

# MATTHEW

*Heirs of the Kingdom*

#1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

# The Anxious Generation

How the Great Rewiring of  
Childhood Is Causing an Epidemic  
of Mental Illness



A  
WALL STREET  
JOURNAL  
TOP 10 BOOK  
of 2024

## Jonathan Haidt

Coauthor of *The Coddling of the American Mind*

## Matthew 6:25-34

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“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? <sup>26</sup> 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? <sup>27</sup> And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life?

## Matthew 6:25-34

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<sup>28</sup> And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, <sup>29</sup> yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. <sup>30</sup> 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? <sup>31</sup> Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?'

## Matthew 6:25-34

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or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' <sup>32</sup> For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. <sup>33</sup> But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. <sup>34</sup> "Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

1. Jesus teaches us to use common sense (*the appeal to reason*)

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*Matthew 6:25-27, 34*

# 1. Jesus teaches us to use common sense (*the appeal to reason*)

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## Some clarifications

- Jesus doesn't deny the reality of problems, troubles, or needs (see v. 34)
- Jesus doesn't deny the necessity of work, planning, or saving

# 1. Jesus teaches us to use common sense (*the appeal to reason*)

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## Jesus's first basic argument:

- Worry is foolish: life is more than food (v. 25)
- Worry is futile: you can't add to your span of life (v. 27)
- Worry is irrational: it doesn't change future troubles (v. 34)

# 1. Jesus teaches us to use common sense (*the appeal to reason*)

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## Application

- If you're struggling with worry, get off your phone, get outside, consider the world around you and the God who created it. He cares for you!

## 2. Jesus exhorts us to trust in the Father's care (*the appeal to faith*)

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Matthew 6:26-32

## 2. Jesus exhorts us to trust in the Father's care *(the appeal to faith)*

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### Jesus's second basic argument:

- If your Father cares for his lesser creatures, he will also care for you (v. 26ff)
- Worry, therefore, indicates “little faith” (v. 30)

## 2. Jesus exhorts us to trust in the Father's care *(the appeal to faith)*

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### Little faith vs. great faith in Matthew's gospel

- Faith undaunted by distance: a centurion (8:5-13)

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### Little faith vs. great faith in Matthew's gospel

- Faith undaunted by distance: a centurion (8:5-13)
- Faith unintimidated by time: a sick woman (9:20-22)
- Faith undeterred by discouragement: a Canaanite woman (15:21 - 28)

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### Application: Exercise faith through prayer

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

### 3. Jesus calls us to seek the kingdom of God (*the appeal to the gospel*)

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Matthew 6:32-33

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#### Jesus's third basic argument:

- Worry indicates a heart seeking security in this world – and not aligned with God's kingdom (see v. 32 and the connection to vv. 19-24)

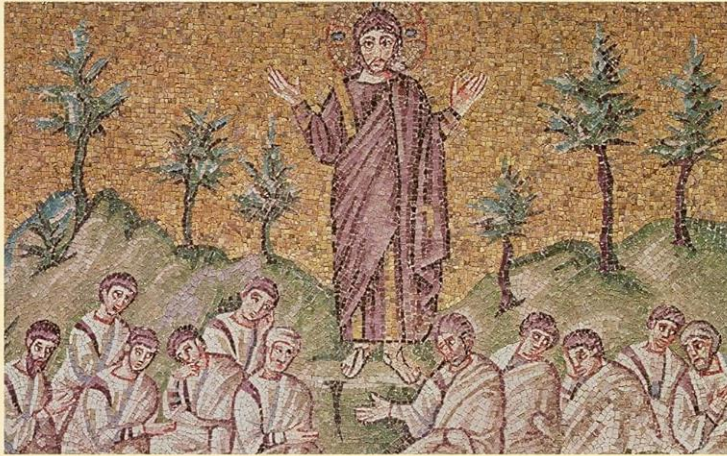
### 3. Jesus calls us to seek the kingdom of God *(the appeal to the gospel)*

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What does it mean to “seek first the kingdom of God and his  
righteousness?”

# The Sermon *on the* Mount and Human Flourishing

A THEOLOGICAL COMMENTARY



Jonathan T. Pennington

**Jonathan Pennington calls verse 33 “marching orders for the Christian way of being in the world – being one who is dedicated to God’s coming reign, and the kind of Christ-centered, righteous behavior that marks the kingdom... Seeking first the kingdom is precisely the ‘concrete practice of righteousness as the Sermon on the Mount develops it’; it is the activity of the faithful disciple.”**

**pp. 249-250; quoting Hans Dieter Betz**

### 3. Jesus calls us to seek the kingdom of God *(the appeal to the gospel)*

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What does it mean to “seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness?”

- To seek God’s kingdom first is to build your life on the values and vision of the kingdom, with devotion to God not worldly wealth and security.

### 3. Jesus calls us to seek the kingdom of God *(the appeal to the gospel)*

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#### Application

- **If you struggle with chronic worry, ask yourself if the things you're anxious about are really aligned with the kingdom of God**

### 3. Jesus calls us to seek the kingdom of God *(the appeal to the gospel)*

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#### Application

- **If you struggle with chronic worry, ask yourself if the things you're anxious about are really aligned with the kingdom of God**
- **“Mine is to abide; His is to provide.”**

# Summary

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Jesus' teaching shows that worry comes from:

- **A lack of common sense**
- **Smallness of faith**
- **A divided heart**

→ Jesus calls us to something better: don't be anxious, trust the Father, and seek his kingdom.



A little bird I am,  
Shut from the fields of air;  
Yet in my cage I sit and sing  
To Him who placed me there;  
Well pleased a prisoner to be,  
Because, my God it pleaseth Thee.



My cage confines me round;  
Abroad I cannot fly;  
But though my wing is closely bound,  
My heart's at liberty,  
My prison walls cannot control  
The flight the freedom of the soul.



Ah! It is good to soar  
These bolts and bars above,  
To Him whose purpose I adore,  
Whose Providence I love;  
And in Thy mighty will to find  
The joy, the freedom of the mind.

—Madame Guyon  
(1648 – 1717)

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