

Matt. 6:25-34

Intro:

This passage concentrates on a prohibition against anxiety, which is a wrong kind of worry and concern. This is different from wise planning and discerning foresight. The kind of anxiety Jesus warned against is the product of unbelief and therefore, it is evidence of loving something else more than God. This passage is part of a larger section dealing with the priorities of the Kingdom. The kind of sinful anxiety Jesus was prohibiting tempts us to take our priorities away from the Kingdom and put our focus on lesser things. Jesus countered this temptation by not only warning against it, with solid theological reasons, but also by bringing His hearers' focus back onto the priorities of the Kingdom.

In this section, Jesus was still talking about "ultimates." This passage is connected with the previous passage, which instructed about seeking the right treasure and pursuing only one "ultimate." Our anxiety and the focus of our ultimate concern, which is addressed in this passage, demonstrates what we truly hold as our one "ultimate." Jesus warned that sinful anxiety is evidence that we have made our own comfort and security to be our "ultimate," which is a betrayal of God.

Jesus did not say that any of these other things were completely unimportant. Rather, He put them in their proper place of importance and concern. They are important, and God cares about them. But they are not as important as we often make them. And God has promised to provide them. And they are relatively unimportant compared with the greater priorities of the Kingdom. God and His Kingdom are infinitely more important, and that is what should be the focus of our concern, because that is what should be our "ultimate." And when God is our "ultimate," all of these other things will be provided to us.

I. Don't be anxious about unimportant things (25-30)

A. Don't be anxious about self-centered things (25)

1. Because of this, I am saying to you: (25a)

The phrase "because of this" is connecting this passage to the prior passage where Jesus commanded His followers to store up treasure in heaven, where it does not perish. And He warned that we can have only one ultimate master. Therefore, in this passage Jesus was continuing to warn against false ultimates and worrying about things that are not ultimate.

"I am saying to you" is a standard discourse formula, introducing what is about to be said. So, this proposition is the transition connecting to the previous section, but then introducing the rest of this passage.

2. Don't be anxious about things that are not most important (25b-h)

a. Don't be anxious about nourishment and clothing (25b-f)

1) Don't be anxious about how you will find nourishment for survival (25b-d)

a) Do not be anxious about your life (25b)

In this proposition, Jesus warned His followers against being anxious about our life. "Life" represents a word normally translated "soul." In this verse, it refers to all of life. But in this specific case, Jesus was concentrating more on physical life, based on what follows. However, His warning also applies to all of life.

And He warned against being anxious. The word translated "do not be anxious" is the main theme of this entire passage, and is repeated in verses 27, 28, 31, and 34. This word is not forbidding any concern at all. We should have a proper level of concern and make appropriate plans, provisions, and actions for all of the things Jesus was talking about. Rather, Jesus was warning against being unduly concerned and apprehensive. We should not obsess about things beyond our ability to do anything about it. This would not be evidence of proper, wise concern and diligence.

Rather, it would be evidence of unbelief and idolatry. If we are anxious, it means we love something more than we should, to the point that it could be a false ultimate. Or it means that we do not trust God to do His promised part in providing and caring for His creation, and especially for His people. If we are anxious, it demonstrates that we doubt God's providence, His power, and/or His goodness. And that is why the alternative solution to doubting, which Jesus is about to offer in the following verses, is to be reminded of God's providence and care.

b) Specifically, don't be anxious about food and drink (25c-d)

These two propositions give specific examples of what Jesus was talking about in the previous proposition. They could be specific examples that do not cover all that Jesus meant by "life." For instance, concern about our health could also be covered by Jesus's warning against worry. But more likely, in this section, Jesus was more specifically defining what He meant by "life" by concentrating on the primary examples of physical needs (food and drink) which are necessary to sustain and continue life. And Jesus will bring the point together in 25g-h.

(1) What you will eat (25c)

Eating is a universal experience that does not need definition or explanation.

The point of this proposition is in the word "what," because it represents an unknown. People may have a question about what they will eat, especially in times and/or cultures at risk of poverty or famine. So, Jesus was saying, in essence, don't worry about whether or not you will eat, or how much, or what type of food you will find available.

(2) Or what you will drink (25d)

This is a continuation of the previous proposition, adding another example, and completing the picture of all the intake that is necessary to sustain life. The definition of drinking is obvious. And like the previous proposition, the point is about the uncertainty of drinking in a place or time threatened by drought.

In much modern culture, we don't have as much anxiety about food or drink because we have been blessed with more steady supplies and our local supermarket has proved dependable. However, recent events have shown how vulnerable these kinds of things can be. In addition, economic insecurity gives many people plenty of opportunity to worry about provisions, even in a wider culture characterized by plenty. Even if our food security is taken away by unforeseen events, Jesus still commands us not to be anxious in a manner characterized by unbelief and sin. Rather, we should do what He will recommend in the rest of this passage.

2) Don't be anxious about what you will wear on your body (25e-f)

a) Neither [be anxious about] your body (25e)

This is a continuation of the same general theme from the previous propositions. Not only are we warned against sinful worry about our life, but now we are also warned against sinful worry about our body. The term "body" refers to all of our physical body, and could apply to our physical health. But in this context, Jesus most likely limited His meaning to what He mentioned in the next proposition.

b) Specifically: What you will wear (25f)

This proposition is a specific explanation of what Jesus said in the previous proposition. Jesus elaborated what He meant by our “body” which we should not worry about. Here it is specifically defined by the body’s covering – what we wear. Like in 25c-d, Jesus could be just giving one example among many possible applications. But more likely, He was narrowing and explaining His meaning to concentrate on clothing, because that was the primary provision for the body that His hearers were most likely to be anxious about. And Jesus will bring the point together in 25g-h.

Food and clothing have typically been seen as the two most important necessary provisions throughout history. And Jesus told us not to be anxious about them, not because food and clothing are not important. But He warned against being fixated and anxious about food and clothing because these things are not *the most* important. And because God knows they are important, and He has promised to provide.

b) There are more important things than nourishment and clothing (25g-h)

In these last two propositions of this verse, Jesus drew all the previous statements together by making His point using two rhetorical questions. These are in the form of questions about the relative importance of food and clothing compared to other parts of life. But the clear point is that there are much more important things in life than just food and clothing.

