

Text: Matthew 6:25-32

²⁵ “Therefore I tell you, **do not be anxious about your life**, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? ²⁶ Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? ²⁷ And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life?^[g] ²⁸ And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, ²⁹ yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. ³⁰ But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? ³¹ **Therefore do not be anxious**, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ ³² For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. ³³ But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

³⁴ “Therefore **do not be anxious** about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

Main Point

Our hearts are easily troubled by the things of this world – We must not be anxious about the things of

this world. Being anxious is sin. We must repent of this sin and combat this sin by Fearing God and serving God

Introduction

Hook

How many of you have spent hours pulling weeds?

I grew up in Northland and my dad had a massive veggie garden and us kids must have spend hundreds of hours pulling weeds.

One weed that was notorious was the Doc Weed. My brother and I once made it our goal to remove every single Doc leaf withing the Garden, but we soon lost heart due to the shear number of them.

The thing with the Doc weed is that when you try to pull it out the leaves easily snap off and root stays behind. And we all know, when the root stays behind it will only come back stronger.

Today we are looking at a different type of weed. We are looking at the weed of anxiety which takes root in our heart. Anxiety just like any weed, has leaves which may seem harmless but it's roots will suck the resources from our lives. And just like other weeds it will keep coming back if we do not get it's root.

Outline

Uprooting anxiety is the main theme in these nine verses, and to help us work through our passage we will break it up into three parts.

The Sin of Anxiety (v25-29)

The Source of Anxiety (v30-32)

The Solution to Anxiety (v33-34)

Part 1 – The Sin of Anxiety (v25-29)

Common reasons for Anxiety

What did people in the time of Jesus get anxious about?

Let's read verses 25 to 29 to find the four things Jesus highlights that were a general cause of anxiety.

²⁵ "Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? ²⁶ Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? ²⁷ And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life?^[g] ²⁸ And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, ²⁹ yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

In this text Jesus highlights four things people get anxious about:

- Length of Life
- Food
- Drink
- Clothes

I'm sure there were more things Jesus' listeners worried about, but Jesus highlights these four things

which are really the basics of life. These are the bare essentials. These are things people depend on for their life.

Things we get anxious about today (application)

But when was the last time you were concerned about going hungry or feeling the bit of the cold?

But we get anxious too right. It may not be about food, drink or clothing, but our hearts are quick to get troubled, to be concerned to worry, to be anxious about the circumstances and situations around us. It seems every time we do something there is reason to be anxious.

We get anxious about missing the buss

We get anxious about giving that speech

We get anxious about that doctors appointment

We get anxious about that conversation we need to have to have with our grumpy colleague

We get anxious about having a conversation with a stranger

We get anxious about letting people know that we went to church on Sunday (let alone explaining the gospel)

We get anxious about all sorts of things of things.

I'm sue you can think of other things too. Those things you mull over in your minds as you try to go to bed.

Those things which pop into your minds the moment you wake up. Worry and anxiety seem to plague us on every side.

It seems our hearts are constantly finding something to be anxious about. Once one thing is resolved, the next thing comes up and we are consumed once again.

Not healthy and strictly prohibited

What a horrible way to live. It is exhausting, all consuming and ultimately destructive.

But not only is being constantly anxious a horrible way to live, but more importantly, Jesus commands us not to be anxious.

When a friend tells you “Don’t worry about it”, it’s meant as a nice reassuring statement right? It is meant to comfort you and spur you on. To help you get through that situation.

But when Jesus tells you Don’t worry, this is no well intended sentiment. This is a command you must obey. This is an order from your king you must follow. To disobey Jesus is serious. To disobey Jesus to sin.

Therefore, we must be clear. To be anxious is a sin.

Now this is completely opposite to what you will hear in the world around you. The world will tell us that you are anxious because of your circumstances. That the events around you cause you to be anxious. That you are a victim of what is happening around you and you have no choice but to be anxious.

But this is completely foreign to scripture and foreign to the teaching of Christ. You have a moral choice to make. An anxious person is not the victim who needs to be rescued from affliction, but a sinner who must repent of their transgression.

The rest of scripture is consistent with this. We are commanded not to be anxious. To be anxious is a sin.

Even just in this passage in Matthew 6, Three times Jesus tells us “Do not be anxious!”

V25 – **do not be anxious about your life**, V31 **do not be anxious**, (about what you eat, drink and wear), V34 **do not be anxious** about tomorrow.

Phil 4:6 says

“do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

It is against the moral will of God To be anxious.

