

DO NOT WORRY

Life can sometimes be very difficult. We can have many issues and troubles that cause us to worry.

Perhaps someone is having trouble getting employment, or may have recently lost a job. It can be a struggle to purchase the essential things they need, like food and clothing. Sometimes it is the events going on in the world that make people concerned, or even afraid of what tomorrow might bring. These types of issues cause people to worry and become anxious about the future.

Jesus taught his disciples about how to handle such things. The key was first to put their trust in God. If they put their trust in God, there wasn't anything in life that should cause them to be worried. Jesus tells them, "do not worry about your life, what you will eat; or about your body, what you will wear. Life is more than food, and the body more than clothes" (vv. 22-23). His disciples needed the perspective that other things were more important than food and clothing.

To help them understand this, he told them to consider some basic lessons from nature itself. They could look at birds and flowers and learn not to worry. Jesus uses the lesson of the ravens. They don't plant any seeds or harvest any plants. They don't have a barn in which to store food. Yet God provides for them.

Jesus reminds his disciples they are a lot more valuable to God than the ravens. He also told them to consider the lilies. They do not do any type of labor. Yet they are clothed better than even King Solomon was in his fancy, royal clothing. He reminds them that God will do the same for them.

Jesus tells them: "Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life? Since you cannot do this very little thing, why do you worry about the rest?" (vv. 25- 26). There was no point in worrying about their lives and what the future was going to hold. They cannot make their life any longer by doing that. Their focus needed to be on the things of God. If they put their trust in God above all things, then everything else will take care of itself.

Jesus reminds them they are people of faith. Because of this, he tells them, "do not set your heart on what you will eat or drink; do not worry about it. For the pagan [those who don't believe in God] world runs after all such things, and your Father knows that you need them. But seek his

kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well" (vv. 29-31). God is their heavenly Father. He is a loving Father, and because of New Testament Lesson #191

that, they just needed to put their trust in him. If they do that and seek after his kingdom, then all the little things in life will be handled. A father knows very well what his children need, and God will take care of his children.

We, too, need to listen to the words of Jesus. We need to let God be our treasure and focus in life. Jesus says, "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (v. 34). If God is first on our list, then we don't seek after treasures and material things in the world. There is no need to worry about anything in our lives. Let us put our trust in our heavenly Father, and he will care for us.

POINTS TO CONSIDER:

- In what is often called the "Sermon on the Mount," Jesus taught the same lesson to his disciples. This is recorded in Matthew 6:25-34.
- The apostle Paul writes in his letter to the Philippians similar thoughts. He said to them, "Do not be anxious [worried] about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (Philippians. 4:6-7).
- Peter writes in his first epistle: "Cast all your anxiety on him [God] because he cares for you" (1 Peter 5:7).

ANSWER KEY:

Do not worry!

Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom.