

Be Anxious for Nothing

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- [0 : 00] I'm going to sing to God's praise from Psalm 55. Psalm 55, verse 16.
- Verse 16, I'll call on God. God will me save. I'll pray and make a noise at evening, morning and at noon.
- And he shall hear my voice. He hath my soul delivered, that it in peace might be, from battle that against me was, for many were with me.
- The Lord shall hear, and them afflict, of old who hath abode, because they never changes have, therefore they fear not God. Against those that were at peace with him, he hath put forth his hand.
- The covenant that he had made, by breaking, he profaned. More smooth and better were his words, while in his heart was war.
- [1 : 08] His speeches were more soft than oil, and yet drawn swords they are. Cast thou thy burden on the Lord, and he shall thee sustain.
- Yet he shall cause the righteous, he shall cause the righteous man, unmoved, to remain. These verses, verse 16 to 22 of Psalm 55.
- I'll call on God. God will me save. I'll call on God.
- God will be save. I'll play and pick a noise.
- He hath my soul delivered.
- [2 : 09] He hath my death of the Lord, God, earthen, hath my soul delivered.
- The earth, the heaven and peace may be, from battle that against me was born anywhere with me.
- The Lord shall be around them, now take the border of the Lord.
- Because we never change the sound, therefore we fear no more.
- Que estos acuerdos de la paz, with him he hath before this time.
- [3 : 41] The covenant he admins, by making he roving.
- More smooth and better with his words, but in his heart was war.
- His speeches were most of the night, and yet not sores they are.
- Cast the life burden on the Lord, and he shall be sustained.
- Yet he shall cause the righteous man, and never do remain.
- [5 : 11] We turn for a short while to the passage read, Matthew chapter 6, and we can read at verse 25.
- Matthew chapter 6, reading verse 25. Matthew chapter 6, reading verse 26.
- Matthew chapter 7, reading verse 26.
- No doubt all of you will be aware of the general state of alarm that exists as a result of the escalating cost of energy.

Many are fearful because of the perceived inability that will overtake them, as costs exceed ability.

[7 : 00] One thing I will say about that is that something that intrigues me, is how much time is given to this problem within the media.

And it is a problem, no doubt. There are concerns which are very great, but how quickly focus moved to this problem from the problem that exists still in Eastern Europe, where Ukraine and Russia, where Ukraine and Russia are at war.

We had war-to-war coverage of that war. And the possibilities of that escalating and the problems that would cause the world.

And prior to that, there was COVID.

And when the vaccine that currently is able to thwart the progress of the coronavirus would encounter some kind of deviant form, that it would not be able to cope with that.

[8 : 56] Now, I realize that each one of these situations is a real situation. It is something that is very worrying.

But we have to bear in mind that we are at the mercy of those who are responsible for broadcasting news.

And very often, they create alarm far more so than needs be created by the focus that they have on these things that are problematic.

They are not trying to, in any way, in any way, dismiss the reality of these situations. Because we are faced with events and situations that create anxiety in the hearts and the minds of men and women.

And these anxieties are added to the way these events are presented. And perhaps unnecessarily so.

[10 : 14] That's just a matter of opinion. But I mention that because anxiety can be created in many different ways.

Anxiety and concern can be created in the hearts and minds of each one of us in different ways.

And as Christians, we deal with that in a way different to the way those who are in the world and of the world deals with it.

It doesn't take the reason for the anxiety away. It doesn't belittle it. But the believer knows that God is God and God is in control of all the events of life.

Whether it is the current crisis that is still developing regarding the problems within society and so on.

[11 : 34] That all of these things are still under the way of God's power. You know the name of the teacher and teacher B.B. Warfield.

And he addresses this passage here. And he does so in a very interesting way.

He talks about those who are atheists.

Who are formal atheists. Those who are practical atheists. He divides them into two categories.

The formal atheist. The formal atheist, he says, and this is how he describes it, denies God. There is offered opinions, words and reasonings which declare there is no God.

[12 : 40] And seeks to sophisticate the understanding into believing there is none. That is the position of an atheist.

As far as they are concerned, God doesn't exist. And on the basis of that belief, they project their theory or their belief into society.

