

WHAT JESUS REALLY MEANT WHEN HE SAID, "DO NOT WORRY" (Matthew 6:25-34).

A Few Thoughts by John Broadus.

A Jewish writer says, "Be not anxious about what is coming, before it takes place; for there is enough of vexation in its own hour." All men observe the folly of borrowing trouble from the future, and yet we continue to do it, and even to have a large part of our distresses spring from the dread of future evil, which likely will never come.

A French Proverb says, "The worst misfortunes are those which never arrive;" and a homely English Proverb, "Never cross a bridge till you get to it." The Greek poet Anacreon (c. 575 – c. 495 BC), notable for his drinking songs wrote: "I care for today; who knows tomorrow?" Horace (65 BC to 27 BC), who was the leading Roman poet during the time of Augustus said, "What is to be on tomorrow avoid inquiring. Whatever sort of day fortune shall give, count it gain.

But there is a broad distinction between our Savior's teaching and such Epicurean counsels. They mean that it is foolish to harass ourselves about an unknown and uncertain tomorrow, and so we must simply enjoy today; Jesus teaches, however, that we ought to trust in the protection and blessing of our heavenly Father. Hence, while not heedless of the future, we may be free from anxiety about it. They say, "Tomorrow depends on chance; therefore; therefore try to forget it, and enjoy life today." Jesus says, "Tomorrow and all its wants will be provided for by your heavenly Father; therefore think of it without anxiety, and try to do right and please God." On the one hand, our Lord's teaching is very different from fatalism. He does not say, the morrow is fixed by fate, and you cannot help yourself but speaks of the personal God, or Father, who cares for us, and will supply our needs.