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This morning, we continue in our 4-part series entitled: “Money and Worry.”



The title of today’s message is: “**Overcoming Worries About Money.**”

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As we read this passage from Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount I want you to notice how many times Jesus says, “Do Not Be Anxious.”

**Matthew 6:25-34**

**25** “Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? **26** Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? **27** And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? **28** And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, **29** yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. **30** But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? **31** Therefore do not be anxious, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ **32** For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. **33** But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. **34** “Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

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Four times Jesus tells us: Don’t Be Anxious. Don’t worry. This is the heart and soul of this passage and oh do these words of Jesus need to be heard today. We worry so much don’t we... particularly about money and the Lord Jesus is encouraging us to CEASE from worrying. Easier said than done, right?

Worry occupies a lot of our thinking doesn’t it? Worry is a big part of most of the waking hours of our day. Yet, we know that worry is dangerous. It’s been said that worry pulls apart the human mind. And it does. It takes a severe toll on people and their bodies.

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In fact, according to doctors, chronic worrying can affect your daily life so much that it may interfere with your appetite, your relationships, your sleep, and even your job performance. Other side affects of worry on the body are: fatigue, headaches, inability to concentrate, irritability, muscle tension, digestive disorders, short-term memory loss, coronary artery disease, potential heart attacks and strokes. Many people who worry in the extreme are so anxiety-ridden that they seek relief in harmful lifestyle habits such as alcohol and drugs, overeating, smoking and the list can go on and on.

What does worry do to you? Have you thought about it lately? Let me ask you this. Have you thought about what worrying says to God? If you really think about it, I think you would agree: **Worry is the equivalent of saying, “God, I know You mean well by what You say, but I’m just not sure You can pull it off.”** In essence then: Worry is the sin of distrusting the promises and the

sovereignty of God, and yet we do it all the time and give little thought about it. It just becomes a way of life.

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Take a look at these two quotes I read this week about worry.

**“Worry is interest paid on trouble before it’s due.”**

**“Worry is a thin stream of fear that trickles through the mind and if encouraged, it will cut a channel so wide that all other thoughts will be drowned into it.”**

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Let me share something that I read earlier this week that absolutely astounded me, but before I do. Let me ask you what this is?



That’s is fog covering part of about 7 blocks in Chicago. It was estimated to be about 100 feet deep and according to the Bureau of Standards in Washington D.C., that fog is composed of less than one glass of water!

That fog, 7 blocks wide, by 100 feet thick is nothing more than one standard glass of water, and yet, it can cripple a good portion of city. And folks, that’s a pretty good illustration of worry. Worry...add it all together and you don’t have much more than a glass of water, but it sure can mess up a whole lot of people.

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The people to whom Jesus spoke and taught in the first century were very poor and most were very haggard. They struggled to live from day to day and of course, you know they worried. They worried in ways, few of us know about. They worried about the basics of life such as where would their next meal come from and if they would have a roof over their heads or clothes on their backs. We know little of this concern in our day. We don’t worry about what we’re going to eat, but how much. We don’t worry about if we’ve got something to wear. We worry if it’s in style. But, Jesus said, “Don’t worry.”

Now let’s remember how we’ve gotten to this point. All through Jesus’ “Sermon On The Mount,” He has corrected erroneous thinking that came from erroneous teaching. He has told the people to set their attention on heaven, not earth. And you see, when we do this, it automatically frees us from worrying about the stuff of this earth. It takes the focus off of the pursuit and accumulation of material things. But isn’t that precisely what we worry about? We worry about stuff? Having enough stuff to last us and sustain and we get afraid that we might run out of stuff.

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We worry about the future don’t we? And so we try to accumulate things to hedge against the future and the potential for running out of stuff. It’s fear! And that fear translates to worry. And that worry translates to not trusting in the Lord and His provision.

Now please hear what I’m saying. I’ve said this before, but it bears repeating. Jesus is not against us using planning prudently for the future. He’s not against us having insurance or storing up some canned goods in a pantry or on shelves in our basement. The question is: How much is enough?