1) Is not life more than food? (25g)

This question shows that we are often mindful and anxious about the less important things. There is more to life than food and drink. There are more important things in life than the bare minimum activities to sustain physical life. Jesus was prodding His hearers to consider higher spiritual things as more worthy of our mindfulness and effort. After all, if you are a miserable slave to sin, who cares what’s on the menu? True spiritual freedom and life is a greater concern. And therefore, these kinds of issues should always be a greater concern to us.

2) And [is not] the body [more than] the clothing? (25h)

This is a continuation from the previous proposition and a second illustration of the same main point. Jesus was still confronting the relative importance and priorities and ultimates. There is more to the body than clothing. Who cares what brand of jeans you are wearing if your leg is broken? Or more to the point that Jesus was making: If you end up in hell, it does not matter how well you are dressed on the way there. Therefore, put much more attention into the things that matter more. And trust God with provision of food and clothing.

B. Don’t be anxious, because God provides (26-30)

In this section, Jesus gave the answer to the problem warned about in the previous verse. His response to the possibility of His people being anxious in an unbelieving way is to encourage faith, by reminding us of the trustworthiness of the object of our faith. There is no need to be anxious about a sure thing. God is faithful and sovereign, and there is no way that He can fail to provide what He has promised. And God is good and generous, and there is no way that He will withhold from us what He has demonstrated to provide for all of His creation. All of verses 26-30 gives and illustrates the main reason why we don’t need to worry about these things.

This section has three parts, arranged in a sandwich (chiastic) structure. Jesus started with an illustration from birds to show how God provides food (v. 26). And He ended with an illustration from flowers to show how God provides clothing (vv. 28-30). And in the center of these two complementary illustrations, He made the central point that sinful anxiety is not productive or helpful in any way. And, by extension, this kind of unbelieving anxiety is actually counterproductive.

1. Don't be anxious about food, because God provides (26)

This verse is the first illustration, using birds to demonstrate that God can be trusted to provide food. It starts with the observation about birds, and how God provides for them. And it ends with an argument from lesser to greater – if God provides for them, He will provide for you, because you are more valuable than the birds.

a The example of God's provision from birds (26a-e)

1) Look carefully at the birds of the air (26a)

This proposition is the introduction to His illustration using birds. He commanded His hearers to look at the birds of the sky. The word He used means more than just to glance at and notice something. It has the connotation of looking carefully and considering – to give something serious thought and attention. In other words, most people have seen birds, but Jesus wants us to go beyond that to notice and mull over the implications of one set of facts about birds in order to form a conclusion about God and how He provides for them. We are to learn a theological lesson from thinking about how God treats birds.

2) God takes care of feeding them without them being anxious (26b-e)

In this section, Jesus more specifically told His hearers the lesson we should learn from considering the birds. And the lesson is that God takes care of them, even though they are not anxious about their food. This is demonstrated by the fact that they are provided for, even though they don't do the kind of work necessary for humans to have food.

a) They don't work to provide or worry about their food (26b-d)

Jesus illustrated His point by listing some typical human activities done to obtain food, and pointing out that birds do not need to do those kinds of activities. We should be careful not to push this illustration too far. We know that birds do have to do certain activities (like getting up early to get the worm), which are appropriate and necessary for birds to obtain food. Jesus is not here suggesting that we should stop sowing and harvesting. He is not promising that we can quit our job and expect God to drop provision in our lazy laps. Elsewhere in the Bible, it is clear that we should exercise proper diligence to earn our keep (e.g. 2 Thes 3:10-12).

Rather, Jesus's point is that the birds do not need to make any effort beyond what is normal for birds in order to find provision from God, because God is faithful to provide what they need. They find sufficient provision from God without having to resort to efforts beyond their nature and station. And so, while we do need to make the appropriate effort and have the appropriate concern to earn a living. We should not think we need to take effort and have anxiety beyond our nature and station in order to find sufficient provision. When we move beyond the appropriate level of concern and effort, we have moved into idolatry – either by loving these things more than we should, or by considering ourselves to have more power and control over the world than we actually do.

(1) That they do not sow seed (26b)

These three activities seem exaggerated and silly when applied to birds. And that is the point that Jesus was making. It would be silly to think that birds have to sow seeds. It is not necessary because of the way that God provides for them. Just like it is unnecessary for us to be anxious.

(2) Neither do they harvest (26c)

In the same way, it would be silly and unnecessary for a bird to try to harvest crops, because of the way that God provides for them. In the same way, it is unnecessary for us to be anxious about food.

(3) Neither do they gather into barns (26d)

This proposition is a continuation of the previous two, making the same general point. Just as throughout this verse, we need to be careful not to push the illustration too far. It is silly for birds to gather into barns for future use. But it is appropriate for humans to gather crops into barns, because many crops are only harvested one time per year. And therefore, they need to be stored in order to be eaten throughout the rest of the year. And yet, in Luke chapter 12, Jesus told the story of a man who wanted to build bigger barns to selfishly store beyond what was needed. And He criticized that man's actions as foolish and selfish and greedy, because he wanted to store and hoard beyond what is appropriate. So, there is an appropriate level of work and planning and wise stewardship in order for us to have food for ourselves and our dependents. But there is also an inappropriate level of worry, work, and greed that demonstrates either a sinful greed and obsession for material things, or a lack of trust in our Heavenly Father to provide our needs (or both).

b) And your Heavenly Father feeds them (26e)

This proposition is the conclusion of Jesus's illustration about the birds. Even though they do not do the minimum kinds of activities necessary for humans to have food, God still provides food for them. The emphasis is not on the work the birds do or do not do. But the emphasis is on the fact that God does not fail to feed them in ways appropriate for birds. Birds (and all of creation) are amply supplied by God gracious overflowing provision. And we should conclude from this fact the truth about God's gracious and abundant generosity to all of His creatures. And this realization leads into the point Jesus will make in the next proposition. Notice also that Jesus referred to God as our "Heavenly Father." He used this title for God throughout the Sermon on the Mount (5:48, 6:14, 32) and had just taught His hearers to address God in prayer as "our Father in Heaven" (v. 9). In this passage, again, Jesus used this kind of language to stress both God's close familiar, loving connection to His people, but also His transcendent majesty, with its accompanying power to accomplish His will. In other words, God cares for us as Father, demonstrating His willingness to provide, at least as much as He provides for the birds. And God is Lord of Heaven, demonstrating His infinite ability to provide, at least as much as He provides for the birds.

b Are you not more valuable than them? (26f)

This proposition gives the point of the entire illustration of the birds. Jesus did not explicitly spell out the point, but rather expected His hearers to grasp the point from the challenge He gave using a rhetorical question. Jesus often used rhetorical questions to communicate His points in a more impactful way that drew His hearers into considering more actively for themselves the implication of a particular truth.. He will make the same point much more explicitly as part of the illustration from flowers in 28-30. But here, He invited His hearers to make the conclusion for themselves.

