**Matthew 6:25-34**

**Responding to Uncertainty**

March 22, 2020

David Taylor

Big Idea: We can trust God because he cares for us as his children and promises to provide for his children.

Today I want to look at Jesus’ teaching in Matthew 6:25-34 about the uncertainties of life in light of the pandemic created by the Covid-19 virus. As we experience financial loss, loss of loved ones, or our own health, there is reason for concern but Jesus warns us to not let our concern lead to fear and worry and anxiety. Uncertainty is always the plight of humanity. The regular rhythms of life give us an allusion of certainty until those rhythms are disrupted. The good news is that God has much to say to us about these uncertainties, fears, and worries. Jesus words about following him in discipleship two thousand years ago are just as relevant to us now.

Let me set the context for Matthew 6:25-34. Jesus’ just taught disciples about their money and possessions. Those who follow Jesus are to have an eternal perspective on their money and possessions so that they generously invest their resources for eternity rather than just this life. But this naturally raises a question, if I choose to serve God this way rather than money, I might suffer incredible loss and be left destitute. If that happens, who’s going to take care of me? So, Jesus addresses their fears, giving five reasons why we should not worry. His point is that we can trust God because he loves us and promises to provide for us. Let’s listen as I read Jesus’ words from Matthew 6:25-34.

First, Jesus says that . . .

1. **Worry is Idolatrous (25)**

Jesus tells them that life is more than just about the things you have or want. So do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or drink nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing (25)? When you worry you become a slave to whatever it is you are concerned about. Your life is in bondage to it, your heart is captivated by it, and your mind is dominated by anxious thoughts about it. Your life has become centered on the object of worry rather than God, which is idolatry. It is extremely difficult to worry and worship at the same time! So first, Jesus tells us that worry is idolatrous. Do not worry because your life is more than just about things and more important than just things.

1. **Worry is Unreasonable (26)**

Then Jesus gives an example to support his argument not to worry. Though birds don’t farm nor stockpile food your heavenly Father takes care of them. Then Jesus asks a rhetorical question, are you not much more valuable them they? The answer is Yes! We are much more valuable than the birds our Father takes care of, so of course he will take care of us. But what is the normal way God provides for us? The normal way God provides for birds is by their foraging for seed and insects just as the normal way God provides for humanity is working or growing our food. God provides for the birds, we are so much more valuable than the birds, so of course God will take care of you! Do not worry because God our Father loves you and will take care of you.

1. **Worry is Unproductive (27)**

Then Jesus approaches them from a pragmatic perspective, what good does worry do for you? Which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his life? Worrying accomplishes nothing; it is unproductive. Health experts tells us that worrying can actually kill you. Every aspect of our lives is in God’s hands. Worrying adds nothing to your life, it only shortens and saddens your life. Do not worry because worrying is unproductive.

1. **Worry is Unbelief (28-30)**

Then Jesus gives us another example to support his argument not to worry. The weeds in the fields grow and flower though they do not work at it yet they are more beautifully clothed than the richest man who ever lived. If God provides for the weeds which last a day or so in the desert sun, how much more will he provide for his children! His point is that in uncertainty, do not worry about your basic needs because your Father will provide for you. Worrying about your life needs is unjustified. Describing his disciples as little faith points to the heart of the issue. Worrying is unbelief, not trusting God. The root cause of all unjustified worry is a failure to trust all that God has promised to be for us in Jesus. While you may think of worry is a natural part of life Jesus says it is symptomatic of disbelief in God! Worrying over the cares of this world, the necessities of life choke out faith. Jesus says the cares of the world and the desire for other things choke the word out of our hearts (Mark 4:19). If God takes care of his creation, then he will certainly take care of his children. Trust God for he promises to provide for his children.

1. **Worry is Unchristian (31-32)**

Finally, Jesus draws a conclusion, worrying about the needs of life is living no differently than the Gentiles, those who do not believe in nor trust in God. Worrying says that you do not trust that God loves you nor is going to take care of you. We should respond differently than our culture to uncertainty. We have a Father who loves us, cares for us, and promises to take care of us. The alternative to worry is to seek God’s kingdom and his righteousness because he promises to provide! To seek first the kingdom means that you are following Jesus in discipleship, he is forming you to be like him, and you are faithful to his mission. In the midst of uncertainty, our demeaner, our attitude, our words should display faith that God cares for us and will take care of us. Our response to uncertainty should radiate the good news of the gospel so that we are a light to those around us. It means that thought you may be concerned about life, you trust that God is going to take care of you so you do not need to worry. And when fear and worry rears it’s ugly head you look to God your Father who loves you and promises to provide for you.

**Life Group Questions:**

1. What is the difference between concern and worry?
2. What are your concerns right now?
3. What are some ways you might worry about uncertainty right now?
4. Of the five reasons Jesus gives for not worrying, which is most relevant for you?
5. How do you combat or fight against fear and worry in your life?
6. How can we encourage each other to trust God right now?
7. How is this message speaking to me?
8. How can I see the pandemic as an opportunity instead of just an obstacle in my life?
9. How does this message help me in making disciples?