

KINGTON BAPTIST CHURCH ONLINE NOTICE BOARD - 9

Please visit our website for the KBC spoken word Thought for the Day

<https://www.kingtonbaptistchurch.org/>

The Antidote to Anxiety

St. Peter writes of the 'exceedingly great and precious promises' of God. Just as 'exceedingly great' – as staggering – are the claims Jesus made about himself and about the safety and care God, our Heavenly Father, guarantees to us. The claims Jesus makes are so amazing that it's impossible to sit on the sidelines where Jesus is concerned. His claims compel us to choose: either Jesus is who he claims or he was a delusional imposter.

The promises Jesus gave of comfort and security are staggering! What's amazing isn't only the guarantee Jesus gives but that he gave them in such an understated, calm, almost relaxed manner. His words imply that for Jesus this safety and security are obvious, familiar and inevitable. It's as if he says, 'How could it be otherwise? Of course your needs will be provided; of course the Father will keep you safe and secure!'

The words of Jesus are the antidote to anxiety. We overcome our worries simply by knowing God *cares*. Jesus explains the depth of our Heavenly Father's care in two strikingly different ways. On the one hand we're pointed to the *Cross*. The Cross shows how much God cares.

But Jesus also says, '*Look at the birds of the air; consider the lilies of the field*'. He tells us to do this especially when we're troubled by doubts about his care, when it may seem he doesn't care.

It's easy to overlook this command. Jesus says, 'Give time to consider well, think carefully about the birds and flowers; absorb the lessons they teach you; don't be satisfied with a passing glance, don't assume you know about them – spend time looking, observing, learning and meditating on what they show you about God's care'. It's easy to overlook that this is a *commandment*, not a bit of optional advice. It's essential if we are to understand the love and care of God our Father: the quiet beauty and perfect symmetry of a wild flower; the delicate, intricate marking on the wings of greenfinch; the selfless way blue tits care for their young...

Only if we begin to understand the message of the Cross will we begin to understand why Jesus says, '*In the world you will have troubles, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world*'. And only if we consider the birds of the air and the flowers of the field will we begin to understand why Jesus says, '*Don't worry about food or drink or clothes or tomorrow*'.