

“Lifestyles of the Content & Worry-Free” (Matthew 6:25–34)

One morning Death was walking into a city when a man stopped him and asked what he was doing. Death answered, “I’m going into the city to kill 10,000 people.” The man replied, “That’s terrible that you would kill 10,000 people.” Death responded, “Taking people when their time has come is my job. Today I have to get my 10,000.” Later, as Death was coming out of the city, the man met him. Again, he was furious. He said, “You told me this morning that you were going to take 10,000 people, but 70,000 died today.” Death answered, “Don’t get mad at me. I only took 10,000. Worry killed all the rest.”¹

Worry has an uncanny knack for killing people. The poet Robert Frost (1874–1963) wrote, “The reason why worry kills more people than work is because more people worry than work.” Seriously, worry has become an American pastime. For many people, worry has become so ingrained in their personalities that once the old worries are gone they search for new ones. They’ve become dependent on worry as a lens through which to view life, and they’ve forgotten any other way to live.² Is there reason to be worried today? Most people would say there is. High energy costs, a worsening economy, rogue nuclear nations, threats of terrorism, widespread job layoffs, and tension in the Middle East—all these make for uncertain times.³ Economic stress is taking its toll on Americans’ emotional and physical health. Surveys show that more than half of Americans report irritability, anger, fatigue, or sleeplessness. Almost half say they self-medicate by overeating or indulging in unhealthy foods. Money and the economy topped the list of stressors for at least 80 percent of those surveyed. Finances now overshadow the more typical daily stressors of work and relationships.⁴

Fortunately, in the midst of a world of “worry-warts,” Jesus isn’t worried. Even better, He has a definitive Word for you. In Matthew 6:25–34,⁵ He says, “*Don’t worry, be hopeful.*” Now there are some passages in the New Testament that are difficult to interpret, but this is not one of them. Jesus uses the word “worry” six times and He says, “Don’t worry” three times. Jesus is against high anxiety and unhealthy worry. Consequently, He provides two reasons you shouldn’t worry.

1. Worry is an exercise in futility (6:25–30). Jesus promises to meet your needs because He cares for you. He begins this section with a negative command: “**For this reason I say to you, do not be worried about your life, as to what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, as to what you will put on**” (6:25a). The phrase “For this reason” ties back to 6:24.⁶ Jesus’ point is: If you can’t serve God *and* money, then you can’t worry⁷ about the material things that money can buy.⁸ The phrase “do not be worried” can be literally translated “stop worrying.”⁹ Jesus wants His followers to stop worrying over food, drink, and clothes because He will meet their basic material needs. Now, I need to put forth two disclaimers. **First, *don’t worry doesn’t mean don’t plan.*** The King James Version translates the phrase “do not be worried” as “take no thought.”¹⁰ This is misleading because it gives the impression that future planning is unnecessary. Over the years, many people have mistakenly assumed that this is a prohibition against career ambition, financial planning, and life insurance. But this is not what Jesus is saying. Jesus is pro-planning! He wants you to work hard and plan for your future. To do otherwise is to be foolish. **Second, *don’t worry doesn’t mean don’t be concerned.*** If you’re not concerned about your children playing near traffic, you’re a terrible parent.¹¹ If you’re not concerned about your health, you’re a fast-food junkie. You need to have some degree of *healthy* concern.¹² Otherwise you won’t meet deadlines or go in for medical checkups.¹³ The root idea of the verb “worry” (*merimnao*) means “to be pulled apart.”¹⁴ There’s a difference between concern and worry. Concern is when you can do something to help a situation, so you do what you can do. Worry is when you can’t do something, but you don’t want to leave it up to God. In other words, worry is concern gone haywire.¹⁵ You can spiritualize it all you want, but worry is a sin. If you are a worrying Christian, you are a sinning Christian. It doesn’t carry much weight with Jesus that He’s your first love, then you act like you can’t trust Him to look after you. Worry is a hideous sin to God because it is an indictment against Him, a slap at His love. So *don’t worry, be hopeful.*

Jesus now gives four reasons why you shouldn't worry.

