

“Anxiety And The Gospel”

Matthew 6:25-34

August 24, 2025

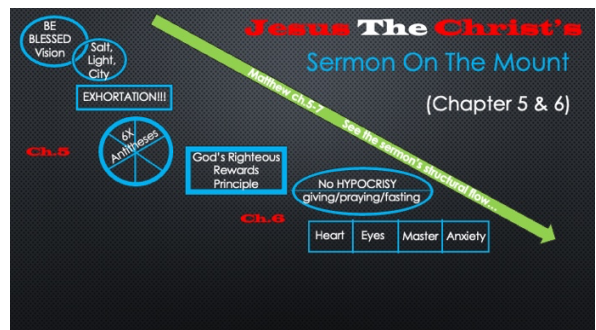
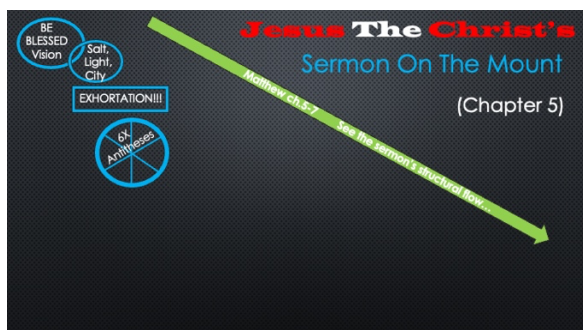
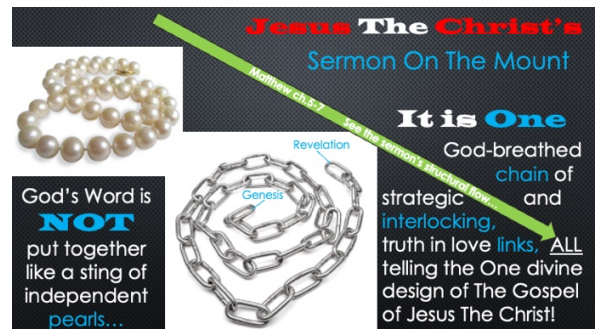
INTRO: Ever known the conviction of telling someone...
“Do as I say, not as I do?”

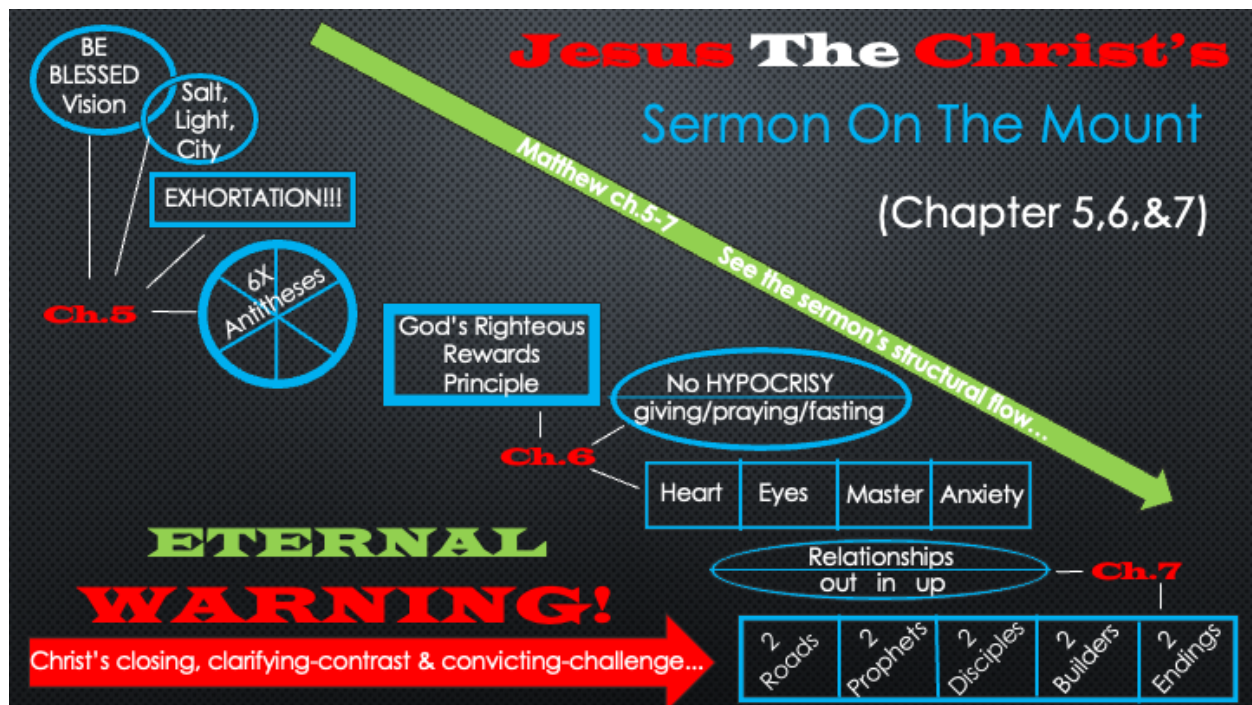
Today, I feel that conviction because I’m anxious as I’m about to preach a sermon that centers on Christ’s command not to be anxious...

PRAYER

CONTEXT:

- Matthew’s Gospel & Christ’s Sermon On The Mount
- Today’s a very personal, practical, & powerful sermon.





BIG IDEA: Our anxieties are no match
for The Almighty's amens!

(Christ's Gospel overcomes our anxieties when we
walk by faith, seeking God's glory, kingdom, &
righteousness... first, forever, & foremost.)

PREVIEW:

1. Understanding Anxiety
2. Trusting Almighty
3. BE-ing Amen!

TEXT:

Matthew 6:25-34

Do Not Be Anxious

²⁵“Therefore, I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not **1.** life more than food, and the **2.** body more than clothing? ²⁶Look at the **3.** birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet **your heavenly Father** feeds them. Are you not of **4.** more value than they? ²⁷And which of you by being anxious can **5.** add a single hour to his span of life? ²⁸And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the **6.** lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, ²⁹yet I tell you, even **7.** Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. ³⁰But **if God** so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, **will He** not much more **8.** clothe you, **O YOU OF LITTLE FAITH?** ³¹Therefore, do not be anxious, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ ³²For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and **your heavenly Father** **9.** knows that you need them all. ³³But **SEEK FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS, AND ALL THESE THINGS WILL BE** **10.** **ADDED TO YOU.**

³⁴“Therefore, do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. **Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.**

VIDEO: *Jesus' Perspective On Wealth*
(The Bible Project)

I. Understanding Anxiety

A. Anxiety **DEFINED:**

➤ Core meaning:

- **Simply...** “to be pulled apart”
- **Structurally...** to take one clear thought or emotion & turn it into many
- **Sinfully...** to break faith’s integrity...