He asked if we are more valuable than the birds. And the expected answer is that we are in fact more valuable, not least because humans are created in the image of God (Gen. 1:26-27) and placed as ruling stewards over all the rest of creation (Gen. 1:28-30, Psalm 8). Jesus used a similar kind of argument in 10:31 and 12:12. And from this expected answer, Jesus wanted His hearers to reason along the following lines, using a “from the lesser to the greater” kind of argument: 1) God provides for birds, which are less important, 2) since God provides for the less important, we can reasonably expect that He will even more certainly provide for something that is more important, 3) humans are more important than birds, 4) therefore, we can expect that God will more certainly provide for humans, at least as much as He provides for birds, and 5) therefore, we can trust that God will provide for us in the appropriate ways, and 6) therefore, we don’t have a need to be anxious about our provision of food, because God has demonstrated both His ability and willingness to provide food for us in the appropriate manner.

2. **Being anxious does not help in any way (27)**

This verse is placed in the center of the two illustrations from birds and from flowers. This arrangement highlights this verse as giving the point of the two surrounding illustrations – that unbelieving anxiety is unhelpful and even counterproductive.

a **By being anxious (27a)**

This proposition is subordinate to the next one, introducing it. This proposition most likely gives the means for the next one. In other words, this tells how – by doing this, by being anxious – the next proposition would be true or happen (or in this case, fail to happen). Someone may try to make their life longer by being anxious, but the next statement declares that this will not work. Or possibly, this proposition may be concessive. In that case, it would be saying something like, “even if you are anxious, who of you...” In that case, it would be suggesting a hypothetical expectation which someone might have that their worry would make a difference, in order, in the next proposition, to show that this expectation is not true. In either case, this proposition is setting up for the main point of this verse, which comes in the next proposition. But this proposition introduces the main idea of this larger section (being anxious) in order to complete the point about it in the next.

b **Who of you is able to add one single length to the span of your life? (27b)**

Like in 26f above, Jesus made what was effectively a statement, but He did it using a rhetorical question. He asked who is able to add any time to their life. But He was essentially denying, and forcing His hearers to recognize the impossibility of doing this.

The word translated “length” is normally a measurement of physical length, and is sometimes translated with the archaic word “cubit” to represent the length of a typical forearm used to measure things. That is why some people then take the term translated “span of your life” in the sense of “stature” or “height” and translate this proposition as “Who can add one single length to your height?” This is a possible translation, because the term is used for physical stature in Lk. 19:3. However, this second word almost always means age or maturity, referring to the time span a person has lived. And therefore, it only secondarily can mean physical stature in reference to the fact that children grow taller as they grow older, and reach full height when they are mature of age. So, this term almost certainly refers to the length of life and then the first term is used metaphorically for adding length to life.

In either case, the point is the same – that we are unable to do it. We cannot – on our own, by our own worry, or even by our own activity – either make ourselves taller or make ourselves live longer. And therefore, worrying is especially ineffective and pointless for this purpose.

And modern medicine teaches that anxiety and stress can actually have negative consequences for physical health, possibly shortening a person’s life. So, Jesus’s point is that

sinful anxiety and doubting God is, at best, ineffective and an unnecessary waste of time and energy. And at worst, it is counterproductive, because it takes our focus and energy away from more productive things. And it can take us away from faith in our gracious Heavenly Father into sinful doubt and idolatry.

3. Don't be anxious about clothing, because God provides (28-30)

This section is parallel to v. 26. The point of both is basically the same, just applied to slightly different topics. And the structure is similar. However, in v. 26, the implication of the illustration is only hinted at with a rhetorical question. And in this section, it is spelled out more explicitly.

a The example of God's provision from flowers (28-29)

In v. 26, Jesus used the illustration of birds to argue that God will provide food for His people. And in these verses, He used an illustration from flowers to argue that God will provide clothing for His people.

1) And why are you being anxious concerning clothing? (28a)

This proposition begins this section by drawing attention back to the main theme of being anxious. Based on what He just said in v. 27, His hearers should realize that being anxious does no good. And before that, He argued that they should not be anxious about food. And here Jesus continued to apply that thought and challenge His readers not to be anxious about clothing either. After nourishment, adequate clothing was (and still is) one of the most fundamental needs for human life on the physical level.

This is a leading question to introduce this next section and to move the overall topic forward. But it is also an accusation that His hearers were indeed anxious about their clothing in an inappropriate way. And therefore, Jesus was challenging them to no longer do this. And He was about to give them the good reasons not to worry in the rest of this section.

2) Learn from the flowers, that God clothes His creatures (28b-29)

Like in v. 26, Jesus used an illustration in order to make a point about God's willingness and ability to provide, based on His abundant provision evidently displayed in creation. And in this case, it is God's provision, not only of covering, but of beautiful adornment that Jesus pointed out in order to show that God abundantly supplies.

a) Learn from the lilies of the field (28b)

Parallel to 26a, Jesus drew His hearers' attention to the wild flowers, which were probably visible all around while He was speaking to them. He commanded that they learn from the lilies of the field. The word translated "learn from" is a different word than was used in 26a. It also has the connotation of observing, but also of observing well, with the ultimate purpose of understanding, thinking about, and therefore drawing a conclusion and gaining insight. They were to think about and learn from the lilies of the field. The word "lilies" refers to one of a few types of flowers, and it is unnecessary to pin down a particular species. Because the obvious reference is to the natural beauty of the flower, which is a common characteristic of many species. And He also added the modifying word "of the field" which probably designates this kind of flower as a wild flower. In other words, this reinforces His point about God clothing them, because they were wild flowers. They were not beautiful because some farmer cultivated them and took care of them. But they grew wild, and their beauty was only because God clothed them with natural beauty out of His abundant provision.

b) God takes care of clothing them without them being anxious (28c-29)

In this section, Jesus more specifically elaborated on what His hearers should learn from the lilies of the field, and the implication they should draw from this about their own anxiety about clothing.

(1) How they grow (28c)

This proposition is a general statement, drawing attention to the growth of the flowers. This general category will be elaborated in the rest of the section, more closely defining how they grow, and the lesson Jesus was teaching from the way that they grow.

