



SCRIPTURE READING: Matthew 6:24-34

24 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. 25 Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? 26 Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? 27 Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? 28 And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: 29 And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. 30 Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? 31 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? 32 (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. 33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. 34 Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

INTRODUCTION:

Jesus deals with an issue that if not dealt with properly, will control and even ruin your life. The issue is that of WORRY. There are legitimate concerns you must have in order to be responsible in life, but you must know that a concern is different than a worry. Worry is taking a concern way too far. It is like a concern on steroids. Have you ever laid awake at night not able to sleep because of worry? Have you ever had your peace and joy overshadowed by worry? Have you ever lost focus and concentration due to worry? We lock the doors of our cars and homes to keep thieves out, but the real thief we need to look out for is worry. Worry is a spiritual chokehold that can actually take your physical breath away. It will affect your health, causing ulcers and heart problems.

This is a great time to consider the devastating affects of worry and how to conquer it. As believers in Christ, we are free (Jn. 8:36). Jesus has empowered us to have victory (1 Jn. 5:4), even over worry.

QUESTIONS:

These questions are designed to stimulate spiritual conversation and open the lines of communication. Take some time to consider each verse and answer the questions to this timely subject.

DAY ONE

(v. 24) — Before Jesus talks about worry, He addresses authority and priority. If God is not your authority and priority, something else will be. As you prioritize your life, you end up living for what is most valuable to you. When those things are taken away or threatened, worry sets in. Worry starts when you leave your Master.

Being that the love of money is the root of all evil (1 Tim. 6:10), it is a common master for many. You cannot serve God and money. God will not take second place to anything or anyone.

What are some other common “masters” people have in their lives? What are the things you tend to worry about? Identify two changes you’ll make this week to place Jesus first in your life.

(v. 25) — Since God is our authority and priority, we know He is responsible for us. Therefore, we have no need to worry. Our only need is having Him (Heb. 13:5)! We are to take no thought (worry) for life, food, drink, our bodies, and clothes. Notice how worry is a mind problem. This is why we must be careful with what we put in our minds. Television programs are designed to “program” our minds. You will never find “fake news” in the Bible. *“Heaviness in the heart of man maketh it stoop: but a good word taketh it glad”* (Prov. 12:25). The more you program your mind with God’s word, the less you will worry. *“Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee”* (Is. 26:3). This does not mean we are not to be informed, but we must be careful not to let the world’s news take the place of the “good news.” We must stay single focused on heavenly things (vs. 22-23).

Remember your spiritual priorities: Your LIFE is hid with Christ (Col. 3:3). You EAT the bread of life (Mt. 4:4) and DRINK of the Spirit (Jn. 7:37-39). Your BODY is a living sacrifice (Rom. 12:1) that puts on spiritual CLOTHES (Eph. 6:11-17). If you place these spiritual truths before the physical, worry will fly away.

How does the material world and all its charm deceive us into thinking it is more valuable than what it really is? According to verse 25, what will a person who idolizes self tend to value? What will this result in? Hint... it rhymes with furry.

DAY TWO

(v. 26) — Jesus continues with the principle of priority, but here He flips it around and teaches that we are a priority to Him. In order to learn this, we must go “bird watching.” What we notice about the birds is that they don’t worry about where they’re going to get their next meal. This is because OUR HEAVENLY FATHER takes care of them. When was the last time you saw a bird with an ulcer? Jesus said we are

more valuable than the birds, and our heavenly Father will take care of us. The reason why we are better than the birds is because we are made in the image of God. We are loved by our God in a very special way (Rom. 5:8). Never forget that you were redeemed with the precious blood of Christ (I Pet. 1:18-19) and never forget how much God loves you (Jn. 3:16).

Why should we take comfort in knowing God takes care of birds? What can we learn from listening to the birds singing? What can we learn from Isaiah 40:31? Read I Peter 5:7.