Whoever will listen to it. But then there is no other belief. But then there is no other belief. But then there is the practical atheist. Who isn't necessarily the formal atheist. And he says, this is where the person would never deny God with his mouth or lips.

But at the same time, forget the God they profess. They order their life as if God is not. We feel his presence and action in some things, but not in others.

We seek his blessing in some matters, but not in others. We look for his guidance in some affairs, but not in others. We can trust him in some crisis and with some hope, but not in others.

[14 : 02] You see what he is saying? They are practically the atheist. Because they deny God in the way that they live their lives.

In the way that they choose to disbelieve what God is able to do. Or what God is willing to do.

And because of that understanding, they are practically, in reality, they are more atheist than those who would deny him with their lips.

If that's not strictly true. But what does that have to do with the words of this passage here? Because we need to understand that this passage is dealing with, at least with, in part with the anxieties that assail those who are in this world.

Anxieties that the people of God must not only be aware of, but be aware of how they are to handle these anxieties.

[15 : 30] Worries and troubles that are part and parcel of human existence. Now, in this passage, we see a description, for example, about how uneasy some people are about the future and what the future holds.

And what the Lord is teaching is that such anxiety is grounded in a lack of trust in God and his purposes.

You might not think that to be the case. But that is exactly what lies at the heart of what the Lord is teaching here.

That there are those who are, because of the grip that, the worry that accompanies anxiety, creates in them.

It clouds their judgment regarding God's willingness to overrule for good in their experience.

[16 : 46] Now, that's not to say that the problems that are presented are not real. That's not the case that Jesus Christ is making. By way of example, what are the causes of worry that we find cited in this passage?

Well, in verse 25, Jesus says, Therefore I say unto you, take no thought for your life, what you shall eat, or what you shall drink, nor yet for your body, what you shall put on.

It is not the life more than meat, and the body more than raiment. Now, we may misunderstand what the Lord Jesus Christ is saying there.

That he is dismissive of all of these concerns, as if they're not really concerns at all.

So, every one of us needs to eat. Every one of us needs to care for ourselves, our clothing, our homes, our families, the best we can.

[17 : 57] But what we need to understand is that the Lord does not allow us to make these things so overbearing in our estimation that they affect our sight of God.

The preacher John Stott has written the following. Jesus Christ neither denies nor despises the needs of the body for food and clothing.

But what he says is that these things are unsuitable and worthy as a Christian person's preoccupation.

They are not the supreme good in life. So, what is Jesus actually forbidding? Well, what he is prohibiting is not thought or forethought, but anxious thought.

Not prudence, but worry. Pre-occupying, distracting, self-centred worry. That's not what he is saying.

[19 : 12] I don't think any one of us can live our lives free from the worries that life brings, aren't we?

But it's what we do with them, how we deal with them, where we go with them that is important. We, when I was looking at this, I was thinking, well, generally speaking, what kind of things can we think of that every one of us has to deal with in some way, shape or form in our lives?

And we can easily think about the workplace, for example. There are those who, in the workplace, have challenges within the workplace.

The kind of work that it is, the kind of stress that it introduces into their lives, which they can't release, which they can't abandon, which they carry with them to the home.

There are many people who have such situations, and it is part and partial of their existence. It's not trivial. It's not unimportant.

[20 : 32] It is anxiety and worry that they carry with them. Go to the home. You'll think of plenty of situations where the home situation might create such anxiety.

whether it is the physical well-being of your family or your own health, issues that many have to deal with.

All of these things create a culture or a climate of worry, and they're not easy to shake off.

You can think of all kinds, and every one of you may have your own experience of it. My own experience of it is when I am troubled.

Very often, I take that with me to bed, and instead of switching off and leaving these things behind, even taking it to God in prayer, leaving it with God, I find myself unable to do that.

[21 : 36] So I toss and I turn, and I pray, and I pray, and then I toss and I turn. And the anxiety is there, the turmoil is there, the worry is there, and it's not something that's comfortable for us.

So it may be that the problem that Jesus Christ identifies for us is very simply this, that we are not fully laying hold of the truth that concerns God, that God is telling us that it's true of himself.