(2) They don't manufacture clothes, but God clothes them (28d-29)

Next, Jesus spelled out the particular details about how the flowers grow, and then the implications to be learned from this. Jesus communicated this in a negative-positive contrast. He first described how the flowers did *not* grow in order to then make a point about how the flowers were clothed. This is all setting up for the larger application He will make in verse 30.

(a) Neg: They do work to make their clothing (28d-e)

This section is the negative portion of the negative-positive contrast. It tells what is *not* true about the flowers in order to set up for the positive point about the flowers Jesus will make in v. 29.

Similar to 26b-d, Jesus pointed out that the flowers do not even make the effort that humans have to make in order to be clothed. Again, this is not promising that humans likewise don't need to do the appropriate work to attain clothing. Rather, it is to show that flowers do not need to go beyond what is natural for flowers. Flowers do not need to attempt to do God's part in clothing them. They only need to do the flower's natural part, and trust God to do His part.

(i) They do not toil (28d)

Obviously, flowers do the appropriate flower activities of drawing nutrients and water from the soil and converting sunlight into chemical energy in order to grow. Jesus was not claiming to set aside normal biological processes. Rather, He was pointing out that flowers do not go beyond their station in trying to provide for their clothing. Jesus was using an exaggerated hypothetical, portraying flowers as if they were acting like humans, which would be unnatural and unnecessary for a flower to have to do.

(ii) Neither do they spin [thread] (28e)

This is a continuation of the same illustration Jesus began in the previous proposition. He is still exaggerating as if flowers were acting like humans in order to clothe themselves. Spinning thread is the process of binding fibers such as cotton or wool into a string, which is then woven into cloth in order to make clothes. In the ancient world, this was a time and labor-intensive process. Flowers do not need to do what humans need to do because God has created flowers with a particular manner of having adornment which is appropriate for flowers. Toiling and spinning may be (at least part of) an appropriate manner for humans to attain covering and adornment. So, Jesus's point was not that we don't need to

take the necessary human effort to attain clothing. But we should not go beyond the human manner of providing clothing and attempt to usurp God's role of provision because we doubt that God is either willing or able. In other words, to be anxious about our clothing is to go beyond what is appropriate to a human, just like spinning and weaving would go beyond what is appropriate for a flower to do. And it is unnecessary, as highlighted in the next verse.

(b) Pos: But they are better clothed than Solomon (29)

This section is the positive side of the negative-positive contrast begun in v. 28d. It tells what is true about flowers in spite of what they do not do, as just communicated above. The point of this section is not just in how the flowers are clothed. It is that they are clothed this way in spite of not exerting more than their natural, normal effort. In the same way, humans should not go beyond our normal means of attaining clothing into being sinfully anxious or controlling about it. Because that would be unnecessary and counterproductive.

(i) But I am saying to you: (29a)

This is a typical discourse formula, introducing what Jesus was about to say. This type of formula puts emphasis on what follows, and is equivalent to verbal highlighting or italics.

(ii) They are clothed better than Solomon (29b-c)

In this section, Jesus compared the beauty of the appearance of the typical wild flower with the beauty of the clothing worn by the greatest, most gloriously clothed person in Israel's history. And His point was that the best of human clothing falls short when compared to the adornment that God gives to plants.

((a)) that Solomon in all his glory did not clothe himself (29b)

King Solomon was the richest man in all of Old Testament history. His riches and opulence were famous throughout his world. Jesus used him and the way he was clothed at the height of his glory as a means of comparison with the wild flowers. Jesus made His point by drawing attention to two things about Solomon. First is his glory, which refers to the magnificence and splendor of Solomon that was shown in his extravagant clothing. The greatest possible display of human wealth and resources cannot compare to God's resources. And second, Jesus specifically said that Solomon clothed himself. This is likely to highlight that the very best humans can do on our own cannot compare with what God does on a mundane basis for flowers, many of which will never be seen by anyone. This is not to put down Solomon or the way that he was clothed. But it is to use the very best of humanity to show that God is magnitudes better. Therefore, we should not rely on our own resources, but trust in God and His resources and grace.

((b)) like one of these [is clothed] (29c)

This proposition is the completion of the comparison began in the previous one. “One of these” obviously refers to the flowers Jesus was mentioning in this context. The flowers were compared with the way Solomon was clothed, and the flowers were found to be more beautiful and glorious. And the reason is that they were adorned by God Himself, without being anxious about the way that they were clothed.

b God will take care of your clothing, even more than the temporary plants (30)

This section is another rhetorical question intended to drive home the point Jesus was making. It is parallel to 26f, but much more explicit in spelling out the application of this truth. Jesus put this in the form of an if-then statement, first giving the condition, which is true, and then asserting the conclusion from that condition in the form of a challenging question.

1) If God takes care of even temporary things in this way (30a-c)

This is a conditional statement setting up for the conclusion in 30d. If this section is true, then the implications stated there must be acknowledged. And the statements in this section are assumed to be true, and therefore, the implications of 30d should also be considered true (even though given in question form).

a) If even in the case of temporary things (30a-b)

This section is a concessive statement, setting up for the point Jesus will make in 30c. It highlights that the grass is temporary and transitory. God is still generous and abundantly supplies the seemingly disposable things of life. This tells us about how He will treat the people made in His image.

(1) If existing today (30a)

This is the first part of the concessive statement, setting up for the next proposition. The grass of the field (implied from 30c) is existing today. But, as stated next, it won't exist forever.

(2) And the next day being thrown into the furnace (30b)

This is the conclusion of the concessive statement started in the previous proposition, and which is leading up to the main proposition in 30c. The plants exist one day, but the next day they are burned for fuel. The word translated “furnace” may better be translated as “oven” because this typically described something used for baking bread, rather than for heating a home.

In any case, the point is that if it is destined to be burned for fuel, one would think that its adornment does not matter. And in one sense, that is true. But the seeming futility of the plant's adornment serves to highlight the fact that God adorns them so well, as stated in the next proposition.

b) In this way God clothes the grass of the field (30c)

Again, Jesus was speaking in an exaggerated manner to point out the contrast between what one would expect and what God actually does. This is to show that God's grace and generosity go beyond what we normally expect from other people. In spite of the futility and temporary nature of grass and other plants, God adorns flowers in such a beautiful way. This demonstrates God's extravagant blessing to His creation. This is an argument from less to greater. If God does this extravagance even for seemingly unimportant and disposable things, how much more will He do this for His people, which is the point of the next proposition.

