

## "The Proper View of Wealth"

### Part 5

#### Matthew 6:19-34

**Introduction:** The past 4 lessons we have looked at in our study of the Sermon on the Mount have come from Matthew 6:19-24. Within those verses Jesus touched upon the subject of worldly wealth or to be more detailed He spoke about how to invest that which is left over after our needs have been met in life. He warned of the concerns which come with investing in the "stuff" of this world.

He then told of the security of investing in that which is eternal. Everything invested into that which is for the Kingdom of God will never be lost. Jesus then spoke of how our investments are a matter of the heart. In Matthew 6:22-23 Jesus used the illustration of the eye to show that when we are generous with what God has given to us the result is we are filled with spiritual understanding.

#### Matthew 6:22

*<sup>22</sup> The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.*

The word "single" here could also be translated "generous".

Jesus also spoke of the how the person who is stingy or tight fisted is blinded to spiritual understanding.

#### Matthew 6:23

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*<sup>23</sup> But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!*

To have an "evil eye" is to be someone who is stingy with what God has entrusted to them.

### **Proverbs 28:22**

*<sup>22</sup> He that hasteth to be rich hath an evil eye, and considereth not that poverty shall come upon him.*

These 2 verses confirm what Jesus said in verse 21 (investments are a matter of the heart). If we are "stingy" with that which God has entrusted to us then we have a problem with the heart and when we have a problem with our heart, spiritually speaking then we are not open to spiritual Truth and spiritual instruction.

Jesus went on to explain that we cannot serve 2 masters. Last week I told you that when "stuff" or anything else controls our lives then God has lost His authority in our hearts.

### **Matthew 6:24**

*<sup>24</sup> No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.*

Now as we leave this section and prepare to enter the next I believe we must keep in mind the background of investments in Jesus Day. Remember that the people of the Old and the New Testaments invested in 3 basic commodities; garments, grain, and precious metals. So, when people invested in these 3 commodities many did so for one

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main reason and that was because they did not know what the future held. The bottom line was they were fearful they would run out in the months to come and if they had a supply stockpiled they felt more secure. So, really their trust was in their stockpiles. They may never use the stockpiles but the thought of knowing they had them gave them a feeling of security. The person who lives this way is not exercising faith in God and when they do this it is usually a good sign they are people who have allowed worry to enter into their lives. Jesus knew that worry would rob the believer of the peace He desired for them to have and it would cause them to be so caught up in their work that they would have no time for serving Him.

That thought goes right back to the fact that no man can serve 2 masters. If you are a person who worries about tomorrow or next week or next year and you are consumed with extra work so as to be prepared for tomorrow then God has lost His authority within your heart.

## **I. The Remedy for Financial Worry**

### **Part 1**

**Notice Matthew 6:25-34**

#### **A. The Theme of this Passage**

As we read through this passage there is one phrase that is used several times. The phrase is "**take no thought**". The thought behind the phrase is used 6 times in this passage. We find it in verses 25, 27, 28, 31, and 34(twice).

The phrase "**take no thought**" means "**do not worry**" and every time it is used in this passage it is used to address the subject of worry. For a

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believer worry is sin. Worry is the opposite of faith and worry is a lack of faith in God. To worry about what we face in life is to say that we do not believe God has the power to take care of the problem we face or it is to say we believe He has the power but He does not really concern Himself with the problems of my life. Neither of those is true. God is bigger than any problem we face and He is concerned with even what we would consider to be the mundane things in our lives.

Worry is something which really hinders us in our life. I found a thought on worry by an unnamed writer:

*"Worry is a thin stream of fear that trickles through the mind, if encouraged it'll cut a channel so wide that all other thoughts will be drown in it."*

Another man said this:

*"Worry is wasting today's time to clutter up tomorrow's opportunities with yesterdays troubles."*

One man said worry is like fog. He said if you take 7 city blocks covered in a very thick fog which is 100 feet high and you condense all of the fog it will not even fill one drinking glass with water. Fog that is 100 feet high and covering 7 city blocks is not even equal to one glass of drinking water. But that fog can devastate the lives of many people. He said that is exactly how worry is. It is not much more than a glass of water but it can really mess up the lives of many people.

Corrie ten Boom said this about worry:

*"Worrying is carrying tomorrow's load with today's strength- carrying two days at once. It is moving into tomorrow ahead of time. Worrying*

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*doesn't empty tomorrow of its sorrow, it empties today of its strength."*

Jesus knew the effects of worry and so He gave us the section before us in the Sermon on the Mount to keep us from worrying.

Now in **Matthew 6:19-24** Jesus was dealing with the extra finances of our lives. By that I mean that which is left over after all the bills are paid and the needs are met. But here in **Matthew 6:25-34** He will deal with the basics of life: the necessities which we need for everyday living.

## **B. Addressing Worry**

### **Notice Matthew 6:25a**

Jesus addresses 3 commodities in this verse: food, drink, and clothing. Now as I read this verse you may wonder why He pointed to these 3 commodities. In your life you probably do not worry much about food because you have enough at home to last for a while and if not you can stop on the way home and buy more, you can turn on your faucet and get all the water you desire, and your closets are bursting with clothing.

But we are missing something here because we are thinking about our day and not what life was like in Palestine. So let me give you the history that will help you better understand what Jesus was thinking about when He started into this section.

If you would have lived in Palestine in Jesus' day you would have been shocked by the statement Jesus made here. Let me tell you why: these would have been 3 commodities that would have been on your list of concerns. If you lived back in Palestine you would have been living on

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the edge of a parched desert. You would be dependent upon the mountain snows for it was the melting of the snow that provided the water. If the snows did not come the blistering summer heat would dry up the water and without water there would be a famine and so you would have no food and without crops there was no work and without work there was no money for clothing. So every year in Palestine you would get concerned as the winter approached for those winter snows were very important to keep the cycle going.

This is why many would stockpile grain, garments and precious metals. They were often worried about what the next year would hold and if there would be a drought or a famine. So they hoarded what they could in grain so as to have food, they hoarded what they could in garments to be clothed and they hoarded precious metals so they could buy what they needed if their fields did not produce. You see it was not just the poor who worried but it was also the rich. They would store up extra "stuff" and even when they knew someone had a need they would not give what they had because they were worried about the future.

### **Notice Matthew 6:25b**

Here at the end of the verse Jesus asks a question to cause His readers to think. But we cannot understand the question without remembering the teaching and the ways of the religious leaders. They were always concerned with the external. To them life was all about the body. But in this question Jesus wanted His listeners to consider that there is more to life than just the body.

By the way that is the very same way our society sees life today. To majority of people in our circles today life to them is all about the body. Think about it: they exercise the body, they cover it with

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makeup, they dress it in the most beautiful clothing they can afford, they take it to spas, they spend money on it to keep it looking young, they feed it the very best they can afford and the list goes on and on but you get the point. Most people in our society today place the greatest emphasis upon the body. But the truth is that life is far more than the body. The body is just the shell for the soul. Life is not sustained by the body, life is sustained by God. It is so sad to watch people today become consumed with the human body and give no thought to the soul. They spend much of their life trying to keep the body young only to eventually lose that battle but they never spend any time preparing for eternity.

In the verse before us Jesus is saying that there is much more to life than the body, so don't be so consumed with it. Instead we are to be consumed with eternal matters which we will see when He tells us to seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness.

Jesus will now give to us 3 reasons why worry should never be given a place in our lives.

## **1. God is our Father**

### **Notice Matthew 6:26**

Now as we approach this verse let us understand that Jesus is preaching this sermon in the open air and as He is speaking there may have been a flock of birds flying by or even feeding on the hillside as so He points to them to use the birds as an illustration. I read where the art of Palestine where the Sermon on the Mount was given is a major flyway for birds.

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Jesus points to the birds to make a point about how foolish worry really is. The life of the birds is sustained by God for the verse tells us He is the one who feeds the birds. God did not just create the birds and then step away to let them provide for themselves. You have never seen a group of birds gathering for a meeting to plan how they are going to make it through the winter. You have never seen birds sitting around worrying about what is going to happen tomorrow. Let me show you some verse that will connect with the thought here.

### **Job 38:41**

*<sup>41</sup> Who provideth for the raven his food? when his young ones cry unto God, they wander for lack of meat.*

### **Psalm 147:9**

*<sup>9</sup> He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry.*

The birds cry unto God for food and He provides that which they need. Notice the phrase in the middle of the **Matthew 6:26**:

### **Matthew 6:26**

*"for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them."*

Now let me just say this is not an excuse for us to not work. Birds don't stand on the end of a branch with their mouth open. Worms don't fall from the sky and land in the birds mouth. Birds work to get their food but they do not worry about what the future holds. They don't build bigger nests to stockpile worms. They live from day to day and it is God who sustains their lives but He sustains them through their efforts to hunt for food.

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There is a very important thought here within this verse and the illustration of the birds: we are not to just sit around waiting on God to feed us but we are to do our work and God will provide what we need as we continue to work. But we do not need to worry.

### **Matthew 6:26**

*yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?*

This is a great thought here at the end of this verse. Our Father sustains the life of the bird and we are far more important than the birds so will He not provide for us? Consider our relationship with God:

1. We are His children.
2. We are joint heirs with Christ.
3. We have been chosen to carry the greatest message ever proclaimed which is the Gospel.
4. We have within us the Holy Spirit.
5. We are a part of the body of Christ.
6. We have been entrusted with spiritual gifts to use in this life to glorify God.
7. It is through us that Christ is manifest to a lost and a dying world.

I could keep going but you get the point. Birds have a place in God's creation but we have a place in God's Kingdom. We belong to Him and so to worry about the everyday needs of life is to question His care for us.

**Conclusion:**

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Now some people would say that life is different today than it was then. We live in a day of uncertainty. We don't know what tomorrow holds in this economy we are in and the evil in this world gets worse every day. That may all be true but that does not change the fact that God is still God. No matter how bad things get in our economy God's power is not hindered. That we must never forget. If God would call you to the darkest place in the world full of sin and sickness He can keep you safe and sustained. Location and economy have absolutely nothing to do with God's power and His faithfulness.