

How to Find Security in an Insecure World:

The Benefit of Living Life from God's Perspective

Matthew 6:25–34 CBC 3/22/09 a.m.

Central Truth: Trust God for the future, one day at a time because He cares for you. Since God is your Master don't worry—not even about necessities. If God's rule and righteousness is your first priority you do not need to be anxiously concerned about your own physical necessities. God takes care of those who put Him first. Jesus calls us to give unswerving loyalty to the advancement of His kingdom values (6:19-24) with complete trust in His provision (6:25-34).

ENGAGE: If I were to ask by a show of hands how many of you have worried about some aspect of your life or a loved one's life this past week, most if not all of us could probably raise our hands. The opposite of worry is peace—a state of freedom from anxiety and inner turmoil. We tend to worry about our finances or health concerns for ourselves or loved ones. We worry about our relationships, issues at our job. We worry about our children, our pets. Worries can easily burden us, weigh us down, and immobilize us with fear. **One of the reasons we worry is because we know we live in an insecure world.**

ILL: A story is told about a man who came face to face with the dangers of worry: **Death** was walking toward a city one morning when a man stopped him and asked, "What are you going to do?" **"I'm going to take 100 people," Death replied.** "That's horrible!" the man said. It's terrible that you would take 100 people."

"Look," Death said, "get off my back. Taking people when their time has come is my job. Today I have to get my 100 people." The man hurried to warn everyone he could about Death's plan. That evening, as night fell the man again met Death, this time Death was coming out of the city. The man was furious. **"You told me this morning you were going to take 100 people, but one thousand people died."**

"Don't get on my case," Death replied. "I kept my word. I only took 100 people. **Worry and Anxiety killed the rest.**"

After a major earthquake several years ago in California, hospitals reported that there were three times as many heart attacks, even up to a month later. **Worry can make us sick. Worry and anxiety can even hasten our own death.**

Our world is an insecure place. Natural disasters occur. Tragedies happen—life-threatening cancer, a tragic accident; the loss of a job.

Now we do all kinds of things to try to handle our worries. Time magazine several years ago said Americans gulp down seven tons of sleeping pills every night. We gulp down sedatives and tranquilizers until the drugs turn us into addicts.

Other people turn to **alcohol**. A good stiff drink or a couple of cocktails make their worries seem smaller and make them feel bigger. But when you see where the abuse of alcohol leads it becomes clear that taking a good stiff drink to handle our worries may really give us something to worry about. Other people turn to their psychic friend to handle their pressures. Not realizing that demonic bondage awaits them.

People in Jesus' day had just as much anxiety as we do. Some may think life was easier in the first century because the times were simpler and people did not have as much to worry about. But anyone who thinks that does not understand conditions in the first century. Most of the people in the ancient world lived like members of the third world today. Laborers were paid every day because they needed the money to live the next day. The government gave them no security. They had no safety net. Some estimate that the average citizen in Palestine paid at least forty percent of his wages in taxes. Times may be hard today, but they were concrete tough then. Yet to people then and now, **Jesus says, "Don't worry."**

Focus: In a world where our lives can be changed in a moment how do we keep from worrying? **How can we find security in an insecure world?** This morning we'll see Jesus addresses this issue of worry for us who are His followers. Today I want you to understand **why you do not need to worry if you are serving Christ with your life.** We'll see how to keep from worrying in the midst of an insecure world.

Set the Stage: The context for our passage today begins with the Lord's prayer. In that model prayer Jesus teaches us to put God's interests first; to focus on God's reputation, and advancing God's kingdom, and doing God's will. After focusing on God's agenda, Christ encourages us to come before God with our needs. Then in Matthew 6:19-24 we saw last week Jesus calls you and me to give unswerving loyalty to the advancement of His kingdom values (6:19-24). To do this requires we lay up treasures in heaven by being rich in good deeds, generous, and sharing with others.

Now can't you hear the disciples trying to process this? "Okay God, I want to trust you. You tell me to lay up treasures in heaven, which will last. You invite me to view life from your perspective. And you challenge me to give my life to serving you, rather than serving what is temporal. But God, I do have physical needs. I left my vocation (my job) to follow you. My family and I need food and clothing. We need a place to call home. **If I make serving you my number one objective, God, how are my material needs going to be met?** It takes a lot of money to provide for a family these days."

PREVIEW: This morning we'll going to see **several reasons why we should not worry** and how we can therefore live secure in the midst of a world that is so insecure.

