



# GOD'S PROMISES COMBAT WORRY

*Do not worry then, saying "What will we eat?" or "What will we drink?" or "What will we wear for clothing?" For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your Heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.*  
—Matthew 6: 31-33

Note the first three words in this passage: *Do not worry*. Jesus does not say, "Try not to worry."

Worry in Greek is *merimna*, and it is used 19 times in the New Testament. It means to *draw in different directions*—to be in two minds, on big things or little things. For example, "I have a promising career, but *what if* I don't get a promotion?" Or "That thumping in my car is probably nothing, but *what if*...?"

Asking "what if" can compound our worries.

Worry starts with a legitimate concern but bubbling below the surface like a super-heated geyser is fear. Unchecked, fear morphs into exaggerated what-if's, causing stress. Eventually, health problems can develop—upset stomach, ulcers, irritable bowel syndrome, headache, sleep problems, eczema—and more.

What does worry accomplish? An anonymous quipster said, "Worry is like a rocking chair: it gives you something to do but it doesn't get you anywhere." But still, we worry. Some say, "I can't stop worrying!" Maybe we can't stop the temptation to worry, but must we collapse into worry every time temptation comes?

In this passage, Jesus offers two solutions for worry.

## 1. Trust that He knows.

Three times Jesus mentions *these things*—life's necessities—what to eat, what to drink, what to wear. Since our "Heavenly Father knows that you need all these things," we can relax. He is aware of the stuff we worry about.

If God knows we need *these things*, then like the Psalmist, "We need not fear bad news, nor live in dread of what may happen. For he is settled in his mind that Jehovah will take care of him" (Psalm 112: 7 Living Psalms and Proverbs).

Not only does He know, He cares. 1 Peter 5: 7 says, "Casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you."



## Navigator Disciplemaking Tool



### 2. Believe His promise.

Matthew 6: 33 is the great promise. To receive *these things* (life's necessities), *seek first His kingdom*. Common sense says you must *seek first* a good job or a good bank account. Focus on your physical needs first and give leftover energy to your spiritual life. But striving for the necessities of life as your #1 priority is no guarantee you will get them. Hard work doesn't guarantee success.

Instead, seek God's Kingdom first and *all these things will be added to you*. That's a guarantee.

Does seeking God's Kingdom mean we do nothing—waiting in excited holiness for God to bless? Earlier in this same chapter (6: 26), speaking about the birds, Jesus said, “Your heavenly Father feeds them; are you not worth much more than they?” But God doesn't drop fresh earthworms into their mouths each morning. When you see a robin poking in the grass, it is looking for the food God has provided. Birds do their part, and God does His part.

### Application

- Have you identified the specific fears that lie below the surface of your worries?  
An honest self-analysis will help.
- What would it look like for you to put Jesus and His Kingdom first—before your finances?
- Are you willing to trust Jesus' great promise?

### Prayer

*Father in Heaven, sometimes I worry about having enough money—but I never considered how my underlying fears might be driving my worry. I want to deliberately seek You first. I trust Your promise that all these things will be added to me. Amen.*

You may find the meditations in *What the Bible Actually Says About Money: 31 Meditations* to be helpful in personal study, Life-to-Life® discipleship, or a small group setting.