

# Day of Thanksgiving

**DON'T WORRY, BE THANKFUL**

**Matthew 6:25-33**

**Day of Thanksgiving**

**Analysis by Bill White**

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? 26Look 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? 27And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? 28And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, 29yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. 30But 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? 31Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear?’ 32For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. 33But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

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**DIAGNOSIS: STRIVING FOR LIFE IS DEADLY**

**Step 1: Initial Diagnosis (External Problem)** : *Worries about Life*

Worry about money is prevalent in our culture today, and it seems to afflict both those who have it and those who do not. We worry about the economy, job security, health care, our investments, our retirement income, and our insurance plans. We are anxious about whether we will have enough money for food, drink, and clothing. Our worry over material things becomes obsessive and debilitating. And so we work hard, striving to guard all of these areas of our lives so we will not have to worry about them anymore.

**Step 2: Advanced Diagnosis (Internal Problem) : Worries Unrelieved**

This kind of worry and striving reveals a deeper problem. We are depending on our own efforts to preserve our lives. In reality our faith is in our employer or our government or our own work instead of fearing, loving and trusting the God, who comes to us in Christ. This kind of worrying and striving reveals us to be in the company of those Jesus refers to as “you of little faith.” With this “little faith” (misplaced faith), our anxiety is ongoing; the worry is never relieved.

**Step 3: Final Diagnosis (Eternal Problem) : Worried to Death**

Worse still, all of our striving and worrying does nothing to preserve our lives. “And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life?” (v. 27) In fact, striving to preserve one’s life apart from God leads only to death.

**PROGNOSIS: STRIVING FOR THE KINGDOM IS LIVING**

**Step 4: Initial Prognosis (Eternal Solution) : Death to Worries**

Our heavenly Father knows what we need (v. 32b). Clearly God cares for birds and flowers and we are of more value than they (vv. 26-30). In fact, God cares for us so much that Jesus, the righteous One, ushers in the Kingdom. Through the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ, God fulfills the demands of the Law destroying the power of sin, evil, and death.

There is life—a life free of worry about material things now as well as eternal life in glory—for all who believe in the crucified and risen Christ!

**Step 5: Advanced Prognosis (Internal Solution) : *Worries Relieved***

Jesus said, “But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness” (v. 33a). This kind of striving is not our work at all, rather it is Jesus coming to us and exchanging our “little faith” for real fear, love, and trust in Christ alone. As Dr. Caemmerer taught his seminary students, “The Kingdom of God is not a place. The Kingdom of God exists whenever and wherever Jesus Christ rules and reigns in the lives of people.” Hence, we strive for the kingdom of God when we are opened to the power of Christ the King to live in us and work through us. Likewise, striving for “his righteousness” is not something we do. We do not become righteous in this life; instead, by faith, we participate in the righteousness of Christ, what Luther called our “alien righteousness.” This faith in Christ relieves our worry.

**Step 6: Final Prognosis (External Solution) : *A Worry-Free Life of Giving Thanks***

A life lived striving for the Kingdom of God and his righteousness is a life lived according to the heavenly Father’s will and in thankfulness. The debilitating and obsessive anxiety which once consumed us is now crossed-out by Christ and replaced with gratitude to God. Participating in the Kingdom of God and the righteousness of Christ by faith relieves us from worry and anxiety about material things, filling us with that blessed assurance that “...all these things will be given to you as well” (v. 33b). A day for Thanksgiving indeed!