

# Don't Be Anxious For Anything

by Zac Poonen

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*This sermon emphasizes the importance of not being anxious about earthly needs but seeking first God's kingdom. It encourages confessing sins, keeping a clear conscience, and developing a deep reverence for God. The fear of the Lord is highlighted as the beginning of wisdom, urging believers to live in a way that pleases God and prepares them for the judgment seat of Christ. The message also stresses the need to maintain a fervent love for Jesus amidst increasing sin and lawlessness in the world.*

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:25, Psalms 37:25, 2 Corinthians 5:10, 1 Corinthians 4:4, Romans 8:15, Matthew 24:12

**Topics:** "Faith over Fear", "Seeking God's Kingdom"

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## Description

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## Transcript

So, dear brothers and sisters, we are thankful that once again God has given us this opportunity to meet like this. And we need to hear the word of God to be ready for the time in which we are living. Because we are going to go into more difficult times in the days to come.

So, I thought of sharing from Matthew's Gospel chapter 6. Two thousand years ago, when Jesus lived on earth, people faced many of the same problems we face today. There were many poor people among the Lord's disciples. And who had worries and fears and concerns just like we have today.

So, Jesus used very simple examples to encourage their faith. And even though we read them again and again, I find I need to remind myself of them all the time. I started studying the Bible about 62 years ago.

And I have never stopped studying it. I am studying even today. It has changed my life.

It has solved many of my problems. In times of difficulty, it has strengthened me. And when I needed guidance as to what to do, the word of God has guided me.

So, to everyone of you, I would say, please read and meditate on the word of God. And teach it to your children from a very young age. Even when they are three years old, you can begin to teach them

scripture.

That way you will prepare them for all the evil they will face in the world. The schools that our children are going to have a lot of people, a lot of children with very bad habits in those schools. And it is our job as parents to protect our children from those evil influences.

If we give them God's word, it will be like a protection for them. Especially if faith can be born in their hearts that they have a father in heaven. So, Jesus spoke much about the heavenly father to his disciples.

So, I want you to turn to Matthew chapter 6 and verse 25. And this is a very relevant word for the time in which we live. Because there is so much uncertainty in the world today because of this COVID pandemic.

And we think everything is getting better and better and better, then all of a sudden it gets worse. And the society is opening up when we are able to meet together and then suddenly they say it's getting bad, you can't go out and meet together again. And so, we don't know how it will be the rest of this year.

We don't know how it will be next year. Like James says, we live from day to day. James said in chapter 4, don't even plan for tomorrow.

We can plan, but we shouldn't think that we are going to live. When you pray, when you say something, say, if we live tomorrow, we will do this. Because time is in God's hand.

And we cannot boast even about tomorrow. What we have to say is, if the Lord wills, we will live tomorrow and we will do this. That's what James tells us to say.

James 4, verse 15. So here in Matthew 6, verse 25, Jesus said, I say to you, do not be worried about your life, as to what you will eat, or what you will drink, or for your body, or dress. Matthew 6, verse 25.

We all know that even after being born again, we face many situations where we worry about what will happen. Our children get sick and we don't know how it is going to turn out for them. And suddenly we may lose a job.

You don't have so many savings and you don't know how you are going to pay the house rent and how you are going to take care of your family. But jobs are so uncertain. Now, when we go through all these things, we can begin to wonder, does God in heaven see what is happening in my house, in my family? Does he know about all the little things that are happening here? As human beings, it is natural to get anxious and worried.

How will we take care of this situation? Especially if somebody gets sick, or the money finishes, or all these situations, Jesus says, don't be worried about your life. What you eat, or what you drink, or what you are going to wear. And then he uses the example of the birds.

I know you have read all this and you know everything. There is no need to hear all this. We have heard it before.

I will tell you when you don't need to hear it anymore. When you have come to the place in your life where you have zero anxiety about anything. When you are not worried about anything that happens in your life, or your family, or in the future, then you don't need to hear all this anymore.