2) Will not [He clothe] you much more, one of little faith (30d)

This proposition is the conclusion of the argument from less to greater. If God so clothed the temporary and disposable plants, we are to consider and conclude that He will clothe His people much more. The phrase “much more” does not necessarily mean better clothing, which would contradict v. 29. Rather, it is a statement of degree, in this case, a greater degree of certainty that God will clothe His people. It is more certain and dependable that God will provide adequate clothing. And in the larger context, this is not limited to physical clothes, because human clothes will not compare with flowers. Therefore, this likely also has a secondary significance with regard to being clothed with righteousness and spiritual qualities that are more important, and which are much better than just outward adornment. This possibility is reinforced by the regular teaching in this sermon that the inward reality is more important than the outward show.

And Jesus ended this proposition by addressing His hearers as “one of little faith.” This is a challenge, and a prod to those who are sinfully anxious to no longer be worried in a sinful unbelieving manner. He has given sufficient reasons to back up His command not to be anxious about food and clothing. So, if someone is still anxious, it displays sinful unbelief toward the God Who has proven His ability and willingness to provide by the way He provides for the birds and the flowers.

II. Therefore, don't be anxious, but trust God and pursue the most important things (31-34)

This final section of this passage is the inference and application of all of the previous teaching in this passage. Because of all that He had just said, Jesus gave a twofold command in order to respond to the truths He had just spoken. There are two parallel commands in this section, both using the same language – “do not be anxious.” They just command not to be anxious about two different, but related, things. And in this section, Jesus continued to give more reasons not to be anxious. But He also gave an alternative. He commanded His hearers to do something positive instead of being anxious. And that positive alternative was connected with a tremendous promise.

A. Therefore, don't be anxious about these things, but seek the things of God (31-33)

The first command in this inference and application section was given in the form of another negative-positive contrast. Jesus reviewed and applied what He had said before, giving more reasons why we should not worry about these things. But then He gave the positive alternative, what we should pursue and give our attention and effort to. This is the central focus to the entire passage, even though it is not given much definition or elaboration in this section. The rest of this sermon and the Gospel of Matthew is the elaboration of this truth. If we give our focus, affections, and effort to the pursuit Jesus recommended, we won't spend our time and energy being anxious about things that are relatively trivial in comparison.

1. Neg: Therefore, don't be anxious about these things (31-32)

This is the negative portion of the negative-positive contrast. Jesus commanded what His hearers are *not* to do. And in the next portion, He will counter that with the positive command that His hearers should do instead.

a Therefore, don't be anxious about food and clothes (31)

Because of all that Jesus had previously said about God's character and promise to provide sufficient food and clothes, He then reiterated His warning against unbelieving anxiety over these things.

1) Therefore, do not be anxious (31a)

This proposition is the exact same wording that Jesus gave in 25b, with the addition of the word “therefore” to connect it with the previous section. Again, Jesus was not forbidding the proper amount of reasonable concern for our physical needs. He was forbidding the sinful, unbelieving kind of anxiety that goes beyond our station and ability, and aspires to exercise

godlike control over our situations, which we are not able to do. And in desiring this, we are implicitly suggesting that God cannot be trusted to do His job or keep His promises. And thereby, we are insulting God whenever we are anxious in the way Jesus was forbidding. And the word “therefore” connects verses 31-34 with all of the preceding verses. All of this section is a direct consequence of what He had previously spoken. We should not be anxious, based on all of the reasons Jesus had previously given.

2) Asking about food and clothes (31b-e)

In this section, Jesus elaborated the manner in which people may demonstrate they are being anxious and the content which they are being anxious about.

a) Saying: (31b)

People demonstrate their anxiety by saying the things Jesus will delineate in the following propositions. This word could refer to saying something out loud to the people around. Or it could just refer to thinking, as in saying something in our heart. In either case, it is giving expression to the anxiety by somehow communicating questions that are evidence of sinful doubt and anxiety. This proposition functions as a discourse formula introducing all of the next three propositions, which form a section describing the content of what is said. And it shows the manner in which people demonstrate sinful anxiety.

b) What will we eat, drink, and wear? (31c-e)

This section contains three parallel questions which show the content of the speech or thought which demonstrates sinful anxiety in a manner that Jesus was warning against. All three of these questions were directly answered in the earlier verses. Jesus returned to the same three issues He had mentioned earlier to review a typical manner in which inappropriate worry may be expressed. And so, if someone is still asking these questions, it is clear evidence of continued unbelieving anxiety of the kind Jesus was forbidding.

(1) What will we eat? (31c)

This proposition echoes 25c, where Jesus commanded His hearers not to be anxious about what they will eat. And He answered that concern in v. 26, using an illustration of how God feeds the birds. And this ended with the implied promise in 26f, that God will feed His people, because they are more valuable than the birds. Therefore, if someone still asks about what they will eat, after all that Jesus had said, they are expressing their unbelief and sinful anxiety.

(2) Or what will we drink? (31d)

This proposition echoes 25d, where Jesus commanded His hearers also not to be anxious about what they will drink. His answer to that concern was clearly implied in all that He said about God providing food. Jesus certainly could have given an illustration about how God waters the trees with rain, parallel to His illustration about how God feeds the birds. But this was unnecessary. Because if God can be counted on to provide sufficient food (which He certainly can), then it can be taken as a given that we can also count on Him for sufficient drink, which can be considered together with food in terms of physical nourishment. Therefore, to also question how we can attain this provision is another way of expressing unbelief and sinful anxiety.

(3) Or what will we wear? (31e)

This proposition echoes 25f, where Jesus commanded His hearers neither to be anxious about what they will wear. He answered that concern in verses 28-30, using the illustration of the wild flowers. And that illustration ended with the promise in 30d, that God will much more certainly clothe His people. Because God has clearly promised and demonstrated His willingness and ability to adorn His people, we should not be anxious about it. And if we do continue to question how we will be clothed, it demonstrates we are being anxious in a manner that is inappropriate and filled with sinful doubt.

b Reason: These are common needs that God provides to all (32)

This verse contains more reasons grounding His reiterated command not to be anxious in v. 31. First is a reason based on an argument from lesser to greater. And second is a reason based on the character and competency of God Himself as our Heavenly Father.