Yes, the Bible instructs us in Proverbs to go to the ant...



They store up and prepare for future and that's fine.

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But, what's wrong is to worry about those plans. Why? Because God, as heavenly Father will sustain us.

**You see, listen to me please**...God may tell you to take some of that stuff you've stored up and sell it right now and use it for His kingdom or a need someone has...will you do it? Or will you balk at that and refuse because of fear.

**Is fear driving your life instead of God?** Yes, God might want you to use those resources now for a specific purpose, but we automatically think: "Uh...Lord, uh...I need to hang on to that for the future because, I might need it." And do you know what we've done? We've distrusted God! We've distrusted God in the present for fear of the future...even though God stands outside of time and already knows the future. And folks, when we do that...that's disobedience.

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Are you disobeying God today? Is there something He's asked you to do or sell or whatever the case may be and you've been afraid to do it because of your fear of the future? Oh...don't give in to that fear. Don't distrust the Lord because it'll only make you miserable. You can hang on to that stuff and be absolutely miserable... So what have you gained? Nothing! Nothing but misery and worry! Like a fog shrouding your life.

What did Jesus say?

**Matthew 6:25**

**25** "Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?"

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Folks, this is straightforward passage...it really preaches itself. I don't have to go in great theological detail on this. As the little boy says, "This isn't rocket surgery." ☺ Matthew Henry sums up this passage this way:

**"The best way to be comfortably provided for in this world is to be most intent upon another world-Heaven."** Bible Commentator, Matthew Henry

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You see, as we learned last week, we are to be storing up for ourselves treasures in heaven. The word: "Therefore" at the beginning of verse 25 points us back to what Jesus has been saying. We are to be following our Him...our Master...not the world! As his followers, we have taken an awl...



... in the ear and are His bondservants. Have you chosen Jesus to be your Master?

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If you have...then we are to serve Jesus...not money and not the world or the stuff of the world.

But again...this is difficult for us to grasp in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It's hard for us to understand exactly how those people felt in the 1<sup>st</sup> century because I dare say none of us in this room this morning has to worry if we are going to have anything to drink today. And as far as our clothes are concerned...well...we've all got on clothes...so we can check that off the list. ☺

But, you see in the first century, they didn't know what they would eat or drink or wear. So many were so poor. I mean we've got houses or apartments that have 5, 6, maybe even 10 faucets indoors and outdoors. But if you were living in Palestine at Jesus' time, you would have been much more concerned. Why?

Because there were times when the snows didn't come to the mountains in the north and when the snows didn't come to the mountains the streams didn't run, and in the burning-hot summer heat the streams would dry up and there would be no water. And then the crops didn't come in because there was no water or the crops didn't come in because the locusts plagued the crops, and so the people scrambled for food anywhere they could find it. There were great famines in the land quiet often and when there was famine in the land, there was no income in the land...and no way to make money...and so they couldn't buy food or clothes and they might not even have any water to drink.

You see church family, it's hard for us to relate to that. We don't know what that's like. You see, we don't live in fear of NOT having any food, clothes or water...our problem is that we live in fear of running out of our abundance. We've got a lot and we want to make sure it stays that way!

And that's why these words of Jesus almost seem odd to us: "...do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on." But, to those people it was tremendously powerful and here's why. They DID WONDER what they were going to eat, and drink and wear...and yet, Jesus says, "Don't worry about it! Don't even give it a second thought," WOW! What a shocking statement!! How could this be?

Well He gives them 2 examples why. First were the birds. Now remember where this is. It's the northern end of the Sea of Galilee in one of the most beautiful places I've ever seen. A hillside just outside of Capernaum... Here's a picture I took in 2007 from the very location Jesus preached.



Isn't that beautiful! And just imagine as Jesus is talking...about that moment...some birds flew overhead.

**Matthew 6:26**

**26 Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?**

Perhaps some sparrows...



