

Rev. Dustin Daniels | River Bible Church
Matthew 6:25-34 | First Things First
April 23, 2023

WELCOME:

- Please turn your Bibles to Matthew 6.
- Bibles in the back—our gift to you.

REVIEW:

Last Sunday, we finished what turned into a three-week study regarding money and possessions.

Jesus taught us, within His Sermon on the Mount, how easily money can turn into a “master”—something that rules over our lives.

We had several key points—

KEYPOINT 1:

Money is a rival god.

Money is not only a challenger, competitor, and enemy of the One True Living God—but rather, how money is a god.

It’s a god because people put their faith in it.

And when people put their faith in it, that’s called worship!

KEYPOINT #2:

The person who pursues the wrong treasure with the wrong vision will most certainly serve the wrong master.

If we choose to pursue earthly treasures because we have our eyes on worldly things, we can’t help serve the wrong god.

A disciple of Jesus cannot serve both God and money.

Having divided loyalty is impossible, and we discussed how the American Civil War was an example of that—

We have to choose sides—otherwise, you get shot by both.

KEYPOINT 3:

The Lord Jesus only demands one thing—your life.

Jesus gave His life for yours—which means that your sin debt is paid and your eternal future secure...

It also means that God is your Heavenly Father ~~in this life as well.~~

And that's where Jesus takes us next in His sermon.

INTRODUCTION:

Today, we learn the practical day-to-day benefits of having God as our Master and Heavenly Father.

One of the underlying themes that Jesus taught ~~us~~ about money is that our attitude toward money is a mark of our spiritual maturity.

As earthly creatures, we naturally tend to worry about earthly things.

However, as blood-bought adopted children, we have a new heart and a renewed mind.

This means that our priorities are constantly in flux between what we can see and what we can't.

And make no doubt about it—money is always a test of the things we can see.

One out of every ten verses in the New Testament is on money.

Sixteen of the thirty-eight parables that Jesus taught deal with money.

There are five hundred verses on prayer, less than five hundred on faith, and over two thousand on money.

Why so many verses on money?

Because we tend to live by sight rather than faith.

We need every single one of those verses to be reminded of who our Heavenly Father is.

Otherwise, we worry.

So Jesus, out of his grace, gives us the cure to our worry today.

What is that cure?

Let's find out!

Please stand for the reading and honoring of God's Word.

SCRIPTURE:

Matthew 6:25— "Therefore I tell you: Don't worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Isn't life more than food and the body more than clothing?"

Matthew 6:26— Consider the birds of the sky: They don't sow or reap or gather into barns, yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Aren't you worth more than they?"

Matthew 6:27— Can any of you add one moment to his life span by worrying?

Matthew 6:28— And why do you worry about clothes? Observe how the wildflowers of the field grow: They don't labor or spin thread.

Matthew 6:29— Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was adorned like one of these.

Matthew 6:30— If that's how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and thrown into the furnace tomorrow, won't he do much more for you—you of little faith?

Matthew 6:31— So don't worry, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear?'

Matthew 6:32— For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them.

Matthew 6:33— But seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things will be provided for you.

Matthew 6:34— Therefore don't worry about tomorrow, because tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

And dear friends, these are the very words from the authoritative, inerrant, inspired, and infallible Word of Almighty God.

PRAY:
*When I am filled with cares,
your comfort brings me joy. (Psalm 94:19)*

EXEGESIS:

Matthew 6:24— “No one can serve two masters, since either he will hate one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.”

Matthew 6:25— “Therefore....”

In other words, *Because God is your Master...*

I tell you: Don't worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Isn't life more than food and the body more than clothing?

Why does Jesus tell us not to worry about our lives?

Why does He give us this command—“Don't worry.”

He gives it because He knows we all do—at some level.

No one is immune from worry.

And yet Jesus commands us not to worry.

The Picture
“Don't worry, don't be concerned with, don't be anxious.”

In other words, Jesus is saying, “Stop it.”

Matthew 6:25— Don't worry about your life,

“Worry” is the keyword of this entire section since it occurs six times.

It's the idea of stopping what you've been doing all your life.

