

Matthew 6:25-34 – “Why Worry?”

Last week we looked at treasures, what are you treasuring and valuing? You can either lay up treasures on earth or treasures in heaven. Now here’s something we didn’t talk about last week that we’ll be discussing today. Because of their unpredictability, treasures on earth can often lead to **WORRY!**

How many people have ever worried about something in their life before?

Worry is something we all have either dealt with, are dealing with, or at some point will deal with.

I deal with a lot of worry. In fact, I spoke with our elders about hiring a full time professional to deal with all my worries. They asked how much that would cost. I told them it would be about \$5000/month. They asked me how in the world we were going to be able to afford that. I said, that’s for him to worry about.

But seriously, worry and anxiety is a major problem in society today.

“Anxiety among Canadians 15 years and older has doubled from 2012 to 2020.”¹

But this is not a new problem. Sure, I believe we’re having more things in society today that are contributing to this trend. But this has been a reality for people since the beginning. And Jesus takes time in this wonderful sermon on the mount to address it. So today we’re going to look at some remedies to worry from the One that cares the most about you.

1. Don’t Worry Because Of Who You Are – 6:25-26, 28-30

6:25-26 - *Therefore I say to you, do not worry 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? ²⁶ Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?*

Now again when we see the word **therefore** we need to ask what it’s ‘there for’. Jesus has just been addressing the fact that we don’t need to live with such a concern on the life that is now, but rather on the life that is to come. Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven (Matt. 6:20).

Don’t be overly concerned with money and material things, but rather serve God (Matthew 6:24).

¹ <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/75-006-x/2023001/article/00011-eng.htm>

So with this perspective in mind, Jesus says **do not worry**... In fact He's going to repeat this phrase three times throughout our text - do not worry! The word worry is going to be used 6 times in these 10 verses. Jesus is obviously wanting us to deal with our anxiety and worry.

Now it's interesting that as Jesus says **do not worry**, He's speaking this in the present active imperative. Meaning this is a **command** that is to be followed in a continuous action.

- Now think about that. We take a lot of commands very seriously. Do not murder. Do not commit adultery. Do not steal. We hear those and we're like, *'Yes, definitely! I'm on that.'*
- But have we ever thought of *'Do not worry'* with that same weightiness?
- I think we all can tend to look at worry as just a part of life. Like it's to be expected. But yet, we don't hold those same views towards these other commands I mentioned do we? And if you do, could you just let me know?? Because if you're looking at murder as just a part of life, like it just happens, then I'm probably going to limit my time with you 😊.

So this is carrying a lot of weight and importance in the eyes of Jesus. And it's something we need to take seriously. Worry is not something to just shrug your shoulders over and think it's just normal or ok. **We need to stop worrying!!**

But Jesus doesn't just tell us to stop worrying, He explains for us why we don't need to worry.

First, He identifies some of the more natural things that we tend to worry about. Things like food and drink – things that we say our going to sustain our life. We have so many options around us today that we're rarely in short supply of food.

- But think of it back in Jesus' time. Food and drink were never a guarantee. People typically had to grow what they ate.
- For us today we are rarely without options for food and drink. But perhaps an equivalent would be having a steady income by which to purchase our food and daily needs.

Jesus also tied in our worry of what we're going to wear.

It's sad that we can often stress over these things. And sadly, it's not so much stressing over if we have something to wear, but more so stressing over if I should wear this shirt or that shirt? Do these pants go with these shoes? Do

these colours blend nicely? We worry about the silliest things when some people around the world are just wondering if they might ever own a pair of shoes.

And notice what Jesus says: ***Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?***

In other words, doesn't your life and body really consist beyond these things? Is this why God put us here on this earth so we can be stressed out over what we're going to have to sustain us, and what we're going to wear to make us look good? This is not the point to life!

God has us here for much more than this! And that's kind of the point that we're getting to. God put you here, and God is going to take care of you. Jesus gives us a great example of this in vs. 26 [read verse].

Aren't the birds just a wonder to you? You see, they're all flying around and their needs are being met for them beyond their own doing.

