

France (2007: 272)

This additional saying [in 26:34]²⁷ has the ring of popular proverbial wisdom.²⁸ The thrust of its first clause is fully consonant both with the summons not to worry about provisions in vv. 25–33 and with the preceding petition, for “bread for the coming day” in 6:11; once you have asked God for tomorrow’s needs there is no need to worry about them. But the following clauses speak not of God’s fatherly concern but, in a quite pragmatic way, of the pointlessness of anticipating tomorrow’s problems. Taken out of its current context, this could, then, be read as simply a piece of cynical advice to live only for the present—the attitude condemned by Paul in 1 Cor 15:32 (following Isa 22:13; cf. 56:12), and indeed also by Jesus in Luke 12:19–20. In speaking of “tomorrow worrying” and of “troubles” as the likely experience of each day v. 34 strikes a more pessimistic (or at least realistic) note than the preceding verses. By including it along with vv. 25–33 Matthew has perhaps deliberately put a sobering question mark against an unthinkingly euphoric attitude which vv. 25–33 might evoke in some hearers. God’s care and provision are assured, but that does not mean that the disciple’s life is to be one long picnic. Each day will still have its “troubles”; the preceding verses simply provide the assurance that by the grace of God they can be survived.

27. Cf. the independent logion in *Gos. Thom.* 36: “Do not be anxious from morning to evening and from evening to morning what you will put on yourselves.”

28. H. D. Betz, *Sermon*, 484–85, refers to a wide range of examples, pagan and Jewish.