- **God will ensure your survival.** Jesus says, **“Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?” (6:25b)** Jesus provides an argument from the greater to the lesser. Since God gave you life, He can surely sustain that life. Almost tongue-in-cheek Jesus says, “If you are going to worry, at least worry about something important, such as your life.” We worry whether we are going to have enough to eat. Jesus says we better worry about whether we are going to be alive to chew. God says, “If I’m going to wake you up tomorrow, I’m going to feed you. Now which is easier? Feeding you or waking you up? Don’t worry about breakfast tomorrow. Worry about whether your heart is going to stop tonight. Worry about whether I’m going to keep your brain working and your heart pumping. If you’re determined to worry, worry about that.” Now most of us don’t worry about stuff like that. We assume when we go to bed at night that we are going to wake up the next day.¹⁶ Jesus says, “If God has the power to keep you alive and wake you up tomorrow, then He will see to it that you have something to eat and something to wear tomorrow.”¹⁷ If you buy into a Creator God, you must buy into a Sustainer God—or you’re simply inconsistent.¹⁸ On a much smaller scale, if a jeweler gives you an expensive diamond ring as a gift, will he give you a box to put it in?¹⁹ Of course he will! The gift of the ring assumes a box. Similarly, if the Lord gives you life, He will take care of that life. Jesus anticipates a follow-up question: God *can* provide, but will He provide?
- **God will meet your material needs.** Jesus says, **“Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you²⁰ not worth much more than they?” (6:26)** Jesus now moves from the lesser to the greater. The word translated “look” (*emblepo*) is a compound verb that can be translated “take a good look at.”²¹ Since humankind is created in the image of God, men and women are far more valuable to God than birds (Matt 10:31; 12:12).²² Birds expend energy in doing what is natural, such as building nests and collecting food for their young, yet it is actually God who feeds and clothes them (cf. Ps 104:10–16). The point is that when Jesus’ disciples are responsible to carry out the proper ways of life as ordained by God, God is faithful to carry out His responsibilities.²³

Our family has four bird feeders outside of our living room and dining room windows. We like to watch birds eat. Lori and the kids spent the better part of a year studying birds, after a friend gave us the book *Birds of Washington State*. Since that time, we have identified nearly twenty birds that come and feed in our feeders. A pair of juncos come year after year to nest in one of our hanging baskets. We have observed first-hand that God provides for the birds because He loves them. At one time or another, you have likely heard from a parent, a sibling, a teacher, employer, or spouse the message, “You are unlovable.” Words like, “Can’t you do anything right?” or “Why can’t you be more like your sister?” or “What’s wrong with you anyway?” or “I’ve found someone else.” These words erode your sense of value until you start to doubt whether even God loves you.²⁴ Yet, the last phrase of 6:26 demonstrates your value to God. If He cares for the birds, how much more valuable are you? *Don’t worry, be hopeful.*

- **God will grant your allotted days.** Jesus says, **“And who of you by being worried can add²⁵ a single hour to his life?” (6:27).**²⁶ Worrying may actually shorten your life. Are you worrying so much that you’re losing sleep? God stays up all night, so why should you? You’re the one who needs to sleep! There was a man who began to worry that he would get cancer. The serious disease had been prevalent in his family, so he began to worry about it. He worried about it for thirty years and then suddenly died of a heart attack. Worrying is such a waste of time. Should you be concerned about your health? Absolutely. Should you do the best you can to stay healthy? Absolutely. But after you’ve done all that you can do, don’t worry. To worry is to insult the God who has your life under control.²⁷

The word worry comes from an old Anglo-Saxon word that means “to choke” or “to strangle.” That’s an apt description of what worry does to us. Worry won’t stretch our savings account, bring back that prodigal son or daughter, or keep cancer or senility at bay. But it will cause us to lose sleep. It will give us ulcers, high blood pressure, and headaches. It will sour our mood and distance our friends and eventually stifle our relationship with God. It not only has physical consequences, it has spiritual consequences as well.²⁸

