**Rocking Chair Theology**

Matthew 6:25 “Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? **26**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? **27**And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? **28**And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, **29**yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. **30**But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? **31**Therefore do not be anxious, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ **32**For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. **33**But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. **34**“Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble. (ESV)

One of the main problems we have in this life is worry. It is so easy to worry and get stressed about all of life’s little details. As a teenager your life is probably full of stress and worry relating to school, sports, time, family, friends, relationships and a host of other things. And what’s not to worry about when all these things apply pressure to your life? Pressure to be better, do better, try harder, please someone, avoid trouble, and so on. All these things, however, are not some of the most basic things you need to survive in life. If your relationship ends life will go on. If you fail a class, you can make that up or do better next year. If you miss the game-winning shot it will eventually just be a memory. We all worry about many things, but it is interesting to find that when Jesus tells us not to worry he doesn’t bring up the ball game or the friendship or the constant rush of a busy life. Jesus brings up the basic necessities of life: food, drink and clothes. The things Jesus tells us not to worry about are the important things—don’t miss that. You need food and drink and clothes. Even the Bible says we need them (1 Timothy 6:8) It’s likely you don’t worry often about if you’ll have food or drink, yet that is what Jesus brings up. Why? Because He wants us to understand that even the most basic needs are nothing to worry over. God will provide. That is Jesus’ message here: You can rest assured that God will provide for His children.

Jesus first reminds them that there is more to life than the basic necessities. We need those, but they are not what life is ultimately about. Our life is about glorifying God. Our life is about living for God. Our life is not about ourselves. It is about Him. And yet, we know that God provides the most basic needs for His children. How do we know that God will provide for His children? Jesus shows us. God cares about all His creatures. He cares about the birds and the animals. He provides even for them. So, if God provides for the birds, what makes you think He won’t provide for you?

And that is Jesus’ whole point. We can have confidence as God’s children that He will provide for our most basic needs. What kind of Father neglects his responsibility to provide for their children? Not a good Father. God is a good father that takes care of His children. We can rest assured in that. And if we know He provides for the most basic things we need in life we know we will be okay.

God is not telling us to completely disregard important things in life such as food and shelter, but He is telling us that we can trust our Father to provide those things for us. Some people take passages like this and twist them. They say we shouldn’t work because we shouldn’t be worried about making a living or having enough money to buy food for ourselves and our family because God will provide. But that is a gross misinterpretation of this passage. The Bible commands that we work. (2 Thessalonians 3:10; Genesis 3:19) The fact that God provides for us does not mean we can shuck all responsibility and be lazy.

What Jesus is showing us is that these things should not consume our life. When we worry it controls us. Worrying causes us to make rash decisions and to live in fear and anxiety. We worry about what we focus on. We focus on what we worry about. God wants to shift our focus. Instead of focusing on all the things we need or want in life, God wants us to focus on His kingdom—to focus on righteous living.

To seek first the Kingdom of God means we are seeking God to establish His throne in our hearts. We are seeking that God would do His will in and through our lives. To seek first righteousness means that to seek to live in right relationship with God—to seek to live holy and godly lives in this world. When we are focused on these things we won’t worry. When we focus on these things God will bring peace to our hearts about all the things that worry us. He promises us this in Philippians:

Philippians 4:6 do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. **7**And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (ESV)

Our primary purpose is to focus on the things of God. When we do this everything else will fall into place. We won’t have to worry because our concern is no longer even for ourselves but for the things of God. And those things we would normally worry about, God provides anyway.

See, this passage is so much deeper than worrying. It is beyond just being stressed. But within it we find the great remedy and cure for worry: a shift of focus.

*“Worry is like a rocking chair; it keeps you moving but doesn’t get you anywhere.” – Corrie Ten Boom*

You want to know how to relieve that stress and worry in your life? Focus on God. Focus on God’s kingdom. Focus on living right and everything else will fall into place. Don’t let your life be consumed by all the pressure, worry and concerns of life. Make God the greatest concern of your life and all other concerns will pale in comparison.