RESPONSIBILITY IN GOD'S ANTIDOTE TO WORRY. (6:33,34.)

- A. **A vital principle:** *“But seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteousness.”*
 1. The order expressed in this principle (6:33a), when followed diligently, will result in a well ordered, useful life. (Colossians 2:5.)
 2. God's kingdom and righteousness should be placed first (**a**) in importance, (**b**) in our love and labor, and (**c**) in point of time.
 3. God's kingdom is his reign over and in us. His righteousness is that attained through divine forgiveness of our sins.
- B. **A firm promise:** *“And all these things shall be added unto you.”* (33b)
 1. “That Christian faith and obedience leads to worldly prosperity is proved by countless instances which are multiplied with each succeeding day. The security of Christ's kingdom leads to that cheerfulness which renews the strength, and to that undistracted industry which brings success.” -- McGarvey-Pendleton, *The Fourfold Gospel*, p. 259.
 2. “It can be no accident that those areas of the world which are most characterized by attention to and observance of the teachings of Christ are also those areas most civilized, having the highest standards of living and the greatest abundance of *‘all these things.’*” --Coffman.
- C. **Live one day at a time:** *“Be not anxious for the morrow: for the morrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.”* (34)
 1. Since anxiety is impractical, impious, and unavailing, **stop it**.
 2. Place your trust in God—your undivided trust—so that you may live well today, and God may grant you his heavenly blessings according to his will.
 3. *“Jehovah is my shepherd; I shall not want...”* (Psalm 23:1.)
 --Charles E. Crouch

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT -- LESSON TWENTY “Anxious Care vs. Trust in Divine Providence”

Matthew 6:25-34

INTRODUCTION —

- I. *“Be not anxious”* for worldly things is the teaching of Jesus Christ to all who would benefit from trust in God.
 - A. He warns against double vision (6:21-23) and double service (6:24).
 - B. He also warns against doublemindedness. (6:25-34.)
- II. In this Jesus does not speak against reasonable foresight.
 - A. He is not indifferent to our physical needs. (Matthew 25:31-46.)
 - B. He merely speaks against **anxiety for these things**.
 - C. We must make reasonable plans for the future, and Jesus advises us to count the cost. (Luke 14:28-30.)
 - D. He does not comfort lazy idlers. (2 Thessalonians 3:10.)
- III. Jesus teaches us to forget ourselves and our earthly need to the extent that we lose concern for ourselves by concern for some greater enterprise. (Matthew 16:24-26; 10:39; 6:33,34.)
 - A. Included in this will be proper concern for the physical needs of others. (Luke 10:37.)
 - B. Christians needs to be anxious and concerned; but this should be unselfish concern—not about our own things, but about those things which truly matter most. (2 Corinthians 11:28; Philippians 2:19-21.)

DISCUSSION —

- I. **“BE NOT ANXIOUS FOR YOUR LIFE.”** (6:25.)
 - A. *“Therefore I say unto you, **be not anxious** 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 the food, and the body than the raiment?”* (25)
 - B. *“Anxious”* is from a word which describes **a state of mental doubt**, a mind “full of care,” **distrust**, “a despondent view of the future.”
 - C. The Lord's design is to show the futility of anxiety about such temporal things and to build confidence in God's goodness and

providence.

1. "Of all God's creatures, from insects to the great animals of the forest, man alone is constantly anxious about his survival." --Coffman.
2. Those disturbed by such fretting "will be hindered, if not prevented from making God's kingdom of first concern." -- John T. Hinds.
3. Such anxiety reveals an improper emphasis and dangerous sense of values, **which is so unnecessary: We can trust God's good laws!**

II. A LESSON FROM THE BIRDS: GOD PROVIDES. (6:26.)

- A. **Birds & people:** "Behold the birds of the heaven, that they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; and your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are not ye of much more value than they?" (26)
- B. Birds live their God-appointed life without complaint, care or rebellion.
1. God feeds them, through they neither sow, reap, or serve mammon.
 2. God is mindful of every sparrow, **though of much less value than man.**
- C. If man will live his God-appointed life, without murmuring, complaint, or ungodly fretting, he will live wisely. (Ephesians 5:15.)
1. God, having made him, will not forsake him. (Hebrews 13:5,6.)
 2. God is mindful of man, who was made superior to birds. (Psalms 8:3-5.)
 3. God provides every need for those who trust. (Philippians 4:19.)

III. ANXIETY ACCOMPLISHES NOTHING GOOD. (6:27.)

- A. "*And which of you by being anxious can add one cubit unto the measure of his life?*" (6:27; Cf. Luke 12:25.)
- B. Worry is worse than useless; impractical, unavailing, powerless to help.
1. Anxiety takes from, but adds nothing good to life.
 2. It cannot bring good health or longer life to anyone.

Anxious Care vs Trust in Divine Providence

3. Worry can only make matters worse.

IV. A LESSON FROM FLOWERS AND GRASS. (6:28-30.)

- A. **Consider the lilies:** "*And why are ye anxious concerning raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: yet I say unto you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.*" (28,29.)
1. Like the animal creation, the lilies live their God-ordained life and glorify their Maker thereby.
 2. If human beings would live in godly trust, according to God's appointment, this would be a glorious world of beautiful characters indeed.
 3. "The magnificence of Solomon and of his court is proverbial in the East unto this day." --McGarvey.
- B. **Much more:** "*But if God doth so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?*" (30)
1. Surely we can rely upon him who made us so fearfully and wonderfully to clothe us adequately, in view of his beautiful green fields.
 2. God "*much more*" than clothes properly him who trusts and obeys.

V. SUCH ANXIETY IS UNBECOMING TO A CHRISTIAN. (6:31,32.)

- A. "***Be not therefore anxious, saying What shall we eat, or What shall wear? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?***" (31)
1. All such anxious care shows distrust of God's infinite love, power, and wisdom.
 2. Faith and worry are incompatible: They do not dwell together as one.
 3. It is sinful for a child of God to doubt his Father's ability or willingness to provide: "*Neither be ye of doubtful mind.*" (Luke 12:29.)
- B. **Gentile seeking:** "*For after all these things do the Gentiles seek; for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.*" (32)
1. Such anxiety removes one important distinction between the Christian and unbelieving worldly people. (6:32a)
 2. It shows that faithless Christians are no better than faithless heathen.

The Sermon on the Mount -- Lesson 20