

## LESSON 1

June 6, 2021

Unit I. Jesus Teaches about Faith

No Worries

**DEVOTIONAL READING:** Ezekiel 34:11-16

**BACKGROUND SCRIPTURE:** Matthew 6:19-34

**PRINT PASSAGE:** Matthew 6:25-34

### KEY VERSES

**Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.** (Matthew 6:32b-33, KJV)

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**“Your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”** (Matthew 6:32b-33, NIV)

### Lesson Aims

As a result of experiencing this lesson, you should be able to do these things:

- Contrast Jesus’ teachings about worry with your own anxieties.
- Appreciate God’s care for everything in nature.
- Embrace the opportunity to trust God in everyday life.

### KEY TERMS

**Arrayed (verse 29)**—Greek: *enduo* (en-doo’-o): to have put on; clothed; decorated; “dressed” (NIV).

**Knows (verse 32)**—Greek: *eidó* (i’-do): is aware; beholds; considers; perceives; “knoweth” (KJV).

**Life (verse 25)**—Greek: *psuché* (psoo-khay’): the vital breath; breath of life; the human soul.

**Observe (verse 28, NASB)**—Greek: *katamanthanó* (kat-am-an-than’-o): to learn thoroughly; examine carefully; “consider” (KJV); “see” (NIV).

**Sow (verse 26)**—Greek: *speiró* (spi’-ro): seed; spread; scatter.

**Worry (verse 25)**—Greek: *merimnaó* (mer-im-nah’-o): to be anxious; to care for; “take . . . thought” (KJV).

### INTRODUCTION

Children typically have little to no worries for such things as bills, clothing, or groceries. They live in a carefree joy that is simply marvelous. While it is true that many children do live in fear and insecurity, millions still live life with no worries, confident that their parents can and will generously supply all they need. At home, they register for school trips and try out for sports teams,

band, cheerleading, and other school activities with no concern for the basic costs and supplemental expenses. At home, they show up at the dinner table expecting that a full hot meal will be served every evening. If any household item is broken, or any necessity is in short supply, they simply notify the adult in charge (mom, dad, grandparent, guardian, etc.), with confidence that the item will quickly be repaired, replaced, or replenished. Children who are fortunate enough to be in such a situation fully trust and depend on their parental figure to supply all their needs. This kind of child-like trust and dependency mirrors the kind of faith and confidence the Lord expects of those who follow Him. Those who see God as the true source of their every supply do not let outward circumstances shake their confidence in Him. Neither economic downturns, recession, financial setback, nor even unemployment can cause true believers to feel insecure about how they will make it. Why? It is because their trust is in God, not the stock market, economic trends, or even their own savings and ability to work. God calls us to do the work He allows, trusting Him to supply all our needs according to His riches in glory (see Philippians 4:19).

## THE BIBLICAL CONTEXT

In His important message known as “The Sermon on the Mount,” Jesus delivered a message to His current and future disciples concerning what it means to live righteously under God’s reign in the kingdom of heaven. In the Sermon, Jesus calls His disciples to embrace a higher level of righteousness than that which was set forth in the Mosaic Law. Jesus encouraged His listeners to focus on the spirit of the Law rather than merely the letter, emphasizing moral purity of the heart over outward demonstrations of religious piety. Throughout the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus emphasized that being a part of God’s kingdom requires demonstrating divine character rather than merely keeping divine commands. Midway through the Sermon (see Matthew 6), Jesus encouraged the righteous not to be preoccupied with physical concerns, but to set their minds on pursuing the kingdom, trusting that the same God who feeds the birds will, likewise, supply all their needs.

## ANALYSIS OF THE BIBLICAL TEXT

### Why Worry about Cares? Do Seek! (*Matthew 6:25-27*)

#### KJV

25 Therefore I say unto you, *Take no thought* for your *life*, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?

26 Behold the fowls of the air: for they *sow* not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?

27 Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?

#### NIV

25 “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your *life*, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes?

26 “Look at the birds of the air; they do not *sow* or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?

27 “Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?

Jesus taught His followers to give priority to spiritual matters above such physical concerns such as food and clothing (verse 25). When you consider your faith and the reality that God created life and the bodies we dwell in, why should we worry about the cares of this world? Therefore, Jesus in His teaching stresses that life is more important than all those things. To help us fully understand, Jesus calls the listeners’ attention to the birds. If birds, small as they are, could trust God to supply their needs, then how much more should those who know God count on Him to take care of them (see Matthew 10:29). Believers boldly profess that God is both the creator and sustainer of the world and all that is in it. Jesus points out that birds do not have the ability to sow, reap, or store, yet God provides for them (verse 26a). Therefore, it is a reasonable notion that those who have been created in God’s own image should trust the heavenly Father’s care for them at least as much as the birds of the air (verse 26b). With a few pointed questions, Jesus challenged His followers to think about what He was saying, Aren’t you worth more to God than a bird? What value can you add to your life by worrying about things you cannot control? So, why worry? (verse 27). Jesus challenged the righteous to avoid the temptation to worry over things that God has already handled and covered and encouraged them to focus instead on what matters most—the deeper, spiritual concerns of life rather than superficial, physical ones. Seek God, and He will handle or “perfect” those things that concern His children (see Psalm 138:8). Those who place material needs ahead of spiritual priorities tend to be anxious and worried by things over which they have no control. Those who focus instead on the kingdom of heaven and its righteousness will realize that God has already worked out a plan for everything they need.

