

# Matthew 6:31

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?

## Analysis

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Jesus summarizes the prohibition: 'Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?' (Greek: μὴ οὖν μεριμνήσητε λέγοντες, 'therefore do not be anxious, saying...'). The verb construction with 'saying' (λέγοντες) indicates anxiety's internal dialogue - worried self-talk about provision. Jesus identifies three basic survival concerns: food, drink, clothing. These aren't trivial worries but legitimate needs. The command isn't against awareness of needs or planning but against anxious preoccupation that questions God's faithful provision. The repetition of 'take no thought' (μὴ μεριμνάω) from verse 25 bookends the teaching, emphasizing its importance.

## Historical Context

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For subsistence-level populations in Roman Palestine, these three concerns were daily realities. Crop failures, economic exploitation, and insecurity made provision precarious. Jesus' teaching comes in context where these anxieties were reasonable from human perspective. His command requires radical trust in God's providence despite real threats. Early Christian communities developed mutual aid systems (Acts 2:44-45, 6:1-6) that practically addressed these needs while modeling trust in God's provision through community.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

## Study Questions

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1. How do we distinguish between responsible concern for genuine needs and prohibited anxious worry?
2. What does our internal dialogue about provision reveal about our trust in God?
3. How can Christian community help alleviate anxiety about basic needs?

## Interlinear Text

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μὴ	οὖν	μεριμνήσητε	λέγοντες,	τί	φάγωμεν;	ἢ,
<b>take no</b>	<b>Therefore</b>	<b>thought</b>	<b>saying</b>	<b>What</b>	<b>shall we eat</b>	<b>or</b>
G3361	G3767	G3309	G3004	G5101	G5315	G2228
τί	πίωμεν;	ἢ,	τί	περιβαλώμεθα;		
<b>What</b>	<b>shall we drink</b>	<b>or</b>	<b>What</b>	<b>shall we be clothed</b>		
G5101	G4095	G2228	G5101	G4016		

## Additional Cross-References

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**1 Peter 5:7** (Parallel theme): Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.

**Luke 12:29** (Parallel theme): And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind.

**Matthew 4:4** (Parallel theme): But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

**Psalms 55:22** (Parallel theme): Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.

**Psalms 37:3** (Parallel theme): Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.

**Matthew 15:33** (Parallel theme): And his disciples say unto him, Whence should we have so much bread in the wilderness, as to fill so great a multitude?

**2 Chronicles 25:9** (Parallel theme): And Amaziah said to the man of God, But what shall we do for the hundred talents which I have given to the army of Israel? And the man of God answered, The LORD is able to give thee much more than this.

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