- You don't see any birds that are out growing little worm farms so that they have an ongoing supply of food. They're not planting sunflowers so that they can have a fresh crop of bird seed. They're not storing up food thinking that tomorrow may not provide. They just go about their business each and every day without a care in the world. Why? Because God is taking care of them!
- And here's the point, if God is taking care of insignificant birds, how much more will He take care of you?! ***Are you not of more value than they?***

Here's why you're of more value than they – because you're created in the image of God. God has put His imprint on you! **There is an intrinsic value on your life because of Whose you are!**

And not only has He made you in His image, but He's given us dominion over His creation. If God is caring for the littlest of His creation, will He not take care of you who He's put over His creation?

We'll cover vs. 27 in a second, but moving on with this 1st point still...

6:28-30 - "So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; ²⁹ and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. ³⁰ Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is

thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?"

Why worry? The point here is why worry when the richest man at the time could not outdo what God simply did with His basic creation.

I mean, just think about some of the amazing colours and designs we see in the flowers. Even in the weeds that cover about 95 percent of my property, there is some pretty amazing beauty to behold.

Remember, Solomon was visited by the Queen of Sheba who was wealthy herself. And she said: *"Your wisdom and prosperity exceed the fame of which I heard"* (1 Kings 10:7c).

- And yet Solomon in all his glory didn't compare to the beauty and glory that God gave to the lilies of the field. They're not straining or striving to look good. They just had to let God do His work!

If God does this to very temporal things (notice, Jesus says that it's here today and then tomorrow thrown into the oven), how much more will He provide for, and bless you, who are eternal and made in His image?!

Are you catching this? As a child of God, there's no need for worry in your life!! The only reason would be because you've neglected to trust your gracious and good Heavenly Father.

This is what Jesus identifies as the issue for those with worry – ***O you of little faith.***

You see, I believe worry and anxiety sets in because we've neglected to trust the Lord with our stuff. Walking by faith is difficult because it means we need to relinquish control; we're yielding these things to God. This can be very freeing, but for some very fearing. Because we like to be in control. We like to have a handle on these things. We like to be the one's that are calling the shots and having our ducks in a row. We don't like unpredictability.

So when Jesus says, *trust Me*, it shakes up this order that we're hoping to hold on to. To trust something often means that we need to let go of something else that we're leaning on.

Worry you see is sort of like saying, *God I don't know if You're able to help me. I'm not sure that I can trust in Your providence.* That's a sad reality.

Remember the sin of unbelief is what kept the Israelites out of the Promised Land. Jesus proves in our text that He loves us and will take care of us and is worthy of us surrendering our control and anxiety to Him.

- **1 Peter 5:7**, "*casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.*"

Now before we move on I'd like to clarify a couple things regarding the believer and faith.

1. Faith does not exempt us from our responsibility. I've heard some Christians take an attitude of inactivity and just sit back expecting God to take care of all their needs. Listen, the birds still need to get out of their nests to get their food. **2 Thessalonians 3:10b**, "*If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat.*" We'd all love to experience a time like Elijah where a supply of miraculous food came through ravens. But don't hold your breath. The Lord takes care of us and sustains us but we are not free to sit in our lazy boy binging Netflix all day and expect God to cover our bases.
2. Faith does not exempt us from times of trial. We'd like to think that if we have enough faith we'll be immune from difficulty, but it's times of difficulty that grow us, strengthen us, and in the end increases our faith. It's our faith that allows us not to panic in the midst of trouble and trials. We'll see in the end of the chapter that Jesus makes mention of the trouble that each day may hold. So, though trials may come it's our faith that overcomes our fears and worry.

Another reason to stop worrying...

2. Don't Worry Because It Doesn't Help – 6:27

6:27 - *Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?*

The message here is: stop worrying because it doesn't help!!

A cubit was a measurement. Can anyone add any height to their life by worrying about it? Trust me, I've tried! It doesn't help!

- Now the idea more so here is probably adding length of time to your life. Isn't that something people worry about? I want to live longer! I don't want anything to hinder that so I'm going to do everything I can to prolong my life. And it can get to the point where you're freaked out to do basic things because you don't want any harm to come to your life. We can spend so much time worrying about preserving our life that we fail to live life. And as Christians our lives are already preserved for eternity! No need to worry!

