

a new argument of our Saviour's. Not only is it unnecessary to be anxious because of God's care, but it is useless also, for we cannot mend matters if we would.

**27. Consider the lilies.** The care-worn women who surrounded the Saviour while he talked were already fretting because they ought to be back at their homes, busy with ovens and cradles and spinning-wheels, while all about them were blooming the buttercups and dandelions and daisies, which toiled not nor worried, but were quite as well taken care of as were these same careworn women. **Solomon in all his glory.** The Jewish writers say that Solomon's attendants were all clad in purple, and their hair glittered every morning with fresh gold-dust. A modern Oriental traveler writes of the lily of Palestine: "The three inner petals of this incomparable flower meet above and form a gorgeous canopy such as art never approached and king never sat under."

**28. Cast into the oven.** The meadow flowers of Palestine were cut down with the grass and used as fodder and fuel, for wood is scarce there. They used portable earthenware ovens.

**29, 30. Neither be ye of doubtful mind.** Don't toss about like boats in the surf. **The nations of the world.** The ungodly Gentiles. **Your Father**

**knoweth.** "Never a want of food or of clothing can escape his eye."—*Courtes.* All this passage sheds a new and beautiful light on the Lord's prayer.

**31. Seek ye the kingdom of God.** Seek permanent possessions and wealth in that kingdom which Christ himself declared to be not of this world. **Added.** As if they were extraneous, incidental, not part of the real and genuine and intrinsic life.

**32, 33. Fear not, little flock.** The good shepherd will gather you in his arms and fold you in his bosom. **Sell that ye have, and give alms.** That Jesus intended this as a literal injunction applying to every individual Christian is not supposable. Our Lord's instructions were always the farthest possible removed from detail. He gave great and underlying principles, and allowed his followers to work them out into consistent conduct. But while it is not a man's duty the moment he is converted to go home and sell his goods, all who name the name of Christ must live in strict harmony with the principle of this command. They are to figure their wealth not in bank accounts, but in good works, in faith, in the unsearchable riches of Christ. How literally the command was taken by those who heard it may be seen by the conduct of the early Church. Acts 2, 44, 45; Luke 16, 9; Matt. 19, 21.

### CRITICAL NOTES.

Having shown the gathered multitudes, by a striking picture of the brevity and uncertainty of human life, the folly of making the increase of material wealth one's sole aim in this world rather than advancement in the knowledge and love of God (ver. 21), Jesus addresses himself directly to his disciples, and calls their attention to the positive side of the same truth. He exhorts them (22-30) to dismiss anxiety concerning food and raiment, and, trusting their heavenly Father for these necessary things, to devote themselves wholly (31-40) to the affairs of his kingdom.

**Verse 22. Therefore.** The case of the man who was his whole life long anxious about food and raiment has shown the folly of such disquietude. **Unto you.** As Christ's disciples they had abandoned their secular pursuits (5, 11), to devote all their time to religious teaching. They would at times, perhaps, feel some uncertainty about means for their future support. **Be not anxious.** "Take no thought." Authorized Version formerly had just this meaning. Both in his daily example and in his constant teaching they had seen an absence of anxiety on his part as to temporal blessings. They were to ask their heavenly Father for the morrow's bread and so banish solicitude as to future needs.

**23. The life.** That God has given them bodily life is warrant enough for believing that he will also provide the means of its sustenance. **The body.** The fabric of flesh and blood so fearfully and wonderfully made displays marvelous skill and care on the part of its maker. It cannot be a serious problem for him to give us the ruder fabric of common raiment. Possession of the jewel removes apprehension as to the setting.

**24. Sow not.** The disciples no longer had any profit from any worldly business. Not now as formerly was money coming in from fishing, farming, or trading. Absorbed in doing the work which their Master had assigned them, they were making no provision for future needs. **No store-chamber nor barn.** Such as the rich man (vers. 17, 18) thought a necessity to give one security for the future. Yet in spite of these he died. **God feedeth them.** Their food comes to them day by day as certainly as though they had worried about it. God gives them instincts which teach them where food may be found. He hears the young ravens which cry. *Psa.*

147, 9. **Of how much more value.** If God cares for the necessities of his humbler creatures he will certainly not neglect the nobler orders.

**25. Add a cubit.** God has given us our present physical stature of three cubits and more without the co-operation of our will-power or attention. We cannot now, by turning our thoughts to the subject, add another cubit to the appointed sum. This is only a proverbial way of saying that we are of necessity obliged to leave wholly to divine Providence many things which yet do most vitally concern us.

**26. Least.** As stature, compared with life, is relatively unimportant, the ability to alter stature would be only a scanty qualification for the management and maintenance of all our life processes.

**27. Consider the lilies.** The word translated "consider" here and in verse 24 was used by Stephen to describe the attentive scrutiny which Moses gave to the burning bush. Turn your mind's eye upon the flowers and discover new tokens of God's care in them. **How they grow.** In what way they attain their comeliness of form and perfection of coloring. **Toil not.** They are careless of the future as the sunny days pass on. They have no anxiety as to their stature or their sustenance. **Neither do they spin.** They prepare no gorgeous attire for themselves. **Even Solomon.** A king's wardrobe is proverbial for the richness of the material used and the elaborate care expended upon its preparation. **Like one of these.** Human art cannot equal the beauty of nature.

**28. Cast into the oven.** Scarcity and expensiveness of wood occasioned the use of hay and other cheaper materials as fuel for heating ovens. **How much more.** If God bestows such care upon that which is so transitory, he will surely not neglect that which is more enduring. **Ye of little faith.** Here, as in Matt. 6, 30, the sentence takes a sudden turn. Instead of saying "you his children," he quickly reminds them of their failure to realize their privileges as children. He had had frequent occasion to note this defect in them. See 8, 25.

**29. Seek not.** The disciples are to aim at something better than merely getting a living. Such had been their exclusive aim once; but now their business is to catch men. **Doubtful mind.** The Greek word contains