Difference between Foresight and foreboding

Before we dig into this deeper and understand what makes being anxious so sinful, just remember that Jesus here is not condemning planning, foresight or diligence. These are good and God honouring things to do. What Jesus is condemning is when foresight escalates to foreboding and Due-Diligence escalates to worry.

When a sailor sees the storm coming, he trims the sail, buttons down the hatches and get's ready for the storm. This is good planning but then he could either get on with the rest of the work or get fixated by the coming storm and let that consume all his thoughts.

Our hearts quickly escalate due diligence to panic. That is what Jesus is condemning here. Plan but don't be anxious.

But why is being anxious such a big deal? Let us try to understand that by looking closely to our text and seek to understand the source of Anxiety, which brings us to the second section of our study.

Part 2 The Source of Anxiety

We cannot deny we have weeds in our garden. In a way our feelings of anxiety are the leafy part of the weed. To get rid of it we must pull out the roots, not just cut off the leaves. But to pull out the roots, we must find the roots.

Let us read v30-32 as we seek to find the source or the root of anxiety.

³⁰ But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? ³¹ Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' ³² For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all.

So why do we get anxious? We can draw out three things from this text which help us understand the source of anxiety. These are

1. Having the wrong value system
2. Unbelief
3. Idolatry

We are anxious because we have the wrong value system

So firstly, you get anxious because you have the wrong value system. You are more concerned about things here on the earth than things in heaven.

Think of the grass of the field, Jesus says. It has no eternal value. It is here today and gone tomorrow, thrown into the fire. Yet it is clothed better than kings.

As humans, our lives will not end with this body. Our souls will live on. We have eternity to contend with.

However, we are quick to believe the lie that this life is where everything matters. That in this world we can find fulfilment and satisfaction. And when these things start falling apart or have the possibility to be taken from us, we get anxious. We get very anxious because the good things of this earth are so fragile. So easy to be broken, destroyed or taken from us.

So anxiety stems from placing value on the temporal instead of the eternal.

Unbelief

But what else does Jesus point out for us is the root of anxiety.

Anxiety also stems from unbelief. Unbelief in God.

In verse 32 we read

³² *For the **Gentiles** seek after all these things*

Anxiety characterizes unbelievers, those who are ignorant of God. Those who have no idea about the character and works of God.

Anxiety also characterizes those who have a distorted view of God. A right view of God will obliterate any anxiety or worry. Jesus reminds us here

*your **heavenly Father** knows that you need them all*

God knows our needs, he knows our situations, he knows our circumstance, he knows our weakness and our short comings.

What more he is our father, he loves us as his children. And he is all powerful and has all resources at his disposal. What is there to be anxious about?

But being anxious shows your true colours. Being anxious shows that you do not believe the promise God has made. The promises that he is able and willing to look after you. You are anxious because you don't actually believe that God cares for you and will meet your every need. You are anxious because you believe that God is not interested in this particular circumstance and you will have to face it on my own.

We often think that we would trust God in the big test of our faith. If we were faced with the lions den or in front of the red sea, then we would have Faith in God, right. And yet we are unwilling to trust God for catching the buss or for having a conversation with a grumpy colleague or a stranger.

"Yeah of little faith"

This is where we see why anxiety is so serious in the sight of God. When you are anxious about catching your buss or of having a conversation, you are displaying unbelief in God and doubting his character.

Idolatry

But anxiety not only reveals that you have a wrong value system and unbelief in God but it also reveals you are trusting something other than God.

Anxiety reveal idolatry. The seeming harmless worries of our day reveal a dark evil idol we are worshiping in our heart instead of God.

Think about it in this way. When you are anxious, what are you placing your trust in? What are you relying on? What are you depending on?

The system? Other People? Your own abilities? These things are not worthy of your trust and dependence.

God tells us to trust Him, to depend on him, to have faith in him, not in the system, other people or our own abilities.

Worry and anxiety reveals that not only do we not believe God, but we have replaced Him with something. Often that thing is yourselves. You trust our own abilities and capabilities instead of trusting God.

Again, Jesus points out the Gentiles, the unbelievers. This is exactly what they do. Because they don't trust Jesus nor do they rely on God.

The unbeliever has every reason to be anxious

If you don't have Jesus as your saviour you have every reason to be anxious. This life will quickly go by. You will face your death sooner or later. And when you die, God will judge you for your sins and condemn you to hell.

Jesus removes the reason for your greatest anxiety. He pays for your sin and welcomes you into heaven. Reject Him and you will be anxious all the way to the Grave, with Good reason. Trust in him and you will know peace. Peace for the next life and peace in this life.

A follower of Jesus has no reason to be anxious. Their eternal destiny has been secured and they have a father in heaven who knows their needs.

