

The Sermon on the Mount (Part 2)

The New People of God

Study 13 – Don't worry!

Introduction

In 1988, Robert Keith *aka* 'Bobbie' McFerrin, Jnr, wrote what he described as a 'little song'. The simple ditty with its catchy, reggae style tune shot to No 1 in the USA and the following year won the Grammy award for Song of the Year. The title – "Don't worry, be happy".

Whatever the precise reasons for the overnight success of McFerrin's song, one thing that is abundantly clear is that the sentiments expressed in it connected with people. In a world full of uncertainty, worry is a reality and personal happiness is elusive. In such a world, the power to choose against worry and for happiness is something very valuable indeed.

In Matthew 6:25-34, Jesus addresses the issue of worry and anxiety. As in the song, His confident exhortation to his followers is "Do not worry" (see vs 25, 31). But unlike the song, His answer to the problem of worry is far more profound than any of us could ever imagine. For Jesus the antidote to worry is not make-believe or a carefree happiness. For Jesus the antidote to our worry is faith in a heavenly Father who cares deeply for us and who knows what we need.

As in the Lord's Prayer, Jesus acknowledges that as people we have both spiritual and material needs and that God is the ultimate provider of all that we need. As in the Lord's Prayer, Jesus acknowledges that every day brings its own share of trouble. As in the Lord's Prayer, Jesus acknowledges and calls upon us to agree that there is more to life than the provision of our material needs. And as in the Lord's Prayer, Jesus makes it clear that whatever trouble life may bring, our first priority should always be the glory of God and the growth of His righteous kingdom, both in our own lives and in the lives of others.



Investigate and Think



Read Matthew 6:25-34

1. According to Jesus, what are the things that people typically worry about?
2. Jesus' summary – “What shall we eat? What shall we drink? What shall we wear?” is short-hand for all our daily needs. In your experience, what are the things that people worry about today?
3. What important questions does Jesus ask us to consider as part of dealing with the problem of worry and anxiety?
4. What answers should we give to these questions from what Jesus says?
5. What is the fundamental thing we should remember about worry? (hint: see verse 27)

11. What promise does Jesus make to those who put God first in their lives?

12. On what basis, according to Jesus' teaching in this passage, do you think that Jesus' promise can be believed?



Apply

1. In what way has this passage challenged or encouraged you?
2. How does Jesus' teaching challenge the prevailing attitude in our society?
3. How would you use this passage to commend Christianity to someone?