In this passage, verse 25 to 34, I want to encourage all of you to read it many times on your own. Please take it as a little project in your life. Matthew 6, verse 25 to 34.

Read it, read it, read it till it is firmly in your mind. Just in these 10 verses, 3 times Jesus says, don't be worried, don't be worried, don't be worried. See, first of all in verse 25.

And then again in verse 31. Don't worry. Again in verse 34.

Don't worry about tomorrow. Three times he says it. I mean, we would think the Lord says it once, it is enough.

So many other things that he said in the Sermon on the Mount, he never repeated three times. He said don't lust after women once. Don't get angry once.

And don't tell lies once. But don't be anxious three times. So it must be something very important.

That the Lord knows will come very easily to us. We know that in the 10 commandments in the Old Testament, there were many things the Lord said don't do. Don't worship idols.

And don't commit adultery. Don't steal. And don't murder.

But never he says, don't be anxious. Why is it in the entire Old Testament, nowhere is this command comes, don't be anxious. You come to the New Testament and three times he repeats it.

So I want to say to you, dear brothers and sisters, it must be something the Lord knows will easily come to us. But we must get rid of it from our lives. And in Philippians 4, Paul says that again.

In Philippians 4, he says in verse 6, Be anxious for nothing. Does that really mean that there must be not a single thing in the world that I should be anxious and worried about? When my child is seriously sick. Or I'm anxiously waiting to get a job and I've been without a job for a long time.

And my savings is running out and I don't know how I'll be able to meet the needs. In a problem. In such situations, we are not to be anxious.

Is that what the Lord is saying? So clear, be anxious for nothing. Many years after I was born again, I never took that as a command seriously. I thought, yeah, that's not such a big thing.

I'm not harming anybody. You know, many other commandments, if I disobey, I'm hurting people. No, telling lies, getting angry, all these things hurt other people.

But here, if I get anxious, I'm not hurting anybody. And I'm anxious only about people whom I love. I'm not anxious about that neighbor on the other side of the street, what he's doing.

If he's facing some problem, I'm not worried. If somebody there on the other side of the road loses his job, that doesn't cause me any anxiety. I'm anxious only about things that concern those we love very much.

Even other families in the church, we can't be anxious about their problems. When it comes to our own family, we love them and so we're anxious about different things. Will my child get admission into this college he has to study? And now the sickness has come, will my child be healed from this? It looks like a burden to tell people, don't be anxious about anything.

But what is the reason why we should not be anxious? Jesus gives us only one reason. You have a father in heaven who cares for you. And look at the example he uses in Matthew 6 and verse 26.

He says, consider the birds in the air. They don't sow, they don't reap, they don't gather into barns. But your heavenly father feeds them.

I read a piece of poetry once. Two birds are talking to each other. And one bird is telling the other, why are these human beings so worried and anxious all the time? Everywhere I fly around, I find every home, human beings are all so anxious.

But the other bird replies. It must be because they don't have a heavenly father like we have. Do you think the birds are saying that about you? Why is this man who says he goes to CFC so worried and anxious about things? They claim to have very high standards in CFC.

Why are they so worried? And the other bird says, maybe those people in CFC don't have a heavenly father like we have. Think of that if one bird is saying that to another about you or me. I'll tell you in my own life, it's natural to be anxious.

Because we love somebody so much, we are anxious that things should go right for that person. Just like it's natural for a child to tell lies. It's natural for children to fight about little things in the house.

It's natural for us to get anxious about little things. There can be tensions between husband and wife because of anxiety. And for myself, the only way I've overcome anxiety is like this.

I say, my lord and my saviour, he tells me not to kill anybody. He tells me also not to be anxious. He tells me not to lust after that woman.

He tells me also not to be anxious. He tells me not to shout at people in anger. He also tells me not to be anxious.

And just like I would not tell a lie, I must put anxiety also in the same category. If I don't put it in the same category, I think, oh, that's not such an important commandment. He said it three times.

