

**Luke 12:22-34**

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**"Worry-Free Living: Birds & Flowers"**

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April 30, 2023

22 And He said to His disciples, "For this reason I say to you, do not worry about your life, as to what you will eat; nor for your body, as to what you will put on.

"For this reason . . ." – looks back at the parable – the guy is going to store up grain. No need to do that. God will take of you.

- Therefore "stop worrying". "worry" - vss. 22,25,26,29
  - There is a lot in this world you can worry about. Like Peter walking on the water.
  - Greed and worry are closely connected. Greed can never *get* enough, worry is afraid it will never *have* enough
  - Food and clothes – necessities.
- 1 Tim 6:8**
- 8 If we have food and covering, with these we shall be content.
- This is not saying we should have no savings for the future, that we should not buy insurance, that we should not concern ourselves with money matters. People say, "Just trust God and He will provide". That is treading on the grace of God. That's wreckless.
  - There is a fine line between worry and concern.
  - Worry accomplishes nothing.
  - Concern motivates us to accomplish something.

Stress worry, and anxiety produce:

- Mental health problems
- Cardiovascular disease
- Skin and hair problems
- Gastrointestinal problem

"Research clearly shows that stress deteriorates our immune systems; people under constant or high stress show lower T cell counts, essential for immune response. Stress has a definite affect on fertility. Prolonged stress has been shown to affect the brain, making a person less able to respond to future stress. And stress also is related to sudden heart failure."



### Phil 4:6

6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

### Some thoughts on worry –

Worry is taking on more responsibility than God intended you to have.

Worry is interest paid on trouble before it comes due.

Worry is the darkroom where negatives are developed.

**You are probably well into worry...**

1. When the thing you are concerned about is the first thing you think about in the morning and the last thing you think about at night.
2. When you find yourself thinking about it during every spare moment.
3. When you find yourself bringing it up in every conversation you have.

### Prov 12:25

25 Anxiety in a man's heart weighs it down,

### Mark 4:18, 19

18 "And others are the ones on whom seed was sown among the thorns; these are the ones who have heard the word, 19 but the **worries of the world**, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things enter in and **choke the word**, and it becomes unfruitful.

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- This is where the world gets stuck. They can't get past the "stuff."

**Matt 4:4**

4 But He answered and said, "It is written, 'MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE, BUT ON EVERY WORD THAT PROCEEDS OUT OF THE MOUTH OF GOD.'"

- The world is living life on the bread level.

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**Lev 11:13-15**

13 These, moreover, you shall detest among the birds; . . .  
15 every raven in its kind.

**1 Kings 17:4-7**

4 The ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning and bread and meat in the evening, and he would drink from the brook.

- They don't have jobs. They don't collect a paycheck. They don't own a business. They have no warehouses.
- But God feeds them.

- However birds don't sit around all day with their mouths open for God to drop a worm into it.
- They fly and search and scratch and pick and explore – i.e. they work.

• I have never seen a bird "paralyzed" by worry – "Where is my next meal going to come from!"

**2 Thess 3:7-8**

7 For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example, because we did not act in an undisciplined manner among you, 8 nor did we eat anyone's bread without paying for it, but with labor and hardship we kept working night and day so that we would not be a burden to any of you;

10 **if anyone is not willing to work, then he is not to eat**, either. • If God is faithful to the birds, and we are more valuable than the birds, then He will be more than faithful to us.

- Trash any ideas you have that we are just a step up from the animals.
- If you worry, you deny God's faithfulness.

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."  
—Author unknown

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#### 25 "And which of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life's span?"

- Worrying is absolutely useless.

#### Job 14:5

5 Man's days are determined;  
you have decreed the number of his months  
and have set limits he cannot exceed.

#### Ps 139:16

16 Your eyes have seen my unformed substance;  
And in Your book were all written  
The days that were ordained for me,  
When as yet there was not one of them.

- God determines everything about our birth and the day of our death.
- Worry changes nothing about those 2 events.
- Our days are determined. The only thing that we determine is the quality of the life we live and taking care of ourselves.

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- If you can't even add an hour to your life span by worrying, then why worry over greater things which for sure you can have no impact on.

