



First Baptist Church Selmer

SERMON ON THE MOUNT • DEALING WITH AN ANXIOUS HEART • MATTHEW 6:25-34 •
11/9/2025

MAIN POINT

Believers can fight against worry by making God and His kingdom a chief priority in their lives.

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

Do you consider yourself a worrier?

What are you most likely to stress about and why?

What negative effects have worries had on your health? Your thoughts? Your productivity? Your relationships with others?

In *The Gospel for Disordered Lives* (Jones, Kellen, & Green), we are to consider four things for someone in regards to "expressing sinful fear, worry, and anxiety: (1) They function as if the possible future event has already occurred; they are not living according to what is true. (2) They fail to pray, rely upon God's grace, or believe God is working in the midst of their struggle; they exercise unbelief in the Lord's promises. (3) They refuse to accept that the Lord may allow suffering and hardship for his own divine reasons; they demand the Lord's will conform to theirs. (4) They neglect responsibilities God has already given them - whether in terms of their personal time with the Lord, their involvement in community, or their willingness to serve their spouse or help raise their children."

The presence or absence of worry measures our trust in God. As believers, we aspire to a single focus on God and a loyalty toward Him. In this passage, Jesus taught that worry is unproductive. Not only is it unproductive, but it's the opposite of trusting in God.

UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

According to Scripture, is worry a sin? Let's take it a step further... Is anxiety a sin?

What does the fact that so many of us struggle with worry say about our culture? What does it say about our faith?

Instead of beating ourselves up over this struggle, what could we do?

In the book, *Building a Non-Anxious Life*, John Delony describes anxiety in this way:

"Everybody keeps asking about anxiety. Anxiety isn't the problem. Anxiety is just the alarm system letting people know things are off the rails. People have created very anxious lives, and their bodies are trying to get their attention... At the end of the day, though we're told the anxiety numbers are going up and up for everyone, everywhere, anxiety is not the problem for the vast majority of us. The fire that's setting off all the smoke alarms is the problem. And all our attempts to cobble together the right combination of podcasts, self-help books, prescription drugs, and bi-monthly counseling sessions in order to stay sane - or to even simply stay alive - are not putting out the fires. We're trying to float like a cannonball."

Anxiety and worry have the uncanny ability to turn our entire lives inward as a means of survival. We quickly become obsessed: my life, my happiness, my health, my pain, my feelings, etc. We blame others, the fall, the brokenness of the world, the devil, but oftentimes forget that we are born sinners in a world that is groaning under the weight of sin (Rom. 8:22). But anxiety is not a disease; it is a "check engine light" telling us that we are unhealthy, overstimulated, sleep-deprived, struggling with setting healthy boundaries, and on and on.

Delony encourages us, "If you're anxious, you are not sick. You may be struggling, but you are not a machine to be fixed or a disease to be cured." The Bible is not silent on the condition of human anxiety. Let's look at Jesus' words today as a starting place for both understanding and addressing our anxiety.

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ MATTHEW 6:25-27.

25 *"Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? 26 Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? 27 And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life?" (ESV)*

According to these verses, what are three specific reasons Jesus gives us for not worrying about the basic needs of life?

What's required for us to take seriously Jesus' instruction not to *"be anxious about (our) life"*?

In verse 25, Jesus asked rhetorically, *"Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?"* Is the only source for fulfillment and meaning in our lives what we eat and what we wear? Of course not. Jesus is establishing the fact that worry is illogical for the child of God. If God is the Creator of the world, including us, then will He not also provide for our needs?

Commentator Robert Mounce states, "At its core worry is practical atheism, practical deism, or practical finite theism. Either we think God is not there (atheism), that he is there but does not care (deism), or that he is there but is not powerful enough to be counted on (finite theism)."

When we worry, what are we saying about our view of God and our relationship with Him?

How has worry hindered your faith and negatively impacted your relationship with God? What eventually helped you overcome that worry?

Worry has detrimental effects on our bodies. Pastor James Merritt says, "Sometimes it is carved into our bodies by sores that we call ulcers. Sometimes it is etched into our faces by lines we call wrinkles. It may be pictured on our lips by the shape we call a frown. It can be heard in footsteps packing back and forth across a floor late at night. Sometimes it is muffled by the silence of someone lying in bed staring at the ceiling without being able to go to sleep." Worry will never add a day to your life, but will, with all certainty, take days away from it.

| HAVE ANOTHER VOLUNTEER READ MATTHEW 6:28-32.

28 And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, 29 yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. 30 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? 31 Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' 32 For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all." (ESV)

What additional reasons for not worrying do you take away from these verses?

What is the main problem with worry in the life of a Christian?

