



**Matthew 6:25-
Do Not Worry Or Judge**

Summary: Make seeking God the greatest priority in your life and everything else that is important will fall into place.

Last week we ended with Jesus telling us it's impossible to live with our loyalty divided. He said

Matthew 6:24 "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

Some translate mammon into English by using the word money because the main idea is: you cannot serve God and also serve materialism – that is, money and the stuff it can buy. Sooner or later the two will come into conflict and you'll have to decide which one to go with, which one you're truly loyal to. You can cheer for two sports teams, until they face each other in the playoffs, right?

Now, that doesn't mean you can't have money, or you can't have things, but you have to be very, very, intentional about keeping money and stuff in its place. And it doesn't like to stay in its place. It's always trying to get more and more of your attention. The very first of the Ten Commandments is: I am the LORD your God, you shall have no other gods before me. But money and materialism make the same claim. So what do you do when your desire for things says "Spend!" and God says, "Give." When your career says "Work!" and God says, "Rest." What do you do when the circumstances say, "This might not work – FREAK OUT!" and God says, "Trust Me."

Jesus is making the point that life is all about priorities, are you living in light of the Kingdom or are you caught up with the stuff of this earth? What's the order and weight of things in your life?

So He goes on to clarify the issue for us:

Matthew 6:25 "Therefore I say to you, do not worry [be anxious, take no care] about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, 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, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? **27** Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature [alt. translation: a single hour to his life]?"

28 “So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; 29 and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

Solomon was the son of Israel’s King David and took the throne upon his father’s death. That means he inherited all that his father had done and then added to it. He was, far and away, the richest man of his day. He was so wealthy the Bible tells us silver “was accounted as nothing in the days of Solomon (1 Kings 10:21)” it was really only the gold they kept track of, and there was so much of that, they used it for the all the king’s drinking cups.

Solomon was active in international trade and shipping; he had a fleet of merchant ships that brought in gold, silver, ivory, apes, monkeys, spices, armor, horses, and clothing from all over the world. And yet, Jesus says, all the splendor of this well-dressed rich man was nothing compared to the beauty of a simple field of flowers that happens all by itself each year as the seasons run their course.

And that’s true isn’t it? Some of the most beautiful things you’ve ever seen are things from the created world. Sunsets and mountaintops, animals of all kinds, flowers and plants even the simple pleasure of fresh fruit in season, eaten right off the vine. Solomon had an entire kingdom and decades of historical momentum in the economy working to make him look impressive. The lilies of the field just grew, all by themselves, each year the way God had designed them and yet when they bloomed, they were easily more impressive.

30 Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?

The point here is simply the short life of these beautiful flowers. They grow, they bloom, and the next thing you know they’re dying and dried out and shriveled up and people are using them as part of the kindling to start their cooking fire. Even the prettiest flowers die, but they come back the following year.

31 “Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ 32 For after all these things the Gentiles seek [that’s a term which describes anyone who is not of Jewish lineage]. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. 33 But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. 34 Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

Jesus is making an important assertion: that life is more than just our daily needs. That there is more to life than just the food we put into our bellies and the clothes we put on our backs. And friends, I think we believe that. I think most of us would nod our heads and agree and that there is more to life than just the stuff of our daily existence. But do we live that way? Do we?

As you analyze the flow of your average day, your average week, your average month, as the years creep or race by, where is the proof you can point to that you live differently? What do you treat as important? What kinds of things are urgent in your life? Jesus is encouraging us to adopt an outlook that says, ‘the most important thing is my relationship with God and everything else fits in around that.’

Jesus is calling us to stop worrying so much about making things happen. He’s calling us to relax, and trust.

Can you appreciate what a TOTALLY different style of life this is compared to most of the people living around us? Ask anyone you know how are things going, and what is the answer going to be the majority of the times? Busy.

But busy doing what? Important things? Not all movement is progress. If you’ve ever seen the Looney Toons cartoons, think of the Tasmanian Devil – he would whirl around all over the place, a tremendous bundle of energy, but he never went in a straight line. In aeronautical terms we would say “All thrust, no vector.” You see, not all movement is progress. And that’s what life here in DC feels like so often, doesn’t it? Lots and lots of movement and commotion, tons of things to get done, and yet, how much of it really matters, how much of it is progress?