In other words, we are to stop worrying and never start again.

Easier said than done.

Before we learn what Jesus is saying, let's discuss what He's not saying.

Jesus is not saying that you should quit your job.

He's not saying that you shouldn't plan for things in your life.

We know that because other parts of Scripture are very explicit about working hard and caring for your family.

So what is Jesus saying?

Matthew 6:25— Don't worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; or about your body, what you will wear.

Jesus mentions the most basic necessities of life—food, water, and clothing.

Next, He asks a question:

Matthew 6:25b—Isn't life more than food and the body more than clothing?

Before we say “yes” to this question, we need to figure out what Jesus means by the word life.

Life —*Psuchē* (sue-kay) is a comprehensive term about your life.

The picture here is of your physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being.

We spend a lot of time worrying about our physical bodies, don't we?

Especially as we get older.

We spend a lot of time looking in the mirror, making sure that our bodies are well.

We want to be presentable to others.

And in doing so, we decorate our bodies by putting clothes on them.

We exercise our bodies to protect them from disease and pain.

Here's the thing—our bodies, in and of themselves, are not the source of anything.

We are creatures, and whether we like it or not, the older we get, the more our bodies fall apart.

this falling apart is a direct result from the Fall of Adam & Eve.
Theologically, Jesus is teaching the doctrine of providence.

Providence means “to see in advance” or “to see beforehand.”

However, *providence* means much more than seeing.

It also refers to God's provision for the future.

Abraham learned this firsthand as he trusted God with his only son.

He was getting ready to sacrifice his son named Isaac (which points to God the Father sacrificing Christ)—

God stops him in his tracks and provides an animal instead.

Abraham being so grateful, names the place “Jehovah-Jireh,” — meaning, ‘the Lord will provide.’

Matthew 6:26a— Consider the birds of the sky: They don't sow or reap or gather into barns,

Jesus moves into an object lesson now.

Remember, Jesus is preaching to His disciples outside on a large hill or mountain.

That's why this sermon is called the *Sermon on the Mount*.

He probably sees some birds and points to them.

FOO Consider the birds of the sky:—look directly at the birds.

Gaze upon them—watch them closely.

Look at something that is staring at you in the face.

These birds don't have a job.

When was the last time you saw a bird plowing a field?

Have you ever seen a raven using fertilizer and doing some weeding on the weekend?

- ② And they're not hoarding worms, either.
- ① Birds only overeat when we stick them in cages.
- ③ Other animals store seeds or nuts for winter, but they do that out of instinct— not out of fear or worry.

Now look at what Jesus says next—

+ **Matthew 6:26b**— yet your heavenly Father feeds them.

Isn't that fascinating?

That is a very interesting statement.

It's profound!

God is our Heavenly Father—

He is not a Heavenly Father to the birds.

(Sorry to break it to you, but birds don't go to Heaven.)

God is our Heavenly Father, and if our Father takes this kind of great care of the birds, how much for His children?

Psalm 147:9—^{NLT} He gives food to the wild animals and feeds the young ravens when they cry.

So if God takes care of these beady-eyed little birds, how much more will He take of you?!

You! Who is created in His own image, and who has become His child by faith alone in Christ alone.

God the Father will not take better care of the birds and ignore his own kids.

He's never done that & He's not going to start now.

Matthew 6:26c—Aren't you worth more than they?

In other words, "Have you forgotten who your Heavenly Father is?"

Isn't it amazing how quickly we forget God's promises?

And that's precisely why He wrote them down in His book, for us to read over and over again.

The apostle Paul asked the same kind of question...

Romans 8:32 NLT—Since he (God the Father) did not spare even his own Son (Jesus) but gave him up for us all, won't he also give us everything else?

Don't forget who your Heavenly Father is.

He has already given you His best.
Jesus continues....

Matthew 6:27— Can any of you add one moment to his life span by worrying?

If you have the NKJV, your verse is translated,

Matthew 6:27 NKJV—Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?

The reason for this translation is that the Greek term for stature can mean height or length.

The context reveals the true meaning.

So it's common sense that Jesus is not talking about height here.