VIDEO: *MacArthur on Integrity*

➤ Context is key... (cf. “together” / “homothoomadon”)

- Negative = inner disturbance that is centered around worry, fear, & irrationality...

**OUR WORRIES FEED OFF THE WORLD
& OUR WORLDLY WANTS.**

- Positive = appropriate ability to segment & systematically strategize...

*We need to ask and answer the difficult question of what happens when two aspects of anxiety, both the positive and the negative, come into what appears to be conflict? See Matthew 10:16; see BE-ing Spirit-led in Scripture... see war-torn realities of unrighteous results - even in the aftermath of righteous acts - cf. *Job, Moses make bricks without straw... backed up to the Red Sea... Prophets, Apostles, Stephen, Paul, Silas.... JESUS!!!**

B. Anxiety **DESCRIBED:**

- **Disorder** (sickness)
- **DISOBEDIENCE** (sinfulness)
 - Earthly treasures vs. Heavenly treasures
 - Money vs. Mission (*see Haggai's pocket holes*)
 - Wants vs. Needs
 - External vs. Internal
 - Irrational-Fear vs. Inspired-Faith
 - Temporary vs. Forever
 - Devilish-Temptations vs. Divine-Tests
 - God's gifts vs. God The Giver
- Difficult to distinguish at times...

C. Anxiety **DETERRED:**

- **"Fear not"** is the Bible's most repeated command
- YET... **"fear of God is the beginning of wisdom"**
- Stay within God's biblical/missional "guardrails."
 - Worshipful peace of mind (like the birds)
 - Worrisome unbelief (like the Gentiles)
 - Working & Wisdom (like the ants/bees)

VIDEO: *What Does The Bible Mean By Fear Not?*
(GotQuestions.org)

II. Trusting **ALMIGHTY**

- 5X Jesus drove home: **"Do not be anxious!"**

- Scripture drives this home hundreds of times...
- Jesus gives us 10 reinforcements (see above)
- *HE is always our ultimate ANSWER to anxiety!*
- **WE DON'T FEAR BECAUSE HE'S FAITHFUL!**

VIDEO: *God Is Faithful.*
(The Bible Project)

- *Fear not, have faith is from Genesis to Revelation!*
- We need more PROPHETIC vs. POETIC preaching

T/S: **VIDEO:** *Wisdom Books - Job*
(The Bible Project)

III. BE-ing AMEN

- **Satan** seeks to **TEMPT** us... to create sinful anxiety.
- **God** will **TEST** us... to purify & strengthen our faith.
- Psalms 56:11 - *In God I trust; I shall not be afraid.
What can man do to me?*

VIDEO: *The Test*
(The Bible Project)

*** Don't underestimate the biblical role of people like Cain, Noah's neighbors, Job's wife & friends... Pharaoh, Korah, King Saul, Absalom (King David's son), Nehemiah's nemesis... **OR, in the N.T....** Jude's "hidden reefs," Titus' "good for nothing" corrupt church leaders, Jerusalem's Christ-killing High Priests, the hypocritical Pharisees & Scribes, Alexander, Demas, & JUDAS!!!

By contrast, let us stand out & fit into Hebrews 11 with other biblical & missional Anti-Anxiety witnesses...

- Noah
- David to Goliath
- Esther to Mordecai
- The 3 boys to Nebby
- Stephen to the stone-throwers
- Paul & Silas to the prison population
- JESUS to EVERYONE everywhere!

When truth is trusted (by faith), anxiety is defeated!

*** The Word of God (Jesus & Bible) is warning us... that it is worldly to worry about and/or worship money... (and/or the things that money can buy).

WHERE & WHEN WE HAVE FAITH PROBLEMS, WE NEED
MORE WORD (ROMANS 10:17), WORSHIP, & PRAYER!

2 Timothy 1:6-10

6For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you... 7for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control. 8Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God, 9who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began, 10and which now has been manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel...

REVIEW:

Christ's Gospel overcomes our anxiety
when we walk by faith, seeking God's
glory, kingdom, & righteousness
first, forever, & foremost.

Building bigger barns is NOT the solution to anxiety!

- Do NOT treasure temporary, earthly treasures.
- Do BE righteously serious... about eternal treasures.
- Do NOT be sinfully anxious about worldly treasures.
- Do BE righteously serious about heavenly treasures.
- Do NOT sweat over the dross & pollutants of life...
- Do BE righteously serious about God purifying His gold.
- Do NOT worry about rearranging the deck furniture when you are sailing on the Titanic...
- Do BE righteously serious about getting a good understanding & working knowledge of the lifeboats.
- Do NOT fixate-on &/or fill your closet with fine clothing.
- DO focus on your core cardio & need for heart health.
- Do NOT be a Martha... Do BE a righteously serious Mary.

CLOSE:

IT'S BEEN SAID...

**WE ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO BELIEVE IN THE IMPOSSIBLE...
& PERSEVERE THROUGH THE UNBEARABLE... WHILE WE
STRUGGLE TO OBEY THE UNCOMFORTABLE...**

- In the end, sinful anxiety is a form of unbelieving fear... that stops (at least momentarily) trusting in God's goodness, sovereignty, providence, & power...

We need to pray for God's gracious help
in praying for God's gracious help...
to help us trust in His gracious help.

- Remembering **Genesis 1 & John 1**
- Remembering **Genesis 3 & John 3**
- Remembering **Matthew 28:18-20 & Acts 1:8**

Christians can stare into the face of any foe.
We can stand with confidence against any corruption.
God's sovereign goodness & providential power is enough.

May we never forget... **Genesis 50:20 & Romans 8:28 & 35-39.**

1. **God meant it!**
2. He is working ALL THINGS together for the good of those who love Him & are called according to His purposes.
3. *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? ³⁶As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered."³⁷No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Our anxieties are no match
for THE Almighty...
& His amens!

