

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VILLA RICA, PCA**

**The Cure For Anxiety**

By  
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Matthew 6:24-34

John D. Rockefeller was one of the richest people who ever lived. There is probably nothing of material value in this world that John D. Rockefeller could not provide for his children. Did you know however, that he had a daughter who became obsessed with the fear that she would die penniless? Her years were haunted with the fear that she would become destitute. Can you imagine such a thing happening -- a Rockefeller worried sick about money?

The Bible declares that the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof. He owns the cattle on a thousand hills. All the silver and the gold are mine, saith the Lord. Hath not my hand made all these things? God has all the wealth, all the authority to give whatsoever it pleases him to whomever he chooses. He told Abraham, <sup>8</sup>"**I will give to you and to your descendants after you, the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.**" Gen. 17:8

God is the Proprietor of all the earth and he can fulfill the desire of every creature He has made. Not all men have faith. We know that some men are living only for this world and do not consider God at all -- their God is their belly, who glory in earthly things, who have set their minds only on this world. They have a substitute god called mammon, and Christ says no man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to one and despise the other. **You cannot serve God and mammon.**

But there are those who come to faith in the Son of God and who call God Father but who yet think of faith in God as only an otherworldly matter. They compartmentalize the things of the soul and the things of the body. They trust in Jesus Christ as Savior but have not enlarged their faith to cover things pertaining to the body.

How much faith do you have today? You can check up on yourself by asking yourself, Am I anxious about something? Do I spend a lot of time worrying about things?

Do a self-analysis on yourself. What, if anything, are you inclined to worry about? You can learn something about yourself by jotting down your worries.

I remember when I was about 14 years old I met a young man about 17 from New York. My folks had moved to Miami and I had a job as an usher at the Olympia Theater. I only met him one time and have never seen him since, but something he said came back to me as I was preparing this sermon. He was in Miami, away from home. I met this young man one evening and he was quite worried. He said to me as though it was a most serious concern to him, "I'm down to my last fifty dollars."

Fifty dollars back then was like two hundred fifty today. And he was with his brother, who drove him down to Miami. So I wondered how in the world he could be so worried when he still had fifty dollars in his pocket. That was about three weeks salary for me. But his concern about having enough money is probably the number one worry of most people. This is a worry that there may not be enough money or food to keep the body going.

For the person who has no faith in God but is only trusting in money we can probably understand why they would worry. Where it gets to be puzzling and shows

a weakness in faith is when the person claims to be a Christian. It is to such people that our Lord would particularly speak in the verses we have read today.

And perhaps all of us at some time have said to ourselves

"I'm down to my last fifty dollars, what can I do?"

Or some people are way below that. They are in debt up to their ears, and the bills keep piling up, they cry, "what can I do"? Like Rockefeller's daughter they can be haunted by the fear that they will be penniless and destitute.

Jesus said to not be anxious for your life as to what you shall eat or what you shall drink; nor for your body what you shall put on. Then he goes on to point to the birds and the flowers. The birds do not even have to sow or reap. They do have to search out and find the food God has made available for them, but they have instincts and senses that equip them to locate what they need and they get along fine. And the flowers have beautiful apparel that adorns them.

God invites us to be naturalists and to observe the world of nature that he has created. Every living creature is supplied with the type of food needed to exist and propagate itself and provided with the skin, coat or shell it needs to survive in the environment where it is placed. Jesus says that it is your heavenly Father who feeds the birds and all other creatures and cares for them. The God who created all creatures providentially provides the food supply and everything else they need. And Jesus says that you and I are worth much more than they are worth.

This is an argument from the less to the greater. If God takes such care of the lesser creatures in the order of life, will he not take care of his noblest creature man who know Him as their heavenly Father"?

Using the father analogy, even sinful men have a basic paternal instinct to provide for their own offspring. Mothers and Dads will see to it that their children are fed even before they eat themselves. And if that is true for you and me as parents, how much more will God be a loving, caring Provider for His spiritual offspring. This is the argument our Lord uses to build faith in his disciples.

