

The Dangers of Materialism **“God’s Antidote for Anxiety”** **Matthew 6:25-34**

Introduction - Church Bulletin Bloopers!

“During the absence of our pastor, we enjoyed the rare privilege of hearing a good sermon when A.B. Doe supplied our pulpit.”

“Thursday night--Potluck supper. Prayer and medication to follow.”

“Remember in prayer the many who are sick of our church and community.”

“Don’t let worry kill you--let the church help.”

Jesus three times in our text today commands us not to worry, see vs. 25, vs. 31, vs. 34. Now Jesus would not have commanded us not to worry if it were not a problem. We all need to heed his command.

In 1961, Time magazine published a cover story on the presence of anxiety in America. The article was entitled “*Guilt and Anxiety*.” It stated that the breakdown of faith in God (in the nineteenth century) and in reason (in the twentieth century) coupled with the accelerated pace and high tension of modern life have produced intense anxiety in many millions of people, so much so, in fact, that it would be correct to call worry one of the most widespread and debilitating ailments of our time.

All kinds of folks worry. Rich people, poor people, educated, uneducated, young people, old people..... but as Christians Jesus says we’re not to worry! You say, but is it possible to live free from worry? Yes! God’s commands mean, God’s help!

Matt. 6:25-34 is God’s antidote for anxiety.

Jesus issues a command in verse 25. It’s literally “stop worrying,” it’s present imperative. It’s “anxiety”. Webster defines as “a state of being uneasy, or worried about what may happen.” Most of today’s worries are like puddles; tomorrow they will have evaporated.

The three things Jesus says not to worry about, vs. 25: food, drink, and clothes. Bu note, Jesus’ question, vs. 25 “is not”... He wants us to think about what’s most important. To worry about food, drink, or clothes betrays a false view of human beings as if they are only bodies to be fed, watered, clothed, it downgrades man to the level of an animal.

Now God is concerned about our bodies, but it’s not to be our number one concern in life. Life is more! Anxiety leads to misery. So what can I do to win?

I. Rest in God's Providence, vv. 26-29

Said the robin to the sparrow,
"I really do not know
Why it is these human beings
Rush about and worry so."
Said the sparrow to the robin,
"I think that it must be
That they have no Heavenly Father,
Such as cares for you and me."

If you are worrying, you are overlooking God's care of the rest of His creation.

Illustration:

Man who can't sleep! "Why can't you sleep?" a wife asked her husband, as he paced the floor at 3 a.m. "Honey, I borrowed a thousand dollars from Sam next door, and I have to pay him back tomorrow," the husband replied. "I just don't have the money," he said wringing his hands. The man's wife jumped out of bed and flung open the bedroom window. "Sam! Sam!" she shouted. After a few minutes the groggy neighbor opened his window. "What is it?" he mumbled. "You know the thousand dollars my husband owes you? He doesn't have it," the woman yelled. Turning to her husband, she said, "Now, you go to sleep and let *him* pace the floor."

II. Believe God's Promises, vv. 30-32

I Peter 5:7, "Casting all your cares..."

III. Adopt God's Priorities, vv. 33-34

We are not to seek only material things as the ungodly do, vs. 32. Rather, we are to seek or be ambitious for spiritual values. vs. 33.

God's kingdom, remember vs. 10.

God's righteousness, 5:20.

Remember the promises in the Sermon on the Mount are for Christians only. Are you a Christian? So to sum it up:

"To become preoccupied with material things in such a way that they engross our attention, absorb our energy and burden us with anxiety is incompatible with both

Christian faith and common sense. It is distrustful of our heavenly Father, and it is frankly stupid. This is what pagans do; but it is an utterly unsuitable and unworthy ambition for Christians.” - John R. Stott

“Worry does not empty tomorrow of its sorrows; it empties today of its strength.”

-Corrie Ten Boom

Reasons not to worry:

1. Life is more than food and clothes.
2. You are more value than the birds and flowers.
3. You can change the future.
4. Worry is pagan.
5. It’s dishonoring to God.
6. God gives us strength for the day.

The average person is crucifying himself between two thieves; the regrets of yesterday and worries about tomorrow.

*Remember times in the past you didn’t think you would make it.

Three key words:

1. Father, vs. 26 - “the character of God”
2. Faith, vs. 30 - “the word of God”
3. First, vs. 33 - “seek the kingdom of God”

He can forgive your past and you can trust Him for the future.

- To worry about the future is sin because it denies the love, wisdom, and power of God.
- It denies His love by implying that He doesn’t care for us.
- It denies His wisdom by implying that He doesn’t know what He is doing.
- It denies His power by implying that He isn’t able to provide for our needs.