In other words,

Jesus asks, "Can any of you live a bit longer by worrying about it?"

It doesn't make sense to translate this Greek word as height.

Can you imagine someone worrying about adding 18 inches to his height?

I'm four feet tall and don't even do that!

So Jesus' second illustration has to do with life expectancy.

KEYPOINT: #1

We worry more about death than any other reality we face.

Newsflash! You're going to die. — You hear it here first.

And because of that reality, we as a culture are obsessed with trying to lengthen our life.

How many magazines are at the checkout counter talking about exercise, diets, supplements, vitamins, and minerals, *oh, oh*

Why oh, why Christians want to stay here longer than planned is beyond me. King Solomon writes this...

Ecclesiastes 3:1 NLT—For everything there is a season, a time for every activity under heaven.

Ecclesiastes 3:2 NLT— A time to be born and a time to die.

The Psalmist writes...

Psalm 39:4 NLT—Lord, remind me how brief my time on earth will be. Remind me that my days are numbered—how fleeting my life is.

Psalm 39:5 NLT— You have made my life no longer than the width of my hand. My entire lifetime is just a moment to you; at best, each of us is but a breath."

KEYPOINT: #2

You worry yourself to death— not to life.

Jesus is saying that our lives are in the hands of God the Father.

And because God the Father is the one who is in control, that should give us great comfort, peace, and joy—not anxiety.

If our God is for us, who can be against us?

Because even in death, death has lost its power and sting.

We don't need to fear death.

Why?

Because a sovereign and holy God has predetermined our days.

We had no say when we were born.

We had no say in who are parents ~~were~~.

We will have no say when we die—unless we commit suicide.

The problem with death is that we don't know the date.

And worrying about the date doesn't do any good.

I've heard people say, "Oh, I'm just a worrier, that's who I am so that's what I do."

No, not if you're a Christian.

God didn't create you to be a worry wart.

You're not a worrier—you are a child of God!

And it pains your Heavenly Father when he sees you so stressed out over nothing.

Take a moment to look in your rear-view mirror and think about the last situation where you were worried and losing sleep.

And now, think about how it was resolved.

Did you make a bigger deal out of it than it was?

Many times, we do. *Even if it's a tragedy - Can you see God's hand on your life?*

This concept of worry really hit home with me about fifteen years ago.

Amy and I babysat a newborn baby—Katelynn.

I remember holding that sweet little girl in my arms—and she was cute—sound asleep.

She didn't have a care in the world.

She wasn't worried about not getting fed later.

She wasn't concerned ~~about~~ what onesie she was wearing.

She wasn't concerned about who was going to change her next diaper.

She was completely safe in my arms.

Nothing, and I mean nothing bad, would happen to her.

And it crossed my mind — that's how we are in the arms of our Heavenly Father—no matter what age we are.

That's the primary idea of this text today, *so please don't forget who your Heavenly Father IS.*

There's a second reason that Jesus commands us not to worry.

+ KEYPOINT: #3

Worry is a sin that needs to be confessed.

Worry is the sin of not trusting God's promises.

We worry because we believe the lie that we have to fix ~~the~~ ^{our} problem ourselves.

The English term *worry* comes from an old German word meaning to strangle, or choke.

Isn't that what worry does to our lives?

Worry not only strangles us ~~feeling~~ ^{like} we can breathe—
~~So there is a very real physical aspect related to our emotions.~~
~~But at the same time, it sucks the life out of us.~~

Worry, stress, and anxiety are ~~the~~ major problems related to our physical health.

Emotional problems equal physical problems.

Many of us may ~~deny~~ ^{ignore} this medical fact.

We may dignify our worry by calling it by some other name—concern, apprehensions.

We may even justify our worry through a Scripture verse—a cross to bear—, but the results are still the same—sleepless nights and increased physical pain.

+ **Matthew 6:28**— And why do you worry about clothes? Observe how the wildflowers of the field grow: They don't labor or spin thread.

Jesus poses a second illustration regarding clothes.

^{Let's} Remember that Jesus' original audience only had one or maybe two sets of clothes.

We should consider this when we walk into our “walk-in closet” and look at the dozens of shirts, pants, and shoes and say, “I don’t have anything to wear!”

