

Sermon Series: Spurred on to Holiness (and Power) by Immersing Ourselves into the Life of Christ Through the Eyes of the Apostles – A Harmony of All Four Gospels

Sermon Title: "Eliminating Worry and Banning it From Our Lives Forever", Matthew 6:25-34

March 24 2019

Theme verse: Acts 4:13 Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus. (ESV)

Emma And Ryan will read Today's Scripture: Matthew 6:25–34

Introduction: See supplement from WebMD

Main point: If we obey God's laws and do what He says as our Master and Lord, then we should never have cause to worry about tomorrow. God takes care of His slaves.

Context: The people to whom Jesus was teaching were people who lived from day to day. They lived off the land, they got one day's wages at a time. If the animals got sick, or the rains didn't come or the crops got blight, they were in a big hurt. Our lives today are similar, but not the same. We can set aside a little for rainy days. They couldn't. And the Romans taxed everyone, rich or poor at 40%. There was no way out of their poverty.

Exegesis

Arguments to convince us not to worry.

1. A Good master always takes care of his slaves and if we are obedient to His will, He will provide for our everyday needs.
 - However, God has clearly said that he commands us to work for our livings. *Proverbs 10:4 [4] A slack hand causes poverty, but the hand of the diligent makes rich. (ESV) 2 Thessalonians 3:10–12 [10] For even when we were with you, we would give you this command: If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat. [11] For we hear that some among you walk in idleness, not busy at work, but busybodies. [12] Now such persons we command and encourage in the Lord Jesus Christ to do their work quietly and to earn their own living. (ESV)*
 - And, it is not foresight that Jesus is condemning. Planning for the future as best as one can is biblical. Not foresight or planning but foreboding foresight or worry that is condemned.
2. If God loved us so much He gave us life and bodies to live in, which are so much more valuable than food or clothing, then of course He will provide the necessities of life to sustain our bodies and help us live for Him. *Is not life more than food, and the body*

more than clothing?

- *Romans 8:[32] He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? (ESV)*
 - If God has provided our salvation according to that verse by such an extreme price then He will provide:
 - The faith necessary to endure to the end, the Holy Spirit to give us daily strength and so if we are receiving these amazing gifts, will he not give us wood for our fires and vegetables for our stews? For you hunters, deer in your scopes?
3. God's abundant care for the smallest of His creatures shows us He intends to provide for us as well. *Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into a storehouse or barn, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?*
- Yet, it doesn't say that Robins sit back with their wings folded and wait for the worms to come crawling up to them. They like sparrows are constantly on the move. But,
 - I have yet to see a robin or sparrow die of starvation. Their food seems to be plentiful.
 - It's not that sparrows don't work or foxes don't hunt their prey. It's that they go about their little lives with no thought about the need to pack in their dens 10 week's worth of kill.
 - Pati and I commented on how dependent our animals are on us. Pondering that we concluded it is a lesson for us on how dependent we are on God for our daily needs.
4. It's foolish to worry about things we have no control over. *And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? If then you are not able to do as small a thing as that, why are you anxious about the rest?*
- The Greek word is cubit, not hour. A cubit is 18 inches. Makes no sense unless you think of our lives as journeys and years as milestones along the way. If one year equal a mile on this journey, we are unable to even extend it by 18 inches.
 - As noted in the introduction, we can worry ourselves to death. We cannot worry ourselves to life as one famous preacher said.
 - We may think that eating right and getting exercise is adding to the length of our lives and they are so just like working to eat, so it makes sense to do what God has commanded us to do to take care of our bodies. Eat healthy and exercise often. But even so, we can't change the pre-ordained day of our death. *Psalm 139 [16] Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them. (ESV) So. . . wear your seatbelts, eat your vegetables, get your daily walks in but no matter what, when God says your number of days are up. . . ??? they are up.*
5. The care and splendor of vanishing flowers proves His care for us. *And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?*

- These are scarlet poppies and anemones that bloomed for a short period and then withered but after they withered mothers would gather them and add them to her wood stove to hurry dinner along. Like dry twigs they made the fire burn hotter.
- Jesus says these flowers are clothed with more beauty than Solomon in his magnificent attire. I bet they also smelled better than Solomon. Point being, if God cares about flowers which are nothing but unthinking, unfeeling plants, how much more will he clothe us?



- Unbelievers do not have a Heavenly Father to look out for them. Therefore they must scramble and scrape to survive. Why should we act as if we don't have a Heavenly Father? *Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all.*
 - The rich keep getting richer and hoard thinking that what they have is not enough. The poor worry and fret because they don't know if they will eat tomorrow. Either way, this is the way of unbelievers, not believers.
 - God is the perfect Father. Does he know we need calories to serve Him? Then calories will be forthcoming. Does He know that we need fasting to accomplish major spiritual victories? Then an empty table is coming our way. Does He know that we need shelter to invite unbelievers into our homes? Then our fireplace will be keeping us and them warm and cozy. Does He know that we can't serve Him effectively in tattered clothing? Then He will put the kind of clothes on our back that best serve the people He wants us to reach.
- Rather than fretting about tomorrow, focus on simply obeying the Lord in all things. *But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.*
 - Work on living out all the teachings of the Sermon on the Mount. Be generous. Be faithful to your spouse. Be forgiving. Control your anger. Be sincere and not hypocritical. Be honest in your dealings. If we focus on being obedient children, our Father won't need to squeeze us through the painful process of deprivation.
- Learn to limit your thoughts to one day's problems at a time. *"Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.*
 - It is an effective method for controlling your anxiety. Just as we have been told to ask for our daily bread, so we need to ask for the grace to get through today's problems. When tomorrow comes, God will give us grace for tomorrow to handle them.
 - *Philippians 4:6-7 do not be anxious about anything, 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 your minds in Christ Jesus. (ESV)*

- You can't stop worrying on your own. You have to bring your worries to the Father. Once you have done that, there is a mini miracle that will happen. According to the previous verse God will give us peace and guard our hearts. He will do the heavy lifting.

Application

- When you wake up at night at 1 or 2 and your mind is racing about all the what-ifs. . . Pray Philippians 4:6-7. [6] do not be anxious about anything, 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 your minds in Christ Jesus. (ESV)
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- Don't sweat it or stew in it. Bring every concern to Him and then say to Him, "Father if I am more important to you than birds or flowers, and I have a Heavenly Father who cares for me unlike my unbelieving neighbors who don't, then put me back to sleep with your amazing peace by guarding my heart from the fears that assail me."