Isaiah 41:10

**FEAR NOT, FOR I AM WITH YOU; BE NOT DISMAYED,
FOR I AM YOUR GOD; I WILL STRENGTHEN YOU, I
WILL HELP YOU, I WILL UPHOLD YOU WITH MY
RIGHTEOUS RIGHT HAND.**

PRAYER

WORSHIP: *From The Valley To The Throne & No Fear*

Do Not Be Anxious. (ESV)

²⁵“**Therefore** I tell you, **do not be anxious** about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? ²⁶Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet **your heavenly Father** feeds them. Are you not of **more value** than they? ²⁷And which of you by **being anxious** can add a single hour to his span of life? ²⁸And **why are you anxious** about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, ²⁹yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. ³⁰But **if God** so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, **will he** not much more clothe you, **O you of little faith**? ³¹**Therefore do not be anxious**, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ ³²For the **Gentiles seek** after all these things, and **your heavenly Father knows** that you need them all. ³³But **seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness**, and **all these things will be added to you.**

³⁴“**Therefore do not be anxious** about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be **anxious** for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own **trouble.**

The Cure for Anxiety (NASB)

²⁵“For this reason I say to you, ^[q]do not be worried about your ^[r]life, as to what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, as to what you will put on. Is life not more than food, and the body more than clothing? ²⁶Look at the birds of the sky, that they do not sow, nor reap, nor gather *crops* into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more important than they? ²⁷And which of you by worrying can add a single ^[s]day to his ^[t]life’s span? ²⁸And why are you worried about clothing? Notice how the lilies of the field grow; they do not labor nor do they spin *thread for cloth*, ²⁹yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these. ³⁰But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is *alive* today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, *will He* not much more *clothe* you? You of little faith! ³¹Do not worry then, saying, ‘What are we to eat?’ or ‘What are we to drink?’ or ‘What are we to wear for clothing?’ ³²For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you

need all these things. ³³But ^[u]seek first ^[v]His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be ^[w]provided to you.

³⁴“So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will ^[x]worry about itself. ^[y]Each day has enough trouble of its own.

Structural Observations:

²⁵“Therefore,

I tell you,

do not be anxious

about your life,

what you will eat

or

what you will drink,

nor

about your body,

what you will put on.

Is not life more than food,

and

the body more than clothing?

²⁶Look at the birds of the air:

they neither sow

nor reap

nor gather into barns,

and

yet your heavenly Father feeds them.

Are you not of more value than they?

[27](#)And

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

[28](#)And

why are you anxious
about clothing?
Consider the lilies of the field,
how they grow:
they neither toil
nor spin,

[29](#)yet

I tell you,
even Solomon
in all his glory
was not arrayed like one of these.

[30](#)But

if God
so clothes
the grass of the field,
which today is alive
and
tomorrow
is thrown into the oven,
will he
not much more
clothe you,

O you of little faith?

[31](#)Therefore,

do not

be anxious,

saying,

'What shall we eat?'

or

'What shall we drink?'

or

'What shall we wear?'

[32](#)For the Gentiles

seek after

all these things,

and

your heavenly Father

knows

that you need them all.

[33](#)But

seek first

the kingdom

of God

and

his righteousness,

and

all

these things

will be added

to you.

[34](#)"Therefore,

do not
be anxious
about tomorrow,
for tomorrow
will be anxious
for itself.

Sufficient
for the day
is its own trouble.

Exegetical Takeaways:

- A. v.25 begins with a “Therefore,” which means that this thought will be unpacking, supporting, arguing-for the previous point (found in v.24: You cannot serve 2 masters... You cannot serve/treasure God & money).
- B. Big Idea = Do not be anxious. (5X repetition)
- C. Pillars = 10X supports/arguments:
 - 1. Do not put your heart, treasure, & hopes in money or what it can buy/acquire because that would constitute “serving money” as your Master...
 - i. It would make money a biblical idol.
 - ii. NO worldly, temporary treasure will help with eternal anxiety.
 - iii. At best, worldly, temporary treasures & tools for dealing with anxiety, will distract & deceive, numb & dumb us down to the realities of the horrors that await the positionally unrighteous.

2. Life is more than food & drink.

- i. Maintaining a pulse does not purify or prepare the heart for what is to come... short term OR long term.
- ii. Life, like many sports, has a first half and a second half... worrying about food & drink is like worrying about the score at half time vs. at the end of the game.
- iii. Life is, in many ways, a war. Focusing on life's food & drink is like concentrating all of your war efforts on the entry onto the battlefield vs. your tactical strategies to ultimately win & come off the field in victory.

3. Life is more than clothing.

- i. How things look on the outside is NEVER as important as how things really are on the inside...
 - 1. Jesus said the Pharisees were like those who cleaned the outside of the cup but left the inside filthy with sin...
 - 2. Jesus said the Pharisees were like white washed tombs filled with dead men's bones...
- ii. Even when it comes eternal care vs. mere appearances (i.e. cloaks for warmth), Jesus is pointing out that our eternal souls are far more important than our physical bodies...

iii. See how this description is exemplified in the exhortation to the Laodicean church in Revelation 3:16ff

[16](#)So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth. [17](#)For you say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing, not realizing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked. [18](#)I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire, so that you may be rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself and the shame of your nakedness may not be seen, and salve to anoint your eyes, so that you may see. [19](#)Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline, so be zealous and repent.

iv. Romans 8:35-39!!!

God's Everlasting Love

[35](#)Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? [36](#)As it is written,

"For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered."

[37](#)No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. [38](#)For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, [39](#)nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

4. Look at the birds of the air...

i. God's provisional & providential grace should be our trusted treasure!

1. Don't push square pegs into round holes.

2. Don't lean on a shovel & pray for a hole.
- ii. Birds don't store/sew/reap/use barns
 1. Daily food is their focus
 2. Their food is a provision from God
 3. *"Give us this day our daily bread..."*
- iii. "You" are of more value than the birds...
 1. God's provision takes care of the birds...
 2. Thus, Father will take care of His child
5. Who can add height or hours to your life?
 - i. Realize the frailty/limitations of our humanity...
 - ii. Realize the futility of faithless efforts...
 - iii. Hebrews 11:6... Without faith it is impossible to please God.
 - iv. Romans 14:23: Whatever does not proceed from faith is sin.
6. Consider the lilies of the fields (in the context of Solomon's wealth)...
 - i. Lilies aren't lazy but their beauty/clothing comes from God's sovereign design & providence...
 - ii. This grass/lilies are here today & fired up tomorrow... If Father does so much with them, how much more will He do for you?
7. Anxiety is Gentile-like living (they don't know, love, trust God as their Father).
8. God/Father KNOWS what you need.
 - i. Remember, your Father is God.
 - ii. Remember, your God is your Father!
 - iii. Seek FIRST the kingdom of God!

9. ALL these things (you need) WILL BE added to you.
 - i. See Romans 8:35-36!!!
10. For, tomorrow will be anxious for itself...
 - i. There is trouble for every day.
 - ii. There will be grace for every day.
 - iii. There are new mercy with each morning.
 - iv. God' has a plan & the power to fulfill it!
 - v. No matter what!

