

Matthew 6:25-34 (NKJV)

25 "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?"

27 Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?"

28 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?"

31 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.

33 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.

When we started this text beginning in verse 25 I had no idea we would be in it **so long**. We have been on the topic of worry for 8 weeks. This happened because there is **so much depth** to explore in each verse. And Jesus obviously thought it was a **very important topic**.

It dawned on me this week that I have simply **assumed** we all know what worry is. I never defined it. And I think the text itself has given us a pretty good idea. But I thought it would be good to define it now.

I did mention that the King James translated it as "take no thought". And literally that is what the Greek word means. But that does not capture the negative nuance of the word.

We talked about the meaning of the Greek word for worry including the idea of **going to pieces**. It means being **pulled** in many directions. That seems to be a **word picture** of how worry causes us to **feel**. It is the **anxiety** that worry **causes us to feel**.

The **ESV**, instead of using the word worry instead uses the word “**be anxious**”. I think this **misses the mark** because the Greek word has more to do with **thoughts** than **feelings**. Anxiety can be a state that a person is in for many reasons. Worry is not a **state**. It is **way of thinking**. It consists of thoughts. So I think to translate this “**be anxious**” misses the point.

I have come to define it like this. **Worry is concern that escalates anxiety by fixating on fears of a negative outcome.**

That is a working definition to me. If you learn things that would adapt it please let me know.

The English Dictionary definition for worry is- **to torment oneself with or suffer from disturbing thoughts;**

As we have been going through this study, I hope that I have differentiated between **worry** and what worry **causes**.

I want to compare it to a whip. The thing that makes a whip crack is when the end of the whip passes the speed of sound. It is a miniature sonic boom. So while you may swing that whip all day, you know when you have passed the sound barrier because you hear it **crack**. You know **what it is** by **its effect**.

Worry is like that. You can have a faithful concern about something. It may cause you to feel sad. It may inspire you to pray fervently. It may accurately realize that a person is in danger and their condition is worthy of concern.

This is much like how we feel about Shawn or Jack and Karen.

But when concern produces anxiety, it is **worry**. When concern crosses that line, we know what it is. When we hear the crack of anxiety, it has crossed the concern barrier and has turned into something bad.

I hope this is helpful.

All anxiety is not **created by worry**. But all worry **creates** anxiety.

If it drives you from a peaceful dependence upon God to a state where you feel your life is falling apart, that is worry.

We have been given many reasons not to worry by Christ. He has been our **worry counselor** telling us what to think instead. But the strongest remedy is not regarding what we **refuse** to do. It is on what we **choose** to do.

Instead of **seeking the stuff** and **fixating on the stuff** of this earth, the stuff people worry about, we are to fixate on **that which is eternal**. We are to seek first the things of God. We let **eternal things** have all the top priority spots in our lives.

Last week we focused on “**All these things will be added to you.**”

We will move on to the end of the text today.

33 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.

Verse 34 starts with a therefore. It is difficult to know if the conclusion is based on the truth in the **prior verse** or on **the whole discourse**. I think it is based on everything that Christ said since verse 25.

It is like Christ is saying,

“I just gave you everything you need to know to **not worry**. You now know how to **counter** those compelling ideas in your heads with facts.

Then I gave you what you really need to **focus on**. Pour your life in a different direction. If you will **believe** what I say and **do** what I say (we really cannot do one without doing the other) you have the **full remedy to worry**. Does it take effort? Of course it does. Will it be hard? Certainly. It will take lots of diligence, like First Peter said. And like all sins it will be harder for some than for others. That is ok.

But therefore do not worry about tomorrow.”

That seems to be what Christ was getting at.

And now Christ gives us an additional insight. And this is not about worry.

This is about life.

for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

What is the difference between today and tomorrow?

What can you do about trouble that has **not yet happened** and you cannot tell if it **will happen** or not? The implication is **nothing**. So this is not talking about things that you can **constructively prepare for**. If you know there is a snow storm tomorrow you can join the rest of the country in buying milk, bread and eggs. No worry is needed. You are doing constructive things.

There need be no **anxiety** in that kind of preparation.

But how about if you have a **medical test** tomorrow? Or if someone is calling you with news and you don't know what it is? Or if you know you will face a difficult situation? The kind of things you really cannot prepare for today.

That is worry fuel. That is what Jesus is talking about.

Now what does He mean when He says

tomorrow will worry about its own things

Let's look at this literally. Is there such a creature called tomorrow that sits around worrying? So that tomorrow will worry so we don't have to?

