

“Don’t Worry”

Matthew 6:25-34

May 26, 2002

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READ Matthew 6:25-34 and Philippians 4:6-7:

"Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important 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 Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?

^{MT 6:28} "And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies 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, O you of little faith? 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.

Philippians 4:6-7: "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

Some Christians irritate me!

I'm talking about those naïve souls who take Jesus' words and say, "Christians should never worry."

I say there are two kinds of people who don't worry; infants and fools.

And neither one worries for the same reason – they’re naïve. Sure, little children don’t worry; they’re ignorant – not stupid just ignorant.

Sure, some Christians don’t worry; they’re equally ignorant – She was born with a silver spoon in her mouth and a Barbie-doll appearance, had access to the best schools, got a job through her daddy, and married a doctor – she’s never had to live in the real world.

Sure, there are **other** Christians who don’t worry; they’ve **chosen** to be ignorant.

They have those positive personalities that frankly are just unrealistically optimistic – Pollyannaish. OR

They stick their heads in the sand and pretend all is well – like the popular song a few years back, “Don’t Worry, Be Happy”.

But while ignorant optimism may be the life of the party, it is not very impressive in the real world of making a living and raising a family.

That’s what irritates me, ignorant or Pollyannaish Christians who come along and say, “Don’t worry, Jesus said not to worry. The Apostle Paul said don’t be anxious about anything. It’s a sin to worry so don’t worry.”

That’s like telling a dog not to bark or a fish not to swim – good luck!

No, I am not opting for Christians to be negative, pessimistic, cynical, naysayers.

I’m just saying, “get real”.

As I see it, everybody’s someplace on the continuum of worry:

On one end of the continuum you have the **ignorant** and at the other end you have the **paranoid schizophrenic**.

In between you have the **Pollyanna**, then the one living in **denial**, then the **selective worrier** (“I don’t sweat the little stuff” but given the right situation, they worry too.),

then the private, **quiet worrier** (you don't hear them worry, but if you lived with them you'd see it),
 then the open **verbal worrier** (this person is noisy about their worries), then **the neurotic worrier** (worry has begun to deeply affect how they live)
 and finally the **psychotic** (they are paralyzed by their fears).

At both ends of the spectrum people are living **out of touch with reality**.

Most of us probably fall somewhere between the selective worrier and the neurotic worrier.

And most of us think that if we can keep ourselves somewhere around the selective worrier and quiet worrier stages we're probably okay.

Or if we get really good at nitpicking about verbs we piously say, "I'm not worried, I'm just greatly concerned."

What was Jesus teaching?

Was he teaching **not to worry at all** or just to keep your worry **within reasonable limits** or something else?

Unless you believe the Scripture contradicts itself Jesus cannot be prohibiting worry of all kinds.

There is apparently a "worry" which is proper:

Jesus himself said in Matthew 26:38-39 "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me." Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will."

What do you call that? Concern, anxiety, worry?

The Apostle Paul comments in 2 Corinthians 11:27-29 "I have labored and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked. ²⁸ Besides everything else, I face daily the pressure of my

concern for all the churches. ²⁹ Who is weak, and I do not feel weak?
Who is led into sin, and I do not inwardly burn?

“The pressure of my concern” – that’s a nice way of saying it.

Again of himself Paul wrote, 2 Corinthians 2:4 “For I wrote you out of great distress and anguish of heart and with many tears, not to grieve you but to let you know the depth of my love for you.

Any serious commitment to Christ will result in an ongoing concern to be faithful to Christ in the way we live our lives.

Any real commitment to the Kingdom will result in a continual concern about pursuing personal holiness and helping others.

The anxious love of a parent for his child is proper.

Even the thoughtful concern about how we will get our work done is appropriate.

Jesus himself said, before building a tower a man should count the cost, take thought about whether he can complete it.

I think quite clearly Jesus is **not prohibiting all worry**.

Is it a matter then of **what** we worry about?

Is it okay to worry about some things but not other things?

Or is Jesus just concerned with the **degree** of our worry?

As long as we are private selective worriers we are okay but not if we are public or neurotic worriers?