1) For the Gentiles desire all of these things (32a)

This first reason is an argument from lesser to greater, and it contains a few steps in the argument that are implied but not explicitly stated. This argument is similar to the illustrations of the birds and flowers used earlier in this passage. The given statement is that the gentiles desire and strive after food, drink, and clothing. There is no indication that this desire and striving is bad in any way, even though gentiles were thought of as the bad guys by many of Jesus's first hearers. Rather, the logic of the implied argument is most likely as follows: 1) The gentiles need all these things, 2) God provides all of these things for gentiles, even though they are not (yet) His people, 3) how much more, then, should we expect that God will provide all these things to those who are His chosen people, in special covenant relationship with Him, because He has promised to care for His chosen people as part of the covenant relationship. Because all of these things are common needs of all of humanity, supplied by God, His people can reasonably conclude that God has taken this into account in His providence over all the earth. And therefore, this applies even more to His people. And this inference is reinforced in the following propositions.

2) For God knows what you need (32b-c)

This is the second reason in this section, reinforcing the command not to be anxious in v. 31. This reason also contains implicit steps, which Jesus expected His hearers to connect, based on what He explicitly stated. This argument is based on the character and ability of God, and His relationship with His people.

a) For your Heavenly Father knows: (32b)

This proposition is, in one sense, an introductory formula, setting up for the statement of the content of what God knows, which is found in the next proposition. But in another sense, this proposition is actually the main focus of the two. It is not just that we have needs. It is that God is very conscious of those needs, which should lead us to the expectation that He will do something about it. Jesus was reminding His hearers that God was vigilant to be involved in their lives. He has not forgotten us, nor will He ever do so. Because He reminded His hearers that God knows, Jesus expected them to conclude that God would make the appropriate response, based on this knowledge.

And again, Jesus described God as our “Heavenly Father.” This again carries all the connotations of promise that God cares for us infinitely more than a good human father cares for his children. And God is able to accomplish His providential care, because He is Lord of Heaven, above all earthly limitations. Our infinite God knows everything. And the clear implication is that He will take care of everything under His care, including our needs of physical provision.

b) That you have need of all these things (32c)

This proposition gives the content of what God knows about us, as introduced in the previous proposition. God’s people, along with the gentiles mentioned in 31a, all have need of the basic provisions of life. This is not something unusual, warranting special anxiety on our part. Rather, it is the common experience of humanity. Therefore, to be anxious, as if our case were a special case, is to think too much of ourselves. And it is also to doubt that God knows or cares about our needs. However, Jesus clearly stated that God does know, and earlier illustrated that God does indeed care for us and our need. Therefore, for His people to be anxious for food, water, and/or clothing is unreasonable and sinful. God’s proven character is reason not to have unbelieving doubt about either His willingness or ability to provide. One solution to sinful anxiety is to take our focus off of our need and put it onto our Heavenly Father, Who is the solution to all of our need. And another solution to sinful anxiety will be given in the following verse.

2. Pos: Seek first God’s Kingdom, and you will be provided for (33)

This verse is the positive alternative to being anxious, which Jesus provided His hearers. Jesus did not just tell people what *not* to do, but He also gave His hearers something better to do instead of the bad thing. Just like the old saying that “nature abhors a vacuum,” our spiritual and moral lives cannot remain empty. We will always find something to fill our desires and attention with. And if it is not something good, it will be something bad. This is the meaning of another old saying, “Idle hands are the devil’s workshop.” Jesus warned that if a person is freed from a demon, but remains empty, more demons will come in and fill that person, and their new state will be worse than their previous state (Lk. 11:24-26).

But this also works in the opposite direction. Something harmful in our lives can be squeezed out if we replace it with something good. That is why people are better able to beat addictions and/or habitual sins when surrounded by supportive community, and often by pouring themselves into something better. There is a famous essay, which I highly recommend, called “The Expulsive power of a New Affection”¹ which highlights how we can overcome sin by replacing it with a godly affection and pursuit. In this verse, Jesus was giving His hearers the godly alternative to sinful anxiety and strongly urging them to pursue the positive option instead. And He also included a tremendous promise to those who pursue this better alternative.

a But seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness (33a)

This proposition is the positive command Jesus gave to His hearers as an alternative to being anxious. The word “seek” means to desire something, but also to give significant effort to realizing this desire. His disciples should both have affection for, and work toward what Jesus was commanding in this verse. If we say we are following Jesus, but lack either the desire or effort, then we are not living in obedience to this command.

And Jesus said that we are to seek it “first.” This word does not refer to time, as if we are to seek this earlier than we do other things, although that may end up being the case. This term emphasizes the priority and intensity of our affections and effort. We are to desire and pursue

¹ <https://www.monergism.com/thethreshold/sdg/Chalmers,%20Thomas%20-%20The%20Expulsive%20Power%20of%20a%20New%20Af.pdf>

this to a much greater degree than we desire and pursue other things. In this context, we are to put more affection and energy into pursuing this thing than we are to put into being anxious about food, drink, and clothing. But this also applies to all other human concerns. There needs to be certain priorities in a disciple's life which are conformed to God's priorities. And Jesus clearly communicated standards for our priorities throughout this sermon, coming to a climax in this verse.

There are two things Jesus stated in this verse that we should seek first: The Kingdom of God, and His righteousness. The Kingdom of God is not explicitly defined in this verse, nor is it clearly defined as such in the New Testament, because Jesus rightly assumed His Jewish hearers would already know what He meant when He used this term. Jesus had already used the term "Kingdom" in 5:3, 10, 19, 20, 6:10 and He would use it again in 7:21. See the comments on these verses for further definition and discussion of this term.

But in this verse, the definition of His Kingdom, and how we are to seek it primarily has to do with the Kingdom as the full and unmistakable manifestation of God's good and gracious rule. In one sense, God always rules. But in another sense, we don't always experience the full blessing of His rule in this fallen world. So, this command is to wholeheartedly long for God to demonstrate the fullness of His rule, which includes judgment as well as blessing. But this command also includes the idea that we would seek God's rule by willfully submitting to His rule in glad obedience to all that God has required of His people, not in order to earn God's rule and favor, but because God is Lord over all, Who has graciously given us to be a part of His rule and its accompanying blessings. This proposition echoes when Jesus taught His disciples to pray, "Let Your Kingdom come, let Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." Implicit in that prayer, and in this command, is that God's people would not only welcome that rule, but actively seek and work toward it, as much as it is possible for us to contribute to His rule, and to joyfully submit to His rule and obey His commands.

