

GOD KNOWS OUR NEEDS

After illustrating from nature why we should not worry, but rather trust in God, Jesus makes this summary statement:

Matthew 6:31 (NKJV)

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

The conclusion of the matter is clear: “Therefore do not worry” about what to eat, drink, or wear. It is pretty clear that Jesus does not want His people to worry. We want to be wise, but not worry.

If someone is struggling, we don’t say, “I will be worrying for you.” No, we know that isn’t right. Instead, we say, “I will be praying for you.” That is the right response – not worry but prayer.

We have the incredible privilege of praying. And God clearly instructs us that instead of worrying, we should pray.

Philippians 4:6–7 (NKJV)

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

7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

1 Peter 5:7 (NKJV)

7 casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

We should note that there is a difference between sinful worrying and being troubled. As humans, there are times when we are troubled in our souls about various things. That is not necessarily a sin.

In 2 Corinthians 7, Paul spoke of a time when he had no rest and was troubled on every side – “Outside were conflicts, inside were fears.” (2 Cor. 7:5) At different times, Jesus was troubled, but He never sinned. In the face of the cross, Jesus said, “Now My soul is troubled...” (Jn. 12:27).

Being human, we will at times be troubled. It’s kind of like, “Be angry, and do not sin”. There is a time for proper anger, but we must not let it lead to sin. There is a time when it is understandable that we are troubled, but we must not let it lead to the sin of worry.

In the garden of the Gethsemane (literally meaning “oil press”) - the place of the press of the soul Jesus said, “My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death.” (Mt. 26:36). But what did Jesus do about it? He went to prayer! He bathed His soul in intense prayer. And then, as the betrayer and regiment came to arrest Him, Jesus went forth with great power and peace.

The issue is not that we are never troubled, nor that we don’t face anxiety. The issue is how do we deal with it? And the God-given answer is that instead of being anxious, we are to handle everything with PRAYER.

Prayer is the antidote for worry! We find our peace in God – in taking everything to Him. The night before He was crucified Jesus said to His disciples, “Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me.” (Jn. 14:1). And He went on to say, “Peace I leave with you” (Jn. 14:27). The cure for a troubled heart is faith and faith is expressed in prayer – in dependence upon God. And if struggling, ask Him to help you!

Matthew 6:32 (NKJV)

32 For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.

The “Gentiles” represent those who don’t know God – those who are not in a covenant relationship with Him. Since they don’t know God, they give their whole life seeking to provide for themselves.

And they are always worried about it. They worry about the economy. They worry about their job. They worry about the news, which would scare anyone in their right mind.

But Christ is really dealing with an attitude – a matter of the heart – the issue of faith. Christ tells His people not to worry and obsess over the basic necessities of life because our heavenly Father KNOWS that we need all these things.

God KNOWS, and He CARES! That changes everything. In reality, we are not really providing for ourselves. God provides for us just like He does for the birds. Yes, we still have to work, but beyond our working is the fact that God is at work. Our work is a reality of His work.

Knowing this changes everything – at least it should in terms of our whole disposition toward worry. We KNOW that as we ask God for our daily bread, He already KNOWS what we need. As believers, we are to have confidence in our all-powerful and all-caring heavenly Father.

This puts our mind at ease. You can rest in the fact that God is your Father and He truly cares for you. You are not on your own to make it happen. God is behind you. He is supporting you. He is helping you.

Just think what it means to be able to call God “Father”. As the heavenly Father, He is sovereignly ABLE to help you, and as your Father, He LOVINGLY wants to provide for you.

But let me ask you this: If God already KNOWS what we need, WHY do we need to ask Him? Well, the reason is prayer expresses DEPENDENCE upon God. God knows, but He wants us to recognize our dependence upon Him in prayer, and as we do so He answers prayer. As we see God answer our prayers, it makes us realize that He is the living/moving God Who is at work on our behalf, and it causes us to praise and glorify Him.