The issue is not what we worry about or even the degree of our worry,

the issue is what we do with our worry - which means who we trust with our worry – where we look for answers to our worries!

For years you’ve had your heart set on a certain college to launch you into the career of your choice.

You’ve made application and now you wait, worrying that you might not get in.

You just bought a new house and your oldest child started college and you've been laid off in an occupation and economy that doesn't look promising.

You start looking for work, but you are worried about what might happen if you don't find work or work with the right income.

You are the parent of young children and you've just been diagnosed with skin cancer.

Worried? Certainly!

You have an abiding desire for your child to know and follow Jesus because you know it makes all the difference in this life and the one to come.

You worry that you might not teach them properly or that they might not respond or that other things will lure them away.

Let's take those legitimate worries of life through the grid of Jesus teaching and see what he has to say.

Jesus' words here are so clearly laid out that we can rather easily capture the flow of his teaching:

In verses 19-24, which we looked at last week, Jesus ended his remarks with the easily overlooked fact that we can't serve both God and money.

It is impossible to serve more than one master.

You can't divide loyalties, either you are most loyal to God and his Kingdom or you are most loyal to other goals – usually self-centered goals.

Therefore Jesus says, as he introduces this next thought.

"If you are going to serve God then I tell you, you don't need to worry about the other things such as the everyday issues of food, drink and clothing.

"You don't need to let your concern for the lesser issues of life consume you.

“Don’t wear yourself out fearing what might happen.”

This is the way he actually says it:

Matthew 6:25 “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes?”

That is his introduction.

Then he gives an illustration to support why an obsessive concern with the basic issues of life is unfruitful:

Matthew 6:26 “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.”

This is not instruction to stop working or saving for that would contradict the rest of Scripture.

His point is not that birds don’t work and so we don’t have to either.

Birds do in fact work and work hard – just watch a sparrow or any bird.

Jesus’ point is that even birds are cared for by our heavenly Father.

Don’t dismiss these words as cute but naïve lessons from nature – remember who it is that is speaking. This is a man whose whole life was hardship and he knew the cross was coming. We’d best not miss his point.

In the rest of verse 26 and in verse 27 he draws two conclusions from his illustration:

The first is that you are more valuable to the Father than birds are.

Matthew 6:26b “Are you not much more valuable than they?”

“Said the robin to the sparrow;
I should really like to know,
Why these anxious human beings
Rush about and worry so.

Said the sparrow to the robin,
 Friend, I think that it must be,
 They have no heavenly Father
 such as cares for you and me.”

The second conclusion Jesus draws is in Matthew 6:27 “Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?”

Worrying does no good.

The late evangelist Vance Havner said, “Worry is like a rocking chair; it will give you something to do but it won’t get you anywhere.”

Obsessive worrying can produce many bad things but none good.

Then Jesus gives another illustration to support **why an obsessive concern with the basic issues of life is unfruitful:**

Matthew 6:28-29 ““And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these.

The point is **not** that flowers don’t work and so we should not work.

The point is that **they are gloriously cared for by our Father** even though they can’t work to care for themselves.

Again Jesus draws **conclusions** from his illustration – actually he restates the same conclusions as before:

The first is in Matthew 6:30 “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, O you of little faith?”

As Jesus pointed out with reference to the birds, so here he reminds them **they are more valuable** to the Father than flowers or grass that is burned for fuel. He loves you!!

And the second conclusion is:

Matthew 6:31 “So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’”

With his illustrations made and his conclusions drawn Jesus now adds to the WHY – why not worry?

This gets to the heart of it.

Jesus could give us illustrations of God's provision all day long and we'd dismiss them.

I could have scores of people in this place stand and tell us how God has provided and we'd say "That's nice but you don't know my situation."

Illustrations alone won't cut it because for every happy robin we can think of we can also think of those that hit the windshield.

We live with very real negative possibilities. Food, clothing, shelter, jobs, health and relationships **are** all subject to loss.

How can we **not** worry about such things?

The answer is in verse 32:

Matthew 6:32 "For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them."