So I say, lord, I'm tempted to be anxious now. You have said not to be anxious because you care for the birds. I believe you'll care for me in this situation.

And for me, it was a great comfort to know when I discovered this great truth that Jesus was tempted in every point exactly like me. Jesus was tempted to be anxious. It says in Hebrews 4 and verse 15.

What he's saying there is that Jesus was tempted in all points exactly as we are, but he did not sin. So dear brothers and sisters, whenever you're tempted with any temptation, say to yourself, Jesus was tempted like this, but he did not sin. He resisted it.

And he trusted his heavenly father. I'm going to do the same thing now. And I say, lord, were you tempted to be anxious in some situation? And the answer is yes, because he was tempted like me and you.

But he would commit the matter to his father and leave it there. That's what Paul says in Philippians. He says when you're anxious, when some situation comes that tempts you to be anxious, this is what you should do.

Philippians 4, 6. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. I know you know these truths, but I want to repeat it to all of you. If you are a brother who has overcome anxiety, praise the Lord.

Then I'm speaking now to all the others who have not yet overcome. But I believe we all need it. I need it even today.

Take that word seriously, I must not be anxious for anything. But it says prayer and supplication, what does that mean? Prayer is a general prayer, Lord protect me from anxiety. Supplication means I mention that particular item, that particular thing which is causing me anxiety.

Lord, I don't know what is going to happen to my child. He's seriously sick. Or my child is doing badly in school, I don't know whether he'll fail.

Or some of your children are probably going astray from the Lord. And you're concerned about them. And you can be anxious.

What should you do? Pray. Say, God, you're my father. And you know this problem I'm facing in my home.

Supplication means mention that particular point. And in Jesus name. Then don't stop there.

It says one more thing. We must thank God that he has heard our prayer. So as soon as you finish your prayer, say, thank you Lord for hearing me.

I believe my father, you have heard me. And when you do that, there is a promise. First, the peace of God will guard your heart and your mind in Christ.

This is not some psychological trick by which we overcome anxiety. It's not some technique that we are teaching people. There is no technique.

We've got a father who is listening to what we are saying. And who assures us that he will do something about it. And the promise is the opposite of anxiety.

Verse 7. The peace of God will guard your heart and your mind. And that peace goes beyond all that we can think. It's much bigger than we think.

And here it says will guard your hearts. That means it's like a military guard protecting a house. Or like police protection for a house.

Same way, the peace of God is like a number of policemen surrounding our house. Have you experienced this? That is God's will for us all the time. So let's turn back to Matthew chapter 6. He says think of the birds and he says you are worth much more than them.

It's very rarely that you see a bird lying dead on the ground. Can you think when was the last time you saw a crow or any other bird lying dead on the ground? Maybe run over by a car or something but falling down because they didn't have enough food. You never see that.

That's amazing that you don't find birds dying without food. There are many human beings who are starving in the world and who are dying without food. All human beings are God's creation but all are not God's children.

There are special promises for God's children. Let me turn you to Psalm 37. David started writing psalms when he was around 20 years old.

Imagine a young 20-25 year old boy writing scripture. He was anointed by the Holy Spirit and most of the psalms he wrote before he was 30 years old. There are only 2 or 3 that were written after that.

But this one is one of the last psalms he wrote when he was 70 years old just before he died. He is known the Lord for about 50 years. When he was a young man of 20 he killed Goliath.

Now he is 70. He says in Psalm 37 and verse 25 I was young, now I am old but I have never seen a righteous person forsaken. I have never seen his children, his descendants begging for bread.

Even if that righteous man was poor I have not seen the righteous man forsaken by God. So we learn something from that. If your life is righteous you seek to please God by living a holy life He will never forsake you and your descendants also will never beg for bread.

Never begging for bread means they will get a job. How is it that our children are going to feed themselves once you have left the earth? They will need a job. That's how they can have food.

