

The Messiah Has Come
Week 27
Matthew 6:25-34
“Don’t Worry, Be Happy”

Introduction

Two things I ask of You; don’t deny them to me before I die. Keep falsehood and deceitful words far from me. Give me neither poverty nor wealth; feed me with the food I need. Otherwise, I might have too much and deny You, saying “Who is The LORD?” or I might have nothing and steal, profaning the Name of my God.

Proverbs 30:7-9

Several years ago a man named Bobby McFerrin wrote and sang a song that took the country by storm for a short while. The song was entitled, “Don’t Worry, Be Happy”. It was the only acapella song ever to reach the number one spot on the charts in the US, and it won him a grammy award for *song of the year* in 1989. The lyrics were both simple and infectious, and the message of the song seemed to capture the hearts of the country. *Don’t worry, be happy* became a slogan for just about everything imaginable. But oh, if it were only that easy! For you see, in the real world, worry is a part of life, because... well, life is hard. It is one thing to say, “don’t worry and just be happy”, and yet quite another to live out the mantra.

The child of God, however, has a power that this world does not possess, and that is the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit of God, and yes, it is very much possible for the Believer to lay aside the cares of this life and place their complete trust in the God Who so loved them that He gave His One and Only Son to die in their stead (**John 3:16**). And as a matter of course, while there should be an army of “*Christian Warriors*”, there should never be found amongst their ranks a “*Christian Worrier*”. Just as we were delivered from the power of sin and death, we too have been delivered from the dread that comes with this life, for we know that all things work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to His purpose (**Romans 8:28**).

The Apostle Paul was no stranger to difficulties in this life. In fact, he had suffered more than his share, simply for spreading the gospel of Christ. But in spite of his painful beatings, imprisonments, and the plethora of false accusations that his enemies hurled at him, he maintained his faith and composure through it all. And this steadfast trust in his Redeemer gave him the courage and the will to say:

I rejoiced in The LORD greatly because once again you renewed your care for me. You were, in fact, concerned about me but lacked the opportunity to show it. I don’t say this out of need, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I find myself. I know how to make do with little, and I know how to make do with a lot. In any and all circumstances I have learned the secret of being content — whether well fed or hungry, whether in abundance or in need. I am able to do all things through Him who strengthens me.

Philippians 4:10-13

So you see, to the Believer, worry is the very antithesis of faith. We have been chosen out of this world in order to rise above the fears which consume those who do not know our God. I once heard a preacher say, “There are three hundred sixty five ‘*fear not*’s given in The Scriptures, one for every day of the year.” He was mistaken, there are only around one hundred seventy or so, but that is still a lot! And if God tells us that many times that we should not fear, but rather, put our complete faith in Him to provide and care for us, then I would think we should take all those “*fear not*” to heart. Wouldn’t you agree?

So today, as we continue our discussion of *The Sermon on The Mount*, we come to the words of The LORD in regards to worry. The English word “worry” is actually derived from an old word that means “*to strangle*”, which is what worry tends to do to most people who suffer from it. It strangles the life out of them, paralyzing them with fear until they do not know which way to turn. We are called to much more than this. In one of Paul’s encouraging letters to Timothy, his young son in the faith, He said:

For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but one of power, love, and sound judgement.

2 Timothy 1:7

So, let us look together this morning and find comfort in The LORD'S commands in regards to worry. We will discover that for the Believer worry is *Forgetful*, *Faithless*, and *Futile*. Please allow me to explain.

Worry is Forgetful (vs. 25-30)

Therefore I tell you: Don't worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Isn't life more than food and the body more than clothing? Consider the birds of the sky: They don't sow or reap or gather into barns, yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Aren't you worth more than they? Can any of you add one moment to his life span by worrying? And why do you worry about clothes? Observe how the wildflowers of the field grow: They don't labor or spin thread. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was adorned like one of these. If that's how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and thrown in the furnace tomorrow, won't He do much more for you — you of little faith?

Matthew 6:25-30

As the old adage goes: when you see the word “therefore” in The Scriptures, look to see what it's “there for”. What is Jesus referring to here? He is continuing on from the last point of His sermon. Which speaks of serving God with a singular focus. His words exactly:

No one can serve two masters, since either he will hate one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.

