

GOD AND YOUR NEEDS

Matthew 6:24-34

No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will devote himself to the one and despise the other. You cannot give all your attention to both God and the things you own.

So I tell you, stop giving all your attention to what you will eat and drink, and about what clothes you will wear. Isn't there more to life than food? Doesn't the body involve more than clothes?

Look at the birds in the air. They do not plant or harvest or store food in barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Aren't you more valuable than they? Do you think you can add even a single hour to your life, by worrying about such things?

And why so much attention on clothes? Look at how the flowers in the field grow. They do not work or make fabric for clothes; yet I tell you that even Solomon in all his splendor was not dressed as beautifully as one of these flowers. Now if that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which may be alive today but thrown into the fire tomorrow, won't he be so much more ready to clothe you? You people, so reluctant to trust him!

So do not worry, saying, "What will we eat?" Or, "What will we drink?" Or, "What will we wear?" People who do not know God focus on these types of things, and surely your heavenly Father knows that you need them. Focus instead on his kingdom and the righteous things he desires. And all these other things will be given to you as well.

So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will have its own worries. Each day has enough problems of its own.

A more literal translation of v. 31-33:

Therefore, do not be anxious, saying, "What shall we eat?" or, "What shall we drink?" or, "What shall we wear?" For the Gentiles seek after all these things; and your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first his kingdom, and his righteousness; and all these things will be given to you as well.

THINGS TO REMEMBER:

1. You have no need to be continually worrying about your needs. You are to seek God's kingdom and his righteousness first - over everything else. Let God "worry" about your needs. Sometimes he will enable you to provide for your own needs. Other times, when you yourself are unable to provide, he will use other ways.
2. DON'T FORGET: What you truly need is not always the same as what you want. Though God may often give us what we desire, he only promises to provide for what we need. We have a tendency to want more than what God promises to give us. (James 4:3)

"I know what it is like to live in poverty. I know also what it is like to live in prosperity. In any and every situation, I have learned the secret of how to get along - whether full or hungry, whether abounding with plenty or being in need. I can do all things through him who strengthens me." Philippians 4:12-13

3. God's ultimate and greatest goal for you is not to satisfy all your physical needs, though he will normally provide for them. Instead, his goal is to make you more Christ-like, and to prepare you for eternity with him. He will withhold what you need physically only if doing so will cause your spiritual needs to be met. (Jesus himself provided an example of this: Matthew 4:1-4.)

This means that God's promise to provide for your physical needs will always hold true unless they need to be withheld in order to accomplish something better. But even if this happens, it will not be this way forever. It is only temporary, for after Jesus Christ returns for his people, all their needs will be met . . . FOR ALL ETERNITY! (See Revelation 21-22.)

4. It may be that you, or someone you know, is presently suffering because of needs not being met. Or, you may be experiencing other kinds of trials. Below are some passages in the Bible that might answer some of the some questions you may have.
 - o Romans 5:1-5; 8:18-39
 - o James (the entire book)
 - o 1 Peter (the entire book)
 - o John 15
 - o Hebrews 11 (especially v. 35b-40 and 12:1-13)
 - o Psalm 73
 - o Job (especially chapters 1-2 and 32-42)
 - o Luke 16: 19-31
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Romans 8:28, 35, 37-39

"We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, for those who are called according to his purpose."

"Who can separate us from the love of Christ? Can tribulation, or anguish, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?"

"In all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor the present, nor the future, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Dennis Hinks © 1992, 1998 Scripture my own translation.
(Matthew 6:24-34 = dynamic translation; other passages = literal translation)