If you know me, you know that I like to rock. I’m not talking about my taste in music, although that would be true as well. I’m talking about my passion for rocking chairs. As wonderful as rocking is, it doesn’t really accomplish a whole lot. I don’t make forward progress. I probably don’t burn too many calories. Worry is basically like rocking—it will get you started as you move back and forth, but it’s never going to take you anywhere. It’s futile to sit in a rocking chair and think that you’re going to get to work on time, and it’s just as futile to think that worrying is going to do anything to resolve some difficulty in your life. It accomplishes nothing. It doesn’t put more money in the bank; it doesn’t make your body well; it doesn’t reverse a decline in the Dow Jones Industrial Average. So *don’t worry, be hopeful.*

- ***God will cover your external appearance.*** Jesus says, “**And why are you worried about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow;²⁹ they do not toil nor do they spin, yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these. But if³⁰ God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, will He not much more clothe you? You of little faith!” (6:28–30)** Jesus says, “Don’t be worried about what you will wear. Just look at the flowers.”³¹ At first glance, Jesus’ words about the lilies, like the birds, are lovely, but they are not very compelling. Sure, birds and lilies don’t worry about life, but they also don’t have mortgages, car payments, grocery bills, and college tuitions to keep them awake at night.³² Yet, here, Jesus says, “God will meet your need for clothing.” You may not be decked out in designer wear, but you’ll have what you need. The verb “observe” is a strong word. It means more than just a mere casual glance. It means to study the beauty of the flowers. The emphasis shifts slightly in 6:30 where Jesus speaks of the clothing of “the grass of the field.”³³ Like flowers, grass is transient and even less impressive. Yet, God clothes the grass whether we fertilize it or not. Jesus longs for you to learn a lesson from the flowers and grass. He closes with a rebuke: “You of little faith,” which is an expression only directed to Jesus’ disciples.³⁴ It indicates not an *absence* of faith but *deficiency* of faith.³⁵ Jesus is saying, “Trust God to meet your needs.” God’s trustworthiness is the issue. Did God take care of you yesterday? What about the day before? What about the day before that? Then, how come you’re worried today? What kind of Father do you have? Some people have sufficient faith to believe God will get them to heaven but not enough to believe He will get them through the next twenty-four hours. They are absolutely confident of the sweet-by-and-by but are terrified of the nasty here-and-now.³⁶

Fog can blanket a city for seven blocks and be as much as 100 feet deep. But if you could take that fog and change it into water, it would only fill up a single glass. Worry is like a gigantic fog that can blind you and cause you to take your eyes off of the Lord. But when you see worry for what it really is, you realize that it is nothing more than a mere glass of water. When you try to actually grab onto the worry that you are consumed with, it is so fleeting that it isn’t even there.³⁷ Jesus says, “God will guide you through the fog of worry if you let Him lead the way. He alone can overcome your worries. *Don’t worry, be hopeful.*”

[Worry is an exercise in futility. Why is this so? For the simple reason that Jesus will meet our material needs. Jesus now provides a second reason we shouldn’t worry.]

2. Worry is a demonstration of faithlessness (6:31–34). These verses repeat the prohibition from 6:25, summarize the reasons for 6:26–30, and draw a conclusion.³⁸ Jesus says, **“Do not worry then, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear for clothing?’”** The prohibition is stated in 6:31: “Do not worry.” The grammar in 6:31 is different than 6:25. Here, Jesus is saying, “Do not *begin* worrying” (cf. Phil 4:6).³⁹ In 6:32–33 two reasons are given for why you should not worry.⁴⁰ First, **“the Gentiles [i.e. the unconverted⁴¹] eagerly seek all these things” (6:32a).** In Jesus’ day, the pagans pursued food, drink, and clothing because they didn’t know God as a loving Father. They were tormented by anxiety because they believed their future was in the hands of Fate and Fortune.⁴² Jesus is saying that worry is practical atheism.⁴³ When you and I worry, we are behaving just like unbelievers. Do I ever worry? Of course I do. I have many responsibilities and pressures. Yet, my desire is for worry to be a small town I pass through, not a place to hang my hat. I want worry to be a momentary phase, not a lifestyle. The second reason not to worry is: **“your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things” (6:32b).** If my children worried about whether I was going to feed and clothe them, I would feel pretty bad about the way they thought of me as a father. They indict me when they worry. When you worry, you are saying, “God, I don’t really know about You. I’m not sure You are a caring God. I’m not sure You are a providing God. You are good for church on Sunday, but I’m not sure about You. So I’ve got to take care of this myself.” God will take care of you. *Don’t worry, be hopeful.*

