**Learn from the Lilies**

Based on [Matthew 6:24-34](https://biblia.com/books/esv/Mt6.24-34)

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I’ve been teaching a middle school class in Health, and we’re going over emotions. I explained emotions this way. You know how there are primary and secondary colors...and that all other colors come about by blending red, blue and yellow. And that you cannot blend any other colors to make red, blue and yellow, because they are primary. I told them that this is like emotions. You can imagine there are four primary emotions: happiness, sadness, anger and fear. I told them that we have words for and experience of countless other emotions, guilt, excitement, jealousy, bittersweetness. But these are secondary. All of these can be understood as a blending of the four primary emotions.

If this is accurate--that there are four primary emotions--it strikes me that in heaven (according to my limited understanding of heaven) there will be no occasion for three of them. There will be no ***sadness***, for Christ promises to wipe away all tears. There will be no ***fear***, because there will be no enemies. There will be no ***anger***, because there will be no injustice. That leaves only happiness, only joy. And while that’s certainly not bad news, it does make me think I will miss certain emotions. ***Excitement*** or ***anticipation*** seems to be a blend of both happiness and fear. ***Bittersweet***, is happiness and sadness. Will we never be excited in heaven? Will we never shed even tears of joy in our eternal bliss?

There is at least one blended emotion none of us will miss. It is the emotional blend of sadness and fear. I am talking about anxiety, stress...worry. I don’t think any of us will have trouble saying goodbye forever to this toxic cocktail when passing through the pearly gates. But there is good news for us even while sojourning in this vale of tears, this world of iniquity. Jesus says that we can give up our anxiety right now. Jesus says that you can stop worrying about the world and earthly things. He gives you permission from God, to stop worrying about this life.

Jesus says, **“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? 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? And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life?.”**

But someone might say, “*If I stop worrying, won’t I be irresponsible?” “If there’s a real danger, shouldn’t I attend to it until it’s solved?” If there’s a poisonous snake in the grass, I’m not going to let my guard down until it is safely out of range.” Isn’t it the same with other dangers in the world? And if I do let my guard down, stop thinking about what might happen, and something bad does happens, wouldn’t I be to blame? No I can’t control tomorrow, but if there’s a potential for danger I can worry about it. Who knows, maybe I can find a way to avoid it*”

Yes, we can worry about danger. Danger is a reality every day as we walk through this valley of the shadow of death. But does your worrying about it really prepare you for it? Jesus says, no. He says anxiety cannot add a single hour to your life. Instead he says, “*learn from the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you God clothes them and gloriously. If he clothes lilies who will only live and die in this world...how much more can we expect him to clothe us who will live forever?”*

You have been baptized and prepared for a kingdom that will last forever. It is not made by human hands or human plans, neither are it’s walls what keep it safe. It is the gracious presence of the Lord that makes it a sanctuary. In heaven, we will be with the Lord in glory. Here, we are with him in weakness. But whether we are here or there, we are with the Lord. And if we are with Him, we have no reason nor right to worry about anything.

Jesus warns us of trying to serve two masters, you cannot serve both God and money. You cannot be anxious over both God and world. So be anxious about God. Seek his righteousness and approval. Strive to please Him. In Corinth, marriage was proving to be a source of much anxiety and sin. St. Paul says, “I wish you would all be unmarried like me. A man with a wife is anxious about this world, So is a woman with a husband; **But the unmarried one is anxious about the things of God...how to please him.**” This is not really about marriage. It’s about how our ties to the world can steal our attention from where true joys are found. This is to point out that--whatever our situation--anxiety spent on the world is a wasteful disregard for the grace of God.

Think about it. Jesus says to not resist the one who is evil, that if he asks for your cloak give him your tunic as well. But, if someone tries to take your coat, you have good reasons not to give it. You will get cold and suffer and maybe get sick. If you’re cold, you might get cranky. If you’re sick, you can’t be well enough to help others. And what about him? If you let him take your coat, aren’t you enabling his thievery? Doesn’t he need to learn self-discipline and responsibility, and not find complicity in his criminal behaviour?

If you are anxious about the world, the answer seems clear...do not give up your coat. But Jesus teaches that if someone asks you for your cloak, give him your tunic as well. If you are anxious towards the world, this is foolish talk. But if you are anxious towards your heavenly Father, who sees you in secret, do you really think he’s going to be angry with you that you gave away your coat without agonizing over it? He feeds the birds who do not sow. He clothes the lilies who do not toil. He cares for all things and not a single sparrow falls to the ground apart from him. If you let ***God*** be anxious for the world that will perish, you will have the energy to be anxious for him who is forever. The treasures you amass on earth will pass away, but the treasures you store up in heaven will last forever.