

STOP WORRYING ABOUT TOMORROW

What Jesus Says About Anxiety

WORD ALIVE • WEEK 13 • MATTHEW 6:16–34

HOW TO TRUST GOD ONE DAY AT A TIME

Big Idea: I don't overcome anxiety by figuring out tomorrow. I learn to trust my Father today.

FASTING — Matthew 6:16–18

Jesus says, “when you fast.” The phrase itself is not grammatically the command, but Jesus assumes fasting will have a place in the lives of His disciples. He expects His followers to practice devotion to God without performing spirituality for people.

A Simple Bible-Marking System

- Red circle — command
- Dark blue star — prophecy
- Green/light-blue triangle — promise

Promise in verse 18: “Your Father who sees in secret will reward you.”

BIBLE STUDY TIP — Why Translations Differ

Hebrew, Greek, and English do not line up word-for-word. An original-language word can have a range of meanings, so translators look at the context and choose the English word that best communicates the biblical writer's meaning.

Example: the Hebrew word ‘oz can be translated with related ideas such as strength, might, power, stronghold, refuge, and boldness. Seeing that range is one reason a concordance or original-language word study can add depth to Bible study.

- Translation — works from the biblical-language texts to communicate Scripture in another language. Examples: ESV, NASB, NIV, KJV.
- Paraphrase — expresses the meaning of a passage much more freely in contemporary language. The Message is an example.

Study habit: Begin with a translation, then investigate significant original-language words for yourself.

LAY UP TREASURE IN HEAVEN — Matthew 6:19–21

Earthly possessions are fragile. Jesus' audience knew that moths destroyed clothing, thieves stole, and circumstances could change quickly. Our modern resources can make us feel more secure, but earthly security is still temporary.

Kingdom posture: Enjoy God's gifts gratefully, but do not build your security on something you cannot keep. Live with open hands and an open heart.

Journal question: What am I holding so tightly that the thought of losing it steals my peace?

Lay up treasure in your “heavenly IRA”: invest your life in loving people, sharing the good news of grace, and pursuing what lasts eternally.

YOUR EYE + YOUR MASTER — Matthew 6:22–24

In its Jewish setting, language about a “good eye” could be associated with generosity and an “evil eye” with stinginess. The surrounding passage is about treasure, possessions, perspective, and whom we serve.

Jesus concludes: “You cannot serve God and money.”

The connection to anxiety: What I treasure, I tend to hold tightly. What I hold tightly, I’m afraid of losing. And what I’m afraid of losing, I worry about.

That is why verse 25 begins with “Therefore...” and moves directly into Jesus’ teaching on anxiety.

DO NOT BE ANXIOUS — Matthew 6:25–34

Study principle: Slow down. Follow the clues. Look for repetition.

Jesus repeatedly returns to anxiety in this short passage, signaling that His disciples should pay close attention.

Word Study: *merimnaō*

Greek *merimnaō* — worry, anxiety, concern. Word-study resources connect it with distraction or divided concern.

Key picture: Anxiety takes a mind that is physically living today and sends it emotionally into tomorrow.

Jesus Gives Four Reasons Not to Worry

1. LOOK AT THE BIRDS — Your Father provides. Matthew 6:26: “Your heavenly Father feeds them.” Jesus asks, “Are you not of more value than they?”

Truth to remember: I have a Father who provides.

2. LOOK AT WORRY — It accomplishes nothing. Matthew 6:27 asks what anxiety can actually add to life.

Worry feels productive because the mind is working overtime, but it produces nothing, changes nothing, and cannot protect us from the thing we fear.

3. LOOK AT THE FLOWERS — Your Father cares. Matthew 6:28–30 asks, “Will he not much more clothe you?” If God cares for the grass of the field, how much more does He care for His child?

4. LOOK AT YOUR FATHER — He already knows. Matthew 6:31–32: “Your heavenly Father knows that you need them all.”

- Before you worried about it, He knew.
- Before you prayed about it, He knew.
- Before you told your friend about it, He knew.
- Before you figured out there was a problem, your Father knew.

Central truth: Jesus doesn’t ground our freedom from anxiety in the promise that nothing difficult will happen. He grounds it in the character and care of our Father.

THE ANTIDOTE — SEEK FIRST — Matthew 6:33

“But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.”

Notice the word BUT. Jesus is giving us an alternative—a redirection for an anxious mind.

You cannot always control what enters your mind, but you can decide where your mind stays. When your thoughts race toward “What if?” redirect them toward “Who is God?”

- What has He promised?
- What has He already done?
- What is true today?

Philippians 4:6–7 gives the same redirection: Anxiety → Prayer • Need → Petition • Fear → Thanksgiving • Result → Peace

The biblical answer to an anxious mind isn’t merely an empty mind. It’s a redirected mind. Seek first.

DON’T LIVE TOMORROW TODAY — Matthew 6:34

“Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow... Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.”

Some of us are exhausted today because we’ve already lived tomorrow 15 times. We imagine the conversation, the diagnosis, the financial crisis, what our child might do, or how we would feel if we lost someone—and none of it has happened.

Jesus never promised a trouble-free tomorrow. But He has given us a Father who already knows what tomorrow holds.

- I don’t need tomorrow’s answers today.
- I don’t need tomorrow’s provision today.
- I don’t need tomorrow’s strength today.

I need today’s grace for today’s trouble. When tomorrow becomes today, the Father who met me here will already be there.

Practice this today: Open your hands. Release what you are trying to protect. Turn your attention back toward your Father. Seek His Kingdom and His presence—the presence of the Prince of Peace—right here, right now.

TOMORROW BELONGS TO HIM. TODAY, I WILL SEEK HIM.

PRAYER & REFLECTION

- Repent for holding too tightly to people, possessions, outcomes, and control.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to redirect distractions and anxious thoughts back to Jesus and the pursuits of His Kingdom.
- Meditate on the Father’s goodness, faithfulness, and love.
- Ask for grace to pursue God instead of chasing tomorrow’s answers and solutions today.
- Fix your mind on the Lord and receive His peace. See Isaiah 26:3 and Philippians 4:6–7.

THE HIGHER PURSUIT

Nurturing your faith. Sharpening your endurance.