ANNOUNCE the passage: Turn with me in your Bibles to Matt 6:25-34 (**p. 854**).

As Jesus' continues the theme of living life with God's kingdom perspective He lays down a principle for us to live by in Matthew 6:25, then gives us examples to flesh out what it means to live by the principle in the rest of the passage.

V. 25 in the NKJV begins with the word "Therefore." [Greek, *dia touto*]. Jesus is drawing an inference from what He has just said. If God is your Master (and if you are Christ's disciple) then you don't need to worry—not even about necessities. How can you find security in an insecure world? How can you keep from worrying about what is going on in your life? **If God's rule and righteousness is your first priority you do not need to be anxiously concerned about your own physical necessities.** In v. 25 Jesus commands us:

DON'T WORRY OVER "EVERYDAY LIFE."

Don't be anxious over "everyday life." If you serve God rather than money (6:24), you should not be anxious about the material things money can buy. Don't worry—not even about

necessities because God is your Master! Jesus commands us here in v. 25, as His followers, not to be anxious over “everyday life.” This general term “life” (*psuchē*) here stands for the material goods that support life: food, drink, and clothing. With God as our Master, Jesus says to us **“Trust God with every aspect of your life.”**

Now when Jesus commands, “Don’t worry about your life,” **does this mean we don’t think about tomorrow?** When the KJV translates this as “take no thought for your life” this means **“do not give anxious thought,” i.e., don’t worry about it.** Jesus is not against thinking about what we need. Instead Jesus warns: **“Don’t worry about the physical necessities of life.”** Jesus encourages you and me who tend to doubt God’s care: Lay up treasures in heaven (6:19-21), see life from God’s perspective (6:22-23), serve God not money (6:24), **knowing** God will provide for your material needs (6:25-34). In other words Jesus promises **God will take care of you as you put Him first in your life.**

APPL: Do you believe that? **Do you believe God will take care of you?** Perhaps you’re struggling to make ends meet. And/or you’re struggling to raise a child or children as a single parent. Or perhaps you or a loved one are struggling with physical issues. **Do you believe God will take care of you and provide what you need?**

Someone may ask: How can I know if I am trusting God to provide what I need in life? My response is: **Are you living in a state of freedom from anxiety and inner turmoil? Or do you find your stomach tied up in knots over situations you are facing?**

How can you and I live in a state of freedom from anxiety and inner turmoil? How can you maintain inner peace even when all around you the moorings of life seemed to be ripped from their foundation? What does Jesus tell us here in Matthew 6:25-34 that can help you and me sink the foundation of our lives deep, down into solid bedrock that will see us through the storms of life?

Trans: Now after telling us not to worry in the first part of v. 25, Jesus emphasizes **why we don’t need to worry** from the end of v. 25 (v. 25d) through v. 32.. Jesus gives us four reasons why we don’t need to worry in vv. 25d-32, then gives us a promise as we put God first and summarizes what He’s said in vv. 33-34.

Jesus gives us the first reason we don’t need to worry at the end of v. 25. Why do you not need to worry over “everyday life?”

DON’T WORRY OVER “EVERYDAY LIFE” BECAUSE THERE’S MORE TO LIFE THAN MATERIAL NECESSITIES.

Don’t worry because worry indicates a wrong value system. Food, drink, & clothing, i.e., the necessities of this life, are not life’s highest purpose. Material possessions are not what life is all about. **If God provides you and me with life and a body, He can certainly provide us with food and clothing.** Therefore, Jesus commands us, “Don’t worry.” Listen again to Jesus instruction in v. 25: *“Therefore I say to you, do not worry [or be anxious] about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on [i.e., wear]. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?”* (Matt 6:25 NKJV).

APPL: Did you realize that **when you become anxious about the physical necessities of life you wrongly suggest that your entire existence focuses on and is limited to material**

concerns. When you worry over material concerns you ultimately are saying, “God I don’t trust you to provide for my needs. I’ve got to carry this burden upon myself.”

Since God gave you life, He will certainly provide what you need to keep going. God who gave you the gift of life itself will supply the means to sustain your life. There is more to life than food, and more to our bodies than clothing.

