

Sermon on the Mount

Lesson #16

“Kingdom Cautions”

Beware of worry Part IV

Matthew 6:25-34

Scripture: Matthew 5:20 *“For I say to you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.”*

Introduction:

Have you heard the Mother Goose Rhyme that goes like this:

*For ever element under the sun
There is a remedy or there is none.
If there be one try to find it.
If not never mind it.*

It’s a gut wrenching thing to realize that even children experience worry. But the greater tragedy is who teaches it to them.

Oh, we don’t mean to let worry get the best of us, but with all the problems going on in our world today we find ourselves more concerned than ever.

Will the recession end soon? Will our country be bankrupt? Will I find a job? Can I ever afford to retire? Will our country become a 3rd world nation? Can I afford health care....and so on !

While looking up worry in the dictionary the strangest thing happened I found the word but where I found it was extraordinary.....It was right at home between the words worn out and worse.

Transitional Statement:

Church make no mistake about it, worry stifles spiritual growth and limits kingdom potential. Year after year I see Satan employ this tactic to spiritually distract God’s people.

READ: Matthew 6:25-34

" For this reason I say to you, do not be worried about your life, as to what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, as to 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, that they do not sow, nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they? 27 "And who of you by being worried can add a single hour to his life? 28 "And why are you worried about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin, 29 yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these. 30 "But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, will He not much more clothe you? You of little faith! 31 "Do not worry then, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear for clothing?' 32 "For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. 33 "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. 34 "So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

I. Jesus begins with “*For this reason*” 25a

A. So far in Matthew chapter 6, Jesus has cautioned us about doing our acts of righteousness to be seen by men, and also, letting earthly things captivate our hearts.

1. And now He brings up the problem of worry

a. “*Worry*” in the Greek means anxiously troubled. It points to a thought that has passed mere concern or cautious observance and has moved us to wrestles nights and sick stomachs.

1) It’s been said that ulcers are not cause by what you eat, but by what’s eating you.

b. This word comes from the Greek word which points to distraction.

1) And Church, I can’t think of a greater kingdom hindrance than Christians who are spiritually distracted.

2. “*Worry*” here is not an independent thought.

a. Jesus is not saying... “*oh by the way watch out for worry*”

b. Jesus connects it to the preceding thoughts by saying “*For this reason*” or to this end.

3. “*Worry*” here is connected to these other cautions because it flows from them.

a. And these three cautions mentioned by Jesus all feed on each other and lead to spiritual downfall.

II. So Jesus instructs us to stay away from worry.

25b “...*I say to you, do not be worried about your life, as to what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, as to what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?*”

A. Let’s think about some basic causes of worry

1. Cause # 1, is Wealth

a. This whole discussion is set against the backdrop of worldly wealth.

b. In the preceding verses Jesus said:

Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. 20But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

24"*No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.*

c. Luke puts this whole discussion of worry between the story of the Rich Fool & what we treasure in our hearts.

d. You know, physical things of this life, can easily become a consuming force!

1) They tug at our desires

2) They often become our treasures

*Requiring great maintenance, time and care

3) The sad end is that they distract our focus away from God.

e. We should not allow wealth consume our lives

1) We must worship the creator not the created.. Romans 1:25

2) God doesn't want us serving wealth he wants us to be stewards of it.

a) Realizing that the love of money is the root of all sorts of evil 1 Tim. 6:10

2. Cause # 2 is our Perception of what is happening around us

a. You know, most of the time people are not hurt so much by what happens to them as they are by their perception of it.

b. In my opinion one of the greatest victories for Satan is when he convinces a Christian to feel like a victim.

1) Church, let me tell you this ...bad things do happen in this world...but you have a choice whether to be victim minded or not.

2) God made us to be more than conquerors ... Romans 8:37

3) And in Christ we are people of hope.

a) Through spiritual eyes we should always see our glasses as full and overflowing.

c. Elisha's servant in 2 Kings 6 needed a little help with perception.

1) The King of Aram sent his troops to capture Elisha

2) Elisha and his servant found themselves trapped in a city

a) Servant was worried and discouraged

2 Kings 6:16-17

16 So he answered, " Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them." 17 Then Elisha prayed and said, " O LORD, I pray, open his eyes that he may see." And the LORD opened the servant's eyes and he saw; and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha."

d. We must keep a check on the way we understand things

1) Realizing Satan uses false perceptions against us

e. We must open the eyes of our heart"

1) Learn to look for what is real

2) Keeping our spiritual eyes clear

f. And we must know that we are valuable to God

1) Created and cared for by a loving God

2) And that things are not always as they seem

3. Cause # 3 is our Desire to Control (READ....Matthew 6:27)

a. You know, simply put, a controlling heart is a heart that acts from fear...Luke 12:32

1) Time and time again Jesus says to His disciples do not fear

a) So why are we so inclined to be fearful?