Do you remember what Jesus said about the sparrows?

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**Matthew 10:29-30**

**29** Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. **30** But even the hairs of your head are all numbered. **31** Fear not, therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.

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You know...if you think about it...you don't ever see birds having committee meetings do you? They don't have meetings trying to come up with strategies to find food. Jesus said that God will take care of them.

But, you do understand that it never rains worms! Birds don't just hang out on the ends of tree limbs with their mouths open, do they? No sir! They've got to work to get the worms. And they're constantly on the move working hard! And that's our example. We've got to do our part. We've got to work. Mankind has to work by the sweat of his brow and the Bible says that if a man doesn't work...let him not eat. But, the point is...when we've done what we can...and it's still not enough...our heavenly Father will provide. He does that for the birds and He'll do it for you.

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Think about it: birds weren't created in the image of God. We were! Birds aren't joint heirs with Jesus! We are! And if God sustains the life of a bird, don't you think He's going to take care of you?

Think of it this way. Which is the greater act of God: For Him to give you life by creating you or sustaining you? Which is the greater act? Creating you or sustaining you? Creating you, right? So, sustaining you is no problem for Him.

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Jesus gives another example (clothing):

**Matthew 6:27-30**

**27** And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? **28** And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, **29** yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. **29** yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. **30** But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?

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When I was walking around on that hillside in Galilee in 2007, I didn't see any lilies, but I saw these beautiful flowering bushes...





Aren't they beautiful? And Jesus said even the great Solomon, (the richest man who ever lived), wasn't clothed like the flowers of the field and you know that's what He was pointing to as He talked.

You know...People try to duplicate the beauty of a flower with plastic, paper and silk, but they can't do it. The beauty that God created in the petals of a flower can't be duplicated. And Jesus said, those flowers were clothed by your heavenly Father, so don't you worry.

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And then Jesus summarizes...

**Matthew 6:31-32**

**31** Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' **32** For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all.

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He said, "...your heavenly Father knows..." Can you park your brain around that? Your heavenly Father knows...

Do you know why it's almost laughable that we worry? It's because of who our Father is! Have you forgotten who your Father is? Peter said:

**1 Peter 5:7**

**7** casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.

You know small children don't worry about much do they? They know they're going to be cared for. For instance, my children don't worry about where their next meal is going to come from. They don't worry about whether they're going to have clothes, or a bed, or something to drink. That never enters their minds because they know that their father is going to take care of that. And that's the way I want it to be. I don't want them to have any anxiety at all.

I know I still feel that way when I'm in my dad's house. I don't worry...my dad's got it covered!

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But, you know, just as the flowers of the field are going to die someday, so will my dad and so will I. But, I want my children to know that they can always depend on their heavenly Father and not worry because He will always provide. **Just like He did for Abraham when Abraham was ready to offer up Isaac, his son.**



Remember what was caught in the thicket by its horns? A RAM. And do you know what Abraham said?

### **Genesis 22:14**

**14** So Abraham called the name of that place, “The Lord will provide”; as it is said to this day, “On the mount of the Lord it shall be provided.”

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Do you know what the word is for “The Lord will provide?” It’s: “Jehovah-Jireh”

**Jehovah-Jireh**- the Lord WILL provide.

Notice it doesn’t say: “The LORD *Did* Provide,” but “The LORD *Will* Provide.” In other words, the name Abraham chose gave him courage for the future in that he didn’t simply memorialize a past event; but instead he knew because of this event, he could trust his heavenly Father to provide for ALL future events.

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Do you know why? Because as we’re getting ready to sing...He’s Good, Good Father...that’s who He is. And we’re loved by Him...

What is it in your life that looks foggy right now?



Hey...it doesn’t amount to more than a glass of water. Your heavenly Father is on the job. And HE WILL PROVIDE! Jehovah-Jireh! He’s got it and He’s got you and He will provide for you. Because your Father in Heaven is a Good, good Father!