The absurdity of fretting and worrying is pointed up by our Lord when he says, 27 "**And who of you by being worried can add a single hour to his life?**"

The argument here is from our creaturely inability to lengthen our lives. If it were possible to lengthen human life by some process or technique you can be sure men would be living much longer than they do. But men die at all ages. Good health is no assurance of a long life. Medical science with all of its modern techniques cannot guarantee anyone longer life. Two patients can have the same ailment and be given precisely the same treatment and one will live and the other dies. I have seen cases of persons already at death's door suddenly revive and come back to live more years, while I have seen others who seemed strong and healthy suddenly take sick and die overnight. Jesus says that ultimately we have no control over the length of years, months, days or even hours we have on this earth. And since that is so, why be anxious about your body? God is in control of the day of your death and the day of my death. If your faith in Him is a settled thing then you have no need to worry or be afraid. But if not then the sooner you make your peace with God in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior the better. For who knows the day or cause of one's death?

Aeschylus (es'ki.lus) was not expecting to die as he went out walking one day. But an eagle that had captured a tortoise was looking for a rock to smash open the shell of the tortoise it was carrying in its talons and spying the bald head of the Greek author of some 90 tragedies and plays, mistook his head for a rock and turned loose the tortoise and the famous playwright was killed instantly. But the tortoise shell remained intact.

Or take the death of another Greek named Calchas. Calchas was a famous soothsayer. One of his contemporaries made a prediction when he planted a vineyard that he would never drink any wine from the grapes. After the vineyard began to produce grapes Calchas made some wine and threw a party to which he invited his rival soothsayer. He wanted to disprove the prophecy of his fellow soothsayer. As he was raising

his goblet filled with wine the other man repeated his prophecy. Calchas was so struck by the humor of it all that he began to laugh uproariously and he choked to death. (Reader's Digest Facts & Fallacies)

Isadora Duncan, a flamboyant and controversial dancer of the last century took a drive in a small racing car called a bugatta on September 14, 1927 in Nice, France and as usual she was wearing an immense red, silk scarf draped around her neck that streamed behind her. Neither she nor the driver owner noticed that the scarf had drifted outside to the rear of the car. As the car pulled away the scarf wound around a rear wheel yanking her out of the car and dragging her for several yards before the driver realized what had happened and stopped. The dancer's neck was broken. The scarf was the cause of her death.

Neither you nor I can add one day or hour to the span of our life so there is no need or point in worrying about it. What we should do is be sure we are prepared for that inevitable event that comes to us all. Jesus Christ is the one who says he has the keys of death and of hell. He is the way, the truth and the life, and we are urged to trust in Him.

Our Lord has given factual reasons why it is foolish to worry about food and clothing and the necessities of life. Seeing the ample provision God makes for the birds and other creatures, seeing the beautiful way he adorns the flowers of the field, we ought not fret about the food and clothing we require in this life.

But now he comes to a word about what you can do to assure the supply of all these things, which he knows you must have in this world. He says, **33 "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.**

Here, then, is the key to it all. God wants you and me to make his Kingdom and His righteousness our number one priority. What he is saying is that we need above all else to have a righteousness, which he can commend. Now this does not mean, as many might assume, that we are to try and achieve a righteousness of our own. This is impossible. **<sup>5</sup>He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, <sup>6</sup>whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, <sup>7</sup>so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. Titus 3:5-7 (NASB)**

It is not a self-made righteousness that God requires but a divine righteousness. The Word of God says all of our righteousness is as filthy rags. We need a heavenly righteousness, the Kingdom of God righteousness. This is provided for us in Jesus Christ. Paul makes it so clear in his letter to the Romans, He quotes God's word to show that there is none who is righteous, not even one, and he points out that all men are accountable to God and that their mouths will be stopped when it comes to claiming any self righteousness. He wrote, **<sup>20</sup>because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin. <sup>21</sup>But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, <sup>22</sup>even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction; Rom. 3:20-22 (NASB)**

He goes on to say that this is a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus. It is in the cross of Calvary that God displayed publicly his divine propitiation in the blood of Jesus Christ, which is imputed to a person through faith in him. My sins are all blotted out and washed away in the blood of God's crucified Son. This is the righteousness God says he requires. Christ urges men to seek that righteousness and by doing so become a part of His eternal Kingdom, and that then all these things will be added to you.

This does not mean that we just sit down and God will drop food into our mouths and send a tailor over to outfit you for free clothing. But assuming that a person is not lazy or unwilling to work, all who

belong to Christ and who are seeking the Kingdom of God and His righteousness first and foremost in their lives will find that all of those things needed for life in this world will be added to them. That is promise from the mouth of Jesus Christ the Savior. This truth is the cure for all anxiety. God promises that he will take care of you.

Hymn #134 God Will Take Care of You

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