And how does it make us feel? Stressed out! You know you can feel the difference when you leave town, and you don’t even have to travel very far, but just get away from the whirlwind of the Beltway and you can feel the tension drop.

But, do you know what? Even if you lived somewhere else, you would still feel stress of some form or another. Remember, Jesus first gave this instruction to poor people living hand to mouth in ancient Israel. They were literally prone to worry about what they would eat or what they would wear. They did not have refrigerators, Costco, and deep freezers. They didn’t have closets full of clothes or a “give away” pile. When some of them prayed “[give us this day our daily bread](#),” they meant it.

So what has gone wrong with us? We don’t need to worry about whether we’re *going* to eat tonight; we just wonder *what* we’re going to eat. We don’t need to worry about clothing ourselves or our kids, we just wonder if this *matches* that or if it still looks nice. And yet, we’re still just as stressed out as the person living in absolute poverty and it’s getting worse.

Research in 2016 showed one in six American adults was taking some form of anti-depressant prescription medication.¹

That same year, 62% of college students said they felt “overwhelming anxiety” in the previous year.

¹ <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/psychiatric-drugs-study-reveals-widespread-use->

What's going on? I'll tell you: we feel like we can't keep up. We feel like we need just a little bit more. We feel like we need the newest whatever. We're running around on this hamster wheel of modern materialism and it's wearing us out.

Compare that with the trust Jesus is calling us to have in the love of our Heavenly Father.

And notice this, notice what He says in verse 32: **For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.**

There *are* things we need in this life, and God knows that. **Your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.** Jesus is not calling you to a blissful ignorance; He's not calling you to pretend you don't actually get hungry, or that you don't actually need clothes. He's not saying you don't actually have bills to pay or that you don't actually need a job. **Your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.**

But He's calling us to seek *first* the Kingdom of God. Is that the greatest priority in your life? Jesus wants to be the cornerstone, the foundation, of your life. The thing everything else is built on top of. He can take the weight, and He can keep it all stable, far more so than whatever else you might be building your life on.

Paul the apostle had been through countless trials and difficulties in life, but he had also enjoyed great seasons of peace, rest, and relative prosperity as well. He summed up the attitude we should have like this:

Philippians 4:6 Be anxious [same word as worry in Matt 6] **for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; 7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.**

One of the most important things in rock climbing or rappelling is learning to trust your equipment. If you're constantly afraid of falling you're never going to relax and that's going to inhibit your ability to climb well. Can you imagine trying to sleep at night in a hammock hanging hundreds or thousands of feet above the ground if you didn't trust your equipment?

Jesus is calling us to trust the hand of our Heavenly Father – that it is mighty to save, that nothing and no one will ever pluck us out of it, and that He is generous and provides for our needs. Can you settle into your faith like a climber settles into her harness and let it hold you?

You can spend all day worrying, but what good does it do you? Does worrying fix anything? Does talking about it fix anything? No. Unless you talk about it with God.

One of the things you need to know and watch out for when you read the Scriptures is the principle of having a put off and a put on. God doesn't just tell you "don't do this." Most

often He says, “Don’t do that, do this instead.” You don’t just pull something toxic out of your life; you fill the hole that it left with something good.

And so here Jesus says don’t worry, but do seek the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. There’s a way not to live, and way to live instead. He tells don’t worry about what we will eat, but He’s also just taught us the Lord’s Prayer: [give us this day our daily bread](#). So, once again, it’s not that you don’t have legitimate concerns in your life, it’s just that God wants you to bring those concerns to Him first instead of worrying about them all by yourself or thinking it’s all up to you to make things happen through your own plotting, planning, or scheming.

Jeremiah the prophet lived during an ugly time in Israel’s history. Things were not going well. In fact, Jeremiah was calling people to repent and return to belief in God at a time when neighboring countries were on the move to surround and conquer Jerusalem. Even under such difficult circumstances, Jeremiah told the people:

[Jeremiah 17:7 "Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD,
And whose hope is the LORD.
8 For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters,
Which spreads out its roots by the river,
And will not fear when heat comes;
But its leaf will be green,
And will not be anxious in the year of drought,
Nor will cease from yielding fruit.](#)

Jeremiah was telling the people, it is possible to weather difficulties and even to thrive through them, if your hope and trust are in the LORD.