So when we pray our father who art in heaven give us this day our daily bread We are actually saying Lord give me a job so that I can earn my daily bread That's the only way we can get bread, food. And when it says here his descendants will not beg for bread what he means is your children will get jobs to support themselves. And if you are righteous according to this verse even your grandchildren will not be looking around for a job.

It's amazing how God cares for the children and grandchildren of a righteous man. God told Abraham I will bless your seed for many many generations. I give this land of Israel to you.

And you know today that is 4000 years after God told Abraham his children are living in Israel today. About 70-80 years ago they were scattered all over the world. They were scattered for more than 1800-1900 years.

But God brought them back to the land which he promised Abraham. Because Abraham was a righteous man. God can do amazing things.

Why won't he do it for you and your children? Even if you are God's children why can't God do it for you and your children? God knows your needs. So don't worry. First he talks about the birds and now he is talking about the flowers.

All the flowers God has created. And many of them have no value. But God still puts nice colors on so many flowers.

People cut the grass and throw it away but God gives it a beautiful green color. So don't be worried about the clothes you are going to wear. Verse 31 Don't worry saying what will we eat what will we drink, what will we wear.

Verse 32 Because the non-Christians they are the ones who eagerly seek out all these things and they are worried about it. Because they don't have a heavenly father. But your heavenly father knows that you need all these things.

That's a great comfort for us to know that our father in heaven knows we need food everyday. Our children need clothes to wear. That we have to pay their school fees because then only they will be able to get a job finally in life.

And college is more expensive. You may have to send them to college and that is more expensive. Your heavenly father knows that or not? Yes he knows.

You can tell him, he knows already. Then why does God ask us to pray? Your heavenly father already knows. See on earth we don't have to keep asking our father everyday for anything.

You don't go everyday to your mother saying I need food today. We don't ask and the father provides food, clothing, school fees without our asking. But when it comes to our heavenly father he tells us to ask.

Part of the reason is because we can't see our heavenly father. So he tells us to pray because that strengthens our faith. So we must all develop the habit of talking to our heavenly father.

He loves to hear your voice. He wants to have the joy of answering your prayer and that is why he asks you to pray. We must get to know God as our personal father in a very intimate way.

See nowadays there are many families in India where the father is working in the gulf some country far away. They are working in Dubai or Singapore or somewhere else and from there they send money to their families. And once a year or something once in two years they come.

The children don't see the father. But they know the father cares for us and sending money regularly. Even more than that the heavenly father, we may not see but he provides for us.

That's the faith that must come strong in our hearts. When I face a need I must remember verse 32. My heavenly father knows that I need this.

Next week you face a need. Say father I know you that you know about this need. Jesus frequently told his disciples that they had a father in heaven.

To the Pharisees he spoke about God. God, God, God. To his disciples he would say father your father, your father, your father.

But when you pray say our father who are in heaven. You see this here in Matthew 6 verse 9. Pray like this our father who are in heaven. Most people I hear when they pray they say lord.

There's nothing wrong in that. But most of the time in your prayer you say lord, lord, lord. I wonder if you are having an intimate knowledge of him as your father.

See your children when they come and talk to you, they don't call you mister so and so. No they say papa, daddy, appa. That is how we must talk to our heavenly father.

The Holy Spirit comes within us to cry out appa. I want to ask all of you, do you talk to your heavenly father like that? You can call him lord, you can call him god, that is all correct. But most of the time you must talk to him as father.

That is how God wants us to talk to him. Let me show you a verse in Romans 8. Romans 8, it says in verse 15. The last part, we receive the spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out appa, father.

Do you pray like that? Even in public when you pray? It is much better to say father. Teach our children also to pray like that. You can pray directly to the lord Jesus when they are small, that is also okay.

As you grow older to say father, father. That makes a lot of difference, it removes anxiety from our life. When I was born again, nobody taught me this.

I would pray god, lord just like everybody else. But I realized once I came to know him as father. It not only removed anxiety from my life, it removed discouragement from my life.