ILL: Jesus reminds us to keep our relationship with Him above our concern for material things in an account recorded for us in the gospel of Luke. One day Jesus and his disciples entered a village and were invited by a woman named Martha in for a meal. In the midst of hectic dinner preparations Martha appeals to Jesus, “Lord, don’t you care that my sister [Mary] has left me to do all the work alone? Tell her to help me” (Luke 10:40). In the midst of Martha’s agitation she flips out. **Martha, in the midst of trying to do a good thing for Jesus, becomes too busy for Jesus.** How does Jesus respond to Martha:

SLIDE: “Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things, ^{10:42} but one thing is needed. Mary has chosen the best part; it will not be taken away from her” (Luke 10:41-42 NET). [BLANK SLIDE]

Martha is anxious and troubled about many things. In her focus on these things Martha is forgetting the most important person. As a result her circumstances overwhelm her. Consequently, Martha stands in danger of running over others with her poor attitude.

By way of contrast Mary has chosen the one thing that counts: to sit and reflect on Jesus’ teaching and the kingdom of God. Mary has chosen the “right meal,” the word of God. Thus, Jesus encourages any Martha’s here today, “**Slow down. Relax. Don’t be too busy to sit at my feet!**”

APPL: What about you? Are you anxious about material things in your life? Is it possible that your worry over material things indicates you need to adjust your value system? Have you put material concerns above your relationship with Christ? Jesus reminds you and me here at the end of v. 25 that there’s more to life than our material possessions and necessities. “*Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?”* There’s more to life than what we have outwardly.

TRANS: Now after stating the principle for us to live by and that there’s more to life than what we eat or wear, in v. 26 Jesus gives us a second reason why we should not worry.

DON’T WORRY OVER “EVERYDAY LIFE” BECAUSE GOD CARES FOR YOU.

In vv. 26-30 Jesus provides us with examples from nature to remind us God cares for you and me, followers of Jesus Christ. Jesus teaches us: Rather than being anxious about the physical necessities of life trust in God’s care and provision.

In the first example Jesus notes that if God cares for the birds in the sky how must more does He care for you and me. **Note v. 26:** “*Look at the birds in the sky: They do not sow, or reap, or gather into barns, yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Aren’t you more valuable than they are?*” (Matt 6:26 NKJV).

Jesus’ argument is from the lesser to the greater. Look at the birds! [SLIDES of wild birds eating; then Blank SLIDE] If God as Creator and Sustainer has set in order the process to feed

the birds, will He not provide for your needs as well? You, who have been made in God's image and redeemed by Jesus Christ. If God lavishes such concern over the birds of the air, how much more does He love you!

Have you watched robins hunting for food? Do robins sit on a branch hoping that heaven will drop a worm into their mouths? (No [unless there are babies in a nest.] Robins scratch and peck and search for their meals. But they don't worry. They sing. **Jesus is not suggesting we do not work. Jesus is saying, "Be like the birds who don't worry." Their Creator takes care of them. How much more will your heavenly Father take care of you.**

Jesus does not propose we stop sowing, reaping, and storing away in barns. God is not against farmers or farming. Jesus simply reminds us how much better off we are than the birds. They can't sow, reap, or store, yet they don't worry. **"Why then," Jesus asks rhetorically, "should we who have these abilities spoil our lives with worry?"**

If God as Creator and Sustainer has set in order the process to feed the birds, has He not made provision to meet your needs as well? Remember God is in a special sense your Father (not the birds' Father) and you are worth far more than birds.

APPL: So what is Jesus saying? **Trust God's care and provision.** God loves you. God cares for you. Therefore, **TRUST God to supply what you need.**

Reit & Trans: Jesus gives us a third reason not to worry. **Why should we not worry?** Don't worry because there's more to life than material necessities, worry indicates a wrong value system. **Second,** don't worry because God cares for you. **Third** from v. 27 we see:

DON'T WORRY OVER "EVERYDAY LIFE" BECAUSE WORRY IS NOT PRODUCTIVE.

Worry is not worthwhile. Worry doesn't accomplish anything. Worry adds nothing to your life span or height. Worry cannot add "a single moment" to your life. Note v. 27: "*Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?*" (Matt 6:27 NKJV) or this can be translated "'Which of you by worrying can add one moment of time [whether hour or day] to your life?'" **In the context here it seems more likely here Jesus is talking about length of life,** rather than worry about height. However, Jesus point is clear either way: **Worrying adds nothing to life span or height** [cf. NET Note]. Jesus' point is that worry is not productive.

APPL: Consider your life! Worrying will not add a single day to your life. **Worrying is more likely to shorten your life than prolong it. Ultimately such matters as the length of your life is in God's hand** (cf. Luke 12:13–21). Why should we not worry? Worry is not productive.

Trans: In vv. 28-30 Jesus gives a fourth reason for us not to worry when He rebukes us for the lack of faith we demonstrate when we worry. Why should we not worry?