John Piper's broader, principled interpretive lessons:

1. The Bible makes arguments (chain links vs. string of pearls).
2. Each "unit of thought" has a big idea
3. Figuring out how the unit's support pillars unify to prove the big idea is the essence of "understanding" a text...
4. Jesus assumes that truth/facts influence emotions (like anxiety). Jesus is slaying the dragon of anxiety for us... We need to trust & obey Him to know victory.
5. Christ's instructions here will work where & when His truths are trusted, believed, & obeyed in faithfulness. Don't miss the massive role of faith:
 - a. Hebrews 11:6
 - b. Whatever is done out of faith is sin.
6. Therefore, we need to be ever investing in, treasuring, & praying for faithful, growing, faith.
 - a. Romans 10:17
 - b. Mustard seed faith
 - c. By faith Moses... Hebrew 11

See the passage's 10 steps to conquering Anxiety: (cf. Romans 8:37)

Pulpit Commentary

Verses 25-34. - These verses, with the exception of the last, which should perhaps hardly be included, are **very similar to the parallel passage, [Luke 12:22-32](#)**. It seems probable that in the differences Luke preserves the more original form (cf. the notes on the separate verses, **infra**). What their original position was is another question. Their immediate sequence in Luke to the parable of the rich fool is no doubt perfectly natural, and is accepted by most commentators as original; but the connexion with the context here is so close that, especially with the probabilities of the case in vers. 22, 23, and ver. 24, St. Matthew may, after all, have recorded them in their original place. Our Lord says in these verses, "Dare to follow out this warning that I have given you about double service into your daily life. **Do not give way to anxiety about the things of life, but look up to God in steady gaze of faith**; he will provide." 'Or, more in detail –

If God has given you life, shall he not add the food and the clothing (ver. 25)?

ANXIETY ABOUT THE SUPPORT OF YOUR LIFE IS NEEDLESS (WITNESS THE BIRDS, VER. 26) AND POWERLESS (WITNESS THE LIMIT OF A MAN'S LIFE, VER. 27); WHILE AS FOR CLOTHING, IT IS EQUALLY NEEDLESS (WITNESS THE FLOWERS, VER. 28) AND COMPARATIVELY POWERLESS (WITNESS SOLOMON'S OWN CASE, VER. 29). REMEMBER YOUR RELATION TO GOD (VER. 30). THEREFORE, DO NOT GIVE WAY TO THE LEAST ANXIETY ABOUT THESE THINGS (VER. 31), BECAUSE THIS IS TO FALL TO THE LEVEL OF THE GENTILES, AND ALSO BECAUSE GOD, WHOSE CHILDREN

YOU ARE, KNOWS YOUR NEEDS (VER. 32). BUT make his cause, without and within, your great object, and all your needs shall be supplied (VER. 33). THEREFORE, BE NOT AT ALL ANXIOUS, BEAR THE BURDEN OF EACH DAY ONLY AS EACH DAY COMES ROUND (VER. 34).

Verse 25. - **Therefore** (διὰ τοῦτο). Because of this fact last mentioned, the impossibility of dividing your service. **Cease to be anxious about things of this life, for anxiety about these is a mark of your attempting this impossibility.**

I say unto you. Though the absence of the personal pronoun (unlike [Matthew 5:22](#), etc.) shows that he is not here contrasting himself with them or with others, yet he still emphasizes his authority.

Take no thought; Revised Version, **be not anxious** (μὴ μεριμνᾶτε). The translation of the Authorized Version, which was quite correct in its day (cf. also [1 Samuel 9:5](#)), is now archaic, and therefore often misunderstood. For the popular derivation of μεριμνάω ("division," "distraction"), cf. [1 Corinthians 7:33](#), "But he that is married is anxious for (μεριμνᾷ) the things of the world, how he may please his wife, and is divided (μεμέρισται)."

Observe that forethought in earthly matters was practised by our Lord himself (John 12:6).

For your life (τῇ ψυχῇ ὑμῶν). **In the Gospels ψυχή is the immaterial part of man, his personality as we should say, which survives death** ([Matthew 10:28](#)), and is the chief object of a man's care ([Matthew 10:39](#), where see note).

What ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink. Although the second clause is omitted by x and a few chiefly "Western" authorities, it is probably genuine, especially as there is no trace of it in Luke (but cf. Westcott and Heft, 'Introd.,' p. 176).

Is not the life more than meat? i.e. you possess the greater, shall there not be given to you the less? Humphry compares [Matthew 23:17](#). Meat; Revised Version, the food (τῆς τροφῆς); i.e. the Revised Version

(1) changes "meat" to its modern equivalent,

(2) defines with the Greek the food as that which is necessary for the body. Similarly before "raiment." Matthew 6:25

Matthew Henry's Unabridged Commentary:

Verses 25–34

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. Here is,

I. THE PROHIBITION LAID DOWN. It is the counsel and command of the Lord Jesus, that we *take no thought* about the things of this world; *I say unto you*. He says it as our Lawgiver, and the Sovereign of our hearts; he says it as our Comforter, and the Helper of our joy. What is it that he says? It is this, and *he that hath ears to hear, let him hear it. Take no thought for your life, nor yet for your body* (v. 25). *Take no thought, saying, What shall we eat?* (v. 31) and again (v. 34), *Take no thought, mē merimnate—Be not in care*.

As against hypocrisy, so against worldly cares, the caution is thrice repeated, and yet no vain repetition: *precept* must be *upon precept, and line upon line*, to the same purport, and all little enough; it is a *sin which doth so easily beset us*. It intimates how pleasing it is to Christ, and of how much concern it is to ourselves,

that we should live without carefulness. **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.**

There is a *thought* concerning the things of this life, which is not only lawful, but duty, such as is commended in the virtuous woman. See Prov. 27:23. The word is used concerning Paul's care of the churches, and Timothy's care for the state of souls, **2 Co. 11:28; Phil. 2:20.**

But **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 necessities. 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); as he was, who (v. 21) *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 now 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.**

OBSERVE THE CAUTIONS HERE,

(1.) *Take no thought for your life.* Life is our greatest concern for this world; *All that a man has will he give for his life*; yet take no thought about it.

[1.] *Not about the continuance of it*; refer it to God to *lengthen* or *shorten* it as he pleases; *my times are in thy hand*, and they are in a good hand.

[2.] *Not about the comforts of this life*; refer it to God to embitter or sweeten it as he pleases. We must not be solicitous, no not about the necessary support of this life, *food* and *raiment*; these God has promised, and therefore we may more confidently expect; say not, *What shall we eat?* It is the language of one at a loss, and almost despairing; whereas, though many good people have the prospect of little, yet there are few but have present support.

(2.) *Take no thought for the morrow*, for the time to come. *Be not solicitous for the future, how you shall live next year, or when you are old, or what you shall leave behind you.* As we must not *boast* of to-morrow, so we must not *care for* to-morrow, or the events of it.

