

Wil Owens
Answers for the Anxious; Matt 6:25-34
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Introduction – We all have moments of worry from time to time. Anxiety is not that. We are all gravely concerned from time to time, maybe for the welfare of others or for a major life-altering decision that lies before us. Anxiety is not that.

Anxiety is a crippling, paralyzing, overwhelming fear that sometimes slowly builds and sometimes can seemingly come out of nowhere and literally takes your breath. Anxiety can send your heart and mind racing at exhausting speeds. I want to say this as pastorally and compassionately as possible – it's not something you would want, but it is also not something you have to settle for. You do not have to give in to anxiety and believe that given what you've been through or what you are facing, anxious is just the way you are now. Anxiety is not your identity.

Now I base that conclusion upon the words of life that God has breathed out in Scripture. Anxiety has become a popular diagnosis and a multi-million dollar pharmaceutical industry. The easiest ways we try to deal with our issues and problems is by either throwing money at it or prescribing medication. The easiest ways are not always the best ways. Now hear me carefully, I do believe there are times and seasons when anxiety medications are helpful and even necessary. Our bodies are fallen and corrupt. They are not yet glorified and perfected and free from failure and disease. The body ages, breaks down, weakens, it does not function properly 100% of the time. But at the same time, as believers, we also know that medications for emotional struggles are not the sole answer. They don't heal; they simply help us deal with the struggle. They do not free our emotions from these crippling feelings; they numb our emotions from fully feeling anything. It's a completely different type of treatment than taking Tylenol for a headache or having by-pass surgery for blockages. Those are issues concentrated in the physical realm. Emotional issues are a mixture of physical and spiritual components. That's why the lack of adequate sleep affects our day as well as the lack of prayer or spending time with the Lord affects our day. God has created us as a wonderful, mysterious, connection of body and soul, physical and spiritual. And that is precisely why the Bible addresses anxiety over and over in the spiritual realm. I'm not denying or being dismissive of anxiety. It is real and many people today are gripped in its relentless hold. I'm simply saying we won't adequately

and fully face our anxiety until we approach it spiritually. God has graciously given to us, in His precious, living and powerful Word, answers for the anxious. Today's passage is just one of them, and how marvelously helpful it is.

- I. Hearing the Words of Jesus Stills the Anxious Soul (v25)
 - a. Let this sink deeply into your soul. If you struggle with anxiety, Jesus is speaking directly to you in this passage – “Therefore I tell you” The very Son of God, the Prince of Peace, the Lord of heaven and earth, your loving Savior and omnipotent friend speaks softly to your anxious soul – “do not be anxious”
 - i. He's not being flippant or dismissive – “Just stop. Don't worry. Be Happy.” He's speaking truth with compassion and peace.
 - ii. You know sometimes it's not having someone communicate to you a tangible answer or solution, sometimes it's just the someone who is communicating to you!
 - iii. Remember when you were a child and frightened of the dark or from having a nightmare, it's not that mom and dad were there to take away the dark or to remove the nightmare, it's just that mom and dad are there. When they spoke to you and said, it's ok, strangely it became ok. The next time your heart flutters or your mind races, hear your loving Shepherd speak, “Do not be anxious about your life.”
 - iv. That's exactly how Jesus speaks to you today. It's just that it's Him speaking – your Shepherd, your Lord, your Friend – that strangely stills the anxious soul.
 - b. If Jesus can stand up in boat sinking in the driving winds and heavy rains and say, “peace, be still” and the wind and the waves obey Him, He can speak to the anxious soul, “Do not be anxious” and still the frightened, anxious soul.
 - c. The words of Jesus are sufficient for the troubled soul and yet He undergirds His words of life with soothing reasons.
- II. Trusting Our Heavenly Father Quietens the Anxious Spirit (vv26,28-31)
 - a. First Jesus calls our attention to the birds of the air. They don't plant seeds, they don't water and fertilize crops, they don't store up. They just do what God created them to do – they fly and they sing!!