DON'T WORRY BECAUSE WORRY REVEALS YOU HAVE "LITTLE FAITH."

Worry reveals our lack of trust in God. Worry shows we need to strengthen our genuine although insufficient commitment to the values of Christ's kingdom. Worry shows we are not seeing our situation from God's point of view. Note Jesus' rebuke for our lack of faith in vv. 28-32: "*So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow:*

they neither toil nor spin; 29 and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. 30 Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? (Matt 6:28-30 NKJV). [SLIDES OF Flowers of the field] [BLANK SLIDE] Marvel at the prairie flowers! “The point is not that [we] may opt for laziness but that God’s providence and care are so rich that He clothes the grass with wild flowers that are neither productive nor enduring. Even, Solomon, the richest and most extravagant of Israel’s monarchs, “in all his splendor” (v. 29) was not arrayed like one of these fields” (Carson, 181).

APPL: Jesus’ responds to our worry with this statement: “O you of little faith.” **Where’s your faith? If God clothes for the little things like the wild grass of the fields, surely you and I can count on God to care for the more important things that concern you and me.** When you or I worry we are saying in effect, “God I don’t trust you to take care of me. **When you or I worry and thereby question God’s care for us it is because we have “little faith.”** Jesus’ point is that worry shows we need to strengthen our genuine although insufficient commitment to the values of His kingdom. **“The root of anxiety is unbelief.”**

Now the rhetorical question here in v. 30 should cause us to reflect on the nature of God’s wonderful providential care for us. **If God cares so much for flowers, which have such a short life span** (cf. Pss 37:2; 103:15–16; Isa 40:6–8; Jas 1:10–11; 1 Pet 1:24–25), **will he not care much more for you and me, disciples of His beloved Son?**

As followers of Jesus, God expects you and me to live differently than people who have no trust in God’s fatherly care and no fundamental goals beyond material things. In vv. 31-32 Jesus repeats His main point not to worry and summarizes the reasons of vv. 25d-30 why we are not to worry. Note vv. 31-32: *“Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ 32 For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things”*

APPL: Is your heart burdened today with concern about material needs in your life? Jesus commands each of us: “Do not worry.” Don’t worry about what you will eat or what you will drink or what you will wear. The unconverted pursue these things; the unconverted live their lives for the here and now. But for you and me, the material things of this world are not to be our primary focus. Remember life is about more than meeting our material needs.

The absence of worry ought to distinguish us if we are living for what is eternal. If you and I trust God that should make a difference in the way we handle life.

ILL: The difference Christ should make in our lives is beautifully illustrated by a man who learned he had cancer. **James Dobson**, in his book, *When God Doesn’t Make Sense* (pp. 224-26) tells about a docudrama on television many years ago. The producer obtained permission from a cancer specialist to place cameras in the clinic. Then with approval from three patients, two men & a woman he captured on film the moment each of them learned they were afflicted with a malignancy in its later stages. Their initial shock, disbelief, fear, and anger were recorded in graphic detail. Afterwards, the documentary team followed these three families through the treatment process with its ups and downs, hopes and disappointments, pain and terror. Dobson says he sat riveted as the drama of life and death unfolded on the screen. Eventually, all three patients died, and the program ended without comment or editorial.

What struck Dobson were the different ways these people dealt with their frightening circumstances. The two who apparently had no faith reacted with anger and bitterness. They not only fought their disease, but they seemed to be at war with everyone else. Their personal relationships and even their marriages were shaken, especially as the end drew near. Dobson notes, "I'm not being critical mind you. Most of us would respond in much the same manner if faced with imminent death. But that's what made the third individual so inspiring.

"He was a **humble black pastor** of a small inner-city Baptist church. He was in his late sixties and had been a minister throughout his adult life. His love for the Lord was so profound that it was reflected in everything he said. When he and his wife were told he had only a few months to live, they revealed no panic. They quietly asked the doctor what it all meant. When he had explained the treatment program and what they could anticipate, they politely thanked him for his concern and departed. The cameras followed this little couple to their old car and eavesdropped as they bowed their heads and recommitted themselves to the Lord.

"In the months that followed, the pastor never lost his poise. Nor was he glib about his illness. He was not in denial. He simply had come to terms with the cancer and its probable outcome. He knew the Lord was in control, and he refused to be shaken in his faith.