II. THE REASONS AND ARGUMENTS TO ENFORCE THIS PROHIBITION. 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.**

Consider then,

1. *Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?*

v. 25. Yes, no doubt it is; so he says who had reason to understand the true value of present things, for he made them, he supports them, and supports us by them; and the thing speaks for itself. Note,

(1.) Our life is a greater blessing than our livelihood. It is true, life cannot subsist without a livelihood; but the meat and raiment which are here represented as inferior to the life and body are such as are for ornament and delight; for about such as are for ornament and delight; for about such we are apt to be solicitous. **Meat and raiment are in order to life, and the end is more noble and excellent than the means.** The daintiest food and finest raiment are from the *earth*, but life from the *breath of God*. Life is the light of men; meat is but the oil that feeds that light: so that the difference between rich and poor is very inconsiderable, since, in the greatest things, they stand on the same level, and differ only in the less.

(2.) This is an encouragement to us to trust God for food and raiment, and so to ease ourselves of all perplexing cares about them. God has given us life, and given us the body; it was an act of power, it was an act of favour, it was done without our care: what cannot he do for us, who did that?—what will he not?

If we take care about our souls and eternity, which are more than the body, and its life, we may leave it to God to provide for us food and raiment, which are less.

God has maintained our lives hitherto; if sometimes with pulse and water, that has answered the end; he has protected us and kept us alive.

He that guards us against the evils we are exposed to, will also supply us with the good things we are in need of.

If he had been pleased to kill us, to starve us, he would not so often have *given his angels a charge concerning us* to keep us.

2. Behold the fowls of the air, and consider the lilies of the field.

Here is an argument taken from God's common providence toward the inferior creatures, and their dependence, according to their capacities, upon that providence.

A FINE PASS FALLEN MAN HAS COME TO, THAT HE MUST BE SENT TO SCHOOL TO THE FOWLS OF THE AIR, AND THAT THEY MUST TEACH HIM! Job 12:7, 8.

(1.) Look upon the fowls, and learn to trust God for food (v. 26), and disquiet not yourselves with thoughts *what you shall eat*.

[1.] Observe the providence of God concerning them. Look upon them, and receive instruction. There are various sorts of fowls; they are numerous, some of them ravenous, but they are all fed, and fed with food convenient for them; it is rare that any of them perish for want of food, even in winter, and there goes no little to feed them all the year round. The fowls, as they are least serviceable to man, so they are least within his care; men often feed upon them, but seldom feed them; yet they are fed, we know not how, and some of them fed best in the hardest weather; and it is *your heavenly Father that feeds them*; he knows all the wild fowls of the mountains, better than you know the tame ones at your own barn-door, Ps. 50:11. Not a sparrow lights to the ground, to pick up a grain of

corn, but by the providence of God, which extends itself to the meanest creatures.

But that which is especially observed here is, that they are fed without any care or project of their own; they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns.

The ant indeed does, and the bee, and they are set before us as examples of prudence and industry; but the fowls of the air do not; they make no provision for the future themselves, and yet every day, as duly as the day comes, provision is made for them, and their *eyes wait on God*, that great and good Housekeeper, who *provides food for all flesh*.

[2.] Improve this for your encouragement to trust in God.

Are ye not much better than they? **Yes, certainly you are.**

Note, The *heirs* of heaven are much better than the *fowls* of heaven; nobler and more excellent beings, and, by faith, they soar higher; they are of a better nature and nurture, *wiser than the fowls of heaven* (Job 35:11): though the children of this world, that *know not the judgment of the Lord*, are not so wise as *the stork, and the crane, and the swallow* (Jer. 8:7), you are dearer to God, and nearer, though they fly in the open firmament of heaven. He is their Master and Lord, their Owner and Master; but besides all this, he is your Father, and in his account ye are of more value than many sparrows; you are his children, his first-born; now

He that feeds his birds surely will not starve his babes.

They trust your Father's providence, and will not you trust it? In dependence upon that, they are careless for the morrow; and being so, they live the merriest lives of all creatures; they *sing among the branches* (Ps. 104:12), and, to the best of their power, they praise their Creator.

If we were, by faith, as
unconcerned about the morrow
as they are, we should sing as
cheerfully as they do...

...for it is worldly care that mars our mirth and damps our joy, and silences our praise, as much as any thing.

(2.) Look upon the *lilies*, and learn to trust God for *raiment*.

That is another part of our care, *what we shall put on*; for decency, **to cover us**; for defence, to keep us warm; yea, and, with many, for dignity and ornament, to make them look great and fine; and so much concerned are they for gaiety and variety in their clothing, that this care returns almost as often as that for their daily bread. Now **to ease us of this care, let us consider the lilies of the field**; not only *look upon* them (every eyes does that with pleasure), but *consider* them.

Note, There is a great deal of good to be learned from what we see every day, if we would but consider it, Prov. 6:6; 24:32.

[1.] Consider how *frail* the lilies are; they are the *grass of the field*. Lilies, though distinguished by their colours, are still but *grass*. Thus *all flesh is grass: though some in the endowments of body and mind are as lilies, much admired, still they are*

grass; the grass of the field in nature and constitution; they stand upon the same level with others.

Man's days, at best, are as grass,
as the flower of the grass 1 Pt. 1:24.

This grass *to-day is*, and *to-morrow is cast into the oven*; in a little while the place that *knows us* will *know us no more*. The grave is the oven into which we shall be cast, and in which we shall be consumed as grass in the fire, Ps. 49:14.

This intimates a reason why we should not take thought for the morrow, what we shall put on, because perhaps, by to-morrow, we may have occasion for our grave-clothes.

[2.] Consider how free from care the lilies are: they *toil not* as men do, to earn clothing; as servants, to earn their liveries; *neither do they spin*, as women do, to make clothing. It does not follow that we must therefore neglect, or do carelessly, the proper business of this life; it is the praise of the virtuous woman, that *she lays her hand to the spindle, makes fine linen and sells it*, Prov. 31:19, 24. Idleness tempts God, instead of trusting him;
but he that provides for inferior creatures, without
their labour, will much more provide for us, by blessing
our labour, which he has made our duty. And if we should, through sickness, be unable to *toil* and *spin*, God can furnish us with what is necessary for us.

[3.] Consider how fair, how fine the lilies are; how they grow; what they grow from. The root of the lily or tulip,
as other bulbous roots, is, in winter, lost and buried
under ground, yet, when spring returns, it appears,
and starts up in a little time; hence it is promised to God's Israel, that they should grow *as the lily*, Hos. 14:5. Consider what they *grow to*. Out of that obscurity in a few weeks they come to be so very gay, that **even Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these.** The array of Solomon was very splendid and magnificent: he that had the peculiar treasure of kings and provinces, and studiously affected pomp and gallantry, doubtless had the richest clothing, and the best made up, that could be got; especially when he appeared in his glory on high days. And yet, let him dress himself as fine as he

could, he comes far short of the beauty of the lilies, and a bed of tulips outshines him. Let us, therefore, be ambitious of the *wisdom* of Solomon, in which he was outdone by none (wisdom to do our duty in our places), rather than the *glory* of Solomon, in which he was outdone by the lilies. **Knowledge and grace are the perfection of man, not beauty, much less fine clothes.** Now God is here said thus to *clothe the grass of the field*.

