

Commentary on Matthew 6:25-34

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The **International Bible Lesson** (*Uniform Sunday School Series*) for **Sunday, November 27, 2011**, is from **Matthew 6:25-34**. Five **Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further** follow the verse by verse **International Bible Lesson Commentary** below. The **Study Hints for Thinking Further**, which are also available on the **Bible Lesson Forum**, will aid teachers in class preparation and in conducting class discussion. For additional **International Bible Lesson Commentaries**, see the complete and comprehensive **International Bible Lessons Commentary Index**. The weekly **International Bible Lesson** is posted each Saturday before the lesson is scheduled to be taught at **<http://InternationalBibleLessons.org>** and in **The Oklahoman** newspaper.

International Bible Lesson Commentary

Matthew 6:25-34

(Matthew 6:25) Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?

Jesus reasons with His followers to help them keep perspective. Some things are more important than other things. Your life and body are more important than things, and no one should sacrifice their life and their body simply to acquire more things, but too many do. Sometimes people work and worry to acquire things and they ruin their mental and physical health, their relationships with God and others. They show their lack of trust in God as their heavenly Father and in His loving desire to give His children all they need. Jesus has already taught them to pray for God to give them their daily bread (meet their daily needs). His children need to trust God as they pray to God as their heavenly Father.

(Matthew 6:26) 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?

The Bible teaches that if we will not work we may not eat: “Anyone unwilling to work should not eat” (2 Thessalonians 3:10). Because of the many uncertainties in this world, Jesus knows we need good reasons not to worry. He does not argue against our need to work, save, and prepare for the future as He enables. We are people, created in the image of God, and God did a great work in creating the world. Jesus declared, “My Father is still working, and I also am working” (John 5:17). We need to work and not worry, leaving the ultimate results to our Father and Jesus

who are still working. As created in God's image, we are of greater value than the creatures God also cares for to meet their needs. If we cannot work, God will find a way to meet our real needs, just as He cares for the birds (who do some work for God and themselves in their own way as created by God).

(Matthew 6:27) And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life?

We know from medical research that worry can actually bring illnesses to someone and even shorten their life. Jesus went to His Father to prepare a home for us in heaven (see John 14:3). Even if we do suffer and die physically, even if we are persecuted and murdered as martyrs, those who trust in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior continue to live with Him and go to the place in heaven that He has prepared for them.

(Matthew 6:28) And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin,

In many places, people need basic clothing necessities. Some need coats for the winter that they cannot afford. In other places, people worry about wearing the latest clothing styles for school, work, or their professional appearance. How we appear to God in our hearts means more to God than whether or not we wear the most expensive or stylish clothing.

Wearing the white robe of righteousness given to those who follow Jesus will make an eternal difference (see Isaiah 61:10 and Revelation 7:9-14). One of the responsibilities of those who follow Jesus Christ is to help the needy; God often helps them find clothing through His people.

(Matthew 6:29) yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these.

God, the Creator of all through Jesus Christ, makes all things beautiful. The external beauty of a lily surpasses the glory of any clothing the richest person may ever wear, and no doubt King Solomon and his court dressed more richly than any of their time. Often, the internal beauty of a righteous person far surpasses their external beauty, for God makes them righteous through Jesus Christ. When we keep things in perspective, it is better to be in a right relationship with God, who can make us beautiful on the inside, than worry about whether or not we have “in style” clothing. Unhappily, in many places, obeying Jesus Christ is not “in style,” but seeking the most stylish clothing is anxiously pursued.

(Matthew 6:30) But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you--you of little faith?

God wants His children to be people of faith. God will fit us for heaven and be with us in this life through every situation. The concerns of this world can quickly turn our eyes from Jesus Christ and from seeking the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. Jesus truly wants us to keep everything in perspective (see Matthew 6:33).

(Matthew 6:31) Therefore do not worry, saying, “What will we eat?” or “What will we drink?” or “What will we wear?”

Have faith in God as revealed in the Bible. Trust in His loving care and that He always does what is best for all concerned. Pray for God to meet all of your needs, as Jesus taught in the Lord’s Prayer and His parables. Faith in God, trust in the word of God (the Bible), and prayer in Jesus’ Name are three ways to overcome worry. As faithful followers of Jesus Christ, we are the children of God and He will care for us as our heavenly Father.

(Matthew 6:32) For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.

At this point in Jesus’ sermon on the mount and in His ministry, most Gentiles did not know, love, and follow the true God, but followed their idols instead (probably Canaanite, Greek, Roman, or Persian idols).

Most unbelievers (or those who do not know the true God yet) are known to strive for the things of this world. Some strive for money and what money can buy, or they seek power to move ahead of others or to take from others. God knows what we truly need mentally, physically, and spiritually. As children of God we know the truth about God, we do His work in His way, and He supplies our needs.

(Matthew 6:33) But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

As people who love God and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, our goals must include living under the kingship or lordship of God our Father at all times. We recognize that the nation we live in is subject to the rules of God's kingdom as revealed in the Bible, whether or not our country's rulers and other subjects know this or not. As the Old Testament shows, when a nation lives contrary to the commands of God, the nation will suffer the consequences. God's moral laws are just as reliable as God's physical laws. The followers of Jesus need to live consciously with this conviction about God's authority over all. As we seek to live right in the power Jesus gives us, God will give us what we need to do His will and prepare us for spending eternity with God and all who love Him.

(Matthew 6:34) So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today's trouble is enough for today.

Jesus told people to live one day at a time when He taught in the Lord's Prayer, "Give us this day our daily bread," and He taught the same thing here. His teaching does not mean that we should not prepare for the future as God enables us. As we prepare for what might happen, have emergency preparedness plans, etc., Jesus tells us not to worry about the future but to trust in God. We have enough daily concerns without worrying about many things that may never happen. We need to do what God wants us to do each day and trust the future to our heavenly Father, the King of the universe, Who cares for us.

Five Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further

1. What are some events and practices that can influence us to worry?
2. What are some means that we can use to defeat the temptations to worry?
3. What does Jesus say about a person who worries?
4. What are some of the actions that Jesus tells us to take so we do not worry?

5. What are some of the things we know about God that will help us not worry?

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