And so having seen the sin of anxiety and the source of anxiety, we can now look at the solution to anxiety and the final point of our study today.

Part 3 – The Solution to Anxiety

Illustration

What tool do you need to get rid of Doc Weed? Or any weed for that matter? A spade or a lawn mower? Someone with a lawnmower may give the appearance that his garden has no weeds but the weeds are really still there.

Similarly, we cannot rid ourselves of the weed of anxiety by simply trying to rid yourself of anxious situations, boosting our self-confidence, or even resolving to being ok with the worst case outcomes

These do not address the root of the problem, and the weed of anxiety will just keep sprouting up.

Need to repent of sin of anxiety

The first thing which is implied by the text is that we need to repent.

Anxiety is a sin against the Holy God and the first thing you must do is fall on your knees and confess to God this sin.

Confess this sin in a specific way, assuming responsibility for your actions and your thoughts. You are responsible for how you respond in situations. Sin is powerful, but we are clearly told in scripture that there is always a way of escape.

Mourn over your sin, let your confession flow from godly sorrow since you have betrayed your saviours, your lord and your father.

Repentance is implied because anxiety is sin, but Jesus gives us some very concrete instructions as well.

Focus in the right place

He says “keep your focus in the right place” - Notice that in verse 33

³³ But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

Seek first means to make that thing paramount, the chief thing in your thoughts and desires.

Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.

Now a lot could be said about these two things.

The key is that the focus is no longer on you and your issues, but to God and his purposes.

Kingdom of God

Seeking the kingdom of God can be boiled down to evangelism, discipleship and living knowing in the forefront of your heart and mind that Jesus will return soon.

We are to be more concerned with explaining the Gospel to that person next to us at the buss stop than worrying if the buss will be late.

We are to be more concerned with our brother or sister's sanctification and holiness than to be anxious about having that confronting conversation with them.

We are to be more consumed with the return of our lord and saviour than weather the interest rate will return to a lower rate.

We are to seek first the kingdom of God.

Righteousness

But we are also to seek his righteousness.

We are clothed with the righteousness of Christ. His righteousness is counted as our own and we are to seek to understand, ponder and rest in that fact. We have been declared righteous because He is righteous. Thanks to him, we have a right standing before God. We have been saved from hell. Our future is secure in him. Let us make those thoughts paramount in our thinking and see how all anxiety will melt away.

But we are also to seek to live out this righteousness. Through the holy spirit he imparts his righteousness as we are sanctified day by day. Day by day we are being made closer to the image of Christ. Use your strength, your time, your resources to advance your sanctification. Pray, read, meditate on God's word. Take part in the means of grace. Sing, serve, give. Be diligent and intentional in your sanctification.

So we seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness and anxiety will be pulled up by the roots. Not only will you have no time to be anxious but your mind and heart will be focused on the right thing, and that person or thing which caused you to be anxious before, will have no grip on you whatsoever.

Today

The final point Jesus makes about uprooting anxiety is keeping our focus on the present.

95% of anxiety is due to being worried about things that **could** happen, but may never actually happen. But Jesus says:

³⁴ “Therefore **do not be anxious** about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

As said before, Jesus is not against planning, but against being consumed by what could be and may never happen.

Do your work today (which can include planning), commit the results to God, and tomorrow is another day to address other issues, challenges and other joys.

In his book Screwtape letters CS Lewis touches on this idea and makes this point

[Satan] want a whole race perpetually in pursuit of the rainbow's end, never honest, nor kind, nor happy now, but always using [every real gift which is offered them in the Present] as mere fuel wherewith to heap [on] the altar of the future.”

We can be so consumed with the future possibilities that we miss the joys of the present by worrying about something that may never happen in the future.

Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

Summary

So do we see God’s gracious solution to anxiety here? Thank God that he does not require you to rely on your self-confidence or to flee all situations that will cause you to be anxious.

To get to the root of anxiety we must fill our mind with the right things instead of anxiety. We must seek first his Kingdom, his righteousness and focus on our task at hand today.

Conclusion

So, in this passage we have considered the weed of anxiety.

We have seen that our hearts are so quick to be anxious. And not only is being anxious unhelpful and unhealthy but it is also a sin against God.

It is a sin of unbelief and it is a sin of Idolatry.

When we are anxious, we are not believing the promises God has made, nor are we believing the truths about his character he has given us.

So we must repent. We must turn from the sin of anxiety.

And once we have repented, we must seek first his kingdom and his righteousness

And God promises, he commits himself, he puts his name on the line and pledges that He will provide everything that you need.

So do not be anxious.

Let us pray.