2) Church, God has not made fear a driver of spirituality.

b. Somehow at the center of fear is that we are not good enough

1) And we buy into the ludicrous idea that we can create our own value.

2) And Control has it's birth.

c. Most of the time the need for control is a protective mechanism for a person.

1) But God is our protector.

- d. Sometimes it is just plain selfishness
 - 1) Have you seen an hour glass.
 - a) No matter what you do only one grain at a time can pass through the neck of the glass
 - b) Yet we will set there and shake it and try everything to make it go faster.
 - e. We must understand that Control is only an illusion
 - 1) Jesus says: “Who by worrying can add a single hour to life....worry changes nothing Matthew 6:27
 - d. The sad part is, that while control may make us feel safe, it hurts ourselves and those around us.
 - e. God controls everything
 - 1) Isa. 40 shows his Sovereignty
 - 2) Not being in control is an adventure

*Enjoy life trusting God
4. Cause # 4 is not being content
- a. We live in a world that just always has to have more.
 - 1) Satan uses this against us
 - 2) Keep up with the Jones
 - b. This is a self destructive proposition
 - 1) We go and buy stuff just because we can
 - 2) Then we have sleepless nights keeping track of all this stuff.
 - c. Many times we aren't even content with yesterday
 - 1) The past haunts and stifles much spiritual potential as well
 - 2) My friends,... all the kings horses and all the kings men can't put the past together again.Let it go
 - d. And dissatisfaction with the past usually ushers in over concern with tomorrow.
 - 1) I'll go here or there and make more money....James 4:13
 - 2) I'll build bigger barns...Luke 12:1

e. We must be Content

1) Here lies the truest of life treasures

2) Finding contentment in all situations.

a) Phil 4:11 Paul talks about being content in whatever circumstances you find yourself.

-Paul had many occasions to understand this..2 Cor 11:23-28

b) 2 Cor 12:9 God tells Paul his Grace is sufficient

f. God suggests that:

1) Our main business is not to see what lies dimly at a distance, but to do what clearly lies at hand.

5. And Finally Worry is a lack of trust in God.

a. Jesus says "...oh you of little faith" (Matthew 6:30)

b. Church even though we walk by faith and not by sight 2 Cor 5:7, God has given us plenty of examples to prove His trustworthiness

26 " Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they?"

28 "And why are you worried about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin, 29 yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these. 30 "But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, will He not much more clothe you?"

c. We must trust in God

1) He knows our needs before we even ask...Luke 12:30

2) "Seek first his kingdom and all these things will be added to you" Matt 6:33

d. Walking with God should be worry free

1) Casting our anxiety on him because he cares for us.. 1 Peter 5:7

B. Let's think about what worry does

1. Worry takes our focus off God.
 - a. In Luke 10:38-42 we find:
 - 1) Martha worried about Mary listening to Jesus
 - 2) Jesus tells her only one thing is needed
 - a) And Mary choose better thing
2. Worry Chokes out God's word in our hearts
 - a. Like in the parable of the sower ..Mark 4:19
3. Worry weighs us down (Luke 21:34)
 - a. It destroys our concentration!
4. Worry leads us in the same direction as the Pagans (Matt 6:32 & Luke 12:30)
5. Worry is Sin
 - a. Jesus said not to do it...Matthew 6:25
 - b. And Paul says in Philippians 4:6

“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.”

Conclusion:

While in Oklahoma this week there was a major ice storm. This is really hard on trees because of the weight. It usually breaks lots of branches off the trees. Especially the hard wood trees like oaks and ash trees. They are so hard and ridged and they are not flexible hardly at all. The willow tree is different. You know why? The willow tree is soft and quite flexible it bows gracefully under pressure and keeps itself together.

The prayer of Serenity is one of my favoritesIt says:

- God grant me the serenity to:
- Accept the things I cannot change
- The courage to change the things I can
- And the Wisdom to know the difference

This morning maybe there are those here who need to just give it all to God.

- Are your burdens great?
- Jesus says come to me you who are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest

Matthew 6:27 "And who of you by being worried can add a single hour to his life?"