Do you find yourself discouraged in some situations? Again the solution is to know god as your father. So develop this habit of talking to god privately, publicly as father. Every time you have a need which brings anxiety, take it to the father and pray.

Here is a very comforting word in Matthew 6 verse 32. Your heavenly father knows everything that you need. So then he says seek first his kingdom.

So I read it like this. Don't be anxious about any of your earthly needs. But if you want to be anxious about something, be anxious about god's kingdom to be established on this earth.

That's the thing we should be anxious about. Lord I want your kingdom to be in my life. So what is the lord saying? If you want to be anxious about something, be anxious that every area of your life will be righteous.

Make that your goal. And he says so don't worry verse 34 about tomorrow. You can plan for tomorrow.

You can plan for next year. You can plan for the next 20 years. Build a house because you are planning for the future.

Save money that you can use when you retire. Save money to pay for your children's education. Plan for the next 20-30 years whatever you like.

But anxiety don't even be anxious about tomorrow. Each day deal with the trouble of that day it says in verse 34. So if you're not anxious about all these earthly things then what should we be taken up with? I will tell you.

Turn with me to 2nd Corinthians in chapter 5. He's talking about believers appearing one day at the judgment seat of Christ in verse 10. There's a day coming when you and I and everybody will stand in front of the judgment seat of Christ. And when we stand there we are going to be rewarded.

What for? For everything we did in this earthly body from the time we are born again. From the time we are born again till the day we leave this earth all the deeds done in the body it says here. Whether good or bad.

God is going to reward the good deeds and he's going to reward accordingly or punish for the bad deeds. So we may say aren't all our bad deeds forgiven cleansed in the blood of Christ? Sure. Even if you've committed adultery or any crime you confess it and the Lord Jesus forgives you.

It's like you know in our mind there's a tape running recording all of our life. You know just like when people take a video with their phone you keep on recording whatever is there in front of the phone. In our mind also there's a video camera that's running all the time never stops.

Think from the time you were born again till today there's a recording in your mind of everything what you did you said and what you thought and what your attitude was to people or the motive with which you said or did something there is all recorded there. Phone cannot record your thoughts and your motives. But this inside in your mind that records even your thoughts and motives.

When we stand before the Lord all of that is going to be played back for the whole world to see and God is going to give us a reward accordingly. And is this something that we have to be concerned about? Look what Paul says about himself Therefore verse 11 we know the fear of the Lord and we persuade men If you fear God you will take this very seriously Why is it people don't take verse 10 seriously? I want to ask you my brothers and sisters Do you believe that every word you have spoken to your husband or your wife at home is being recorded and God is going to evaluate it one day? Everything the way you have spoken the way you did things everything is recorded. If you cheated somebody in your business or in your office that is recorded.