Note,

All the excellences of the creature flow from God, the Fountain and spring of them. It was he that gave the horse his strength, and the lily its beauty; every creature is in itself, as well as to us, what he makes it to be.

[4.] Consider how instructive all this is to us, v. 30.

First, As to fine clothing, this teaches us not to care for it at all, not to covet it, nor to be proud of it, not to make the *putting on of apparel* our *adorning*, for after all our care in this the lilies will far outdo us; we cannot dress so fine as they do, why then should we attempt to vie with them? ***Their adorning will soon perish, and so will ours; they fade—are to-day, and to-morrow are cast, as other rubbish, into the oven; and the clothes we are proud of are wearing out, the gloss is soon gone, the color fades, the shape goes out of fashion, or in awhile the garment itself is worn*** out; such is man in all his pomp (Isa. 40:6, 7), especially rich men (Jam. 1:10); they *fade away in their ways*.

Secondly, As to necessary clothing; this teaches us to cast the care of it upon God—Jehovah-jireh; trust him that clothes the lilies, to provide for you what you shall

put on. If he give such fine clothes to the grass, much more will he give fitting clothes to his own children; clothes that shall be warm upon them, not only *when he quieteth the earth with the south wind*, but when he disquiets it with the *north wind*, Job 37:17. He shall much more clothe you: for you are nobler creatures, of a more excellent being; if so he clothe the short-lived grass, much more will he clothe you that are made for immortality. Even the children of Nineveh are preferred before the gourd (Jonah 4:10, 11), much more the sons of Zion, that are in covenant with God.

Observe the title he gives them (v. 30), *O ye of little faith*. This may be taken,

1. As an encouragement to truth faith, though it be but weak; it entitles us to the divine care, and a promise of suitable supply. Great faith shall be commended, and shall procure great things, but little faith shall not be rejected, even that shall procure food and raiment.

Sound believers shall be provided for, though they be not strong believers.

The babes in the family are fed and clothed, as well as those that are grown up, and with a special care and tenderness; say not, I am but a child, but a dry tree (Isa. 56:3, 5), for though *poor and needy* yet *the Lord thinketh on thee*. Or,

2. It is rather a rebuke to weak faith, though it be true, ch. 14:31. It intimates what is at the bottom of all our inordinate care and thoughtfulness; it is owing to the

weakness of our faith, and the remains of unbelief in us.

If we had but more faith,
we should have less care.

3. *Which of you, the wisest, the strongest of you, by taking thought, can add one cubit to his stature?* (v. 27) to *his age*, so some; but the measure of a cubit denotes it to be meant of the stature, and the age at longest is but a span, Ps. 39:5. **Let us consider,**

a. **(1.) We did not arrive at the stature we are of by our own care and thought, but by the providence of God.** An infant of a span long has grown up to be a man of six feet, and how was one cubit after another added to his stature? not by his own forecast or contrivance; he grew he knew not how, by the power and goodness of God. Now **He that made our bodies, and made them of such size, surely will take care to provide for them.** Note, God is to be acknowledged in the increase of our bodily strength and stature, and to be trusted for all needful supplies, because he has made it to appear, that he is mindful for the body. The growing age is the thoughtless, careless age, yet we grow; and shall not he who reared us to this, provide for us now we are reared?

b. **(2.) We cannot alter the stature we are** of, if we would: what a foolish and ridiculous thing would it be for a man of low stature to perplex himself, to break his sleep, and beat his brains, about it, and to be continually taking thought how he might be a cubit higher; when, after all, he knows he cannot effect it, and therefore he had better be content and take it as it is! We are not all of a size, yet the difference in stature between one and another is not material, nor of any great account; a little man is ready to wish he were as tall as such a one, but he knows it is to no purpose, and therefore does as well as he can with it. Now **as we do in reference to our**

bodily stature, so we should do in reference to our worldly estate.

i. [1.] We should not covet an abundance of the wealth of this world, any more than we would covet the addition of a cubit to one's stature, which is a great deal in a man's height; it is enough to grow by inches; such an addition would but make one unwieldy, and a burden to one's self.

ii. [2.] We must reconcile ourselves to our state, as we do to our stature; we must set the conveniences against the inconveniences, and so make a virtue of necessity: what cannot be remedied must be made the best of. We cannot alter the disposals of Providence, and therefore must acquiesce in them, accommodate ourselves to them, and relieve ourselves, as well as we can, against inconveniences, **AS ZACCHEUS AGAINST THE INCONVENIENCE OF HIS STATURE, BY CLIMBING INTO THE TREE.**

4. *After all these things do the Gentiles seek*, v. 32.

Thoughtfulness about the world is a *heathenish* sin, and unbecoming Christians. **THE GENTILES SEEK THESE THINGS, BECAUSE THEY KNOW NOT BETTER THINGS; THEY ARE EAGER FOR THIS WORLD, BECAUSE THEY ARE STRANGERS TO A BETTER; THEY SEEK THESE THINGS WITH CARE AND ANXIETY, BECAUSE THEY ARE WITHOUT GOD IN THE WORLD, AND UNDERSTAND NOT HIS PROVIDENCE. THEY FEAR AND WORSHIP THEIR IDOLS**, but know not how to trust them for deliverance and supply, and, therefore, are themselves full of care; but it is a shame for Christians, who build upon nobler principles, and profess a religion which teaches them not only that there is a **Providence**, but that there are promises made

to the good of the life that now is, which **teaches** them **a confidence in God and a contempt of the world**, and gives such reasons for both; it is a shame for them to walk as Gentiles walk, and to fill their heads and hearts with these things.

5. *Your heavenly Father knows ye have need of all these things;*

these necessary things, food and raiment; he knows our wants better than we do ourselves; though he be in heaven, and his children on earth, he observes what the least and poorest of them has occasion for (Rev. 2:9), *I know thy poverty*. You think, if such a good friend did not but know your wants and straits, you would soon have relief: your God knows them; and he is your Father that loves you and pities you, and is ready to help you; your heavenly Father, who has wherewithal to supply all your needs: away, therefore, with all disquieting thoughts and cares; go to thy Father; tell him, *he knows that thou has need of such and such things*; he asks you, *Children, have you any meat?* Jn. 21:5. Tell him whether you have or have not. Though he knows our wants, he will know them from us; and when we have opened them to him, let us cheerfully refer ourselves to his wisdom, power, and goodness, for our supply. Therefore, we should ease ourselves of the burden of care, by casting it upon God, because it is he *that careth for us* (1 Pt. 5:7), and what needs all this ado? If he care, why should we care?