Actually we have here two reasons but they are two sides of the same issue.

The issue is your worldview – your basic beliefs about life.

Your worldview is the assumptions you make about how the world operates.

There are three basic worldviews: an "open universe", a "closed universe" and a "controlled universe".

My thanks to Dr. Don Carson of our own seminary, Trinity International University, for the terminology.

The first two of these views, an open universe and a closed universe, are what control the attitudes and actions of who Jesus calls pagans, those who do not know the true God.

An “open universe” worldview was dominant in Jesus’ day – not among the Jews but among most people.

Whether it was the spirits of the trees and rocks and sun and moon of the Animists or the many gods of the Greeks and Romans, Hindus and Buddhists, people saw all of life as open to constant change depending on the whims of the spirits and the gods.

And every person lived with the responsibility to placate the gods in order to live and even then it was chancy because the gods were unknown and capricious.

This is why, Jesus said, the pagans run so hard, give themselves totally, to the mundane things of this world.

It was a very fearful world in which people lived, never knowing what would happen and having no guaranteed way to control it.

There are some in our day who are returning to an open universe worldview.

They think of the forces of good and evil playing out their games on the chessboard of our lives.

Of course these are impersonal forces over which we have no control.

It’s a huge, chancy, whimsical world in which we hope for the best – become one with the universe.

But if you think about it very much it is really quite hopeless.

The second and more prevalent worldview in our day is the “closed universe”.

In a closed universe – **Everything that is can be explained by what is.**

There is nothing other than matter, energy and space and they have always been and always will be.

Everything is explained by the mechanistic principle of cause and effect. We are solely the product of biology, chemistry and time.

And there is no ultimate cause behind it all and thus what happens just happens.

You can explain the process but you can't explain the reason.

There is no reason, and ultimately no meaning in life.

We are told that good things happen to bad people and bad things happen to good people with no rhyme or reason.

Life just is.

With the hubris of youth we think we can conquer life but soon realize we are helpless in the hands of mechanistic determinism.

Anything is possible – you could find a lottery ticket and win \$10 million or you could have invested your entire retirement in Qwest stock.

A light fixture could fall on your head in the next 10 minutes or tomorrow you could learn that you have a disease that is completely curable.

It is this that causes what some call the anxiety of life.

We aren't nearly as afraid of death as of life.

We feel terribly alone, ultimately alone and on our own we worry so greatly about controlling it all.

If we think about it, life becomes pretty hopeless.

At best we can influence it for a while but eventually we will be the effect of some unseen cause.

But there is a third worldview. It is a “controlled universe”.

Given that I am speaking to people in a church, this is probably what you believe.

A controlled universe is one in which all that we can see or experience with our other senses is part of the universe that operates by discoverable laws of cause and effect.

The sun rises because the earth rotates on it's axis.

Plant photosynthesis is the result of chlorophyll and sunlight.

But outside of that universe is God who is **not part of** the universe **but created it** and controls it as he chooses.

And even the laws of cause and effect are subject to God's intervention.

In the day-to-day experience of life, the "controlled universe" looks very much like the "closed universe" but in fact the laws that govern the world were established by God and are controlled by him.

And he has the power to intervene at any time he chooses – and he does intervene as he chooses.

But within this "controlled universe" worldview are two very different perspectives.

One perspective is of those who have divided life into the temporal and the eternal, or the material and the spiritual, or the here and now and there and then.

This is the person among us who believes that **Jesus is relevant for forgiveness of sins** and getting to heaven when he dies **but considers him irrelevant for job search**, recreation, purchases, etc – you know the real stuff of which life is made.

When thinking of natural things, this person assumes natural means to acquire them.

Their motto is 'Use your head, work hard and take care of yourself.'

We assume God will take care of heaven but here we are on our own.

Even if we do look to God to help us in the here and now we have it in our heads just exactly how he is to help us.