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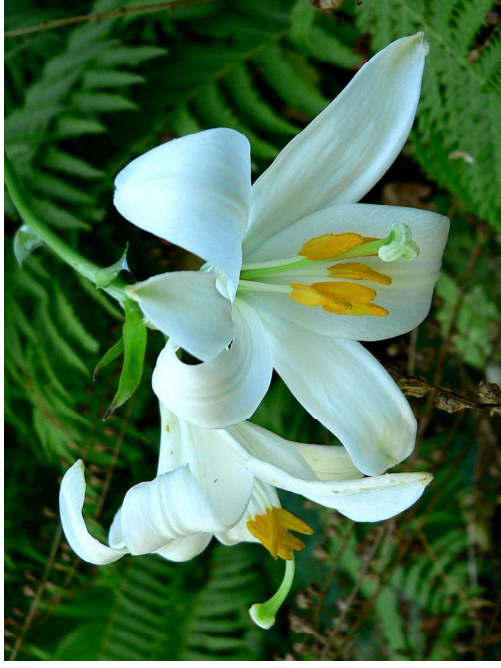
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**Illustration #2 – Flowers**

- Lilies don't make their own clothes. You won't find them shopping in the clothing dept. at Nordstrom's. You won't find them behind a sewing machine making their petals and pistils.
- They don't have to do that. Why? Because God is the one who adorns them in all of their beauty.
- Solomon was the best dressed man in Israel.
- But compared to lilies, there is no comparison.



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**Illustration #2 – Flowers**

- Vs. 28 - Even the beauty of grass across a field or lawn, God clothes. But then it is burned up.
- Grass has a very short life span. It ends up in an oven or furnace for heat to cook or for warmth.
- If God is lavish in His provision for lilies and grass, that is here today and gone tomorrow, don't you think He is concerned about clothing you?
- Again, you are of far greater value than flowers or grass which are much lower than humans, and in particular, His children.

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**"do not seek" – do not pursue. Life is so much more than food and clothing.**

We learned that last week – "be rich toward God."

- So Jesus wants us to trust Him and not worry. Jesus wants you to settle the issue of worrying in our lives and "stop" doing it.

**Rom 14:23**

23 and whatever is not from faith is sin.

- Worrying is a sin.

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"eagerly seek" - επιζητεω - to crave

- The pursuit of the world (unbelievers) is exactly that – "How am I going to put food on the table and clothes on my back?"
- Unbelievers have no promises from God. They have no heavenly Father that guarantees that there will be provision for them tomorrow. It makes sense for them to worry. They are just trying to survive.
- Your heavenly Father not only has the power and the resources to provide these things for us but He knows you need them. How wonderful!! How blessed we are!! I don't need to inform Him – He already knows.

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- If I am not to worry, if I am not to put the whole focus of my life on "food and clothing," what do I pursue?
  - So here is the logical conclusion: Pursue God.
- Matt 6:33**
- 33 "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.
- Here is a command and a promise = "Seek and I will add."
- The contrast is very clear: His kingdom or the world.**
- You can either pursue the things of God or pursue the things of the world.
  - You can either be spiritually-minded or earthly-minded.
  - You can either be in pursuit of holiness and righteousness or you can be in pursuit of material possessions.
  - You can either care more about the souls of men or the savings account in your bank.
  - You can either pursue fellowship with God or fellowship with the ungodly.
  - You can either be in pursuit of the fruit of the Spirit or you can be in pursuit of the desires of the flesh.
  - You can either invest your money for eternity or you can invest it in this temporal world.
  - You can either proclaim God to the world or you can proclaim the desire for money and materialism.
  - You can either glorify God with your life or you can exalt yourself.
  - You can either trust God or you can worry.

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- God provides for you enough for you to give some of it away.
- Give to those less fortunate but give wisely.
- We invest in the "bank (bags, purses) of heaven." Pays eternal dividends. Great returns.
- The "bank of heaven" will never be robbed, it will never fail, there will never be a "run on the bank", it will never close, because its existence is guaranteed, not by the FDIC, but by the God of the universe. How much more safe could it be?

#### Application

1. What things cause you to worry?
2. List 3 things you are currently worried about.
3. Would you, instead of worrying, give those 3 things to God and let Him handle them?
4. Is the kingdom of God the first priority in your life that you are pursuing?

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- Follow the money – It will tell you the condition of your heart.
- The heart is the core of life – your thoughts, your will, it is what you are.
- John Rascus put \$300 in the collection plate when it passed, and he said softly, "I'll see you in heaven."  
*I'd rather have Jesus than silver or gold,  
I'd rather be His than have riches untold;  
I'd rather have Jesus than houses or lands,  
I'd rather be led by His nail-pierced hands.*
- If you have Jesus you have everything. No need to worry!