And if you thought something evil about somebody or lusted after some woman that is recorded. And it is all going to be played back How will you feel in that day? When the whole world is seeing what all was going on in your thoughts and what all attitudes you had towards people Maybe you are an elder in a church appearing to be a very holy man How will you feel in that day when the whole thing is being played back? Most believers don't think it will ever happen But here it says it will definitely this is what's going to happen in the judgment seat of Christ So Paul says as far as I'm concerned I fear God when I know this And I warn other people And he says I want to keep my conscience clear and I urge you to keep your conscience clear So what shall we do about all the wrong things that we did which are in that tape in our mind Because we have all done so many things that we are ashamed of It's very important that we confess it to the Lord 1 John 1 verse 7 If we walk in the light as God is in the light His blood will cleanse us from all sin Walk in the light means just be honest The only thing God wants from you is to honestly acknowledge what you did wrong to him If somebody has got something against you you must go and ask that person's forgiveness If you hurt somebody or you took money from somebody you must return it Then our conscience is clear Then that sin is wiped out from the tape So if we have developed the habit of immediately confessing any wrong that we did to the Lord That recording in our mind will have no sin recorded in it And we must live like that all the time It's possible to live like that See what Paul says in 1 Corinthians 4 Read this verse I am conscious of nothing against myself That means he says in my conscience I am not convicted about anything that I have not confessed and said right with God My faith is absolutely clear He is saying if I die this moment there is nothing that God will find on that tape It's all cleansed in the blood of Christ We must live everyday being able to say 1 Corinthians 4 I am conscious of nothing against myself There is nobody I have to ask forgiveness I have already asked everybody There is nobody I owe money to I have repaid all my debts I have asked forgiveness from my wife I have asked forgiveness from my husband Even if I hurt the servant who works in my home I have asked forgiveness from that person also I am conscious of nothing against myself Because I have a fear of God And I don't want anything on my tape Which is sinful So then we say then it doesn't matter because my tape will be clean I just confess it and it is cleansed But do you know that if we have lot of those blank things in our tape which are just cleansed and there is nothing there That means we did not do what God wanted us to do It's like money that is wasted Time is like money If I wasted a lot of time in sinning And I have asked forgiveness it is cleansed That is a period of time when I should have done something for the Lord And that's wasted So that is where it says the Lord will reward us according to what we have done There is so much of time which is wasted because we have not taken sin seriously So we need to fear God See the early apostles They grew up for 30 years in Jewish homes where they were taught the fear of God every

day And after 30 years of hearing the fear of God they heard about the grace of God from Jesus That's how they learned to appreciate the grace of God Today's Christians they hear about the grace of God straight away From childhood And most Christians today do not have the fear of God Dear brothers and sisters ask yourself How much of fear of God is there in your life The Bible says the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom God wants all of us to be wise in our actions And the ABC of that is the fear of the Lord So if you take heed to all these things that you heard today Not only your life will be peaceful on earth free from anxiety When you stand before the Lord You will have the joy of having lived a useful life for God So everyday pray to God to fill you with the Holy Spirit And say Lord Jesus please help me to keep myself pure today To live in a reverence for God that keeps me away from sin in my thoughts and in my words I will show you one more verse before we finish Jesus said in the last days Matthew 24 Verse 12 Sin is going to increase like anything And love for Jesus will grow cold Love for money will increase Secret sin will increase Lawlessness is going to increase And love for Jesus will grow cold But if you take that warning seriously There is a danger of your love becoming cold There is a danger that you will be caught up in a world which is falling into sin And if you fight against that And you endure to the end in love for the Lord You will be saved So if you ask me how to be saved in the last days I say read verse 12 and 13 Make sure your love for Jesus is like a burning fire Endure in that Don't become cold like other believers around you Always be on fire Always be on fire to speak a word for the Lord Ask the Holy Spirit to fill you with that fire of God I do that everyday Lord I want the fire of God, the Holy Spirit to fill me everyday of my life I don't want the temperature to go down I don't want the love to become cold If I love you today, I must love you more tomorrow I want to keep on increasing in love Is that happening in your life? That is God's will for you In marriages You must increase in your love for your husband and wife as time goes by In the world in marriages they are cooling off Their love for each other is getting colder In CFC in all of our families Our love for our husband and wife must increase That is God's will You can only do that if you are filled with the Holy Spirit So pray to cry out to God Fill me with your Holy Spirit Lord That is one of the most frequent prayers I have in my life I get up in the morning, I bend, that's my prayer Lord I want to love you more than ever Fill me with the Holy Spirit Please do that When Christ comes again you will have no regrets For many of you these are very elementary truths But we need to hear them again and again To be preserved in these days Lord I want to be 100% free from anxiety I never want to forget what I heard today I must be anxious for nothing But everything take it to the Father in prayer I must develop the habit of talking to my Father regularly Let us pray Our Heavenly Father Help us to take and remember what we have heard today For us to be deeply rooted in them Bless every family that has been listening here In these difficult days encourage them, strengthen them Meet everybody's needs We pray in Jesus name Amen

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