DAY THREE

(v. 27) — Just as a thought cannot add to your stature, worry cannot help with problems. In other words, worry won't work. It is ineffective. Why should we worry when we can pray? When we pray, we are praying to the One who can not only add stature, but can also move mountains! How should Ephesians 3:20 take care of your worry?

(v. 28) — Now, the Lord wants us to stop and see the lilies. The lilies don't agonize in looking pretty. They trust God to clothe them and grow them. Read John 15:1-11.

(v. 29) — Even Solomon, in all his extravagant clothing, wealth, and glory (II Chron. 9:3-4), cannot compare to a lily, though they do nothing for their clothing. Jesus is teaching that it is natural for nature to trust its Creator. It should be natural for us, who have a divine nature (II Pet. 1:4), to also trust our Creator and Father. To worry is to elevate the natural over the supernatural. How does faith play a part in letting God work for you? What are some things that may hinder you from trusting God?

DAY FOUR

(v. 30-31) — The grass and lilies spring up, bloom in splendor, and quickly die before being raked up and burned. If God provides "clothing" for them, don't you think He will clothe you? Worrying about these things is a faith problem. *"But without faith it is impossible to please him"* (Heb. 11:6). *"For whatsoever is not of faith is sin"* (Rom. 14:23). Worry is really a sin problem. When you worry, you are saying you don't trust God to take care of you. It is a lack of confidence in an omniscient and omnipotent God. Worry says God is not able or sufficient to meet your need. It is actually an insult to God and reveals your lack of faith.

(vs. 32) — Worry is actually associated with a heathen mindset. People that don't know God will naturally act in a way that reflects what they believe. They have mismanaged priorities as they place the material before the spiritual, the earth before Heaven, self before God, earthly riches before spiritual riches, and doubt before faith. The last people on earth to behave like this should be God's children.

You should take comfort in knowing that God knows every need that you have. He knows everything about you (Mt. 6:7-8; 10:29-31). How should this give you comfort?

DAY FIVE

(v. 33) — Jesus goes back to priorities again and commands to seek first the kingdom of God and God's righteousness.

This means to have God first (Mt. 22:36-38). The kingdom speaks of divine rule and righteousness of divine standard. *"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost"* (Rom. 14:17). When a child of God does this, God provides all his needs, and the sin of worry is avoided. *"I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread"* (Ps. 37:25). Many today make the mistake of trying to get enough money and things so they won't have to worry. When problems come, they run to God as if He is like a spare tire. This is the direct opposite of what we are supposed to do. Are you seeking God and His righteousness before all else? How do your spiritual priorities affect your blessings?

(v. 34) — God wants us to know how to manage our time and concern. We have enough for today, let alone for tomorrow. Worrying about tomorrow will rob us of our effectiveness for today. Sometimes we crucify ourselves between the two thieves of yesterday and tomorrow. We need to live one day at a time, so we can enjoy the blessings of today. *"It is of the LORD's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness"* (Lam. 3:22-23). How can you stay focused on today and not tomorrow?

REVIEW:

- Worry is a reflection of our priorities being out of place.
- Worry steals joy, peace, blessings, and sleep.
- Worry won't fix anything.
- Worry is a lack of faith and trust in God.
- Worry is sin.
- Worry is not a problem solver, but a problem causer.
- Worry is a heathen mindset.
- Worry is an insult to God.
- Worry affects our productiveness for today.
- Worry questions our faith, trust, and love for God.

CONCLUSION:

When worry comes, we must remember our FAITH (v. 30), our FATHER (v. 32), and our FIRST (v. 33). As soon as worry shows up, it's time to pray (Phil. 4:6-7) (Heb. 4:15-16) (Mt. 7:7-11). Prayer puts the attention where the attention belongs, which is on God. Don't let your life be ravished by worry. Seek God first and let worry die.

- *"But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus"* (Phil. 4:19)
- *"Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved"* (Ps. 55:22)
- *"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you"* (Jn. 14:1-2).
- Also see: (I Pet. 5:7) (II Tim. 1:7) (Rom. 8:35-39)