As one author wrote:

"True we understand that it is God who must help us and that we cannot get along without him (after all we're not atheists), so we go ahead and ask him (for help) but we decide (what his help should look like). In other words, God is supposed to help us only by opening the door WE are looking at and carrying out the program WE have planned for ourselves. To leave him to

(decide the way) he will help us, seems to us a bit too risky. That God with all his higher thoughts should have any thought about how he will help us, that we should let his help break in unexpectedly and therefore contrary to all our plans and deliberations in the form of surprises this seems to us to be demanding too much of our trust... And because we cling to our own ways and means we... are torn between faith and doubt, anxiety and trust.” Thielicke Life Can Begin Again 127

“We pray but not with our hands folded. We pray while letting our fingers drum nervously on the table or secretly reaching for the door through which we are stubbornly convinced is the only one God’s help can come, the way which our arrogant and untrusting thoughts have devised and deluded us into believing.” (Thielicke 127)

Oh, we believe in a controlled universe all right as long as we get to set the agenda.

Jesus speaks of our need to trust our heavenly Father because he knows that the reason we are hell-bent on laying up treasures on earth and the reason we are such servants to money is that we don’t trust our Father.

John R Rice said isn’t it interesting that we ask about non-Christians: “Why can’t people trust Jesus for salvation?”

A much more pertinent question may be “Why cannot we Christians trust Jesus for everything else after he has already given us salvation.” (from John R Rice God’s Care for Anxious Care 9)

It’s like a man walking down the road with an 80-pound sack of sand on his shoulder.

Another man stops to give him a ride and the man accepts but keeps the heavy sack on his shoulder.

That other man says, “Put your load down and take a rest.”

To which the first man says, “No, it’s enough that you would carry me without having to carry my sack as well.”

That’s silly, we say. But even as God is carrying us we insist on obsessive worrying about everyday things because we don’t trust him. (JR Rice 9)

In one sense some worry is arrogance – assuming we know better than God.

But among those who have a “controlled universe” worldview there is another perspective and it is those who believe what Jesus says in the latter part of verse 32:

Matthew 6:32 “...your heavenly Father knows that you need them.”

Jesus always challenges the “open” or “closed” universe worldviews and says God is involved and God is competent in the natural things of life as well as in the spiritual.

God made this world and your life and God sustains it.

Jesus says he wants us to know that our Father is controlling all of life, even the food for the birds and the beauty of the flowers.

This does not deny that God still use means to accomplish his purposes.

It is still true that the bird has to fly to the wet ground and listen for the worm and pick it up.

It is still true that we must avail ourselves of the means that God gives to us to make a living.

But it is even truer that God is behind, beneath, above and in all those means.

Jesus said, Matthew 28:20 “I am with you always.”

The Psalmist said, Psalm 23:4 “Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me...”

My young son has developed a fear of the dark.

When he awakens in the night and comes to our room I quietly say to him that we are going back to his room.

I walk behind him but I notice that he often puts his hand out just to touch me as we walk in the darkness – just to know I am there.

Jesus said in Luke 12:6-7 “Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten by God. Indeed, the very

hairs of your head are all numbered. Don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.”

Is that only hyperbole or is this a God-controlled universe?
What did Jesus believe?

When I reach the “point at which I can see that the (living heart of my heavenly Father) beats for this world and for me, then my anxiety would be removed with one blow. (In such a world) nothing could touch me that had not first passed the censorship of that Heart and been declared by that Heart to be wholesome and good for me. Then in everything that troubles me, in everything I dread, the hidden theme of love is at work, even though I am unable to detect it in the confused beat of this disjointed world. Then for me it would simply be enough that all these things come from the heart of God...” (Thielicke 140)

If we believe in a God-controlled universe what then do we do?

Jesus responds in Matthew 6:33 “Seek first (God’s) kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”

That word “seek” means to ask for, look for, desire to possess, strive for, an unceasing quest.

This not just an attitude but a way of life – what we “seek” is what we give ourselves to, what we work hardest for, what we invest ourselves in and is akin to “laying up treasures in heaven” of the previous section in Jesus’ sermon.

It is identifying what God is doing in this world and being preoccupied with involving ourselves in it.

It is to ask the question, “Where can I throw myself into God’s causes?”

