



## **Matthew 6:28–30**

28 “And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labour or spin. 29 Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendour was dressed like one of these. 30 If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith?

## Reflection

(Today's AYWJ is written by Justin Moffatt.)

Clothes. Food. Drink. What you eat, what you drink, what you wear. If you live in Sydney, these are three inescapably important things.

We are a city that cares about fashion: what we wear on the outside can communicate so much how we feel on the inside.

We are a city that cares about food: the interest in coffee and pop up restaurants, small bars, and with the newish use of the word, 'foodie', we care about what we eat.

We are a city that cares about drink: Too

much. We enjoy the taste, the social status, and also the power alcohol brings to deliver to us a buzz when we are bored, escape when we are sad, or social lubricant when we are scared. But in the end, for many, it's just a habit that robs us of joy.

But here is something for you: Jesus isn't against eating, drinking and wearing clothes. He says in verse 25 that life is more important than food; and that the body is more important than clothes. But either way, God knows what you need, and how much you need of it, and he cares for you as a Father does in verse 26. And even better: like a Father who actually has the world in his hands: a Heavenly Father who knows what you need.

So what does Jesus warn against? He warns against being like ‘the pagans’ – he says that in verse 32. The Gentiles ‘chase after these things’. They worry about them, and fret over them. And Jesus says to his followers: Don’t be like them. How do you not be like them? By not worrying; by not fretting; by not chasing after these things.

Yesterday, he considered our ‘chasing after’ for food. To this, he says: ‘look up in the blue sky. Let the birds be your teacher. God feeds them, and he cares more about you.’

In our passage today, he considers our love for clothes. And Jesus says: ‘Look at the field’. (Perhaps there was one close by). Look at the lilies. Look how they grow.

It's worth just pondering the wonder of the comment: Jesus is looking at the world God has created: stunning flowers, and says: you can let the flowers be your teacher.

How? They don't labour or spin. You labour. You spin. You worry. You shop. You care too much. We all do. But, says Jesus, not even Solomon was dressed like one of these. Rich Solomon. And not even Solomon on his finest day; not even Solomon dressed in all his splendour was dressed like one of these.

God does that for flowers that are so transient. 'Here today, and thrown into the fire'. You are more important to God: So you can give up the worry. Then the real challenging part:

‘...will he not much more clothe you – you of little faith?’

‘You of little faith’ is both a rebuke and a gentle word: ‘He’ll clothe you, O you who struggle to believe that he will cloth you.’ Many of us feel ‘little in faith’, and here, Jesus is saying: he still cares for you, and he’ll still feed you, he’ll still cloth you.

But this rebuke and challenge are there to increase our faith. I want you to think about worrying for a bit. It’s so hard to stop worrying, and so easy to feed it.

I read this illustration (probably apocryphal) about a woman who for a decade couldn’t get to sleep at night because she feared burglars. One night her husband

heard a noise in the house, so he went downstairs to investigate. When he got there, he did find a burglar. “Good evening. I am pleased to see you. Come upstairs and meet my wife. She has been waiting 10 years to meet you.” We worry and worry. And in the end those worries control us. So much that it affects our sleep. It’s like we have to meet them. Like we are addicted.

I don’t know about you, but telling someone not to worry is pointless advice. At best it’s just impossible, and at worst it causes someone to worry much more than they were in the first place. But what if Jesus gave us the reason not to worry: the key that calmed your heart.

What if Jesus said: Don’t chase after

clothes. The key is to know deep down that God will take care of you. Don't worry about what you eat and drink: know deep down that he cares about your life. Don't even worry about death itself: I've got that covered in my resurrection.

What if he pointed out the logic problem with worry? It doesn't work – it doesn't solve the problem. What if Jesus gave you the solution: Let go of the 'things in life' that 'control your life'. In the end they are idols that control us. You can't serve both God and stuff.

What if Jesus modelled it? He gave up his own life on the cross for the sake of the Kingdom.

See there is an alternative: Follow Jesus.



Seek first the Kingdom. 'Chase after' and 'worry' about that! God will give you everything you need anyway. He will throw it all in.

And let tomorrow worry about itself. Let Sydney worry about itself. Let your friends who look down on you for clothing worry about themselves. Let those with mortgages worry about keeping their properties. Let those who chase food take worry about the next fad. These are good things. But you relax, and not feel as though you need to chase them.

Living totally without worry sounds, to many people, as impossible as living without breathing. Some people are so hooked on worry that that when they haven't got anything to worry about they worry that

they have forgotten something.

Here, at the heart of the Sermon on the Mount, is an invitation that surprisingly few people even try to take up. Why not learn how to trust, O we of little faith?

Is it morning now?

Give the day to your Heavenly Father. Is there something you are afraid of? Don't chase that fear. Ask God to help you seek his Kingdom.

Is it afternoon or evening now?

Give the night over to your Heavenly Father. Is there a dream or a hope that may not be realised? It's OK. God knows what you need. Ask him to help you seek his

Kingdom.

Let him take care of the rest.

More on this tomorrow.