

# Consider the Lilies of the Field

## Introduction

Did you know that if we live to be 80, we may spend around **30 years sleeping, 4 years eating, and over 2 years just getting dressed?**

Jesus said there is more to life than these things.

**Matthew 6:25** — “Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?”

## Transition

Jesus sees the reality of creation and the nature of God very differently than we often do. He wants us to **consider the lilies** and reconsider our priorities until heaven and earth become one.

**Matthew 6:28–29** — “Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow...”

But before I explain what Jesus is saying in the Sermon on the Mount, I want to be clear about what He is **not** saying.

## Misconceptions

Jesus is not saying:

We do not have needs.

We do not need to work.

We do not need to steward what God has given us.

**2 Thessalonians 3:10** — “If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat.”

**Proverbs 21:5** — “The plans of the diligent lead surely to abundance...”

He is also not talking about every kind of worry in this specific context, though the principle can be applied more broadly.

**1 Peter 5:7** — Cast your anxieties on God, because He cares for you.

## Historical Context

Jesus grew up in Nazareth, likely a small Jewish village. Archaeological evidence shows that Nazareth was occupied during the early Roman period, and an early Roman house was discovered

there. Some estimates suggest Nazareth's population was very small, possibly only a few hundred people, not a large town.

The economy was mainly agricultural. People grew wheat, barley, olives, grapes, herbs, vegetables, and legumes. Archaeology also shows many winepresses and olive presses, which points to the importance of wine and olive oil production.

In Galilee, some people also worked in fishing, especially around the Sea of Galilee. The first-century Galilee boat discovered near the lake gives us a real archaeological picture of the kind of boat used for fishing and transport in that world.

During Jesus' adult life, Galilee was ruled by Herod Antipas, a Roman client ruler. He rebuilt Sepphoris and built Tiberias as his capital around 18–20 CE, naming it after Emperor Tiberius.

This means Galileans lived in a Jewish world, but under the shadow of Rome and Herodian politics. Taxes, tolls, tribute, royal building projects, and land pressure shaped daily life. In Judea, the Roman census connected to taxation in 6 CE triggered resistance under Judas the Galilean, showing how politically and spiritually charged taxation could be.

So when Jesus warns against serving Mammon and calls His disciples to seek God's kingdom, His words have a sharp edge. He is contrasting God's reign with an anxious economy of scarcity, status, taxation, and survival.

**Matthew 6:24** — "You cannot serve God and money."

Daily life included grinding grain, baking bread, drawing water, repairing tools, caring for animals, fishing, farming, spinning thread, making clothing, raising children, and preparing for Sabbath and festivals.

## Challenging Our Ultimate Goal in Life

Jesus makes it clear:

**"Seek first the kingdom of God."**

**Matthew 6:33** — "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness..."

In other words, seek God's will on earth as it is in heaven.

**Matthew 6:10** — "Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."

One day, heaven and earth will be united under Christ. God's will is going to be fully done. Evil and death will be destroyed. But until that day, we get to give the world a preview of that future life when we walk in agreement with God's will now.

**Revelation 21:3–4** — God will dwell with His people, and death, mourning, crying, and pain will be no more.

## Challenging Whether We Trust God or Ourselves

If we see creation through the lens of scientific materialism, we may begin to believe that all this world is simply time, chance, and matter. Life becomes an accident. Humanity becomes something floating in an infinite universe by luck and random chance.

Those assumptions often lead people toward self-preservation.

But Jesus did not see creation that way.

Jesus saw creation as good, beautiful, and intentional. He saw the world as something created by a generous Father who made it to bless humanity. God did not create the world with lack at its foundation, but with fruitfulness, abundance, and enough to share.

**Genesis 1:31** – God saw all that He had made, and it was very good.

**Psalms 24:1** – The earth belongs to the Lord and everything in it.

Sin brought lack. Greed brought self-protection. But God invites us into trust, protection, and provision.

**Matthew 6:26** – Look at the birds. They do not sow or reap, yet the Father feeds them.

Jesus is challenging us to trust our Father more than our own self-sufficiency.

**Proverbs 3:5–6** – Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding.

## Challenging Greed with Generosity

If we assume the world is not good, and that God is not generous, we will begin to imitate what we believe God is like and how we think creation is designed.

But Jesus tells us to look again.

Consider the lilies.

**Matthew 6:30** – If God clothes the grass of the field, will He not much more clothe you?

I had an earthly father who was extremely generous. He said generosity was what made him happy, and I truly believed him. But how much more generous is my heavenly Father?

If my earthly father found joy in giving, how much more does our Father in heaven delight in caring for His children?

**Matthew 7:11** – If earthly parents know how to give good gifts, how much more will your Father in heaven give good things to those who ask Him?

**James 1:17** – Every good and perfect gift is from above.

## Application

Renew your view of God and creation.

**Romans 12:2** – Be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

Trust God while you work, and trust Him even while you are looking for work.

**Matthew 6:32** – Your heavenly Father knows that you need these things.

Practice generosity, because generosity kills greed.

**Acts 20:35** – “It is more blessed to give than to receive.”

Seek God’s will in your life. And if you do not know the “big thing” God wants you to do, that is okay. Most of us already know the small things God is asking us to do.

As you practice obedience in the small things, you will be prepared to obey Him in the bigger things.

**Luke 16:10** – Whoever is faithful in very little is faithful also in much.