6. *Seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.* v. 33. Here is a double argument against the sin of *thoughtfulness*; *take no thought* for your life, the life of the body; for, (1.) You have greater and better things to take thought about, the life of your soul, your eternal happiness; that is the *one thing needful* (Lu. 10:42), about which you should employ your thoughts, and which is commonly neglected in those hearts wherein worldly cares have the ascendant. If we were but more careful to please God, and to work out our own salvation, we should be less solicitous to please ourselves, and work out an estate in the world. Thoughtfulness for our souls in the most effectual cure of thoughtfulness for the world. (2.) You have a surer and easier, a safer and more compendious way to obtain the necessities of this life, than by carking, and caring, and fretting about them; and that is, by *seeking first the kingdom of God*, and making religion your business: say not that this is the way to starve, no, it is the way to be well provided for, even in this world. Observe here,

- a. [1.] The great duty required: it is the sum and substance of our whole duty: "*Seek first the kingdom of God*, mind religion as your great and principle concern." Our duty is to seek; to desire, pursue, and aim at these things; it is a word that has in it much of the constitution of the new covenant in favour of us; *though we have not attained*, but in many things fail and come short, sincere seeking (a careful concern and an earnest endeavor) is accepted. Now observe, *First*, The object of this seeking; *The kingdom of God, and his righteousness*; we must mind heaven as our end, and holiness as our way. "Seek the comforts of the kingdom of grace and glory as your felicity. Aim at the *kingdom of heaven*; press towards it; give diligence to make it sure; resolve not to take up short of it; seek for this glory, honour, and immortality; prefer heaven and heavenly blessings far before earth and earthly delights." We make nothing of our religion, if we do not make heaven of it. And with the *happiness* of this kingdom, seek the *righteousness* of it; *God's righteousness*, the righteousness which he requires to be wrought *in* us, and wrought *by* us, such as exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees; we must *follow peace and holiness*, Heb. 12:14. *Secondly*, The order of it. *Seek first the kingdom of God*. Let your care for your souls and another world take the place of all other cares: and let all the concerns of this life be made subordinate to those of the life to come: we must seek the things of Christ more than our own things; and if ever they come in competition, we must remember to which we are to give the preference. "Seek these things *first*; first in thy days: let the morning of thy youth be dedicated to God. Wisdom must be sought early; it is good beginning betimes to be religious. Seek the first every day; let waking thoughts be of God." Let this be our principle, to do that first which is most needful, and let him that is the First, have the first.
- b. [2.] The gracious promise annexed; *all these things*, the necessary supports of life, *shall be added unto you*; shall be *given over and above*; so it is in the margin. You shall have what you seek, the *kingdom of God and his righteousness*, for never any sought *in vain*, that sought *in earnest*; and besides that, you shall have food and raiment, by way of overplus; as he that buys goods has paper and packthread given him in the bargain. *Godliness has the promise of the life that now is*, 1 Tim. 4:8. Solomon asked wisdom, and had that and other things added to him, 2 Chr. 1:11, 12. O what a blessed change would it make in our hearts and lives, did we but firmly believe this truth, that

the best way to be comfortably provided for in this world, is to be most intent upon another world! We then begin at the right end of our work, when we begin with God. If we give diligence to make sure to ourselves the kingdom of God and the righteousness thereof, as to all the things of this life, Jehovah-jireh—the Lord will provide as much of them as he sees good for us, and more we would not wish for. Have we trusted in him for the *portion of our inheritance* at our end, and shall we not trust him for the *portion of our cup*, in the way to it? God's Israel were not only brought to Canaan at last, but had their charges borne through the wilderness. O that we were more thoughtful about the things that are not seen, that are eternal, and then the less thoughtful we should be, and the less thoughtful we should need to be, about the things that are seen, that are temporal! *Also regard not your stuff*, Gen. 45:20, 23.

7. *The morrow shall take thought for the things of itself: sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof*, v. 34. We must not perplex ourselves inordinately about future events, because every day brings along with it its own burden of cares and grievances, as, if we look about us, and suffer not our fears to betray the succours which grace and reason offer, it brings along with it its own strength and supply too. So that we are here told,

a. (1.) That *thoughtfulness* for the morrow is *needless*; *Let the morrow take thought for the things of itself*. If wants and troubles be renewed with the day, there are aids and provisions renewed likewise; *compassions*, that are *new every morning*, Lam. 3:22, 23. The saints have a Friend that is *their arm every morning*, and gives out fresh supplies daily (Isa. 33:2), according *as the business of every day requires* (Ezra 3:4), and so he keeps his people in constant dependence upon him. Let us refer it therefore to the morrow's strength, to do the morrow's work, and bear the morrow's burden. To-morrow, and the things of it, will be provided for without us; why need we anxiously care for that which is so wisely cared for already? This does not forbid a prudent foresight, and preparation accordingly, but a perplexing solicitude, and a prepossession of difficulties and calamities, which may perhaps never come, or if they do, may be easily borne, and the evil of them guarded against. The meaning is, let us *mind present duty*, and then *leave events to God*; do the *work of the day in its day*, and then let *to-morrow bring its work along with it*.

b. (2.) That *thoughtfulness* for the morrow is one of those *foolish and hurtful lusts*, which those that will be rich fall into, and one

of the *many sorrows*, wherewith they *pierce themselves through*. *Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof*. This present day has trouble enough attending it, we need not *accumulate* burdens by *anticipating* our trouble, nor borrow perplexities from to-morrow's evils to add to those of this day. It is uncertain what to-morrow's evils may be, but whatever they be, it is time enough to take thought about them when they come. What a folly it is to take that trouble upon ourselves this day by care and fear, which belongs to another day, and will be never the lighter when it comes? Let us not pull that upon ourselves all together at once, which Providence has wisely ordered to be borne by parcels. The conclusion of this whole matter then is, that it is the will and command of the Lord Jesus, that his disciples should not be their own tormentors, nor make their passage through this world more dark and unpleasant, by their apprehension of troubles, than God has made it by the troubles themselves. By our daily prayers we may procure strength to bear us up under our daily troubles, and to arm us against the temptations that attend them, and then let none of these things move us.

The OPPOSITE of ANXIETY:

The Bible presents several concepts as the opposite of anxiety, including:

- **Contentment:**

- **Peace:**

The Bible encourages finding peace in God, as in Philippians 4:6, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God."

- **Trust:**

Trusting in God's plan and providence can alleviate anxiety, as in Psalm 23:4, "Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me."

- **Hope:**

Hope in God's promises can provide comfort and counteract anxiety, as in Romans 15:13, "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."

- **Love:**

Love casts out fear, according to 1 John 4:18.