After providing two reasons not to worry, Jesus gives a command in 6:33a. Jesus says, **“But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness.”** This is a present tense command. The word “seek” (*zeteo*) was used to describe the activity of a hunter who hides in a blind to hunt birds. He is hunting for food, not just for sport. He focuses his whole mind on those birds. His eye always looks for them. He keeps his bow and arrows ready. The birds will be within shooting range for only a moment, so he is constantly alert. Just as a bird hunter makes birds the center of his attention, you are to make God’s kingdom your top priority.⁴⁴ This means if you are to be anxious about anything, it should be the affairs of God’s kingdom.⁴⁵

In 6:33b, Jesus now moves from a command to a promise. He states that *if* you fulfill the condition of seeking first God’s kingdom and His righteousness **“all these things [material necessities] will be added to you.”**⁴⁶ Jesus specifically limits this promise to those who obey 6:33a. Rather than a blanket promise, this is a conditional promise that applies to disciples who are sold out to Christ. Those committed to building their own temporary financial kingdom receive no such assurances. This promise is hopeful upon seeking first God’s kingdom. This is not a license for laziness. One element of seeking first God’s kingdom and His righteousness is working. Disciples are promised survival, not affluence.⁴⁷

Is this promise always fulfilled? Does God always provide for the needs of His children throughout the world? When Christians seek first God’s kingdom and His righteousness, they will become world Christians, and He will meet the needs of those in poverty in other parts of the world. God is not saying that there will never be anyone who starves. These are maxims that are generally true but not exhaustively true. This statement is much like the book of Proverbs in the sense that it states general principles. They are not meant to explain every individual particular occurrence. Sometimes God will provide a time of need in order for believers to trust Him, turn to Him, or to improve their character. Nevertheless, as David said in Psalm 37:25, “I have been young and now I am old, yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken or his descendants begging bread.” *Don’t worry, be hopeful.*

In 6:34, Jesus hammers the death nail in worry.⁴⁸ For the third and final time He says: **“So do not worry about tomorrow.”** Jesus then gives two reasons you should not worry. First, **“tomorrow will care for itself” (6:34b).** The problem with worrying about tomorrow is you never run out of tomorrows. You must learn to live life one day at a time. God only gives you help you need for today. He doesn’t give you tomorrow’s help today. So don’t worry about what you are going to do tomorrow, because when you get to tomorrow, God’s grace will be there to meet you and give you what you need.⁴⁹ As Mark Twain once said, “I’m an old man and I’ve known a great many troubles, but most of them never happened.”⁵⁰

A second reason not to worry is: **“Each day has enough trouble of its own” (6:34c)**. Jesus is saying something quite interesting: You won’t sink under the burden of today’s crisis, but tomorrow’s agenda puts you over the weight limit. Have you ever tried to carry too many bags of groceries at the same time? I have. I’m a “one-tripper.” I carry in all the bags at one time. It doesn’t matter how many there are. I will strap five or six plastic bags to each wrist and load myself down. I know what you’re saying, “He’s a manly man!” Yes, indeed! But there’s only one problem. Recently, a gallon milk jug fell out of my arms and exploded on our garage floor. I have also spilled eggs and bruised fruit. I leave spills all over the place. The lesson is: Don’t carry too much baggage at once. Learn to make multiple trips instead of one. Jesus tells you to carry today’s bag today and make a fresh trip tomorrow.⁵¹