We live in a food-obsessed (either too little or too much) and superficial (clothing and entertainment) world.

Jesus wants to liberate us from those inane obsessions and the worries that accompany them and free us to focus on what truly matters.

We too often approach life as if our needs are the products we are on our own to desperately seek when Jesus says our needs are the loving byproducts of another search – “seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.” This is not a quid-pro-quo deal with God! I served you, God, and yet my child is sick – you failed, God!

The possibilities for bad still exist, pain may come, things could turn out so different from what we wanted and yet mysteriously the care, the concern, the anxiety or the worry are taken away. We trust our Father.

That is not just an optimistic attitude this is faith.
That is not just a positive personality this is trust.
I know that my Father’s love is superintends all things.

So Jesus concludes: Don’t worry.
Don’t be controlled by the idea that you are on your own,
don’t be controlled by the idea that life is huge game of chance,
don’t fear.

So what do we do with our worries?

Don’t run away from them or pretend they don’t exist.

Don’t dwell on them alone – take them immediately to the Father in prayer.

Tell God your cares – all of them, no matter how trivial they might seem to others.

Look at the evidence of God’s provision – look at such everyday things as the birds and the flowers.

In prayer we are brought into the presence of the Father, and as one author said it, “we can hear his heart beating for us”.

(Thielicke 143ff)

Philippians 4:6 “Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to

God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

Other Quotes:

Introduction 25 Don't worry; food, clothing

First illustration 26 food; birds

Conclusions:

26 you are more valuable than birds

27 worry won't help (so don't worry)

Second illustration: 28-30 clothing; lilies

Conclusions restated:

30 you are more valuable than grass

31 so don't worry

Two reasons not to worry:

1. 32a Worry is a pagan attribute.

2. 32b God knows your needs and worry is a denial of that.

Principle: 33 Pursue God and he will provide for your needs

Conclusion restated: 34 Don't worry

Expanded Outline:

Instruction: Don't **worry** about “treasures on earth”, about the basic needs of life. “Treasure” kingdom values and God will provide for you.

Introduction:

25 "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes?"

Introduction: Worry, food, clothing.

“Life more important than food and the body more important than clothes.”

There are issues more important, of higher priority, than food and clothing. “Treasure” kingdom priorities.

First illustration: food

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 “Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?”

Birds don't have the ability to do as you do (sow, reap and store in barns) and yet they are fed. (but they do work hard)

You are more valuable to God than they are.

First statement of conclusions:

26 You are more valuable than birds

27 Worrying won't add hours to your life.

Second illustration: Clothing

28-30 ““And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies 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, O you of little faith?”

Common, everyday flowers don't labor or spin yet God cares them for.

Argument from lesser to greater – if God would care for them certainly he will care for you who are worth so much more to him.

Jesus chides them, “O you of little faith?”

Second statement of conclusion:

30 You are more valuable than grass (lilies).

31 “So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’

Two reasons not to worry:

1. It is pagan:

32a “For the pagans run after all these things,”

5:47 “And if you greet only your brothers, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that?”

2. It is a denial of God's knowledge and ability.

32b “and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. This is a restatement of the rationale of v26 “You are more valuable than birds” and v30 “If God clothes lilies he will surely clothe you.”

And of 6:8 “Your Father knows what you need before you ask him.”

Principle: Pursue God and he will provide for your needs.

33 “But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

When we have our priorities right (“treasuring” the right things) God promises to provide for basic human needs.

Third restatement of the conclusion: don’t worry

34 “Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

Anxiety is a form of idolatry. We worship the bread by which we are satisfied rather than worshipping the Lord who satisfies.

The idea of being free from worry is not just a matter of learning better how to balance life so it is less hard on us but of getting away from the slavery to false gods.