Clearly that is not what Jesus is saying. In going through this study I have come to a new appreciation for how Jesus spoke. He said things in ways that people would get them. He was not a technical writer. He did not frame things in such a way that you understood everything about everything. But He spoke to where people lived in such a way that they got what He meant. And that is what He was after. They weren't technical theological discourses as much as they were pastoral teachings to a flock of followers. They were true theologically, but their purpose was not to clarify theological borders but to communicate direction to people.

So when He says **tomorrow will worry about its own things** He did not care that a literal interpretation of the words might be confusing. His audience was probably not confused at all. Nor do we need to be.

I think there is a word here that will help us put things in perspective.

Jesus says **Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.**

The word for trouble here is translated lots of ways.

But one of its earlier uses was to describe **hail damage** to crops. I think that helps us get a grip of the **trouble** that **each day experiences**. And it helps us know what **trouble** our **imagination can come up with** to worry about.

I believe when Jesus says "tomorrow will worry about its own things" He is telling us **tomorrow's potential for trouble is out of our realm.**

How would you answer this question? What time period is God holding you responsible to **be faithful to Him** right now?

The answer is easy.

Right now.

He is not holding you responsible **right now** to be faithful to Him **in the past**. It is **in the past**. There will either be **reward for it** or **none** for it. There may be **consequences** for it. But the past is not where we live. There is nothing we can do about it but thank Christ for it and/or repent of it. Christ does not address that **the past** is out of our control here. But He does address **future**. Christ is not holding you responsible **right now** for what you will do **in the future**. That is not the focus because it is completely out of your **realm of control**.

Right now is **all you have**. Right now is **all you ever have**. Right now is **where you live**. Right now is all you are responsible for right now. Might that mean **right now** you are busy **preparing for the future**. Sure it does. But it is not the future. It is now. You are doing it **now**.

I love the Bible because it is so realistic.

Look at this.

The implication is that **today has troubles**.

Tomorrow will have troubles.

Tomorrow's troubles are **out of our realm of control or responsibilities.**

Today's troubles are **sufficient.**

We don't know if there will be hail damage **tomorrow.**

But if there is hail damage **today** we are going to be responsible for dealing with it.

There are a couple of things to note here. We have talked about some of this in Sunday school.

We know that God's mercies are new every morning. We know that He supplies us everything we need for life and godliness and it will be there when we need it.

Today has **unexpected calamity.**

Tomorrow will have **unexpected calamity.**

Let me ask you, which calamity does God **equip us for** today? Today's calamity or tomorrow's calamity?

Yeah. We know the answer. God only prepares us for the trouble He will give us. And the trouble he will give us He has prepared us for.

When we worry we try to **apply grace that we have not yet been given for trouble we have not yet been given.** It is a waste of time. Tomorrow is outside of our realm. We are not **responsible for it** and we have not been given the **grace to handle it.**

I like how brother Jones says it.

Worry has an active imagination, and it can envisage all sorts and kinds of possibilities. It can envisage strange eventualities, and with its terrible power and activity it can transport us into the future and into a situation that is yet to come. And there we find ourselves worried and troubled and borne down by something which is purely imaginary.¹

Matthew Henry says **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 tomorrow bring its work along with it.**

The second thing to notice is that the assumption is that we **can** handle and **should** handle today's calamity and **only** today's calamity. Guess what happens when you try to handle **tomorrow's calamity today?** You guessed it. We won't be able to handle **either** of them. Tomorrow's worry will cause us to not be able to carry out our **responsibilities of today.** Anxiety about

¹ D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, [*Studies in the Sermon on the Mount*](#), Second edition. (England: Inter-Varsity Press, 1976), 464.

tomorrow will **limit**, or even **debilitate** ourselves. So the things God **does hold us responsible for** we don't do, and the thing we choose to do, worry, has **zero effect**.

Have you ever been worried sick about something? How effective were you at looking out for the needs of others? How perceptive were you to the leading of God for ministering to others? How effective were you at constructively praying? How useful were you?

Do you see how it works. Worry about **tomorrow** will rob you of **today's usefulness**.

When you worry about the future you cripple yourself to be able to handle the future troubles because you have not handled **today's trouble adequately**. It becomes a cycle of regret and dread. When you look back you only see failure. When you look ahead you are not prepared for it because you did not do what you could do **yesterday**. You have not learned to **persevere in faith** because you were too borne down in worry to **build yourself up in faith**. Then when you **need the faith** that should have been built up yesterday, you find you have to **begin doing that today**. But there is still a future to worry about. And you run like the hamster on the worry wheel.

OK so how should we think of this. How should we **approach our day**?

Well we need to realize first that our **current reality is all we have**. We can do nothing about the past except possibly confess unconfessed sins or right prior wrongs. We can do nothing about **future** calamities.