What are you stressing out about right now? What are you worrying about? What are you anxious about? What are you fighting? Have you sought God on that? Have you asked Him about it? Have you invited Him into the issue? Have you sought His guidance and counsel? Have you asked Him to give you what you think you need, or do you feel like it’s all on you to make this happen?

That is not the life God wants you to lead. He’s calling you to a balance between diligence and dependence. As Christians we should work hard, our bosses should prosper because of us, we should get more, and better, work done than anyone else as we do all that we do as unto the Lord, but we should also be dependent – dependent on the power and presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives to make all that we do possible, dependent on God to provide for even our most basic needs.

We’re dependent on Him for forgiveness, for the new life we receive in Christ, and for the power to live this new life. We should be both diligent and dependent on a daily basis in every area of life and that reaches over to the next subject Jesus brings up: forgiveness.

Matthew 7:1 “Judge not, that you be not judged. 2 For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you. 3 And why do you look at the speck in your brother’s eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye? 4 Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me remove the speck from your eye’; and look, a plank is in your own eye? 5 Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.

Here’s the connection to everything we’ve seen already this morning – my relationship with God affects the way I see and interpret the rest of my life.

If I believe that God is my Father, I turn to Him with my needs instead of getting all worked up by anxiety, fear, and worry.

And, if I know what God has done for me, it makes me that much more patient with others around me. If I know that I am a sinner forgiven by grace, if I know the truth about myself and the depravity of my own motives and interests; the selfish tendencies of my heart, and the darkness of the thoughts that come into my own mind – the plank in my own eye, then I can look at others with patience and grace instead of a critical spirit. I’m far more aware of my own shortcomings than I am of those in the lives of the people around me and I understand how desperately I need to be helped as I attempt to help others – I see my plank *and* their speck, but I know how to lead both of us to a loving Father who will help remove them both - and that makes all the difference in the world.

The problem is most people don’t have this kind of dependent relationship with God. The people who surround us each day tend to feel like life is all on them. They feel if anything is going to happen they’re going to have to make it happen, or they’re going to need to push and press and maneuver and hope until things come together.

Maybe that’s you. Maybe you’re sitting here this morning and you’ve exhausted, frustrated, or maybe you’re excited because you’ve just hatched a plan, you’ve got an idea, but there’s something inside of you saying, *there’s another way*. Another way of life. Most of us have been there before. God comes into your life and begins speaking to you – convicting you of things that are wrong that need to change, or doing things for you answering prayers or coordinating what you call coincidences – He’s trying to get your attention, to show you that He’s real and He cares. He wants to be involved in your life. He wants to be your Father.

Now, under most circumstances, your parents don’t want you moving back in with them. They don’t want to have dependent adult children. But one of the big points Jesus has been making here in the Sermon on the Mount is: God wants us to see Him as our Father. He wants to be the one responsible for taking care of us. He doesn’t want us to be out there living on our own. He wants us to come and live with and for Him. The Bible is full of this kind of imagery, of us, as wayward children coming home, finding forgiveness, and being restored.

If that's you today, if God is calling you home – go! There are no magic words to say, there's no formula, Jesus told us to pray to "Our Father." Talk to Him. Tell Him of your needs. Ask for forgiveness for the wrongs you have done. Ask for healing from the wrongs that have been done to you, ask for daily bread, and clothes, for guidance, strength, and direction in life and for help removing the plank in your eye. Make yourself available to Him.

Christianity is not so much a religion as a spiritual relationship between a Heavenly Father and you as His child. If you have any questions about that, please see one of the pastors, or talk to the person who brought you. Email one of us if you need to – our addresses are in the bulletin. But whatever you do, if God is stirring you this morning, respond.

Give up on your anxious, angry, worried, depressed, desperate life, and come into a life of peace, rest, trust, safety, and security instead. It may not make everything instantly better, you may still have needs, but you can trust that your Father *knows* you have needs, and you can trust Him to guide you, provide for you, give you guidance and strength, and surround you with brothers and sisters in Christ who will walk through things with you.

And then, once your eyes are turned upward it will begin to affect how you look outward as well.

Let's pray.