I know that we have to be ultra careful when we're talking about, you know, anxiety and worry, for example, manifest itself psychologically more often than not.

And there are psychological disorders that are rooted in anxiety and in worry. There are so many, so many new disorders that are listed for you, you know, that probably were never heard of many years ago.

PTSD, post-traumatic stress disorder. PTSD, SAD, GAD, all of them are really based upon the psychological condition of the individual and they focus upon the burden that impacts upon the mind and the turmoil that the mind is in and the inability that there is for the person to release that.

[23 : 32] Now, these are very serious conditions at times and they cannot, they cannot be ignored or they cannot be dismissed or they cannot be, cannot be overlooked.

Some of them do need medical attention of some description. But that's not what the Lord Jesus Christ is dealing with here. What he is dealing with really has to do with a heart and a mind that is fixated with what belongs to the world and so taken up with what is in the world that they lose sight of what the world to come has to offer.

If your heart and mind is on the world and all that the world has to offer, we will have a problem.

Do you remember in the parable of the sower, Jesus speaks about a particular seed that is sown and it springs to fruition.

But the cares and the concerns of this world tangle it up and choke the life out of it. And that is the case.

[24 : 57] This spiritual life, the potential for it can be affected. In your life and in my life, you will lose sight of what the Lord is doing and what the Lord can do.

It is clear that the world places pressure upon all of us. And as far as material possessions are concerned, we are all in the same boat.

We all find ourselves presented with glossy images of things that are attainable. And they are desirable.

And because they are desirable, the fact that they are attainable makes us strive so that they become our possession.

And even if it is one step beyond our capacity to bring these things to ourselves, it creates disorder, it creates in us a dissatisfaction.

[26 : 10] And that really is because our mind is centred at that moment in what this world has presented to us as being desirable.

We think that our happiness, our contentment, our satisfaction will be provided when these things become ours, whatever they are.

We think that our happiness is in us, whatever they are. And, you know, some people, you don't, I think that the iniquity of our society is seen in the imbalance there is in the wealth that is created and possessed by a few, and the poverty that affects so many.

And this couple were looking for a new home. And the budget that they had for buying this new home was £1.5 million. I don't know what their trade was or where they got that.

That was their budget. £1.5 million to buy a property. Now, one thing I noticed, quite apart from not being satisfied with any of the properties that we were presented with, was that they weren't satisfied full stop.

[27 : 33] And they gave the impression of, well, this money is going to be spent on this property. What if it's not up to scratch?

What if it doesn't meet the criteria that I've set myself where this property will become mine? So the thought that mere wealth will take away the thoughts of discontent is a complete myth.

And you see that in countless ways. Rather than be content with our lot as God sees for it to supply it, our ambition may be for something better.

And ambition is not a bad thing. It may be a good motivator. But if it's selfish ambition, if it's designed to satisfy ourselves rather than anything else, then we're not a loser.

And to be reliant on what the world provides. That can be taken from us just as easily as we bring it to ourselves.

[28 : 49] It's just a recipe for disaster and greater grief. I was reading in the morning a wee booklet, The Gospel in Barbers.

And I think it was written during Calumian MacLeod's day. And it talks about Catherine and Hankey, a worthy of a past generation.

And the story is that she was going to communion in North Tolstoy. And she wasn't, she was spiritually wealthy, but materially poor.

And the story has it that as she made her way to the North Tolstoy communion, she was convinced in her own mind, from God's word to her, that God was going to supply her with a pair of shoes, because her shoes were worn.

But as she made her way to Tolstoy, I don't know if she was lying down in the heather or something, an English man who was visiting the estate, mistook her for a deer, and went to take a shot at her.

[30 : 06] But in the providence of God, the man's gun misfired. And she was spared. And at the moment that he took the shot, he realised that it wasn't a deer, that it was Catherine.

And he went to her, and he explained what had happened. And she told him that God would not allow him to harm her. But I think he got such a shock, and he was so glad that she was spared.

And he took one look at her attire, and he saw her shoes, and he gave her money to buy new shoes. Probably the guilt that he felt because of the disaster that was avoided.