### **What do you think?**

What are the things that tend to distract us from seeking Christ and His kingdom?

### **Why Worry about Clothes? Be Satisfied! (Matthew 6:28-30)**

#### **KJV**

28 And why take ye thought for raiment? *Consider* the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:

29 And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not *arrayed* like one of these.

30 Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?

#### **NIV**

28 “And why do you worry about clothes? *See* how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin.

29 “Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was *dressed* like one of these.

30 “If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith?”

As Jesus continued in His teaching, He challenged the common preoccupation that people have with clothes (verse 28a). For many, clothing symbolizes a desire to be pleasing or attractive

or even impressive to others. Depending on the person, this desire may be physical, social, or even emotional—as clothing has always meant different things to different people, based on their situation. Jesus directed His listeners to notice how the lilies and other flowers continue to grow and be lovely without labor or stress (verse 28b). His point was that even Israel’s great King Solomon, with his abundance of wealth and fine things, was never more splendidly adorned than the flowers of the field (verse 29). Essentially, Jesus said that being stressed and anxious over daily necessities and appearances is something pagans (unbelievers) do. There is no need for believers to chase after the things that God knows they need. Instead of being worried and panicked, Christians should put their energy into pleasing God, trusting that He will meet their needs (verse 30). Jesus emphasized that the worth of many things people seek after quickly fades away. Even flowers bloom and are beautiful for a moment before withering and becoming worthless. Why spend your time fixating on material possessions that come and go? It is better to make God your priority, because He alone can meet every human need and make us shine with His splendor.

### **What do you think?**

How can we shift our worry to worship?

**Why Worry about Consumptions? Do Submit!** (*Matthew 6:31-34*)

#### **KJV**

31 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?

32 (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father *knoweth* that ye have need of all these things.

33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

34 Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

#### **NIV**

31 “So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’

32 “For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father *knows* that you need them.

33 “But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

34 “Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”

In addition to not worrying about your clothes, as we set aside the cares of this world to pursue the kingdom of God, Jesus teaches us not to worry about what we will consume/eat. He says, “therefore” (or “since”) we are more precious to God than flowers (previous section), we should not worry about what we will eat or drink. He then reiterates the futility of worrying about clothes (verse 31). Jesus placed a bold reality check in their laps by stating that the “Gentiles,” “pagans,” or “nonbelievers” live their lives this way by chasing after what they want and think

they need (verse 32a). While placing this thought in their laps, He gives them a way to release the guilt of living similar lifestyles at the same time by stating that while you know that the pagans live like this and that it is wrong, why would you chase such things knowing that our “heavenly Father knows what we need” (verse 32b)? The next verse speaks to our remaining focused to what God has called us to do. Since we know that God knows and we have faith in Him as our Father God, we must submit to Him and seek His kingdom and His righteousness (verse 33a). When this is done with submission and sincerity, “all these things” are made available to us (verse 33b). The reality check was an attention getter. You cannot ignore its presence. This was the case of Jesus’ statement. The power of Jesus’ words in the text is that these things are individual. My “these things” are different from your “these things” but we share a commonality in that—that God supplies them to take care of our needs while on this life’s journey to fulfill our calling in Christ. Faithful submission and godly focus are what allow us to not worry about tomorrow. Jesus’ statement in verse 34 is not a statement of evil and trials not coming but more of a reassurance to relax in the comfort of God through troubles which are bound to happen daily. With faith and full submission to God, why worry about what may or may not happen? We must submit all things to God.

### **What do you think?**

With all the pressures of the world, how can we submit to God to fulfill our purpose in God?

### **A CLOSING THOUGHT**

The first unit of our summer session deals with Faith. This first lesson is teaching us to have a faith that has no worries, a faith that trusts God no matter what the day brings. When we have complete trust in God, we learn to trust Him completely in all things. This means that in every aspect of our lives—whether that be for our family, our finances, or our fitness—we must trust God to lead us to where we are to be, thus making a way for us to prosper for His glory.

### **YOUR LIFE**

This week, list the things you are worried about. Make a prayer journal and begin to pray and proclaim God’s deliverance and supplying power in those areas. Begin to scratch through them as the weight of worry falls off as you pray and study God’s Word on each matter.

### **YOUR WORLD!**

This week, share the list you created with a prayer partner. Ask the person to go into prayer and Scripture searching with you for each concern you have. Encourage him or her to do the same and share with you.

### **CLOSING PRAYER**

Lord, help us to set aside our worry and exchange it for worship. Guide us by Your Spirit every step of our journey and every moment of our day. Teach us to trust You always in all things. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

### **CONCLUSION** (Preparing for Next Week’s Lesson)

While reading the background Scripture, consider this thought: “Do you believe that God can calm your storm?”

## HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS

### Why Are You Afraid? (June 7-13, 2021)

MONDAY, June 7	“Do Not Fear the Storm”	(Mark 4:35-41)
TUESDAY, June 8	“Do Not Fear Persecution”	(Matthew 24:9-14)
WEDNESDAY, June 9	“No Separation from God’s Love”	(Romans 8:31-39)
THURSDAY, June 10	“I Have Overcome the World”	(John 16:25-33)
FRIDAY, June 11	“Choose to Follow Me Now!”	(Matthew 8:18-22)
SATURDAY, June 12	“Jesus Delivers the Demon-possessed”	(Matthew 8:28-34)