Just as Jesus wants us to slow down and watch how our Heavenly Father feeds the birds, He wants us to observe/study the wildflowers.

Once again, Jesus ^{probably} points to all the wildflowers growing on the hill.

In other words, let the flowers preach to you.

Let the sparrows sing to you of God’s sovereignty.

Jesus specifically says, “Observe how they grow. They don’t labor or spin.” ^{thru}

In other words, they don’t have a job—they don’t work for a living.

And they don’t make clothing for themselves.

These flowers make no effort to grow. — *They just do!*

They certainly didn’t design or color themselves.

† Matthew 6:29— Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was adorned like one of these.

Solomon! Jesus is pulling out the big guns now.

Wow, talk about an example.

There’s a Jewish Historian ^{→ Josephus} that writes this about King Solomon...

There was great fame all around the neighboring countries, which proclaimed the virtue and wisdom of Solomon.

All the kings everywhere desired to see him because his stories were incredible.

These other kings demonstrated their respect for Solomon by sending him gifts.

These kings sent him gold, silver, purple garments, spices, horses, and chariots.

All these gifts were known by the kings for their strength and beauty.

He then added these horses to his stables—more than 20,000 in all.

These horses also were so strong and could run so swiftly that there were no others in comparison.

None were finer or swifter.

Their riders also were a further ornament to Solomon.

These riders were young, strong, beautiful warriors.

They were distinguished for their size.

They were far taller than most men.

They also had very long heads of hair hanging down and were clothed in garments of Tyrian purple. (Think Armani suits).

They also had gold dust sprinkled on their hair—so that their heads sparkled with the reflection of the sunbeams from the gold.

The king himself rode upon a chariot in the middle of these men, who were still in their armor.

Ad that to show how over the top Solomon was,

Now, despite all the flowers' inactivity—of not working to be beautiful—

JOSS SAYS

Not even Solomon, Israel's most extravagant king, could compete with the beauty of wildflowers.

WILL

Matthew 6:30— If that's how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and thrown into the furnace tomorrow, won't he do much more for you—you of little faith?

Furnace is better translated as "oven."

This type of oven was made of clay and for baking bread.

To bake bread, a woman would build a fire inside the oven as well as under it.

The fuel for the oven was dried grass and flowers.

→ Temporary

Jesus' point is this—once the flower's fleeting beauty was gone—the flower itself had little use —except to be burned up as fuel.

Isn't it amazing that we can believe that God redeemed us, saved us from our sins, and promised us eternal life with Him...

YET...and we do not trust Him to supply our daily needs?"

Matthew 6:30— you of little faith?

What does Jesus mean by 'little faith'?

Notice that he doesn't say 'no faith.'

It is not the absence of faith—it's the scarcity of faith.

Because

We often don't have sufficient faith to get us past the trial causing us to worry.

that's

We learned that worry is indeed a sin.

And it's not a trivial sin, either. Why?

Because worry strikes a blow both at God's love and provisional care.

When ~~children of God~~ ^{God's children} worry, we tell our Heavenly Father that we don't trust Him.

regardless of what we say. → behavior

We would never say that aloud—but our worry/anxiety judges us/proves that we are guilty.

Worry shows that our circumstances master us.

There's that word master from last week—lord.

— you of little faith?



Faith—a constant reliance upon God.

If we have little faith, how do we build it?

How do we work out our salvation w/ fear? Trouble? How do we build spiritual muscle?

Answer: One day at a time.

By reading the word of God by the Spirit of God on a consistent basis.

When we are not reading, listening to, or watching God's Word in some form or fashion every day—there is a vacuum in our life.

Guess what—the world or even the demonic rush into to fill that void.

What are they going to fill it with?

Lies, fear, doubt, and worry.

Worry then pushes us away from the Lord.

Did you know that it takes the same amount of time to worry about something as it does ~~pray~~ *to pray about it?*

Matthew 6:31— So don't worry, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear?'

We ask these specific questions when we're all jammed up in a financial crisis.

Worrying about these things *proves* that we're spending too much time in the world.

How so?

