

Sunday Morning Message

October 9, 2016

Looking unto Jesus and His Instruction Regarding Worry

Congregational Reading – Matthew 6:31 - 34

Text – Matthew 6:19 - 34

Our theme for the year is Looking unto Jesus

Our theme verses are Hebrews 12:1 – 2

"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." (Hebrews 12:1-2)

This year, we will be preaching messages from the 4 gospel accounts in the New Testament and we will be closely examining the life of our Lord Jesus Christ while He walked the earth, learning the principles that He teaches us, specifically looking for ways to apply His life to our own.

Introduction

The portion of Scripture that we are dealing with today is part of the famous Sermon on the Mount. This sermon that Jesus preached in the second year of his earthly ministry does not tell us how to be saved, but it does tell us how saved people should live, and one of the things that saved people should do a lot less of when compared with people who do not know the Lord is worry.

In our text we see the phrase "take no thought" repeated, in various ways, five different times. "Take no thought" literal means not to spend too much time, or really any time at all, thinking, worrying, or stressing about something. In this case, Jesus is telling us not to think too much about, worry, or stress over what you eat, what you drink, or what clothing you will put on. I think it would be safe to assume that we could make a broader application and include other things that we are not to worry about, including where you will live, or how you will be transported from point A to point B. We could probably make the very broad application to include any material possession from this earth.

Why should we not give too much thought to these needful things? Because God is already thinking about them for us. In this passage, God tells us to think about Him, and then He will make sure that He takes care of all of these earthly needs.

Illustration:

Worry is faith in the negative, trust in the unpleasant, assurance of disaster and belief in defeat...worry is wasting today's time to clutter up tomorrow's opportunities with yesterday's troubles. A dense fog that covers a seven-city-block area one hundred feet deep is composed of less than one glass of water divided into sixty thousand million drops. Not much is there but it can cripple an entire city. When I don't have anything to worry about, I begin to worry about that. (Walter Kelly)

Transition

This morning we are going to closely examine this portion of Scripture along with other supporting passages and see what are some of the causes of our worry and stress, and then learn what God says that we should do to eliminate them.

I **The Root Problem of Worry Defined (vs. 19 – 24)**

The root cause for much of our worry has to do with things that are temporary rather than eternal: things that cannot be taken with us into Heaven. We worry about losing these things, or about these things being stolen, or about these things breaking, or about whether or not we will have enough money to maintain them or buy more of them.

Think about your home right now, your car, your closets, your trunk, your shed, your storage unit, your attic – they are filled with things that decay, things that can be stolen, things that are temporary in nature. None of these things will follow you into Heaven. They are all things of this earth, and they are all things that to some degree cause you at least a little bit of worry and stress.

God is not saying that it is wrong to have most of these things, but He is saying that the things that should really matter to you the most are things that are eternal. Things that are not tangible, but nevertheless are worth a great deal.

Your relationship with God

A soul won to Christ

A work done for the Lord

A dollar invested in God's Kingdom or given in the name of the Lord

A relationship that is built and nurtured

These are all things that require our investment of our time, talent, and treasure; but these things do not decay – they remain, and they follow us into eternity.

"And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them." - (Revelation 14:13)

Notice the order given in verse 21 – the heart follows your treasure. We love things that we invest in.

Verses 21 & 22 are slightly obscure verses that I have struggled to fully understand for many years, but I think I have a handle on them now.

A single eye is an eye that is singularly focused and in this case the focus is on things that concern eternity. An evil eye is an eye that is diseased or impaired, and it cannot see clearly.

Physical sight in the Bible is symbolic of spiritual understanding. The Christian that is singularly focused in things that really matter in life is full of light. He is not concerned with possessions, he is not consumed with keeping up with the Joneses, and he is not competing with everyone else in the “who ends the game with the most toys” contest. We all end the game with the same amount of toys – 0. There are never any U-hauls following behind a hearse.

Verse 24 sums it all up – we have to make a choice – we cannot “halt between two opinions”. Either we will be focused on the things of God, or on the things of this earth; but, we cannot be focused on both.

If our focus is more on eternal things rather than the temporal, then we will have lot less to worry about. Why? We will see in a moment that God will be glad to supply all of the necessary temporary things that we need if we are more concerned about the things which are eternal.

II The Real Pointlessness of Worry Described (vs. 25 – 32)

God already knows what you need, and as long as you are inside of His will, fulfilling what He wants you to do, He will be happy to give you the things that you need.

The problem is that much of what we are worried about does not concern a legitimate need, but rather something we want that perhaps God doesn't want to give us.

A car for most of us is needful, but do we really have to have the most expensive model with all of the bells and whistles.

A place to live is also necessary, but do we have to live in a mansion, in the best neighborhood.

Clothes are necessary, but do we have to spend \$200.00 on a pair of sneakers, or hundreds of dollars on a purse.

Eating is necessary, but do we have to eat out as much as we do.

It's good to have a hobby, but do we really need to spend hundreds or thousands of dollars per year buying boats, or guns, or bows, or golf clubs.

You get the picture – the majority of our money problems does not come from the purchase of necessities, but rather from the financing of luxuries (treasures).

By the way, God may bless you with some of these unnecessary luxuries and that is awesome, and you don't have to apologize to anybody if God blesses you with anything.

But, if you are stressing, worrying, taking much thought over how to pay for these things. If you have to work three jobs and overtime to finance the debt you incurred from purchasing these things, then you have lost focus.

We all need to learn to be content with what the Lord has given us:

"Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." - (Philippians 4:11)

"Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." - (Hebrews 13:5)

"And having food and raiment let us be therewith content." - (1 Timothy 6:8)

By the way, God not only knows what you need today, but He also knows what you will have need of tomorrow in your retirement years.

It's good to be prepared for the future, but if you are worrying and stressing over the future and hoarding every penny today because you are scared to death you will starve in retirement, you do not understand our God.

God knows what you need and He will take care of you – today and tomorrow.

David said:

"I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." - (Psalm 37:25)

III The Right Prescription for Worry Delivered (vs. 33 – 34)

God says that we should concern ourselves with Him and His kingdom, and He will make sure that we have every earthly thing that we need in order to live on this earth as His ambassador.

And, He says He will even give us some things that are more than just necessities.

"Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart." - (Psalm 37:4)

Conclusion

If I can't worry what can I do:

- 1 Work Hard – God blesses hard work – but don't spend all of your time working to earn money. Spend some time working at things that will matter for eternity. Work

- for the Lord. Work at your marriage. Work at being a better parent. Work at building relationships with others.
- 2 Give to the cause of Christ – Tithe and give offerings of your time, talent, and treasure
 - 3 Live within your means – Spend the money you have, not God’s money, and not the credit card company’s money.
 - 4 Be content with what you already have. Take care of what God has already given you.
 - 5 Be prepared to be blessed. God will reward you here in this life with some earthly desires, and he will also reward you richly in Heaven.

Financial worries are not all that we worry about, but for some of us it is on the top of the list. Let’s eliminate this source of stress, and put our financial house in God’s order. Put God first, and He will take care of the rest.

"And one of the company said unto him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me. And he said unto him, Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you? And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." - (Luke 12:13-21)