

Matthew 6: 25 –end

Living where we do in the world what have we to be worried about? Yet we still live in an atmosphere of uncertainty and radical change where anxiety abounds. We can no longer be certain about things that at one time we believed would always be there. For all our trust in our employers and governments they are only the channel for God's provision, not the source. Our provision always comes from him. We are dependent on God and if we are honest we don't much like it because we like to believe that we are in control of our future.

Worry can dominate us to the point that we forget about God. Anxiety damages our health. Worry makes us more focused on ourselves other people become less important. Our attitudes change we become less trusting, less helpful, less productive, intolerant and much quicker to assign blame elsewhere.

Jesus tells us not to worry, because when we worry we rebel the King of Heaven who looks after his own creation and so will look after us.

God provides food for the birds but they still have to search for it in different ways and in different places. Similarly with the flowers of the field. They only thrive in the right place for them. We need to become aware of where God wants us to be, to seek out where we can best serve him. Planning for tomorrow includes seeking and trusting in God's guidance. God's plan for us is unlikely to coincide exactly with our own. (Joseph, Ananias) Often we don't appreciate God's provision until we look back on our lives, too often when we look forward in our lives we doubt his provision. In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus is presenting a radical manifesto of the life that is expected from the members of his kingdom and it's all about the centre of our life being the rule of Jesus. Get the centre right says Jesus and the rest will follow.

Consumed by fear worriers find it almost impossible to trust God. We let our desires affect our relationship with God today. When things are not

going as we want the temptation we face is to let go of God. To forget about God and what he is calling us to do in that situation. It all comes down to trust, who do I rely on myself or God?

Read Philippians 4:6-7. It echoes Jesus' teaching because it stipulates a priority. The solution to anxiety is not first and foremost action but prayer. *Corrie ten Boom "Never be afraid to trust an unknown future to a known God". When we accept that God is in control then he will give us his peace and calm our fears, for we know he will see us through whatever we have to face. Even if that means he calls us home to be with Him. God's Peace passes understanding because in a situation where the natural response may very well be anxiety, that deep inner understanding that everything will be all right is not natural, it is an extraordinary witness.

We are to pray. Use the Lord's Prayer as a model to seek the Kingdom of God first and then hand the situation over to God and trust in his provision. As we receive God's peace fear and the material things in life lose their hold over us and our worries fade away

Questions

1. What worries you about today's world.?
2. When you pray for something that you are concerned about how easy is it for you to seek the Kingdom of God and his will first?
3. Can you look back on your life and share an example of God's provision?
4. Can you share a time when you have experienced the Peace of God in a situation that you have faced or are facing?