

# Anxiety, the Curse and its Cure, pt.4

This evening we continue our examination of anxiety.

I am convinced that if, by God's grace, we can grasp this teaching along with the teaching on suffering, we will be able to live lives that are completely and truly free from .

Think of living a life free from anxiety!  
Think of living a life free from worry!!

This reality can truly be yours, if you grasp this teaching on anxiety!

And here's the truth of the matter: The Lord *desires* for you to have and live a life free from anxiety, worry and stress.

Notice that I *did not* say that God desires you to have and live a life free from *trials!*

No, I did not say that!

I said that He desires for you to have an *anxiety* free, *worry* free life.

You and I know that there will be trials in this life, but that does not mean that we have to be anxious about them.

We can live free from anxiety!

Our Lord died and rose again to purchase your freedom from the prison and sin of anxiety.

So, let me say from the onset, the Lord wants you to be free, He purchased your freedom and He expects you to walk in the freedom He has accomplished for you!

You must come ready, willing, desirous and eager to “make every effort” to put to death the sin of anxiety!

Our Lord, as He addresses what ought to be characteristic of those who are in His kingdom makes it clear that those who claim Citizenship should be those who are free from anxiety!

In other words, anxiety has absolutely no place in the life of one who claims to be a citizen in the kingdom of God!

Our Lord teaches this plainly, in Matthew 6 (so, if you have a copy of God’s word turn to Matthew 6:24–34.)

**The first truth is:**

**Truth #1: Do Not be Anxious...Because Life is More than Provision (v. 25)**

What our Lord helps us to understand is that life is more than the thing for which we are anxious!

When you are anxious, you reduce all the riches of living life as a redeemed image bearer down to a *single temporal issue*.

When you are anxious it's like you have determined to cover one eye with your hand and use the other eye to look at life through a microscope.

When you are anxious you remove all the goodness of living to focus on the things of life!

And our Lord tells us plainly that life IS more than the thing for which we are anxious.

And when we understand this, this will help us to rightly orient ourselves to everything in life; where the things for which we are tempted to be anxious for are placed in their proper place.

This question frees us from magnifying material things and allows us to truly live free.

That's the first truth. (Life is more than provision.)

**Truth #2: Do not be Anxious...Because Birds and Flowers Are Not Anxious (v. 26, v. 28, read)**

Here the Lord reminds us of who we are by telling us what all the rest of creation is not!

Remember our illustration: The only thing we share in common with all of creation is that we have the same Creator.

Jesus uses this to drive home the point: If the Lord supplies the needs of creatures who are not made in likeness, not redeemed by the blood of Christ, not indwelt by the Spirit, how much more will he supply your needs when those things are true of you!

So, in this way, anxiety reveals that foundationally you have forgotten who you are and who you belong to!

So, when you are anxious you are having a temporary identity crisis! You have forgotten who you are and who you belong to!

And, ultimately, anxiety reveals that you do not trust God! (That's why Jesus says, "Why are you anxious, O, you of little faith.")

When you are anxious, your anxiety is saying to God, "I do not trust you!"

It says, "God, I know you said you will provide my needs according to your riches in glory, but I do not believe you!"

It says, “God, yes, I know you said that you will clothe and feed me, but I do not trust you!”

This is why anxiety is sin and not just negative vibes!

Anxiety reveals a heart and minds that cast the shadow of doubt of the goodness and greatness of God!

So, help when we are struggling with anxiety, Jesus tells us if you want to be reminded of the kindness and benevolence of God, look at the birds and lilies and observe how your heavenly Father feeds them AND KNOW THAT IF HE FEEDS THEM HE WILL FEED YOU!!

### **Truth # 3: Do Not Be Anxious...Because it is A Waste of Time (v. 27)**

Jesus goes further in this teaching by telling us that anxiety is a waste of time!

Being anxious is one of the most unproductive things you could do!

The reason why is because being anxious is not a helpful solution to the problem you face!

For example:

Say you are anxious about the well being of your children.

- Does being anxious help you or your children? (No, it doesn't!)

Say you are anxious about your health.

- Does being anxious help you get healthier? (No, it doesn't! In fact, it can lead to poor health!)

Say you are anxious about provision?

- Does being anxious help you to acquire more provision? (No, it doesn't! In some cases it can lead to a lack of contentment for what you have!)

The point is anxiety is useless; it is unproductive; it is a complete waste of time!

Being anxious is the equivalent of trying to light a candle in the midst of a hurricane!

It is pointless!

Jesus continues and reveals several more truths that we:

**Truth #4: “Do Not Be Anxious...Because Pagans Passionately Pursue Provision” (v. 31, read)**

To put the cookies on the bottom shelf: **Jesus says that we are not to be anxious because those who do not know God are those who passionately pursue possessions!**

The pagans (or gentiles) are ones who are worshipfully preoccupied with stuff! Their Master is money and/or material things!

They do not have God as their Father!

Now, this word “seek” in v. 32, is a word that means:

- to pursue diligently
- to search or intensively seek after
- to crave (or to desire with earnest)

I like the way the NIV translates it as, “to run after.”

The point is that Jesus is telling us not to be anxious because Pagans make it their aim in life to acquire and obtain material possessions!

For the unbeliever, life is not more than provision; for them, life is about provision!

To those who are of worldly everything is about the physical! In Philippians 3, Paul describes unbelievers as those who “have their minds set on earthly things.”

He continues to describe them as those whose “god is their belly...”

Which means that they are controlled by their desires. They want what they are hungry for!

