

## Your Heavenly Father Knoweth

Matt. 6: 31, 32.

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(B.T. Vol. N5, p. 198-199.)

How wholesome, direct, and complete is the Lord's rebuke of earthly care!

"Be not therefore anxious, saying, What shall we eat, or What shall we drink, or With what should we be clad? For after all these things do the Gentiles seek; for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things" (vers. 31,32).

As the Lord began, so He closed, His charge to the saints against anxiety in the earthly life. He purposely presents the homely commonplace of daily fare and clothing. The birds of the sky He adduces as the witness of bounteous provision without solicitude, and the unequalled splendour of the lilies of the field, as a rebuke to troubled efforts after vain show. The sentiment and the phrase of vers. 25 and 31 are substantially alike but in the latter He exchanges "ye" and "your" into the more tender and family expression "we." Each is as it should be, and both make His word only the more touching as well as complete.

The poor as to the world are habitually burdened and distressed on both accounts in their daily and domestic life. But the noblest and the richest spend much time and thought on their food and attire; and the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, have their mortifications among the highest. And if, as things are, the majority of Christians are too much like others, it only confirms the wisdom and goodness of the Lord in deigning to say so much to elevate the motives and form the ways of His own according to the mind of God.

Yet there are a few here and there all over the earth who hear His words in this discourse as elsewhere, and seek to do them from the heart. Nor do they fail to find their blessed account in pleasing Him, apart from the world and its things, with happy deliverance from all its anxieties and selfishness. Is not this what the Lord here enjoins on all that bear His name? Do these lay His will to heart when temptation arises to settle down in earthly comfort if not luxury and show? Is this consistent with being pilgrims and strangers on the earth awaiting glory on high with Him?

No doubt it is what men of the world do, who mock at faithful stewardship as fanaticism, and ignore being not their own but bought with a price to glorify Him with their bodies. If not their lips, their life says, Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die; yet their constant study is to spin out their mortal life, with no real heart for the resurrection, no habitual joy nor practical value for Christ as their life. Is it not to "mind earthly things," and to forget day by day that "our commonwealth is in the heavens, whence also we await the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour, who shall transform our body of humiliation into conformity to His body of glory according to the working of power which He hath even to subdue all things to Himself?" "For" as He says, "after all these things the Gentiles seek:" the contrast He seeks in His disciples. O let us too seek it in our ways for the little while, and thus help to impress it on such as wish to make the best of both worlds, a shameless motive and character for those who are Christ's.

Are we then left without consolation or resource? Far from it. The Lord winds up with blessed cheer to such as seek to be faithful; "For your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things." And is it not the Father's pleasure to consider every need of every child? Who can pretend that

He does not abound in all good things? or that He would not have us to confide in Him, not in ourselves? Be it yours to abjure self, and "cast all your care upon Him, for He careth about you."