But she took that as God's provision for her. And that's the way she lived her life. God provided for her. Whatever she had was meagre, but whatever God meant her to have, she got.

And she was content with that. And many of God's people can be like that. And that's what Christ commends. And, you know, Christ says something very interesting here.

[31 : 24] Which of you, by taking thought, can add one cubit and do a stature? You're not, by allowing your thoughts, to think about these things.

You're not going to make yourself any taller than you actually are. And the worries that you carry with you. Take no thought, saying, what shall we eat or what shall we drink?

Wherewithal shall we be clothed? For your heavenly Father knows what you have need of. And that you have need of all these things. And he's correcting this wrong thinking.

That when we live for ourselves, with the intent to serve ourselves rather than serve God, we run the risk of suffering loss, rather than bringing something to ourselves that is worth keeping.

In verse 27, which of you, by taking thought, can add one stature to yourself?

[32 : 35] How often have you said, have I said, what can worry change? We take them to bed, and they're still there in the morning, although we've spent the night unravelling them, and knotting them, and putting them back together again.

You've all read, I'm sure, or heard of George Muller. And if anyone took things to the wire, as far as his prayers was concerned, he did.

He ran homes for orphans. And very often, according to the accounts that we have, he would get up in the morning, and he would have 20 or 40 children under the care of these orphanages, with not a bowl of oatmeal between them, not knowing where he was going to manage to feed them.

But in the providence of God, that was how, day by day, he was able to provide for these children, who otherwise would have been in the street.

The beginning of anxiety, is what he taught. The beginning of anxiety, is the end of faith.

[33 : 59] The beginning of faith, is the end of anxiety. We are taught to bring our burdens to God, in prayer. And indeed we do.

But how many of us, as I said already, take these burdens with us, rather than leaving them with him. We sang in Psalm 55 there, verse 22, these, cast your burdens upon the Lord, and he shall sustain you.

And surely that is true. We need to learn this. We need to remind ourselves of this. We need to practice this. A truth, that God means us, to have sufficient, for each occasion, whatever the occasion may bring.

The worries that we have, will not go away. But, the potential that there is, to, to dismiss these, worries, by taking away the cause of them, lies, in the hands of God.

The prophet Isaiah, tells the people of God, you will keep him, in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on you.

[35 : 21] In the original Hebrew, you'll have been told, you will keep him, in perfect peace, in peace, peace, whose mind, is stayed on you.

Because, because, he trusteth, trusteth in thee, he trusts in God. That's what, it's all about, that's what Christ, means us to do.

That's what he wants us, to be engaged in. Putting, our trust, in God's provision. As I said, none of the things, that we are concerned with, are, things, that we do not need, to be concerned, about.

It's what we do with it, that matters. Where we go, with our fears, where we go, with our, our problems, our, our worries. And, Christ, commends, God to us, as the one, to whom we can go, for that.

Take, therefore, no thought, for the morrow, for the morrow, shall take care, of, for, the morrow, shall take thought, for the things of itself.

[36 : 34] Sufficient unto the days, the evil get off. Is that not the case? May God bless, to us these thoughts. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, we give thanks, that you are indeed, just that, a heavenly Father, who cares for his children, in a way that, no earthly father, would care for his own.

Sometimes, as fathers, we, we did not supply, what was needed, to our children. And, they suffered, because of that.

But you have never, caused your children, to suffer want. Because, you are a God, who knows, what to bring, to every situation, that we find ourselves in.

We pray, that you would watch over us, and that, those who have cares, and concerns, even tonight, would know, where to take them, and surrender, them all, into the, everlasting arms, of this God, that is God over all.

Forgive sin, in Jesus name. Amen. We can conclude, singing, in Gaelic, from Psalm 37, Psalm 37, verse 22, Products for murdering, of this Jesus country, that, of this God, we can pray, as, as, as, as, as, as, as, as, as, as, as, as, is ha gawal tlach gestol da lieise gomor naranschen vor wehze hud at janotsen shir vialiat hundir vor wehze hud hud hud hud hud hud

[38 : 56] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

[41 : 28] Thank you. Thank you. Amen.