

Rev. Lex DeLong / General Adult

Thanksgiving 2025 / Matthew 6:25–34

Notes

11/30 Matt. 6:25-34, "Thanksgiving in Provision: Trusting God's Care," Scripture: Jeremiah 17:7-8

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"We all know the feeling. It starts as a tightness in the chest or a racing mind at 3:00 AM. It's that low-grade hum of anxiety that says, *'If I don't handle this, no one will.'*

We look at our bank accounts, our career paths, or our children's futures, and we feel an overwhelming pressure to secure it all. We hustle. We strive. We calculate. We lose sleep.

**'The Orphan Scramble.'**

Think about an orphan in the ancient world. An orphan had no guaranteed inheritance, no protector, and no provider. If an orphan wanted to eat, they had to find the food. If they wanted safety, they had to build the walls. Their survival depended entirely on their own effort. To stop striving meant to starve.

If we are honest, many of us—even those who have been believers for years—live our daily lives with the emotional posture of an orphan. We believe in God on Sunday, but on Monday, we scramble as if He doesn't exist. We act as if the weight of the world rests on our shoulders.

In Matthew 6, Jesus interrupts this scramble. He looks at a crowd of people worried about food and clothing—legitimate needs—and He tells them that their anxiety is actually a case of mistaken identity. He tells them, 'You are worrying like people who don't know they have a Father.'

As we leave behind this Thanksgiving season, we must realize that it is hard to be truly grateful when you are terrified of the future. You cannot enjoy a feast on the table today if you are paralyzed by the fear of an empty pantry tomorrow.

But Jesus offers a different way. He invites us to stop living as if we are alone in the

universe. He invites us to remember that we are not orphans left to scavenge for survival; we are children of a King who owns the resources of heaven.

And that leads us to the heart of our text today. If we want true ongoing peace after this Thanksgiving, we have to change how we view our reality.

**You see...**

**Main Idea:** "Worry lives like an orphan scrambling for survival, but **faith** rests in God's care; so trade your anxiety for surrender and live as if the Heavenly Father is King of your reality, now and forever."

## **I. Worry Makes the Orphan Scramble (vs. 31-32a)**

- For us, we identify either with the orphan or a child with a father: the "what shall we eat" of verse 31 was to identify like the "Gentile" mindset. The Gentiles lived unaware of a Father in heaven, they just lived for today, for the life ahead of them, foraging and looking out for themselves.
- Worry is to live like a spiritual orphan—acting as if you have no provider and must scramble to survive on your own. "The Gentile" was anyone outside the family of God. To worry is to act like you have no provider.
- The Exhaustion: It is a life of constant striving without security.
- **If you are the provider, you can never stop. If you are the protector, you can never sleep.**
- Worry makes you like a spiritual orphan who cannot stop or sleep because it is all on your shoulders.

### ***merimnaō* ("Worry" v. 25)**

This word comes from a root meaning "to divide" (*merizō*) and "mind" (*nous*).

**Worry isn't just fear; it is a divided mind.** It is the state of trying to live in two realities at once—one where you trust God (Sunday) and one where you are the orphan provider (Monday).

"The Bible's word for worry literally means to be ripped in two. You feel scattered

because you are trying to be both the Child and king; a child of a King and yet the King of your own universe." "Worry is a divided mind" and a divided mind forces you to live in two realities at the same time, which actually adds to the scramble, rather than calming it..

**"Anxiety is a desire to become the father of the household. It is making yourself the master instead of being a servant for whom the Master provides... It is a determination to get our own way."**— *Charles Spurgeon*

**"Stop scrambling like an orphan to secure a future that God already holds; surrender the burden of self-preservation to the Father and make His Kingdom your only priority."**

**"Worry makes the orphan scramble;"** however, ...

## **II. Faith Rests in the Father's Care (vs. 26-30, 32b)**

- Note what the Father Values (vs. 26-30): The text says the birds and lilies are valuable to God, yet He values you more than them.
- Note what the Father knows (vs. 32b): This is the game-changer. "Your Heavenly Father **knows**." When you don't have food, He knows. When you're in danger, He knows. When you have nothing, he knows. Your Father in heaven knows it all. The wonderful thing is that you don't have to scream to get His attention; you already have His eye. Your heavenly Father knows.
- Note the Shift: We move from "scrambling" to "resting" not because problems disappear, but because we know Who is watching over us.

So, how do we shift from scrambling to resting?

First..."lock your gaze" on what your heavenly Father IS doing around you.

***Emblepsate* (v. 26 - "Look at the birds") and *Katamathete* (v. 28 - "Consider the lilies")**

**Emblepsate** means to "lock your gaze" on something. Don't just glance; stare at the bird until you see the God's hand.

**Katamathete** means to "learn thoroughly" or "study the data."

Jesus isn't asking for blind faith. This isn't complacency. This isn't irresponsibility. Jesus is asking for evidence-based faith.

