

## Lesson #11: A Worry-Free Life

Jesus really does get us. He has just concluded teaching His followers not to pursue earthly wealth, to be generous, to sacrifice the material for the spiritual. This is high-minded stuff! He knows the natural response to such teaching: “But hey, I’ve got to live in this material world!” Jesus’ response is to say, in effect, “I know. But don’t worry about it. Look after God’s interests, and He will make sure to look out after yours.

### Don’t worry about stuff.

*“Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear.” —Matthew 6:25*

The word translated “Worry” refers to an appreciation for important matters that require attention. It can be used in a positive or negative way.

- “Concern” is giving appropriate attention to an important matter while trusting God.
- “Worry” is giving an unhealthy amount of attention to an important matter while lacking trust in God.

Jesus is NOT teaching

- That we don’t need to be responsible about material matters.
- That it is wrong to work hard and financially prosper.

Jesus point: *Don’t fret over material matters. Trust that God will make sure your physical needs met.*

### Here’s why.

*25 Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? 26 Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? 27 Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life? 28 “And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. 29 Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. 30 If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? —Matthew 6:25b-30*

After making His general statement, Jesus asks a series of rhetorical questions where the answers are so obvious they make His point clear.

Question #1: *“Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes?”* Vs. 25b

- ➡ Life is meant to be lived, not just sustained, and your body is meant to be used up in living a full life, not just protected from the elements or dressed up for show.

Question #2: *“Are you not much more valuable than common birds?”* Vs. 26

- ➡ God cares enough about birds to make sure they are fed. Since you matter much more to God than birds, He will make sure you are fed, too.

Question #3: *“Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?”* Vs. 27

- ➡ Worry is incapable of adding either days to your life or quality to your days. It can only diminish your life.

Question #4: *“Will God not make sure you have clothes to wear?”* Vs. 30

- ➡ God cares enough about wildflowers that He makes sure they are beautiful when they present themselves to the world. Since you matter much more to God than flowers, He will make sure you are presentable to the world, too.

## **Observations**

*Cosmological observations.*

God created and sustains the universe. It operates according to the laws He established. Both animal life and plant life are sustained by these God-established governing principles. When they operate, it is God who is behind them and He is credited with their benefits.

The existence of God better explains the existence of the universe and the laws by which the universe operates.

*Environmental observations.*

- Creation matters. God cares enough about birds and plants to make sure they keep being fed and enabled to bloom. Human beings are charged with the care of the physical creation, as outlined in Genesis 1 and 2. This is known as the “Creation Mandate”.
- People matter more. People have a far greater value than animals. The word Jesus used translated “more valuable” conveys the idea of “vastly more important or significant”.
  - People alone are created in the image of God and will exist forever.
  - Plant life ends up being used for fuel. Animal life is over upon death.

#### *Exceptional observations.*

Jesus is teaching us about how life normally works. There are exceptions to the rule that God Himself reveals in the Bible itself. Revealed exceptions are not contradictions, they are paradoxes.

Example: Psalm 91:9-11 (general rule) and Hebrews 11:35-38 (exception).

We are wise to count on the general rule, and know there will be grace given for the exceptions to that rule. When there is an exception to the rule, it is always for a greater good!

#### **So live this way.**

*31 So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ 32 For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. 33 But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. 34 Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.*

—Matthew 6:31-34

Jesus clearly teaches us that, if we are being responsible, we don’t need to worry about life’s physical necessities. God loves us and will make sure we have what we need. He now highlight three ways we should live because of these realities. Jesus clearly teaches us that, if we are being responsible, we don’t need to worry about life’s physical necessities. God loves us and will make sure we have what we need. He now highlight three ways we should live because of these realities.

#### **#1: Don’t live like people who don’t know God. (Vs. 31-32)**

- People who don't know God worry about material concerns and obsess about such things.
- People who do know God are confident that God knows their needs, is capable of providing their needs, and cares enough to make sure they are met.

## **#2: Make Christ's cause your primary focus. (Vs. 33)**

- Our focus is on the kingdom of God.
  - We seek to expand the kingdom by helping unbelieving people to believe in Jesus. (This is often called "evangelism").
  - We seek to edify the kingdom by helping believing people to become like Jesus. (This is often called "edification").
- Our focus is on the righteousness of God.
  - We seek to become more righteous personally.
  - We seek to bring more righteousness to the world socially.

## **#3: Take life one day at a time. (Vs. 34)**

- This will enable you to engage in the matters of today fully. This puts you in the best position when tomorrow comes.
- This will keep you from importing tomorrow's possibilities into today. This not only complicates today, we don't know for sure what will happen tomorrow!

### **Reflect**

- ♦ Do you worry? About what?
- ♦ In what ways might worry over material goods keep you from being generous?
- ♦ Which of Jesus' instructions do you most need to take to heart?
- ♦ What steps could you take to better pursue God's kingdom and righteousness?

### **Do**

- ♦ Take a moment to entrust yourself to God's care.
- ♦ Take one step to increase the way you expand and edify God's kingdom.