Matthew 6:24

“Therefore” every one who claims to be a Believer in Jesus is to journey through this life with a singular focus. In short, we are to serve God above all else! Remember what we discussed last week about the key verse in this chapter? Everything else here revolves around that verse, and that verse is:

Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Matthew 6:10

And how do I know that this is the key verse of the passage? Because The LORD circles back to it when He sums up His thoughts on money, investing, and worrying (**vs. 33**). We'll get there shortly.

The word that The Savior uses translated “worry” in the CSB is “*merimnao*” in the Greek. And it actually means “*an anxious thought*”. The KJV translates this phrase as “*take no thought*”, which is a bit misleading, for our LORD is not saying that we should never plan for things or put aside money to buy what we need. This would be contrary to other Scriptures in regards to money. And trust me, *The Bible* has a lot to say on the subject of money. The LORD is simply telling us here that we are not to be consumed with stress in regards to what we need. God will see to it that we have those things. So we learn to rely on His promises and keep our focus upon the things of the kingdom.

I once had someone tell me that I should be careful not to get “so heavenly minded that I am of no earthly good.” I do not think that this is a problem at all. In fact, I believe the problem is that so many people are so *earthly* minded that they aren't good for anything! If our singular focus is to be on God and His coming kingdom, then we must rely on Him for what we need in the interim. Remember the verse, “Give us **this** day, our daily bread”...?

When we choose to stress over whether or not our needs will be met, we are actually being forgetful of just Who is our Master. We belong to The Almighty Everlasting God. And we have been given the privilege in Christ to call Him “*our Father*” (**vs. 9**)! And that is a privilege we must never forget, for He has promised that “all things” will work together for our good, if we love Him and are called according to His purpose (**Romans 8:28**). And to be reminded of who our Father is, is to also be reminded of His great love for us. Lest we forget:

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our LORD.

Romans 8:37-39

THIS is who our Father is, and oh how He loves us! Do not forget His love for *you*.

Worry Is Faithless (vs. 31-32)

So don't worry, saying, "What will we eat?" or "What will we drink?" or "What will we wear?" For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. **Matthew 31-32**

Several years ago I attended a pastor's conference in Gatlinburg. There were a lot of great sermons that weekend, but one in particular stood out to me. I cannot remember the speaker's name, but I will never forget his sermon topic that evening. He preached about the faithlessness of worry. And one of his points really slapped me in the face. He said, and I quote, "*When you worry, you are as much like the devil as you could ever be.*" You could have heard a pin drop in the auditorium, when he said that!

He went on to explain that Satan didn't think that God was qualified to be in charge. He was convinced in his wicked mind that he would be a better ruler than God was! Imagine that for a moment. Satan, a mere created angel, albeit it a powerful one, actually convinced himself that he was more qualified to rule the universe than his Creator! Kind of boggles the mind does it not? Then the pastor went on to say that when we worry, it is because we have convinced ourselves that *our* God cannot handle *our* problems. So then we decide that we must take them up and wrestle with them ourselves. In this, we are doing exactly as Satan did. In fact, it is the very thing that got him kicked out of heaven!

I remember driving home that night with tears in my eyes the whole way. I couldn't wait to get to a private place, where I could get on my knees and repent. I had certainly never thought about it that way before, but that is exactly what we do when we worry. In fact, this world is filled with so-called Believers who claim to have faith, that is... until they are required to actually *use* it! After all, we are called "Believers" for a reason, don't you think? It should be because we actually *BELIEVE*.