Tomorrow will have trouble. It is unavoidable. No Christian should ever be caught in what I call the “then syndrome.” “Then things are going to be trouble-free.” “When I get married, then I’ll be beyond trouble.” Yeah, right! “When I have children, then I’ll be trouble-free.” Okay, scratch that one. “When I get a promotion, then I will be happy.” Nope! It is futile to try to live a problem-free life. You can spend all your time and energy fortifying the castle of your life, but there is always a place that goes unguarded. Tomorrow will have its challenges and trials, no matter how hard you try to prevent them.⁵² Leave tomorrow alone. When that day dawns, God will give you the grace and the strength you need for it. At the present time, you have the grace and the strength He has given you for today. Your calendar gives each day its own number. Live them in that order, just as God arranged them. Stay in one square at a time.⁵³ Someone said, “Worrying doesn’t rob tomorrow of its sorrow, it robs today of its strength.”⁵⁴ Don’t let this happen to you. *Don’t worry, be hopeful.*

If you’re a chronic worrier, here’s a suggestion you might find helpful. First, find a shoebox. Tape the lid on, and then cut a little hole in it. Call it your “worry box.” Whenever you feel tempted to worry, write your worry on a piece of paper and drop it in the box. You can say, “Lord, this is my concern, and it has the potential to become a worry. You have told me not to worry, so here’s what I’m going to do. I’m going to put it in my worry box and let You take responsibility for it. Anything that I put in this box will be there because I can’t handle it. Once it’s in the box, I’m going to trust You to handle it for me, Lord.”⁵⁵

My little daughter, Jena, loves to jump into my arms. She climbs onto our bed and says, “Daddy, Daddy, I’m going to jump into your arms and you’re going to catch me. Right, Daddy?” She demonstrates her trust in me by taking a leap off our bed. Do you think I’ve ever dropped her? No, not on your life! I always catch her and I always will. Jena has no fear that her daddy won’t catch her. Likewise, God asks you to take a leap of faith and trust in His ability to catch you. He is trustworthy and He alone can meet your needs. So trust Him today.

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Scripture References

Matthew 6:25–34

Luke 12:22–31

Philippians 4:6–7, 12–13, 19

Proverbs 30:7–8

1 Timothy 6:9–10

Psalm 37:25; 104:27–28

Matthew 19:23–20:15

Study Questions

1. How could Jesus' words in 6:25–34 be used to justify idleness? Is there a difference between being anxious and being irresponsible? Read Matthew 25:14–30. How does this parable help answer these questions? See also Acts 20:34–35; Ephesians 4:28; 1 Thessalonians 5:14; and 2 Thessalonians 3:6–13. Why is a godly work ethic emphasized in the Scriptures?
2. What do I worry about the most? Why? What does constant worry reveal about my faith? How do my biblical values and convictions determine how I handle life? How can worry be a form of practical atheism for me? Who will hold me accountable for my worry?
3. What are the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual consequences of worry in my own life? How has worry affected those around me? Read Philippians 4:4–7. What concepts stand out to me? How could this passage change my perspective and circumstances for the better?
4. Has there ever been a time when I have really worried over my material needs? How has God faithfully met all of my needs? What is “enough” when it comes to money and possessions? Am I able to draw the line when “enough is enough?” Read 1 Timothy 6:6–8. Are these verses a good commentary on Matthew 6:25–34? Why or why not?
5. Augustine (354–430) said, “Our hearts are restless until they find rest in Thee [God].” How can I consciously and continually find rest in God? What causes me to feel restless? What can I do to consciously prepare myself to abide in Christ during these seasons?