- And ironically, not worrying actually helps you live longer. In fact, stress and anxiety rob you of life. “Doctors and researchers say that stress is more responsible than anything else for almost every disease.”²

Sinclair Ferguson said it well: “Your life is in the hands of your Father. He has designed it. He knows the end of it from the beginning. He plans each step of the way to fulfil his purpose for you and through you. You will have all you need to fulfil that purpose, and when that is accomplished, you will be taken home to be with him. Why worry when he has your life in his hands? Your worry is a sign that you do not adequately know him, or that you do not trust him, or have not yet yielded to him as you ought.”³

3. Don't Worry Because It Hinders Our Testimony – 6:31-32

6:31-32 - *Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’³² For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.*

Remember, this Sermon On The Mount is being given to Jesus’ disciples. It’s meant to lay out the character and conduct of the citizens of God’s Kingdom. So Jesus lays a bit of a contrast here. The things that you might often find yourself worrying over are the very things that the Gentiles (those not living for God) are seeking after. But it’s not to be that way for the citizen’s of God’s Kingdom. We’re to live with a different focus and different perspective (which we’ll get to in our next point).

Ultimately, when we as believers live worried stressed out lives, we’re not providing anything different than what unbelievers in the world are already dealing with. And we hinder our witness. We’re called to be different.

If we’re trying to lead people to Jesus, and we’re being dominated by fear and worry, what kind of message does that send? We’re communicating a God that is powerless in our life.

Now let me just say I’m not talking about moments of difficulty in our life. Times where we might go through hardship that tests us. We’re going to battle with anxieties at times. But this passage more so is addressing a life that is always worried about where this provision and care is going to come from. It’s a life

² Brodersen, B. (2016). *Following Christ in the Modern World*. (page 70). Santa Ana, CA; Back to Basics.

³ Akin, D. (2019). *Exalting Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount*. Holman Bible Publishers.

riddled by self-focus rather than faith in God. That's what the Gentiles are consistently about. Yet it should not be what we're about.

Here's what we are to do, have the right focus...

4. Don't Worry Because You Lose Perspective – 6:33-34

6:33-34 - *But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. ³⁴ Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.*

Don't seek after what you think you need, seek after God and His kingdom. Live out the things that Jesus has been revealing in this sermon of the Kingdom Way! In other words, stop worrying about your little kingdom, and start living according to His Kingdom. Put your eternal rewards ahead of anything this world can offer. When you get your perspective straight, you'll see that the things you've been worrying about really are quite small and insignificant in light of Him. When you put God first, and your desire is His righteousness (living rightly before Him and honouring Him) you're going to find a lot less things to be worried about.

So Jesus wraps up by saying again, ***do not worry***. Stop thinking about tomorrow. It will be taken care of when it comes.

- Corrie Ten Boom said: Worry does not empty tomorrow of its sorrow, it empties today of its strength.

Now I'm not sure this is the best way to encourage not worrying, but Jesus says, today has enough trouble of its own. I would have preferred Him just to say it will all be ok, no need for concern. But He says, today will have enough trouble of its own. And the idea again is that trouble may arise, but don't jump to worry. Trust the Lord!

- **John 16:33**, *"These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."*

Remedies for worry: Father – Faith – Future

1. The Father – we serve a God who cares about you.
2. Faith – our faith needs to be exercised and times of uncertainty are times to see our faith strengthened. It's times to see that God is good and sufficient.

3. Future – We're not living for this world. Seek first the kingdom of God. Know that there is hope beyond what we see around us.

Philippians 4:6–7, *"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; ⁷ and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."*

Proverbs 12:25, *"Anxiety in the heart of man causes depression, But a good word makes it glad."*

Isaiah 26:3, *"You will keep him in perfect peace, Whose mind is stayed on You, Because he trusts in You."*

Jeremiah 17:7–8, *"Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, And whose hope is the Lord. ⁸ For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters, Which spreads out its roots by the river, And will not fear when heat comes; But its leaf will be green, And will not be anxious in the year of drought, Nor will cease from yielding fruit."*

Commitment: Jesus, I yield control to you today. I surrender my worry. Be the One that leads and controls my life. I give it all to You. Help me to trust You and walk in the blessing of Your peace.