"Jesus commands us to study the data of nature; to lock your gaze on it. If you look closely at the evidence, you will see the Father's fingerprints."

**"Because our Heavenly Father cares and provides, You can trade worry for worship"**

**"Faith Rests in the Father's Care"**

So then, we are left with a choice. This choice is not just a once-and-done choice, but a daily moment-by-moment choice.

So, ...

### **III. Choose Today to Trade Anxiety for Surrender (vs. 33)**

- "Seek First": Seeking the Kingdom isn't just a religious activity (although at times it can and sometimes should be that); rather Seeking the Kingdom is "**Living as if the Heavenly Father is King of your reality and you are His child.**"
- This is what is meant by "surrender" in the Bible. It is not giving up, it is learning to rest.
- It is the opposite of "scrambling." It is abdicating the throne of your life and acknowledging His rule over your mouth, wallet, and decisions. It is learning to wrap your arms around Him as your heavenly Father and resting in His embracing arms.

If we are not seeking to scramble after what we need, then what are we to seek? There are 2 different words here for "seek" in the English.

The Gentiles:

## **Epizēteo (v. 32 - "For the Gentiles seek...")**

When Jesus describes the Gentiles seeking food and clothing, He uses a compound word (epi-zēteo) that means to "seek out," "crave," or "scramble after" with intense, frantic energy.

This is the "Orphan Scramble" in a single Greek word. It describes a panic-stricken hunt for survival.

## **zeteo (v. 33 "seek")**

In verse 33, Jesus tells us to just zēteo (seek) the Kingdom you desire. Which would you rather hold onto, the daily scramble that prevents you from resting or sleeping, or the continual rest in the arms of the Heavenly Father that you seek?

The world scrambles (panics); the child seeks (focuses).

If we seek that which we truly desire (the rest and sleep in our heavenly Father's arms), then...

## ***Prosthesetai* (v. 33, "...all these things will be added to you")**

The Term: Prostethēsetai (Verse 33 - "...all these things will be added to you").

This verb is in the Passive Voice (specifically, the "Divine Passive"). This is the most crucial grammatical point in this passage.

The Active Voice: I add things to my life. (The Scramble)

The Passive Voice: Things are added to me. (The Surrender)

You don't have to "get" provision; you just have to "position" yourself in the Kingdom, and provision happens to you. You Don't have to produce protection, you just have to rest in the LORD's kingdom, and His protection is yours.

"You do the seeking; God does the adding. You take care of the assignment; He takes care of the arithmetic."

**"Worry is not just a failure to trust God; it is a refusal to surrender control. It is an indication that something else has captured your heart's imagination more than the Father."**— *Adapted from Tim Keller's teaching on Idols*

**"We Can Surrender Worry for Worship When We Accept Our Heavenly Father knows and provides for our needs when we make Him King of our reality right now."**

**"Choose today to trade anxiety for surrender"**

Then and only then can you...

#### **IV. Rest In Your New Reality, Now and Forever (vs. 34)**

- The "Now": Because the King holds the "Forever," you are free to live in the "Now."
- Verse 34—you don't have to mortgage today's peace to pay for tomorrow's problems. Just give thanks for the provision for sure, but not just for the provision - Give thanks for the Provider.
- We give thanks not just for the food on the table, but for the King on the throne.
- We surrender the burden of self-preservation to our Heavenly Father.

Some translations like the King James or the ESV uses the word "sufficient" about tomorrow:

#### **Arketon (v. 34 - "Sufficient"):**

The word for "sufficient" implies a boundary line. Tomorrow is tomorrow, today has enough to worry about or to surrender. Focus on the here and now and leave tomorrow in God's capable hands. The word in some translations, "sufficient," speaking about tomorrow means that God has drawn a circle around you today, tomorrow can't yet touch you. But know this about tomorrow, God's grace is sufficient inside tomorrow's circle. Don't step outside the circle of today into the circle of tomorrow. You see, God's grace will be with you today, but when time takes you into the circle of tomorrow, His grace will still be with you.

**"Stop trying to secure a future that God already holds; surrender the burden of self-preservation to the Father who knows your needs and is worthy of your trust."**

**Worry makes the orphan scramble.**

**Faith rests in the heavenly Father's care.**

**Choose today to surrender anxiety for surrender.**

**Rest in your new reality, now and forever.**

**Main Idea:** "Worry lives like an orphan scrambling for survival, but faith rests in God's care; so trade your anxiety for surrender and live as if the Heavenly Father is King of your reality, now and forever."

"Church, this past Thursday we just set aside a day for thanks, but God is calling us to a life of trust.

So before we rush back into our routines, let's make a trade. **Let's trade the orphan scramble for the peace of the King.**"

Here is how we should respond:

"Lord, today my life is Your distinct territory. My mouth speaks Your words, my wallet serves Your purposes, and my decisions follow Your rules. You take care of the outcome; I will take care of the assignment."