

## Contentment and Peace

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*Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself.  
Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.*

*– Matthew 6:34 –*

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There are various and sundry disciplines to the spiritual life. The serious disciple of Jesus Christ is continuously engaged in the battle between the flesh and the spirit. As such, we learn that there are things that, when practiced with regularity out of an earnest and sincere heart, bring victory over the flesh and conformity to God's will and purpose in our lives.

Jesus outlined and instructed us in many of these spiritual disciplines in the Sermon on the Mount. For instance, He taught us how to properly give of our resources, without ostentation and with great charity. He taught us how to pattern our prayers in what has been come to be commonly referred to as "the Lord's Prayer." He tutored us in how to properly fast so as to gain Heaven's attention and intervention in extreme exigencies. And He revealed that if we prioritize and align our hearts such that God is pre-eminent, we would be better equipped to live in a state of mind and heart that is unmolested by the cares of this life.

Some of us are worrywarts by nature, and most of us are worrisome to some degree or another. Our peace is not only easily disturbed by the slightest of unexpected occurrences, but we also actually look for things to fret about by living in the land of "what if". Some even feed this self-destructive disposition by consuming a steady diet of "news" which is designed precisely to stir up concern, dread, and fear within the psyche so that we enter into a continuous loop of depending upon its very purveyors to calm us, from calamity to calamity!

Life here under the sun is obviously strewn with dangers, toils, and snares. Concern with pending danger that leads to effective planning against disaster is undoubtedly prudent. But giving ourselves over to constant worry and fear is nothing short of fleshly and carnal. Jesus pointed out the futility of fretfulness chimerically when He asked, "Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit to his stature?" And he rather starkly called attention to how antithetical worry is to a life of faith for His Jewish audience - "...after all these things do the Gentiles seek." He then frankly reminded them of their privileged position, "For your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things."

Putting Christ first and choosing to trust God moment by moment is the certain cure for worry and care. It is a discipline we must engage in volitionally, like prayer, fasting, and giving. Let us resolve to seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and to trust that our good and gracious Father is working all things together for our good. This will most assuredly keep our hearts in perfect peace while we pilgrim here in this foreign land. -- D. Murcek