- i. Millions of birds all over the planet wake up every morning, and they need worms and bugs and insects and seeds. And when they fly in search of what they need, they find the earth is daily, abundantly swarming with worms and bugs and insects and seeds of hundreds and hundreds of varieties. They can't possibly eat all that God has provided for them!
 - ii. God created you to worship and glorify and enjoy Him! That's how you fly and sing! Jesus is not saying we are just like birds. He's not saying we don't need to work or make provisions.
 - iii. He's simply saying we need to trust God for the things we need in this life. If God abundantly feeds the birds, how much more does your heavenly Father care for your every need. You who were not only created in His image but redeemed by His Son!
 - b. Next Jesus calls our attention to the lilies of the field. They don't work to purchase their clothing. They don't fabricate their own clothing. They just do what God created them to do – they grow.
 - i. The reason why the lilies adornment outshines the finest apparel in the world is because our finest clothing comes from the outside and is man-made; the lilies clothing comes from within by the will and provision and order of Almighty God.
 - ii. Now if God clothes the fleeting lilies with beauty, how much more will your heavenly Father care for your every need!
 - iii. Trusting our heavenly Father Quietens the Anxious Spirit.
 - c. You see, to the birds and the lilies, He is Creator and Sustainer, but to you, to you, He is heavenly Father.
 - i. If it comes down to me or my kids eating, my kids will eat. If it comes down to me or my kids having clothes, I'll wear holes in my socks. If it comes down to my needs or their needs, I go needy. Why? I'm their father.
 - ii. My friends, hear me well. We don't just have a Father, we have a heavenly Father – His resources are never depleted! Trusting in our heavenly Father quietens the anxious spirit.
- III. Knowing the Father and the Father Knowing Us Calms the Anxious Heart (v32)
 - a. The Gentiles, those who do not know God, who do not have God as their heavenly Father – they worry, they are anxious, they are fearful

because as far as they know, everything they need is up to them! They are their only resource. They are simply not aware that God is gracious enough to even supply for them even though they reject Him and some even hate Him.

- i. I saw a bumper sticker leaving the movies last week that read, “Sorry I missed church – I was practicing witchcraft and becoming a lesbian.” Right beside it one read What would Jesus Do and then labeled Christ a word that I dare not repeat.
- ii. I couldn’t help but think, whoever drives that car, God gave them the breath to live, the health to drive, a safe trip down the road, and enough money to enjoy a day at the movies, even though they desecrate His Son everywhere they go.
- b. Those without Christ do not know God – but you do and furthermore and even far more essential and meaningful, if you are in Christ, God knows you! Your heavenly Father knows!
 - i. You only know what you know. God knows everything there is to know about your life – why are you anxious?

IV. Seeking God First Displaces the Grip of an Anxious Mind (v33)

- a. What does doctrine have to do with life, with the practical day to day grind of living in this world – there’s that word righteousness! This entire sermon Jesus is distinguishing false righteousness and true righteousness – false righteousness leads to worry – if its up to us we’ve got a lot to worry about. But true righteousness is from God – it is a depending on, relying on, trusting in the righteousness of Christ as our Savior, and therefore being thrilled to live righteously for Him! If our righteousness is based on Christ, that frees us from worry.
- b. The basic rule of faith in this verse is this: If we fill our minds and our hearts and our days and our time and our pursuits with the things of God, there will be no room left for worries and anxieties!

Conclusion – Most of our anxious thoughts boil down to 3 categories: Things that we genuinely need like food and clothing. The answer for the things that we need is remembering we have a heavenly Father and He means to carry that load. Things that we cannot change – v27 and things that we do not know – v34. The answer for the things that we cannot change is to turn our thoughts to the things that we can change – we can listen to the words of Jesus rather than listen to our

anxious thoughts, we can trust in our heavenly Father rather than live as if we are on our own, and we can know that our Father knows us, and we can seek Him every day.

The answer to things that we do not know is to turn our thoughts to the things that we do know – we have a heavenly Father, He is caring, He is sufficient, He has promised, and He is able to deliver! Do not be anxious about your life!