“He who invests the treasure of his trust in God’s bank is the only one who will never be defrauded –either in this life or the next – because it is safe with him whose heart is faithful and loving, whose eye watches over him, and whose hands are ready to bestow upon him from his eternal abundance all that he needs.” (Thielicke 130)

“We are not carefree when the sea is calm and the ship of our live glides pleasantly along. Be we can be carefree even if the waves rise high, when the Lord sleeps in our ship and we know that it cannot go down, that winds and weather cannot hurt us... As soon as we direct our cares to the wrong address, namely, the waves, we are caught in the grip of mortal terror and we sink.” (Thielicke 130)

“I dare not neglect prayer and thanksgiving if I am to enjoy God’s transcendent peace and overcome my worries. I must abhor thankless bitterness and eschew sulkiness. My worries must be

enumerated before the Father, along with thoughtful requests framed in accordance with his will. These requests must be offered to the accompaniment of sincere gratitude for the many undeserved blessings already received, and for the privilege of stretching my faith by exposure to this new and improved hardship. Thus the follower of Jesus learns really to trust the all-wise and all-gracious sovereignty of God..." (Carson *The Sermon on the Mount* 85)

"The warning forbids any undue concern or crippling anxiety that drives one to seek security by one's own efforts apart from the Father. The warning neither calls for a simplistic lack of concern nor does it rule out forethought in responsible living. Rather the section's thrust is directed at looking at God, the Creator, as Provider and Sustainer rather than to one's self." (Guelich 336)

"Worry is practical atheism." (Robert Mounce in [Matthew](#) 58)

"Instead of consuming one's energies in anxious pursuit of food and clothing, one is called to submit oneself to God's rule and to live in confident trust of his power to provide. If the God of creation can provide for his creation, how much more can the God of redemption whose reign is being revealed in history caring for his own." Guelich 345

"If God is kindly disposed to a man and gives him success, he can often accomplish more in one hour without care and anxiety than another man in four whole days with great care and anxiety... Thus no one can accomplish anything except when the hour comes that God gives us a free gift without our anxiety. It is vain for you to try to anticipate and with your concern to work out what you think are great schemes... What He does is this: when he sees someone fulfilling his office diligently and faithfully, being concerned to do so in a God-pleasing way, and leaving the concern over its success to God, God is generous in his gifts to such a person." (Luther [Sermon on the Mount](#) 207-00 in Bruner [The Christbook](#) 270)

Not so in haste, my heart. Have faith in God and wait;
Although he linger long, he never comes too late.

He never cometh to late; he knoweth what is best;
Vex not thyself in vain; until he cometh, rest.

Until he cometh, rest, nor grudge the hours that roll;
The feet that wait for God are soonest at the goal:

Are soonest at the goal that is not gained by speed;
Then hold thee still my heart, for I shall wait his lead. (Dolomite
Chant in Bruner 271)

“Part of the presence of the kingdom is indeed material blessing.
Therefore we can hardly live under God’s reign, receive his blessings,
and not use them to help alleviate the evil of hunger and need
elsewhere.” (R.A. Guelich Mark in Word Biblical Commentary 373)

The Roman Emperor Julian couldn’t stop Christianity from growing in
the Empire. He told his followers, “We ought to be ashamed. Not a
beggar is to be found among the Jews, and those godless Galileans
(Christians) feed not only their own people but ours as well, whereas
our people receive no assistance whatever from us.” (in Carson 91-92)

“Our main business is not to see what lies dimly at a distance but to
do what lies clearly at hand.” (Thomas Carlyle in Beck Why Worry 58)

“Ain’t no sense worrying about things you got control over, because if
you got control over them, ain’t no sense worrying. And there ain’t no
sense worrying ‘bout things you got no control over, because if you
got no control over them, ain’t no sense worrying.” (Anonymous in Beck Why
Worry 75)

T.B. Pollock (in Carson 95-96)
We have not known thee as we ought
Nor learned thy wisdom, grace and power;
The things of earth have filled our thought,
And trifles of the passing hour.
Lord give us light thy truth to see,
And make us wise in knowing thee.

We have not feared thee as we ought,
Nor bowed beneath thine awful eye,

Nor guarded deed, and word and thought,
 Rememb'ring that our God was nigh.
 Lord, give us faith to know thee near,
 And grant the grace of holy fear.