And they are hungry for the things of this world!

The pagan, spends the lion share of their time consumed with material gain!

And Jesus says, “do not be like the pagans! They seek after the perishable!”

The tragedy of being anxious is that it makes us look like, sound like and act like pagans when it comes to our provision!

So, Jesus says in effect, “Do not be anxious about stuff, because when you do, you look like and are acting like someone who does not know God!”

Think of the blood shed for you! Think of the cup of wrath that was drunk for you!

When you are anxious you disregard ALL of that and live like a pagan!

Our Lord tells us, “Do not be like Pagans who do not have God as their Father!”

That's truth #4: Do not be anxious...**Because Pagans Passionately Pursue Provision!**

Truth #5 is this:

**Do Not Be Anxious...Because Your Father Knows Yours Needs (v. 32)**

As children of the one, true and living God one of things that gives us great comfort and confidence is that God knows us!

To be known by God, is our heart's greatest delight!

The one who created the heavens and the earth and everything in the heavens and the earth knows you and knows what you need!

So, when you are anxious, you are declaring that God is ignorant!

That He does not know what you need!

That He does not see you and know you!

This is why we must fight not to be anxious and put to death such wicked thoughts and feelings!

What makes this teaching on anxiety so important is because of the way Jesus describes our relationship with God.

Please observe the way Jesus describes our relationship to God.  
He calls Him, “*Your Heavenly Father.*”

And in the teaching on the mount, Jesus refers to God as our Father a lot:  
(5:16, 45, 48, 6:1, 4, 6, 8, 9, 14, 15, 18, 26, 32)

Jesus tells us that God is “*your heavenly Father*”

***Your***– Possessive. He belongs to you! Not that you own God, but that He is covenantally related to you!

***Heavenly***–*Place of dwelling, or Seat of authority.*

- That is to say, heavenly not only describes God’s transcendence (in the sense of Him not being an *earthly* father...He is the transcendent *heavenly Father.*)

“Heavenly” also describes God as the one who inhabits and fills the heavenlies!

That is to say, He is the one whose rule and authority is in heaven!

And guess what?

If His authority encompasses *heaven*, then it necessarily follows His authority encompasses *earth*! (This is why He has the ability and power to grant you what you need on the earth...because has the authority to!)

The bread God gives to feed our physical bodies is physical bread, not spiritual bread.

The clothing God gives to clothe your physical body is physical clothes, not spiritual clothes!

And the reason He can and will do this is because He owns and has authority over it all!!

**Father**– (listen to the way one brother describes this): to us as believers, God being our Father means that *“through Christ, we have been exalted to a specially close and intimate relationship with God, and who no longer dread him as a stern judge of sinners, but revere him as their reconciled and loving Father”*

Note that our brother says that for God to be our Father means that we have been “exalted to have a specially close and intimate relationship with God.”

This means that God has *made us* His children and has chosen to covenantally relate to us as our Father.

This is who God is:

He is *your heavenly father!*

Help me with this illustration:

What are some characteristics of a good earthly father?

(After the list is compiled.)

Is there any earthly father who perfectly fulfills this list at all times?

No.

Catch this: *Not only does God perfectly fulfill this list at all times, but He is the reason we have a list of what a father is supposed to be!*

And the PERFECT FATHER IS YOUR FATHER!!

He displays all of these characteristics towards you constantly and continually!

You have *never* known God not to be this kind of Father to you!

Earthly fathers waver in their consistency, but God, the Heavenly Father does not!

So, precious Saint, why are you ever anxious?

Precious Saint, why do you ever doubt?

THE FATHER is YOUR FATHER!

And what you need to rest in is knowing that He knows what you need!

More than that, Jesus tells us in v. 8, that our “Father knows what you need before you ask him.”

But, when you are anxious you call all of this into question!

Can you now see why anxiety is sinful?

When you are anxious you are not only declaring that God is not good, you are declaring that He does not know you and will not provide what you need!

But Jesus says, you need to rest in the fact that *your Father, who is in heaven*, knows what you need (and the implication is that He will provide what you need!)

There is more to examine, but we will stop here and examine more next week, Lord willing.

Here are the truths that Jesus revealed to us thus far:

**Truth #1: Do Not be Anxious...Because Life is More than Provision (v. 25)**

**Truth #2: Do not be Anxious...Because Birds and Flowers Are Not Anxious (v. 26, v. 28, read)**

**Truth # 3: Do Not Be Anxious...Because it is A Waste of Time (v. 27)**

**Truth #4: “Do Not Be Anxious...Because Pagans Passionately Pursue Provision” (v. 31, read)**

**Truth #5:Do Not Be Anxious...Because Your Father Knows Yours Needs (v. 32)**

I will leave you with one point of application from the two new truths Jesus reveals to us.

Application:

**1. Instead of being anxious, remember who your God is:**

- Your God, your heavenly Father who knows and cares for you deeply!
  - He cares so deeply about you that He met your *greatest need...* He gave His son as a substitute and sacrifice for you!

And if He will meet your greatest and primary need, certainly He will meet your secondary need.

Hear Romans 8:32,

“32 He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?”

- Your Father loves you and will provide what you need!
- He is your omnipotent Father, who has the power, authority and might!
  - Translation: There is nothing ever hindering your Father from providing whatever you may be anxious about!

He is your good Father, who will never withhold anything He thinks you should have.

Why be anxious when your good God and Father owns everything and has comprehensive authority!

Instead of being anxious, Saint, remember who your God is!

Let's pray!