Notes

- ¹ Haddon W. Robinson, *What Jesus Said About Successful Living* (Grand Rapids: RBC, 1991), 221.
- ² David Jeremiah, *Slaying the Giants in Your Life* (Nashville: Word, 2001), 61–62.
- ³ David Jeremiah, “Worried about the Future,” *Today’s Turning Point*, 10/1/08.
- ⁴ SermonNews.com, “Health Takes Hit as Economy Creates More Stress,” cited in *USA Today*, 10/7/2008.
- ⁵ Cf. Luke 12:22–31.
- ⁶ Ed Glasscock, *Matthew*. Moody Gospel Commentary (Chicago: Moody, 1997), 154. Matt 6:25–34 may encompass the entirety of Matt 6:19–24. See Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*. Word Biblical Commentary series (Dallas: Word, 1993), 163; Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to Matthew*. Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), 157.
- ⁷ Matthew uses the verb *merimnao* (“worry”) seven times in his gospel (6:25, 27, 28, 31, 34 [2x]; 10:19). Six of these occurrences are found in 6:25–34.
- ⁸ David L. Turner, *Matthew*. Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008), 198.
- ⁹ The present imperative with the negative *me* (“not”) implies to stop what is already in progress (cf. Matt 6:19).
- ¹⁰ This phraseology is repeated again in Matt 6:34.
- ¹¹ Jeremiah, *Slaying the Giants in Your Life*, 56.
- ¹² Wilkins writes, “Sometimes *merimnao* expresses an appropriate feeling of intense concern and care for something, such as the Lord’s work (1 Cor. 7:32) or someone’s welfare (Phil. 2:20). In this case we can render this word in English as “concern.” Concern is appropriate when it is directed toward right things, kept within bounds, and causes us to do our proper duty. However, *merimnao* also expresses intense feelings of anxiety about issues of life, such as what to say when arrested for preaching the gospel (Matt. 10:19), about many less important things (Luke 10:41), or about the pressing daily matters of life.” Michael J. Wilkins, *Matthew*. NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004), 296.
- ¹³ David S. Dockery & David E. Garland, *Seeking the Kingdom* (Wheaton: Harold Shaw, 1992), 93.
- ¹⁴ Dockery & Garland, *Seeking the Kingdom*, 94.
- ¹⁵ Tony Evans, “Overcoming the Stronghold of Worry,” *The Alternative View* (7/2001).
- ¹⁶ Tony Evans, *Returning to Your First Love* (Chicago: Moody, 1995), 277–78.
- ¹⁷ Tony Evans, *Time to Get Serious* (Wheaton: Crossway, 1995), 106.
- ¹⁸ Jeremiah, *Slaying the Giants in Your Life*, 57.
- ¹⁹ Robinson, *What Jesus Said About Successful Living*, 224.
- ²⁰ “You” (*humeis*) is emphatic. The disciples are far more valuable than birds.
- ²¹ R.T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*. New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 264. See John R.W. Stott, *The Message of the Sermon on the Mount* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1978), 164.
- ²² Job 38:41 and Ps 147:9 promise that God provides for the ravens. This is an interesting point because Jesus most likely had in mind ravens who were unclean birds under the Old Testament law (see Lev 11:15 and Deut 14:14).
- ²³ Wilkins, *Matthew*, 297.
- ²⁴ Rowell, *Go the Distance*, 107–108.
- ²⁵ Phillips writes, “The only person who succeeded in increasing his lifespan was King Hezekiah. Fifteen years were added to his life and during that time Manasseh, his son and heir, was born to him. But when Hezekiah saw what Manasseh was like, he doubtless wished he had died at God’s appointed time (Isaiah 38:1–5; 2 Chronicles 33:1–10).” John Phillips, *Exploring the Gospel of Matthew*. John Phillips Commentary Series (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2005), 120.
- ²⁶ It’s possible for Matt 6:27 to be translated, “adding a cubit to one stature” (see NASB note). However, the word *helikia* (“life”) usually refers to length of days or age rather than the height of one’s stature. BDAG s.v. *helikia* 1. The word *pechus* (“hour”) does indeed refer to a cubit (approx. eighteen inches), but this does not seem to make sense in the context, even as hyperbole. Words for space measurements can be used metaphorically as time measurements (Ps 39:5). See Turner, *Matthew*, 198.
- ²⁷ Tony Evans, “Overcoming the Stronghold of Worry,” *The Alternative View* (7/2001).
- ²⁸ Ed Rowell, *Go the Distance* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2002) 103.
- ²⁹ Plants have a short lifespan (Pss 37:2; 90:5–6; 102:11; 103:15–16; Isa 40:6–8; Jas 1:10–11; 1 Pet 1:24–25).
- ³⁰ This is a first class conditional sentence which Matthew assumes to be true. God does provide for His creation.