"The cameras were present on his final Sunday in his church. He actually preached the sermon that morning and talked openly about his impending death. To the best of my recollection, this is what he said: 'Some of you have asked me if I'm mad at God for this disease that has taken over my body. I'll tell you honestly that I have nothing but love in my heart for my Lord. He didn't do this to me. We live in a sinful world where sickness and death are the curse man has brought on himself. And I'm going to a better place where there will be no more tears, no suffering, and no heartache. So don't feel bad for me. 'Besides,' he continued, 'Our Lord suffered and died for our sins. Why should I not share in His suffering?'" Then he began to sing, without accompaniment, in an old, broken voice: "Must Jesus bear the cross alone, And all the world go free? No, there's a cross for everyone, And there's a cross for me. How happy are the saints above, Who once went sorrowing here; But now they taste unmingled love, And joy without a tear. The consecrated cross I'll bear, Till death shall set me free, And then go home my crown to wear, For there's a crown for me." Dobson says he wept as this gentle man sang of his love for Jesus. He sounded very weak, and his face was drawn from the ravages of the disease. But his comments were as powerful as any Dobson had ever heard. His words that morning were his last from the pulpit, as far as Dobson knows. The man slipped into eternity a few days later, where he met the Lord he had served for a lifetime. (Cf. James Dobson, *When God Doesn't Make Sense*, 224-26.)

Trans: How can you find security in an insecure world? How can you keep from worrying about what is going on in your life? Remember God cares for you! You are of more value than the birds of the sky that God feeds or the wild flowers of the field that God clothes.

When you or I worry we are telling others God cannot be trusted. When we worry we are saying the God we worship is not different than the gods of the world.

Jesus reminds you this morning: **Remember you have a heavenly Father who cares for you!** Your sovereign, all-powerful Father in heaven knows your needs. The unconverted pursue material possessions, but this is not to be your focus. You have a Father in heaven who cares for you. He will provide for your material needs. Trust God to meet your needs.

Transition: Now in vv. 33-34 Jesus balances the command not to worry about our physical needs and sums up what He's said in vv. 25-32. If we are not to worry what are we to do?

TRUST GOD FOR THE FUTURE, ONE DAY AT A TIME, BECAUSE HE CARES FOR YOU (Matt 6:33-34).

Don't worry because if you put God first by seeking to advance His kingdom and living an upright lifestyle God will give you all the food and clothing you need. Rather than worrying **have as your primary concern God's Kingdom and the upright lifestyle that accompanies God's Kingdom. Putting God first by seeking to advance His kingdom and living an upright lifestyle will result in God giving you all the food and clothing you need.** Note the **promise** Jesus gives in v. 33: *"But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you"* (Matt 6:33 NKJV).

If you put God first by seeking to advance His kingdom and living an upright lifestyle God will give you all the food and clothing you need. By contrast, when you or I worry what we are saying is that rather than God's kingdom being most important in our lives, actually OUR kingdom is most important. Worrying does nothing except marginalize God and His Kingdom.

How do we seek first God's kingdom? We seek first God's kingdom by desiring above all to enter into, submit to, and participate in spreading the good news about Jesus Christ. We seek God's kingdom when we **take the initiative to seek the lost**. We seek first God's kingdom as we seek to **serve Christ with our lives**. We seek God's righteousness as we seek to live **a life pleasing to God, living an upright lifestyle**. The present seeking of Kingdom values is equivalent to living righteously, living according to the commands Christ has given us. *****We also seek first God's kingdom as we care for others in need among us**. When we, as God's people, seek first God's priorities, we will by definition take care of the needy in our fellowship. And it is when we, God's people, care for others in need among us that God supplies the needs that we have as a whole. Perhaps part of the reason for this is because then God can trust us to use His gifts in a way that honors Him.

Luke, the beloved first century physician writes about the early church: [SLIDE] "The group of those who believed were of one heart and mind, and no one said that any of his possessions was his own, but everything was held in common.^{4:33} With great power the apostles were giving testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and **great grace was on them all.**^{4:34} **For there was no one needy among them, because** those who were owners of land or houses were selling them and bringing the proceeds from the sales^{4:35} and placing them at the apostles' feet. The proceeds were distributed to each, as anyone had need" (Acts 4:32-35 NET). [BLANK SLIDE]

Now by putting God first in our lives not only will God see that we have all the food and clothing we need, we also will receive an abundant reward when the Kingdom comes in its fullness. Jesus promises [SLIDE]: "Whoever has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life" (Matt 19:29 NET). [BLANK SLIDE]