The second thing that Jesus commanded His hearers to seek was "His righteousness." This phrase is parallel to, and related to, God's Kingdom. The concept of righteousness and its related terms is important in the Sermon on the Mount (5:10, 15, 20, 45, 6:1), and in the Gospel of Matthew as a whole (3:15, 9:31, 10:41, 12:37, 13:17, 43, 49, 20:4, 21:32, 23:28, 29, 25:35, 37, 46, 27:19). This vocabulary comes from the legal sphere and refers to being on the right side of a legal and/or moral standard. In the Bible, this is the same language used for the concepts expressed in English by the words "justice," "just," and "justification."

The term "righteousness" can have a range of possible specific meanings, all within this general idea. It can mean a position or standing of being in the right as far as legal sanction and responsibility. In other words, it can mean the same as being innocent of legal or moral wrongdoing. And it can also mean being on the right side of the law by having paid your debt to society or to the lawgiver. All of these have to do with the standing of a person on the right side of the legal and/or moral standard, as opposed to being guilty or a lawbreaker or a sinner. And this term can also refer to the actions and lifestyle of a person, which is in conformity with the legal and/or moral standard. There can be righteous deeds and attitudes and lifestyles, as opposed to unrighteous or wicked actions and lifestyles. And therefore, there can be righteous people, who typically live in a righteous manner. And this language can also refer to the standard itself as the proper measurement of what is good and true and right.

With God, the legal and moral standards are the same, because He is the ultimate lawgiver *and* the ultimate standard of right and wrong. Therefore, any transgression against His moral standards is also a transgression against His legal sanctions, as well as being an affront to His person and dignity. With human standards, it is possible for something to be immoral, but not illegal, or illegal, but not immoral. This is not the case with God. And throughout the Book of Matthew, especially in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus regularly contrasted God's ultimate

perfect standards of righteousness with various human standards. The Pharisees thought their traditions and rules were in line with, and even guarding and improving God's standards of righteousness. But Jesus clearly disagreed in many cases.

Jesus commanded His hearers to seek "**His** righteousness," that is, God's righteousness. Of course, God's righteousness is the same as Jesus's righteousness, but that is not relevant to the point that Jesus was making. Jesus was contrasting God's righteousness with human righteousness. Earlier in this sermon, Jesus had made it clear that our own righteousness is not enough unless it surpasses the righteousness of the Pharisees (5:20), which it is not likely to do on our own. And our righteousness is not enough unless we are perfect as our Heavenly Father is perfect (5:48), which is impossible to do on our own. A lot of the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount is aimed at raising our standard of righteousness to which we are aspiring and working, while at the same time, forcing us to despair of reaching that standard of righteousness on our own. We can never do it, though we should desire and strive to live this way.

All this is to point us away from our own righteousness, the way of depending on our own merit, and to point us to an alien righteousness and power for righteous living that comes from God alone. We are not to seek our own righteousness, but **His** righteousness. Jesus is beginning to reveal that there is a righteousness available to God's people that comes from Him as a gift. This will only be fully developed in the rest of the New Testament, but Jesus is showing the necessity of this different kind of righteousness. This righteousness is a position and standing before God graciously given to His people by means of relationship with Christ and the atonement He brings. This righteousness is a gift, which we should long for. Like the Kingdom of God, we cannot bring this about on our own, nor even contribute to it. But in the same way, we can respond to it, and live our entire lives in light of it, and strive to live in conformity with this righteousness from God which we don't deserve on our own. We should seek to live in conformity with this righteousness we have been given in Christ, but never think that we have this righteousness because of an obedience and conformity on our part. We are to live righteously because we have been given righteousness from God. We are not given God's righteousness because we live righteously, as will be clearly stressed later in the New Testament.

These are the two things we are commanded to seek as first priority: His Kingdom, and His righteousness. This is the positive activity given to us as an alternative to being anxious. And this command comes with a promise given in the next proposition.

b And all these things will be provided to you (33b)

This proposition is the promise attached to the previous proposition. If we seek first God's Kingdom and righteousness, Jesus promised that all these things will be added to God's Kingdom and righteousness as a bonus. Even without seeking God's things, the gentiles get the bare minimum of provision, solely because of God's goodness to His creation. How much more should we expect God to provide the simple things of physical provision when He is also graciously granting the full privileges of His Kingdom rule and righteous standing to those who seek Him.

In this verse, the phrase "all things" obviously refers to sufficient food, drink, and clothing mentioned in the previous context. This is not a blanket promise for anything and everything we may selfishly desire. And if someone thinks they are seeking God's Kingdom, but doing it primarily in order to get luxuries, they are probably not genuinely seeking God's Kingdom and righteousness.

And the term "provided" is the same word used in v. 27 for "adding" something to our life. In this context, it means graciously adding something to someone else as a means of providing it

by grant. It is a gift put into the life of God's people because of His generosity, not something they earn themselves. And it is added, in addition to all the phenomenal blessings of His Kingdom experienced because we have been granted standing with His righteousness. If we fixate anxiously on food and clothing, we miss out on God's Kingdom and all its blessings. However, if we focus on God's Kingdom, we get food and clothing thrown into the blessings. This promise assumes God's power and willingness to grant all these things, which was plainly argued in all of the passage above. But it also clearly demonstrates that God is not like humans. Humans, even with the best of intentions, will often let us down. They try, but are not sufficiently able. God never will let us down. God's promises never fail, because God is unable to fail. This is a solid promise of fact, based on God's character and omnipotence. However, we need to be careful to remind ourselves that this is not a precise promise of the manner, timing, or extent in which this promise will be fulfilled. It is necessary to guard our hearts and live with faith and gratitude. Otherwise, we will be tempted to doubt and grumble if this promise is not fulfilled in the exact timing and way that we expect or desire. God will always keep His promises, but not necessarily in the way that we think He should. Nevertheless, this promise is a solid foundation that sustains us against anxiety and motivates us to seek first His Kingdom and righteousness.

B. Therefore, don't be anxious for tomorrow, but take care of today (34)

This final verse of this passage is parallel to verses 31-33. It gives the second expression (vv. 31-33 being the first expression) of the inference and command that flows from the first section of this passage (vv. 25-30). The bottom line of this entire passage is the command not to be anxious. This was repeated and stressed in v. 31 as the first summary application of this teaching. And in this verse, it is repeated and stressed one last time. Jesus made it very clear (again) that His hearers should not be sinfully anxious, gave excellent reasons and motivations not to be anxious, and then wrapped up this teaching by putting the focus on the future, and the proper attitude we should have toward it.

