

**Bruner (2009: 334)**

6:34 “So don’t ever be anxious about tomorrow; you see, tomorrow will worry for itself enough for today are today’s own problems.” These three punchy sentences seem anticlimactic after the preceding noble promise. And yet this final sentence is consistent with Jesus’ already observed tendency to end units of teaching with warning. This paragraph (indeed, this whole chapter) is devoted to *focus*. Disciples’ eyes are to be directed singly to the eyes of the observant Father—and now our present Word adds—to *today*. We cannot get the eyes of the Father tomorrow, for tomorrow is a promise, not a possession. It is characteristic of anxiety to be futuristic and thus wasteful. Twice in our little verse Jesus speaks of “tomorrow,” as if tomorrow can be a distraction; and once, at the end for emphasis, Jesus speaks of “today,” as if concentration on today is helpful for disciples wanting freedom from anxiety “One day at a time,” “Keep it simple.”

In connection with this verse, Luther, *SM*, 207–9, has these fascinating observations on time: “If God is kindly disposed to a man and gives him success, he can often accomplish more in one hour without care and anxiety than another man in four whole days with great care and anxiety. . . It is vain for you to try to anticipate and with your concern to work out what you think are great schemes. . . . What He does is this: when He sees someone fulfilling his office diligently and faithfully, being concerned to do so in a God-pleasing way, and leaving the concern over its success to God, He is generous in His gifts to such a person.”

The *kakia*, “evil” or “trouble” (RSV, NRSV, NJB), that will be disciples’ daily lot is not the *objective* evil of the satanic against which the Lord’s Prayer warned us (*ho ponēros*, “the evil one” at the end of the Lord’s Prayer, is a power from whom disciples rightly prayed to be *delivered*); *kakia*. the “evil” here, is that *subjective* “evil” or “trouble” from which disciples can never be delivered; the word has the less ultimate sense of the “inconvenient” the daily “troubles” of distractions that keep us, we think, from devoting our time to God’s work (Schlatter, *Der Evangelist*, 236; Stendahl, 779–80; Hill, 145; cf. Chrysostom, 22:5:153; Tertullian translated the word helpfully as *vexatio*; Tholuck, 395).

Few things bother serious disciples as much as the distractions that keep them from the matters that really count. It is these daily “troubles” that Jesus here calls evil in the subjective sense. Discipleship learns sooner or later, however, that it can pursue God’s kingdom and righteousness right in the middle of these daily “evils.” Brushing the children’s hair, grading students’ papers, going to committee meetings, entertaining unexpected visitors, and doing the thousands of other earthly things that seem to distract us from more important things and from the one thing needful, can all be forms of kingdom-seeking and righteousness-doing when seen in faith. Thus when Jesus tells us (in the old English) that “sufficient unto the day are the evils thereof” or (in modern English) that “*enough for today are today’s own problems,*” he means that it will be by mastering these daily gremlins that we learn to be disciples. For grading students’ papers thoughtfully, while it takes teachers away from writing and reading, helps students considerably. Parents’ brushing children’s hair, though it takes them from more elevated tasks for the moment, may be one of the few chances parents and children have to touch each other that day. These “evils” then, may be “sufficient” in unexpected ways.