Faith calls for trust in a loving and personal God at work in the world. Worry shows a lack of trust. The late pastor John MacArthur puts it this way, "When we think like the world, and crave like the world, we will worry like the world... The faithful, trusting, and reasonable Christian is anxious for nothing." Jesus' teaching by no means ignores the reality of poverty, hunger, and even suffering among the people of the earth. However, Jesus' clear teaching for believers is to trust God above all. If the Lord faithfully provides for the needs of mere creatures, how much more will He provide for us—His children?

**Is it practical to depend on God for vital necessities like food and clothing?
Why do you think He expects us to?**

Trusting God with everything is easier said than done. What spiritual disciplines—such as prayer, worship, study, fasting, and so forth—have you found helpful for fighting worry?

Why do praising God and giving thanks undermine worry?

| HAVE A FINAL VOLUNTEER READ MATTHEW 6:33-34.

33 "But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. 34 Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble." (ESV)

Practically speaking, what does it mean to "seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness"?

How have you seen Jesus' statement in verse 33 proven true in your life?

Jesus encourages us to rest in our positions in God's kingdom (vv. 31-34) instead of being consumed by worry and fear. First, remember that God loves as a father loves. We should not think of God as far away and unapproachable or even as a king who is not accessible. As our Father, God loves and cares for us. Second, God is personal; we have a personal relationship with Him. Finally, as both God and Father, He knows that we need the basics of life.

In his commentary on this passage, D.A. Carson states, "It is as if Jesus recognizes that there will be some unavoidable worry today after all. But let's limit it to the concerns of today! Our gracious God intends us to take one step at a time, no more; to be responsible today and not fret about tomorrow. Each day has enough trouble of its own. And if there will be new troubles tomorrow, so also will there be fresh grace."

Christians never have to worry about whether God knows or cares about their needs. Instead of worrying, believers can seek the kingdom of God and trust Him. We can focus on living out His mission. If His will is our priority, we will be less concerned about material matters and more committed to eternal relationships.

APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

How would your life be different if you lived the way Jesus sets forth in this passage?

What are some examples of actions that show a person is seeking first God's kingdom?

What are some ways to keep the work of Christ central to your thinking as you try to seek His kingdom first?

PRAYER

Pray that the work of Christ would overwhelm all lesser concerns, and that joy and abundant life would define the lives of those in the church.

COMMENTARY

| MATTHEW 6:25-34

6:25. Jesus' point could be translated as "stop worrying." The questions in 6:25b imply, "If God is the provider of life and body, He will also provide for them to continue."

6:26. In this verse Jesus came to the first of two illustrations, supporting His main theme in verse 25. Note the use again of the phrase heavenly Father, especially in this context of God's loving care. Jesus was not advocating waiting lazily for God's provision, but avoiding anxiety as we take responsibility for obtaining it.

6:27. This verse moves away from the specific example of food to the broader picture of anxiety in general, showing its utter futility. Jesus was saying, "If you try to take your basic provision into your own hands, you will find you do not have the power over life and death. Only God has this power, and He will sustain you as long as His plan intends."

6:28-30. Here we are given a more fully developed picture of the second illustration supporting Jesus' main point in verse 25. Verse 30 is a conditional statement, assuming the truth of the condition. So it could just as easily be translated, "Since that is how God clothes the grass of the field." The qualifying phrase, "*which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire*," emphasizes the transience and worthlessness of the grass. If God cares so much for something of little value, He will certainly care even more for us who are of much greater value to Him. This passage is not only a command to trust the Father, but it also shows of our great worth in His eyes.

The words "*you of little faith*" in 6:30 should be translated literally "little faith ones." In this case, Jesus' tone was not scolding, but coaxing and reasoning. He was asking, "Do you trust your Father or not?"—not with a slap in our face, but with an arm around our shoulder. Jesus was not belittling His disciples; He was encouraging them upward.

6:31-33. With these three verses, having illustrated and supported His theme, Jesus built His case. In verse 32, He made two more points about anxiety. First, it was downright pagan; anxiety was the attitude of those who were not a part of God's kingdom. Second, it was totally unnecessary to worry about what to eat or drink or wear, because your heavenly Father knows that you need them.

Three times in verses 32 and 33, we find the phrase "*all these things*." We might imagine Jesus using it somewhat disparagingly. This was not to belittle the importance of basic necessities, but to place them at the back of the mind of His disciples, far behind His kingdom and righteousness in importance. "*All these things*" are what pagans (and the Pharisees) scrambled after. "*All these things*" are thoroughly known by the Father. "*All these*

things” will fall into place when we put God’s kingdom and righteousness in its proper place and serve the kingdom’s interests.

6:34. Jesus restated for the third time His command, *"Do not worry."* This time He broadened it to include any possible anxieties we may have for tomorrow. As an expression of trust in his Heavenly Father, the kingdom servant is to live in the present, trusting the Father for the grace to cover the needs of the present. “When tomorrow comes, the Father will provide the grace to cover its needs also,” is the implied assurance.