We have not loved thee as we ought,
 Nor cared that we are loved by thee;
 Thy presence we have coldly sought,
 And feebly longed thy face to see.
 Lord, give a pure and loving heart
 To feel and own the love thou art.

We have not serve thee as we ought;
 Alas, the duties left undone,
 The work with little fervor wrought,
 The battles lost or scarcely won!
 Lord, give the zeal, and give the might,
 For thee to toil, for thee to fight.

When shall we know thee as we ought,
 And fear, and love, and serve aright?
 When she we, out of trial brought,
 Be perfect in the land of light?
 Lord, may we day by day prepare
 To see thy face and serve thee there.

“The mountain discourse was given to the citizens of a kingdom who, in a sense, were destined to live in exile until their Leader returned to set up his kingdom on earth...The sermon then is for loyal followers of Jesus Christ. It is the manner of conduct he expects from them in a foreign environment as they anticipate the time he will return and set up his kingdom.” (Haddon Robinson [The Christian Salt and Light Company](#) p19)

“Inaugurated eschatology recognizes an “already/not yet” tension in which the sermons ethic remains the ideal or goal for all Christians in every age but which will never be fully realized until the consummation of the kingdom at Christ’s return.” (Blomberg 95)

“Life in the kingdom is not simply a question of crossing one hurdle or passing one test, followed by relative indifference to kingdom norms.

Involved, rather, is that deep repentance which willingly orients all of life around these norms.” (Carson *The Sermon on the Mount* 75)

“We want treasure because they give us security. But because of decay treasures lead us to security’s opposite, anxiety. Because our riches bring us into constant war with decay, they do not bring us rest. It is a great service of Jesus, therefore, to liberate us here from anxiety about gain.” (Schattler, *Das* 99-100 in Bruner 260)

We might say we are saving for our children, taking care of them
 Augustine wrote, “It is a great duty of natural affection, it will be said, for a father to lay up for his sons; rather it is a great vanity, one who must soon die is laying up for those who must soon die also.” (Augustine’s *Sermons* 10 (60):3:291)

Along the same line Luther wrote:

“See to it that greed does not take you in with a sweet suggestion and lovely deception like this: that you intend to advance yourself or your children into a higher...social position. The more you get the more you will want; and you will always be aiming for something higher and better. No one is satisfied with his position in life.” (Luther *Sermon on the Mount*)

Joe use to worry all the time about everything. Everyone knew him as a worrier. One day his friend Bill saw Joe walking down the street not in depressed worry but in an apparently carefree attitude, whistling as he went.

Bill asked Joe what had changed him so.

Joe said, “It’s wonderful, I haven’t worried for days.”

Incredulously Bill asked, “Well how did you manage to change?”

Joe said, “I hired a man to worry for me.”

“You hired a man to worry for you. I must say that sounds odd. How much does he charge you?”

“A thousand dollars a week.”

“How can you possible raise a thousand dollars a week to pay him?”

“That’s his worry.” (In Jay Adams *What to do about Worry* 5)

“Worry is a set of negative, uncontrollable concerns that center on some issue with an uncertain outcome – an outcome that the worrier feels will almost certainly be awful.” (Jim Beck in *Why Worry* 10)

“Remember: Today is the tomorrow you worried about yesterday. Is today really as awful as you thought yesterday, tomorrow would be?”
(Beck Why Worry 12)

The word “worry” comes from the Anglo-Saxon root meaning to strangle or to give pain. Merriam-Webster Dictionary

E. Stanley Jones said, “Worry is the interest we pay on tomorrows troubles.” (In Hawkins The Roots of Inner Peace 42)

“Worry never robs tomorrow of its sorrow, it only saps today of its strength.” (A.J. Cronin in The Roots of Inner Peace 51)

“If there were one point at which I could see that there is a Living Heart that beats for this world, then my anxiety would be removed with one blow. There nothing could touch me that not first passed the censorship of that heart and been declared by that heart to be wholesome and good for me. Then in everything that troubles me, in everything I dread, the hidden theme of love is at work, even though I am unable to detect it in the confused beat of this disjointed world. Then for me it would simply be enough that all these things come from the heart of God...” Thielicke 140)