

MARCH 4, 2024

5 Minute Meditation

Lillies & Sparrows

Read Luke 12:22–34 and Matthew 6:25–34

"Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?" Matthew 6:26

The "what ifs" feel heavy in my head.

What if...the biopsy is positive. What if...we don't have enough to pay off the debt. What if...I never find a place to belong. What if...my child never speaks. What if...grief is too much.

No longer are we confident in the future. The past hurts. Because friendships die and the days of loneliness often linger longer than we ever imagined. Then the grief feels like a black hole. It starts growing a seed of worry. Anxious thoughts spread throughout our entire heart and into our soul. How could tomorrow bring anything but sorrow when yesterday was filled with tears?

In Luke 12:22 Jesus tells His followers to not be anxious. This passage is often used to help combat worry. Sure. We can trust that God will provide when we lack. But there is a deeper truth here, a much stronger and more life giving truth than I ever imagined. Jesus gives us a reason why God's provision provides peace for our hearts. Let's take a look at the two examples Jesus gives to demonstrate this truth.

The first example is the phrase, "the grass" in Luke 12:28 it says, "so God clothed the grass..." What did God "clothe" the grass with? In Luke 12:27 it says God gave the grass lilies. Lilies are huge, flashy flowers that show forth such beauty! Jesus is saying that common grace, which withers and dries up in a day, is given such beauty and care by the Heavenly Father. God gives delight and pleasure and beauty to something so common: grass.

The next example are the ravens. These birds were considered annoying and common. But Jesus said that even they were provided for by God. It is God who feeds the birds. Let's also look at Matthew 6 where Jesus mentions the "birds of the air." Instead of saying God just provides for them, it says that God cares for them. The birds mentioned here were numerous during the time of Jesus. They nested everywhere and were so common. In fact, they were of so very little value that many people didn't even notice them. They were sold for a part of a day's wages and were considered of no value.

The birds and the grass are things we barely even acknowledge exist. What things we would overlook, take for granted, and ignore, God notices and He places a value on them. The key phrase is here: "Of how much more value are you" (Luke 12:24) The birds were of value, but the emphasis is on you and me. We are of even more value than they.

Jesus says, yes, don't worry. But why? Why do you not need to worry? Because God will provide for you what you need. Yes, but also, there is a deeper truth here. Don't worry because God loves you more than all of creation. Don't miss that the deeper reason we can trust and rest in God is because our value is not found in what we bring to the table. Birds and grass don't do great works for God. Our value is in the fact that our Father in Heaven created us. Our value and worth is completely and utterly wrapped up in the Person and Work of Jesus Christ. It is not found in what we do.

Christian, if the "what ifs" plague your heart, let this truth sink deep inside your soul: You are worth more than all of creation. You are worth so much. Jesus died for you. Your worth keeps you safe and even if suffering is just around the corner, you will have everything you need because of this simple truth: God loves you.

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A Prayer:

Dear heavenly Father, let me rest in this truth today that yes you will provide for me, Not out of obligation, but out of love. Out of care and because of your steadfast mercy for me. I am worthy to be loved and oh how I'm loved by you! Amen.

Reflection:

Have you ever struggled with worry or anxiety? If so, what did you find helpful in overcoming those feelings?

What are you worried about today? What keeps you up at night?

What does Ephesians 2:4–9 tell you about your worth?

In light of this, how does this change your prayers to God when it comes to the thing(s) you worry about? In other words, how does your worry change when we believe this truth about our lives?

Read Luke 12:30–31 again. How can you seek God first today, trusting Him to meet your needs?

Scripture meditation:

Psalm 138:13–16

Song meditation:

<https://youtu.be/cw8757d5lfg?si=mHMsARQgJhVnE3Hz>