God is faithful. He will see that you have all the food and clothing you need as you put Him first in your life. While God often gives us much more than the basics, the apostle Paul commands us [SLIDE], *"Now **godliness combined with contentment brings great profit.**^{6:7} For we have brought nothing into this world and so we cannot take a single thing out either.^{6:8} But if we have food and shelter, we will be satisfied with that.^{6:9} Those who long to be rich, however,*

stumble into temptation and a trap and many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. ^{6:10} *For the love of money is the root of all evils. Some people in reaching for it have strayed from the faith and stabbed themselves with many pains*” (1 Tim 6:6-10 NET). [BLANK SLIDE]

Transition: Jesus concludes this section by reminding us that tomorrow’s food and clothing is not to be our concern. How can you find security in an insecure world? **TRUST GOD FOR THE FUTURE, ONE DAY AT A TIME.** Don’t worry about tomorrow. Note how Jesus concludes by telling us again **not to worry about what the future may bring.** Listen to what Jesus command us in v. 34: “Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day *is* its own trouble” (Matt 6:34 NKJV).

How can you find security in an insecure world? Trust God for the future, one day at a time. **Address yourself to today’s concerns while believing that tomorrow is in the hands of our loving heavenly Father** (cf. Prov 27:1; James 4:13-15). There’s enough trouble today without worrying about what the future will bring. “So don’t worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today’s trouble is enough for today” (Matt 6:34, NLT)

Now in this passage Jesus does **not** teach that as His disciples we will receive food and clothing automatically without planning and work. But such planning and work must not lead to anxiety that distracts from the first things—God’s Kingdom and righteous standards. **When we put first things first, God will provide us with the necessities of life.**

APPL: God’s grace is sufficient to meet whatever needs you may have today. Don’t waste God’s grace on tomorrow’s worries. If the future brings new trouble into your life, you can be sure God will give you the grace to meet you needs (cf. Carson, 182). **ILL: Rayna DuBose,** was attending VA Tech on a basketball scholarship when she contracted a life-threatening bacterial infection in May 2002 that resulted in her undergoing the amputation of both legs six inches below her knees and both arms four inches below the elbows. In a recent interview a smiling Rayna gave abundant evidence of the grace God has given her in coping with her affliction.

As Haddon Robinson aptly states: “People keep ruining all their todays by mixing spoiled yesterdays or unripe tomorrows into their stew. Some people live with yesterday’s slights, grudges, and guilt. Something happened to them, and they can’t forget it. Other people live with tomorrow’s threats, evil, and sorrow. Something fearful might happen to them and they cannot ignore it.

“If you do not live one day at a time you spoil all of life. God divided life into bitesize chunks called days. Trying to chew more than one at a time can choke us.”

Bible expositor Ian McLaren asked, “What does your anxiety do? It does not empty tomorrow of its sorrows but it empties today of its strength. It does not allow you to escape the evil, but it renders you unfit to cope with sorrow and evil when it comes.”

APPL: Don’t let tomorrow’s worries affect today. Doing so only robs power from today. Can you trust God to supply your needs for the next twelve hours? The next twenty-four hours? Every time you bit off a hunk of today God commits Himself to meet your needs.

ILL: On the way to his inauguration Abraham Lincoln stopped in New York City where he spoke with Horace Greeley. Greeley asked Lincoln the question that was on everyone’s mind. “Will the nation be plunged into a civil war?” Lincoln responded to Greeley’s question with an anecdote about some lawyers from Illinois. They followed the judge from town to town to argue

cases. As they traveled they had to cross a number of rivers including many that were swollen. They were particularly worried about the Fox River. In a small town where they had stopped for the night they met a circuit riding preacher. He had crossed the Fox River many times so they asked him about it. "I have one rule that helps me cross the Fox River," he said. "I don't cross the Fox River until I get there."

Concl: Jesus overall message here in Matthew 6:19-34 is this: Instead of living for the material things of this life, make sure you pursue God's Kingdom priorities—all the while being assured that your heavenly Father will take care of you.

Just as a bird hunter makes birds the center of his attention, so make the advancement of God's kingdom the center of your life. To seek God's kingdom is to seek His work in the world. To seek God's righteousness is to live the kind of life that pleases Him, which includes seeking the highest good for others. Whether you deal with foes or friends seek their highest good because this is what God does. In business or family issues seek the best of others. **As you seek what is best for others, God gives you what is best for yourself.**

SALV: This morning Jesus calls you and I to peace. First, peace with God through Jesus Christ. Then also the peace that comes from God that gives us freedom from anxiety and inner turmoil... Lay your worries on Jesus for He cares for you!