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- ³¹ Though traditionally *krinon* has been regarded as a type of lily, scholars have suggested several other possible types of flowers, including an anemone, a poppy, a gladiolus, and a rather inconspicuous type of daisy. In view of the uncertainty, the more generic “flowers” is to be preferred. See NET Study notes
- ³² Thomas Long, *Matthew*. Westminster Bible Companion (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1997), 75.
- ³³ The green grass of spring when cut, dried, and bundled was a natural source of fuel for fire ovens and was a common biblical metaphor for dramatic changes of fortune and for human frailty and transience.
- ³⁴ Jesus rebukes His disciples with this phrase in Matt 8:26; 14:31; 16:8; and 17:20. The phrase is only used elsewhere in Luke 12:28. France writes, “‘Faith,’ in Matthew, means the confidence that God can and will act on his people’s behalf.” France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 270. Morris notes, “Whenever this term occurs in the New Testament, it is always applied to the disciples.” Morris, *The Gospel According to Matthew*, 170.
- ³⁵ Wilkins, *Matthew*, 298.
- ³⁶ Robinson, *What Jesus Said About Successful Living*, 229.
- ³⁷ Doug McIntosh, “Dealing With Worry” (Matt 6:25–34): <http://www.cornerstonebibch.org/html/Sermons/Matthew/Matt23.pdf>, 6.
- ³⁸ Turner, *Matthew*, 200.
- ³⁹ This is the same verb that is used in 6:25. In 6:25 it is a present tense imperative; here it is an aorist subjunctive. Morris writes, “If there is a difference, Jesus is now telling them [His disciples] not to begin to be anxious about anything, whereas in the earlier verse he spoke of the continuing attitude.” Morris, *The Gospel According to Matthew*, 160 n. 102.
- ⁴⁰ See also Isa 26:3: “The steadfast of mind You will keep in perfect peace, because he trusts in You.”
- ⁴¹ See NET.
- ⁴² Charles H. Talbert, *Reading the Sermon on the Mount: Character Formation and Ethical Decision Making in Matthew 5-7* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004), 127.
- ⁴³ Robert H. Mounce, *Matthew*. A Good News Commentary (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1985), 58.
- ⁴⁴ Robinson, *What Jesus Said About Successful Living*, 231.
- ⁴⁵ Philips, *Exploring the Gospel of Matthew*, 121.
- ⁴⁶ This passage does not mean that food, drink, and clothing will come to disciples automatically without work or foresight. The text addresses *only* the problem of undue anxiety about these things. Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 166–67.
- ⁴⁷ France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 272.
- ⁴⁸ The language in this verse is similar to the saying found in Prov 27:1. James also seems to draw upon this verse (Jas 4:13–15).
- ⁴⁹ Evans, *Returning to Your First Love*, 284.
- ⁵⁰ Jeremiah, *Slaying the Giants in Your Life*, 65.
- ⁵¹ Jeremiah, *Slaying the Giants in Your Life*, 63.
- ⁵² R. Kent Hughes, *The Sermon on the Mount: The Message of the Kingdom*. Preaching the Word Series (Wheaton: Crossway, 2001), Electronic ed.
- ⁵³ Jeremiah, *Slaying the Giants in Your Life*, 65.
- ⁵⁴ Jeremiah, *Slaying the Giants in Your Life*, 60.
- ⁵⁵ Evans, “Overcoming the Stronghold of Worry.” See also Jeremiah, *Slaying the Giants in Your Life*, 68.