Because Jesus says, we're acting just like the world....

Matthew 6:32— For the Gentiles (unbelievers) eagerly seek all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them.

To worry about material things is to live just like the world.

And we say, "I don't want to live like the world—I really don't. But how do I break free from this stranglehold on my life?"

And now Jesus provides the answer...

Matthew 6:33— But *seek first* the kingdom of God, and *his righteousness*, and *all these things* will be provided for you.

This is one of the most powerful verses in *all* of Scripture.

Highlight it, write it down, and tattoo it on your body.

This verse will ~~change~~ ^{transform} your life. if you choose to believe it.

Matthew 6:33— But seek first the kingdom of God,

Seek first—striving involved.

Building faith includes building spiritual muscle. — Takes work, Meditation? A willingness to change.

Notice the importance—first.

Everything else is a distant second.

Matthew 6:33— But seek first the kingdom of God,

The Kingdom of God is your life with God. — Relationship.

Matthew 6:33— But seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness,

We are to seek, strive to learn, and apply God's 'right-ness' to our lives.

We are to apply God's moral standards to our lives—no matter the cost.

And look at the promise!

Matthew 6:33— But seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things will be provided for you.

What things?

The things we tend to worry about.

These things | will be added to your life and given to you.

Keypoint #4

Matthew 6:33— We are not to strive for the things—we are to strive for the Kingdom.

In other words, we tend to worry because we seek first the wrong things in this world.

And when we seek first the wrong things, we'll never stumble upon the right things.

What does it look like to seek first after God, practically?

Jesus is not saying we are to seek the kingdom first, food second, and clothes third....

He's not talking about chronological order.

Instead, He is talking about priority. *Attitude of life*

He's talking about our hearts and motives.

~~Why do we do the things that we do?~~

~~Why do we behave in the manner in which we behave?~~

~~The number one priority of the Christian is his relationship with God.~~

If anyone seeks God and his kingdom first, God promises to meet your needs, *but it*

MAY not be in this life

Notice here, not your wants.

~~If you seek God first, God will relieve you of worry.~~

~~The promise does not explain how to seek God's kingdom—because the rest of the Bible tells us how to do that.~~



Matthew 6:34—Therefore don't worry about tomorrow, because tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

When we worry about tomorrow, we tend to overextend ourselves with a capacity we do not have.

Today has a list of its own troubles.

Why do we look ahead and grab some of the troubles prepared for tomorrow and add them today?

Let me ask you, do you ever worry about yesterday?

Jesus says we have enough on our plate today without worrying about tomorrow. One translation reads, "Sufficient for the day is the evil of it." ~~God is the God of tomorrow as well as the God of today and eternity.~~

Worrying does not enable you to escape your problems.

Worry does make you unfit to cope with the reality of your problems.

If you add today's troubles to tomorrow's troubles, you give yourself an impossible burden.



Key Point #1
~~Do not borrow trouble.~~
Do not borrow tomorrow's trouble.
How can we possibly do this?

A couple of thoughts:

1. Don't live in the future.
2. Live now.

Put your arms around your wife right now.

Take a walk with your child or your grandchild today.

Enjoy the life God has given you today.



KEYPOINT:

#6

Stop worrying and start worshipping.

worship changes everything - Attitude, Health, relationships

PREACH:

I once read that it takes sixty trillion fog droplets to cover seven city blocks.

Now sixty trillion droplets— seven city blocks' worth of fog— can close down airports and entire cities.

Yet, if you ~~condense~~ ^{shrink} those sixty trillion fog droplets, you would have only half a glass of water.

That's a good picture of what worry is all about.

You begin with something minor, only half a glass of water.

But you start thinking about it and wrestling with it, wondering,

How is this going to work out? How am I going to do that?

And before long, you can't sleep, and you've got ulcers.

Dear friends - stop worrying; start worshipping.

Watch what happens when you ~~stop~~ seek First the Kingdom to

PRAYER

Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you. (1 Peter 5:7)

your life this week

BENEDICTION

Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal comfort and a wonderful hope, comfort you and strengthen you in every good thing you do and say. (2 Thess 2:16)

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