1. Therefore, do not be anxious for tomorrow (34a)

This proposition is parallel to 31a. It uses the exact same language, but adds "for tomorrow." Jesus repeated the same theme prohibition (see vv. 25, 27, 28, 31) of this section as the conclusion and application of this passage, and as the logical inference from all that He spoke before. And, as with 31-33, this command is supported by all the reasons Jesus gave earlier in this passage. This verse focusses specifically on "tomorrow," by which Jesus likely meant our short-term future in general. He stated the command in this proposition, and will give reasons to back it up in the rest of this verse. Like in the rest of this passage, this command is not a prohibition against wise planning and preparation for the future. Throughout the Scripture, we are taught to make wise decisions looking toward the future consequences. And we are specially to live every day with eternity in mind. Jesus was not recommending short sightedness or foolish neglect of responsibilities. Rather, like throughout this passage, He was forbidding a sinful anxiety that flows from a lack of trust in God's provision, and desires to usurp God's control of our future and take His sovereign prerogative as our own. Only God controls the future, and we should not aspire to take that control for ourselves. Like James stressed in his epistle (Jms. 4:13-17), we should not boast of our future plans, as if they are independent of God's provision and control. Rather, we should humbly rely on God for our future, even as we try to wisely plan to the best of our ability. The issue is not whether we plan and/or work toward our future. The issue is the attitude with which we look to the future. Do we try to make our future on our own, as if God does not exist? Or do we entrust our future into God's hands, acknowledging and following Him in all that we do?

2. Today has enough problems without worrying about tomorrow (34b-c)

These final two propositions are introduced by the word “because” and give the reason for the preceding command. Jesus had already given many excellent reasons not to be anxious. But here, He gave the reasons specific to not being anxious “about tomorrow.” And those reasons have to do with the nature of “tomorrow” and its relation to itself, and its relation to today.

a Because tomorrow will be anxious for itself (34b)

The word “tomorrow” is the same word as used in the previous proposition. It still can be referring to the near-term future (including the time after the very next day). But in these last two propositions, it more likely should be taken literally to mean only the following day, because the point is that each individual day should be dealt with on its own.

And the word translated “be anxious” is the same word used throughout this passage (vv. 25, 27, 28, 31, 34a). However in this proposition, tomorrow is the subject of this verb. It is tomorrow that will be anxious. This proposition is not a command to us, like the other uses of this word in this passage, but it is just a simple statement of the fact that tomorrow will be anxious. This could be taken as stating a bad thing, or it could be taken as stating a good thing. Most likely, based on the following proposition, Jesus was just neutrally stating a fact. Tomorrow will be anxious for tomorrow. And that is the reason not to be anxious about tomorrow today. Tomorrow’s anxieties will take place tomorrow, and therefore, it is fruitless and unnecessary to be anxious about tomorrow today.

And the grammar of the last word in this proposition is somewhat ambiguous. Literally, it is “tomorrow will be anxious of itself.” This could mean that it will be anxious *about* itself. That is, tomorrow will be the object and topic about which it will be anxious. Or it could mean that it is anxious *for* itself. In other words, tomorrow will be anxious on its own accord, without our input or help. There is some truth in each of these possibilities. And either option gives good reasons for the command not to be anxious about tomorrow. But this ambiguity is ultimately answered by the context and content of the next proposition.

b Its own problems are sufficient for each day (34c)

The word Jesus used, which is translated “problems” is the generic word for evil or bad. Here it most likely does not have any connotations of moral evil. But rather, Jesus intended to refer to the general bad and/or hard experiences, or difficulties we can typically encounter in any given day. And He more specifically described that word by saying “its [own].” That is certainly referring to each individual day, as He will state later in this proposition. So, Jesus was talking about whatever difficulties and trials and needs would be encountered on any particular day.

And the word “sufficient” means, enough, adequate – no more is needed. And this word is emphasized by its position in the sentence – literally, “sufficient for each day is its difficulties.” Jesus stressed that each day had an adequate amount of difficulties on its own. No more bad things are ever needed to be imported from other days. There is one day’s worth of troubles for each day, and that is enough. Therefore, there is one day’s quota of needed concern for each day, and adding anxiety would be sinful, stupid, unnecessary, and counterproductive. Therefore, we should deal with it as it comes. There is enough to handle today, and so we don’t need to add tomorrow’s anxiety to today.

And again, I need to make the disclaimer: Jesus was not saying we should be irresponsible or fail to plan for the future. We should use all necessary foresight and make responsible decisions and actions. That is not what Jesus was forbidding in this passage. He was prohibiting sinful anxiety that is the product of unbelief.

But Jesus's point in this passage is that we should deal with each day's difficulties without sinful anxiety and doubt in God's goodness, ability, or provision. We should trust God for tomorrow, because we are not God. We are not able to control tomorrow, and worrying about it will not help tomorrow at all. Rather, we should submit to God, and rely on Him to guide and provide for tomorrow. Tomorrow will take care of itself tomorrow, and we should not be anxious about it today. Today has enough problems on its own, without worrying about tomorrow.

There is one additional thought that was not part of Jesus's intention in this proposition, but which is still true and applicable, flowing out of what Jesus said: Because each day's difficulties are sufficient for each day, neither should we err in the opposite direction by trying to push today's difficulties into tomorrow by laziness and procrastination. Be wise and diligent to deal with today's issues today. If we leave them for tomorrow, we will be overwhelmed trying to deal with them in addition to all of the new difficulties that will come with tomorrow. Procrastination and avoiding of issues will come back to bite us if we are foolish not to address them at the proper time.

Summary:

For all of the reasons Jesus has given, especially the character and promises of God, He counselled His hearers not to be anxious about these secondary things. As a positive alternative, we should wholeheartedly pursue His Kingdom and righteousness. And all else will be taken care of as part of His Kingdom. And this is all because God is the kind of God Who takes care of all these things. Therefore, we should seek Him first, not primarily for the sake of receiving all other things. But primarily for His own sake. And we will receive all other things as a bonus part of experiencing the One Who is all in all. If we forsake Him in order to pursue other things, we will lose both. But if we seek only God, we will get all good things as well. Therefore, He is the priority we should seek before all other things.