



A Systematic Expository Study of the Word of God

Special Study:

FREEDOM FROM THE BONDAGE OF WORRY AND ANXIETY

Matthew 6:25-30

"I say unto you, Take no thought for your life" (verse 25). "Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit (18 inches) unto his stature?" (verse 27) "And why take ye thought for raiment?" (verse 28) "Therefore take no thought" (verse 31) "Take therefore no thought for the morrow" (verse 34). In this brief passage, our Lord warns and cautions us against worry and anxiety. He commands us not to be worried or anxious about our present needs and future prospects. Worry is unnecessary because we have a heavenly Father who cares for us. Worry is unreasonable because we cannot improve our lot by worrying and being anxious. Worry is unwise because it cannot stop whatever is going to happen and it paralyses our faith which has power to change all situations and things.

Worry causes and increases tormenting fear; it broods over what may never happen and creates unnecessary despair and depression, making our situations seem worse than they really are. Worry brings the pain of yesterday, borrows the burden of tomorrow and adds them to the concerns of today thereby making our excessive load of the present hour unbearable. Worry makes us live like a hopeless orphan, without a heavenly Father, without any promise of divine help and provision. "Have faith in God."

CHRIST'S COMMAND FORBIDDING WORRY AND ANXIETY

Matthew 6:25,31,34; Luke 12:22-30; Mark 13:11; 1 Corinthians 7:32; Philippians 4:6-8; Hebrews 13:5,6; 1 Peter 5:7; Psalm 55:22; Luke 21:34-36.

"Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life." What is the meaning of "Take no thought"? Is the Lord teaching us not to plan for the future? Is He encouraging us to be thoughtless and careless about our lives? No. He expects us to plan ahead, count the cost, plan for the future on earth and plan with faith and commitment for our eternal future. "For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish" (Luke 14:28-30).

What, then, does this mean? "Take no thought." 'Be not anxious, be not worried'. Christ's command is that we should not be worried or anxious concerning any area of our lives - what to eat, what to drink, what to wear, etc. God, our Creator, Redeemer and Father who has given us life will take care of that life. Since He has given us life, we can trust Him to provide all that is necessary to take care of it. He will surely provide necessary food to sustain the life given. Since God has graciously and freely given us bodies, surely we can trust Him for adequate clothing for the body.

COMMON CREATURES' FREEDOM FROM WORRY AND ANXIETY

Matthew 6:26,27; Genesis 1:30; 8:6-19; Job 38:41; Psalm 104:10-14,27,28; Matthew 10:29-31; Luke 12:24; Job 35:10,11; Psalm 8:4-9; Ecclesiastes 3:14.

"Behold the fowls of the air: ... your heavenly Father feedeth them." Our Lord now uses the example of the birds. There is no worry or anxiety in their lives. They do not attempt to pile up food for an unforeseeable future, yet their lives go on as ordained by God. Let the higher creatures learn from these lower, common creatures. The Lord provides an abundance of food for the birds, will He not provide for us? If God so carefully takes care of these relatively insignificant creatures, how much more will He take care of His own children? Will anyone of us who owns fowls, dogs, goats at home take care of these animals and yet allow the children to starve and die of hunger? He who feeds the birds and keeps them from worry and anxiety will also feed us. Trusting in the care and provision of our heavenly Father, we are kept free from worry and anxiety.

Jesus asked an important question. "Are ye not much better than they? " - than the fowls of the air? No bird is created in the image of God or recreated in the image of Christ, our Saviour. No bird is a joint-heir with Christ. No bird has a place prepared for it in heaven. If God gives sufficient provision to sustain the life of birds, will He not

take care of us who are His children? He has given us Christ, will He not give us all that we need to sustain our lives? (Romans 8:32).

CONSISTENT CONFIDENCE OF FAITH WITHOUT ANXIETY

Matthew 6:28-30; Luke 12:27-31; Hosea 14:5-9; James 1:5-8; Ephesians 6:16; Romans 4:18-21; 8:32; Psalm 37:16-19; Romans 10:11-13; Philippians 4:6-8,13,19.

Worry is essentially distrust of God. Faith in God sets us free from worry and anxiety. He who believes in God will not worry or be anxious because he believes in the love of God. It is pointless to worry. Can worry or anxiety add one cubit to our stature? Prayer and faith added fifteen years to Hezekiah's life (2 Kings 20:1-6) but has worry, fear, unbelief, anxiety or discouragement ever added to the quality of any life?

“Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow. If God so clothe the grass of the field ..., shall He not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?” To be worried and anxious about necessities of life shows that we are of little faith. If we have manifested saving faith and we have received “so great salvation”, why should we doubt God in the area of material supplies? If God clothes the lilies of the field with a beauty which is beyond man's power to imitate, how much more will He care for His own children? Surely, God, a loving, compassionate Father will not be forgetful of man, the crown of creation. He will not forget His own. He will not forget you.

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