When Jesus said to have anxious thoughts about the necessities of life is to be like the "*Gentiles*" (**Vs. 32**), the word He used is "*ethnos*", and it is used in this sense to describe pagans who do not believe in God. So make no mistake, to call ourselves "Believers" and then worry about the cares of this life is to act as un-Believers. Simply put, worry is a sign of utter faithlessness. And *The Bible* is clear:

Now without faith it is impossible to please God, since the one who draws near to Him must believe He exists and that He rewards those who seek Him. **Hebrews 11:6**

The Pagans of this world are forced to wrestle with concerns for their life's provision. They must do so, *for they have no heavenly father to care for them!* We, on the other hand, have a Father Who knows our every need and has promised to supply them in abundance. The Scripture clearly teaches this in various places. One of my favorites in particular:

I have been young and now I am old, yet I have not seen the righteous abandoned or his children begging for bread. **Psalms 37:25**

Our heavenly Father has given us His Word that He will never leave, nor forsake us (**Hebrews 13:5**). He has made us this promise because of His great love for us. Just as we must never forget who He is, we must also never doubt what He says He will do. I am reminded here of the remake of *Amazing Grace (My Chains are Gone)* by Chris Tomlin, and its verse that says:

*The LORD has promised good to me, His Word my hope secures.
He will my shield and portion be, as long as life endures.*

Our God will always keep His Word, and He has promised to provide our every need (**vs. 33**). And His Word tells us, that our God cannot lie... (**Hebrews 6:18**). So is it any wonder that Jesus described Himself as The Way, The *TRUTH*, and the life? To worry is to doubt His integrity, His sovereignty, and His power. In other words, to worry is show ourselves faithless.

Worry is Futile (vs. 33-34)

But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be provided to you. Therefore don't worry about tomorrow, because tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own. **Matthew 6:33-34**

See! I told you that He would circle back to that key verse in the end. Here is the simple truth: If our focus is on one thing, and one thing alone, if we have good eyes and singular vision (**vs. 22-23**), then all we are really concerned with is the coming kingdom. And as such, all we need down here is whatever we will need today to survive the journey homeward, for we don't even know if there *is to be* a tomorrow! And when, and if, tomorrow comes, and we find ourselves on this same journey, then we will need tomorrow's provisions.

Can you imagine how stress free your life would become if today was the only thing that concerned you? How different would you live today, if you truly believed that Christ would return tomorrow? What priorities would shift? How many things would you change in your schedule today? Would you call that lost loved one and try one last time to reach him or her with the gospel? Would you reach out to that person you have wronged and make things right? Or would you stop everything and fall to your knees and rededicate yourself to the One who loved you enough to die on a cross to pay for your sins and shortcomings? I know for a fact that my life would be different if I always lived in the expectant hope of Christ's return tomorrow. But oft times we let the things of this world crowd out what really matters do we not?

The simple fact is... worrying about tomorrow is futile. It's a pointless exercise that leads to nothing. Remember what The Savior said just a few verses earlier:

Can any of you add one moment to his life span by worrying?

Matthew 6:27

Answer: No. Do you know that it has been said that over ninety percent of the things that we worry about *never actually happen*? Talk about a waste of time! We're stressing out over things that more than likely will never occur, and even if they do, worry certainly will not solve the problems they bring. But do you know who can? Our heavenly Father. There is nothing that will ever come up in your life that He cannot handle. And not only will He handle it, He will make it work together for your good! Because He is a good Father, and He loves you with an everlasting love.

So in the end, worry comes down to a forgetting of our Father's love and power, a lack of faith in His ability or willingness to care for us, and a futile exercise of stressing ourselves out over realities that we cannot change, or even worse, things that may never occur. *The Bible* is clear on these things. And we are commanded to "Cast our cares upon Him, for He cares for us" (**1 Peter 5:7**).

When our focus is fixed upon the kingdom of heaven, and the expectant hope of Christ's return, He promises us that every provision for our sojourn here will be provided. And if God has given us all that we need, then what more should we desire than this? This of course doesn't mean that we should never plan ahead or put aside funds for a rainy day. But what it does mean is that all is to be done in light of the fact that God is in control, and this world is not our home. And He has the right to interrupt our lives without a moment's notice or hesitation. For He... is our Master.

Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will travel to such and such a city and spend a year there and do business and make a profit." Yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring — what your life will be! For you are like a vapor that appears for a little while, then vanishes. Instead you should say, "If The LORD wills, we will live and do this or that." But as it is, in you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil. **James 4:13-16**

In other words:

Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Truth!!!