- **Humility:**

Submitting to God's will and acknowledging His power can reduce anxiety, as in 1 Peter 5:7, "Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you."

These concepts promote a sense of calm, contentment, and reliance on God, which are antithetical to anxiety.

TYPES of ANXIETY:

- G.A.D. General Anxiety Disorder = persistent and excessive worry about various aspects of daily life.
- PANIC Disorders = sudden episodes of intense fear accompanied by physical symptoms like a racing heart or shortness of breath.
- PHOBIAS = intense, irrational fear of specific realities that lead to avoidance behaviors.
- SOCIAL Anxiety Disorder = high levels of fear & worry about social situations due to the fear of being judged, humiliated, or embarrassed.
- Agoraphobia = a fear of being in situations where escape might be difficult or embarrassing, often leading to the avoidance of public places.

- SEPARATION Anxiety Disorder = excessive fear about being separated from people to whom one has a strong emotional bond.
- O.C.D. Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder = unwanted intrusive thoughts (obsessions) & repetitive behaviors (compulsions).
- .
- General UNBELIEF
- Faithless FEAR
- Immature UNCERTAINTY
- Concerned URGENCY
- Wicked/Evil REALITIES
- Threatening RISKS

CAUSES of Anxiety:

- **Sin!**
- **Biopsychosocial Factors:**
Anxiety disorders often result from an interaction between biological, psychological, and social factors.
- **Genetics:**
A family history of anxiety or other mental health conditions can increase your risk.
- **Brain Chemistry:**
Imbalances in the brain's neurotransmitters can contribute to mood disorders.
- **Environmental Factors:**

Long-term stress, traumatic events (such as those in childhood or adulthood), and significant life changes can trigger anxiety.

- **Medical Conditions:**

Some physical health issues, like an overactive thyroid, can cause symptoms similar to anxiety.

- **Substance Use:**

Withdrawal from certain drugs or alcohol, or the misuse of substances, can lead to anxiety.

- **Personality Traits:**

Certain personality characteristics, such as being shy or prone to being physically reactive, can be risk factors.

Desiring God

Anxiety: Disorder, Sin, Or Both?

We get a lot of questions and emails about anxiety disorders and attention deficit disorders — ADD/ADHD. One listener asks if these are merely disorders, or are they sin, either/or, or is it a both/and? Over the years as a pastor, how did you process these questions over panic attacks, anxiety, and ADD?

Well, as I have tried to think about them, and I have over the years, they really are pretty distinct issues. So let me separate them out and maybe we can do ADD in its own podcast, but with regard to anxiety the answer is yes. Paul and Jesus explicitly command us not to be anxious, so to be anxious is a sin. Jesus says: “Do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on” (Matthew 6:25). And then he gives eight reasons in that paragraph in Matthew 6 why we don’t need to be anxious and shouldn’t be anxious — “Do not be anxious about

tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself" (Matthew 6:34). Or Matthew 10:19: "When they deliver you over, do not be anxious how you are to speak or what you are to say." And Paul in Philippians 4:6: "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God."

Trusting God

So, yes, worry or anxiety is a sin. God wants us to trust his sovereign, all-wise, all-good, all-providing, all-protecting, ever-assisting care. This is a trust issue. And he wants us to do it so deeply that death itself is not the ultimate threat, that death cannot separate us from the love of God or rob us of our joy. So the godly opposite of anxiety is peace and contentment rooted in trust in God's promises. It is the experience of Paul's secret. "I have learned" — this is Philippians 4:11 — "I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content." That is the opposite of anxiety. "I know how to be brought low" — and not be anxious about being brought low. "I know how to abound" — in any and every circumstance. "I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger" — now hunger would mean I don't know where my next meal might come from — "abundance and need" (Philippians 4:12). I don't know if my needs are going to be met. And he is saying, I have learned a secret: "I can do all things through him who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13) so that the great challenge to all of us is to trust God more and more, because, Tony, all of us are anxious.

“God wants us to trust his sovereign, all-wise, all-good, all-providing, all-protecting, ever-assisting care.”

I mean I hope the person who asked this question doesn't hear me say, "Yes, it is a sin," and respond, "Well, thank you. That is no help." Well, it is a help, because I am joining you in it. There is no human being on the planet beside Jesus who doesn't struggle with

anxiety. All of us are flawed in our faith. If we were perfect in our faith we would be anxiety-free. And the more we mature in faith, the more anxiety-free we are.

But I don't think in this life there has ever been a person who, when faced with some new threat, some new danger, some new difficulty, doesn't have anxiety pop up in their life and then like the psalm says, [Psalm 56:3](#), "When I am afraid, I put my trust in you." So there is this transaction that goes on as we deal with the remaining corruption and unbelief in our hearts.

Spiritual and Physical

Now having said that, we are all on the same team of trying to grow into greater and greater faith and less and less anxiety, having said that, it is true that there are psycho-physical conditions that make extreme anxiety and panic attacks, for example — uncontrollable phobias — a real life problem. So there is a continuum for all of us, but I do want to acknowledge for some in these unusual cases, the believer needs very wise counsel from those who know him best and who know those physical and psychological conditions best.

“There will always be physical strategies as well as spiritual strategies for dealing with the conditions of our soul.”

Here is the bigger picture. The physical brain and the spiritual soul are interdependent in ways that we cannot fully see. This means that there are — and there always will be — physical strategies as well as spiritual strategies for dealing with the conditions of our soul. That is a huge statement. We might want to talk more about that later. There will always be physical things you do and spiritual things you pursue and do in dealing with the condition of the soul. What we eat and drink and how we sleep and exercise and how we deal with the weather we live in, like is it dark in February? Will the sun ever come

out? Will the temperature ever get, you know, above zero? The lighting that we have at work, the sounds that we are surrounded with — a chirping bird versus a whirring freeway — all of these things affect our psychological and our spiritual condition, which simply means that there may be extreme cases that require special physical efforts, including medication, that provide a kind of equilibrium where the more natural strategies can have their best effects.

In other words, medication may bring a person to the point where they can avail themselves more effectively of God-given natural strategies and maybe later we could talk about how these work. I have ideas about how to sanctify these natural strategies. But for now I just want to emphasize that, Yes, we ought not to be anxious. And, Yes, we are all anxious. And, Yes, God has provided wonderful resources both spiritually in his promises and physically with steps like *Get enough sleep* in order to have the resources that he provides to be content.

John Piper (@JohnPiper) is founder and teacher of Desiring God and chancellor of Bethlehem College and Seminary. For 33 years, he served as pastor of Bethlehem Baptist Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota. He is author of more than 50 books, including *Desiring God: Meditations of a Christian Hedonist* and most recently *Foundations for Lifelong Learning: Education in Serious Joy*. Read more about John.