

Matthew 6: 24-34
Background Information

Textual Background:

Jesus has been teaching a great multitude on a mountain side. He has taught them many things including teaching about the fulfillment of Mosaic Law. He continues on by warning against doing spiritual works in order to be seen and instead, storing up treasures in heaven.

Cultural Background:

- **Wild Flowers** – In this context, lily. The chalcedonicum lily, its flowers a glowing red, grew in King Solomon’s garden. It was a symbol of loveliness.
- **Solomon** – The name means “peaceful.” He was the son of David and was the wisest and richest king that ever lived (1 Kings 3, 10). Many Old Testament books are attributed to him including Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, Proverbs, Wisdom, and Sirach.

Old Testament References

- “Look at the birds in the sky ... feeds them.” (line 5-6) – Genesis 1:20, Job 35:11, Psalm 145:15-16, 147:9
- “the way the wild flowers grow.” (line 9) – Song of Songs 5:13

Greek Definitions:

- **Serve** – 1398 – to be a slave to, to obey, submit to, give one’s self up to
 - (line 1, 2)
- **Mammon** – 3126 – an Aramaic word meaning wealth or property, treasure or riches
 - “You cannot serve God and mammon” (line 2)
- **Worry** – 3309 – to be anxious, troubled with cares, to care for, look out for
 - “do not worry” (line 3, 7, 8, 13, 16)
- **Moment** – 4083 – unit of special measure from the joint of the elbow to the tip of the middle finger, a cubit (about 18 inches)
 - “single moment to your life-span” (line 8)
- **Life-span** – 2244 – stature, age, time of life
 - “single moment to your life-span” (line 8)
- **Pagans**– 1484 – foreign nations not worshipping the true God, Gentiles
 - “All these things the pagans seek.” (line 14)
- **Righteousness** – 1343 – refers to moral conduct in conformity with God's will, saving activity of God
 - “seek first the kingdom (of God) and his righteousness (lines 15-16)