

Consider the Lilies

MARCH 2019

With all of today's modern demands, it is easier than ever to get caught up in the chaos of our daily grinds. In an attempt to find steady routines in an ever-shifting world, we become slaves to the things we consume... our morning coffees, our bingeworthy shows, our perpetual purchases. Before we know it, we have lost sight of the things that truly fulfill us, and we become out of tune with those around us.

1. Read Titus 3:1-9 (NRSV). What sorts of "passions and pleasures" take your focus away from "the goodness and loving kindness" of God? How are they creating discord in your life?

2. What do you think it means to "be ready for every good work"? In what ways would your life change if this became a daily habit?

3. Describe a "creature comfort" of yours that you could presumably live without. How would its absence affect your daily life? What might you notice about yourself or your habits after its extended absence?

As we work to reprioritize our attention towards the inward peace that comes from knowing God, we may find that the things that often stretch us thin or stress us out are not, in fact, beneficial or necessary in any way. When we take away the things that distract us from meaningful growth and purpose, our hearts and minds have more room to seek and find Jesus Christ, our true source of life.

4. Read Matthew 6:25-34 (NRSV). What is your biggest worry in life? When does it weigh on you the most?

5. Why do you think Matthew uses the nature imagery of "the birds in the air" or "the grass in the field"? Explain.

6. What are some realistic ways we can turn our worries into concrete plans of action?

In closing, reflect on the words of St. Gregory of Narek from his Book of Lamentations:

“*But grant your mercy nevertheless upon my forsaken self, good king, who inspires awe, loves humanity and cares for his people, living and holy Lord who always enlightens us by the power of the mystery of your exalted cross. In my barren fields, hardened by sin, filled with folly, with fruitless heart, I am still sustained by your compassion, Almighty. My soul shall be refreshed with springs of water and my sore eyes quenched with streams of tears, offered for purification and salvation and released by your acceptance, all-giving Lord, who is glorified forever. Amen. (Prayer 64D)*

"When the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us."