We are only ever **currently responsible** for **current life**. You can only be faithful and obedient to God in this current moment. God has ordained this day for you and He has provided everything you need to face it. He will do the same thing **tomorrow** but He has **not yet done it** for tomorrow.

If you are living faithfully, you will have plenty today to keep busy with. It is a day designed by God, so if we are **wasting it**, it is because we are not going by what He says. We cannot be **seeking something** and be **inert** at the same time. We can't be **seeking first the Kingdom** and have **nothing to do**.

Seeking requires **all diligence** like 1 Peter told us 3 times in one chapter.

Now this day will have a daily quota of problems. Some may be completely unexpected and unlooked for. Some may not. But they are what God has placed on the agenda for this day. Not yesterday. Not tomorrow. But this day. And while today's problems may seem like a lot, they are all the problems we have for the day. God did not burden us with **two day's problems**. Just **one**.

And the problems will not be more than we can bear in His strength. We can rest in that fact.

But what about tomorrow? What about next week? What about that bad thing that seems sure to happen?

Again another excellent quote from brother Jones.

We must learn to realize that the God who helps us today will be the same God tomorrow, and will help us tomorrow.

Do you think that maybe I am being too optimistic, that I am overstating the provision of God?

Listen to this:

Lamentations 3:21-26 (NKJV)

²¹ This I recall to my mind, Therefore I have hope.

²² *Through* the LORD'S mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not.

²³ *They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness.*

²⁴ "The LORD *is* my portion," says my soul, "Therefore I hope in Him!"

²⁵ The LORD *is* good to those who wait for Him, To the soul *who* seeks Him.

²⁶ *It is good that one should hope and wait quietly For the salvation of the LORD.*

The context of Lamentations is that we are not consumed, we are **kept** in this present day because of the **mercies** of this present day. It is addressing this very issue we have been discussing. It is talking about **overcoming trouble** with a **daily dose of mercy**.

Listen to this too.

Isaiah 33:2 (NKJV)

² O LORD, be gracious to us; We have waited for You. Be their arm every morning, Our salvation also in the time of trouble.

We begin every morning with each new day. We do not face a week or a month. Just a day. And that day is all we have to be faithful in. And that day is where God will meet our need for strength and provision. He will not give it for a **week** or a **month**. **Just today**.

As we close out this topic I wanted to add some scriptures about peace. If worry produces the effect of spinning our minds in every direction, peace has got to be the opposite emotional state. It is the alternative experience that we

desire. It is the sure sign that we **are not** worrying. It is a state of non enmity. No conflict.

Let's see what scripture says about that.

Isaiah 26:3 (NKJV)

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

Is this not resaying in a **few words** what Jesus said with **many**? Worry comes when our minds and our lives are focused on the **wrong things**. Peace comes when it is focused on **God** with an active trust. And how could we not be **seeking the kingdom first** when our minds are **stayed upon God**?

Let's see what Jesus says in the book of John.

John 16:33 (NKJV)

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."

Notice again, the peace is in the context of **tribulation**. It isn't that we will always have **peaceful circumstances**. But we can have inner peace even when the whole world seems to be falling apart, even when the trouble of the day becomes intense. We have peace in our hearts and minds because we know the most important peace, the peace between us and God, has been taken care of.

And next is probably the most quoted verse when dealing with worry and anxiety.

Philippians 4:6-7 (NKJV)

⁶ 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.

I think this passage is probably the best summary of this section of the sermon on the mount. It commands us to apply exactly what Jesus was saying.

Do not allow **worry** and its accompanying **anxiety** to be the state we live in, no matter what our life's situation. This implies we do not need to live in a **state of anxiety** that is **created by our thoughts**.

But instead seek first the kingdom of God. Make it a spiritual pursuit, a spiritual request, exercising faith at every turn.

We seek God, even counting on God to **bring something good out of it** so we can be thankful even before God responds. This is faith in action. It assumes

the loving character of God, no matter what others might read into the circumstance.

And here is a bonus- a promise that God will respond. He will **meet us** when we **call out to Him**. He will **add to us** as we **seek the Kingdom of God**.

And here we receive more than food clothing and shelter.

Here we receive that peace, that **supreme alternative** to worry and anxiety. And that peace will be used to **guard the problem spot**, the **source** of our worries. Our **hearts and minds**, the very things Jesus has been continually talking about.

What an adequate and appropriate summary of the sermon on the mount where it speaks of worry.

Are we ready now to go on?

Have we picked up all the fuel for **no longer worrying**?

Have we seen the **punishment** that worry does to us?

Have we seen the **benefit** of trusting God?

Have we **learned our lesson** at the hand of Jesus?

Are we convinced that we want to **live in this peace we are being offered**.

If so we are ready to move on and speak about judging.

Lord willing, that will begin next week.