
Third Presbyterian Church
Bible Study
Sermon on the Mount – Lesson 22
“Why we Worry”

Matthew 6:25-34 (NIV)

²⁵ "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? ²⁶ Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? ²⁷ Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life? ²⁸ "And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. ²⁹ Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. ³⁰ If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? ³¹ So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' ³² For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. ³³ But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. ³⁴ Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

1. Worrying is a mental activity of contemplating outcomes. Please explain this in your own words and how worry accomplishes nothing but self-hurt.
2. If God is really in control of the universe, why do we worry so much about so many things?
3. Why does the statement not to worry only apply to the children of God?
4. Explain and give example of “submissive hearting.” Why is this so important to be delivered from a worry spirit?
5. How do you think worry affects people emotionally, physically, and spiritually? (be specific about each affect)
6. How would you answer someone who interprets this passage to mean that God promises to give His children everything their hearts desire?
7. In light of this passage, what would be some good principles on food and clothing for us to follow? (Have no less than 3 for each food and clothes)
8. What is the difference between planning for the future and worrying about the future? (please give this some thought to this because this determines how you live every day)
9. What does it mean to believe in God versus Believing God? How does knowing this overcome worry?

Workshop: The world is constantly chasing after food/clothes/drink so much so that they become idol gods. What steps can you take today to change your priorities from worldly ones to kingdom ones? Write a paragraph explaining this and read it to group.

10. Please share your takeaways from the sermon/lesson this week.

The Counsel on Worry and Anxiety, 6:25-34

(6:25-34) **Introduction:** this counsel meets one of the greatest needs of men, the need to be delivered from worry and anxiety.

1. A counsel—do not worry about necessities (v.25).
2. Do not worry about your life and body (v.25).
3. Do not worry about food and shelter (v.26).
4. Do not worry about your stature (v.27).
5. Do not worry about clothing (v.28-30).
6. Do not worry: do not be thinking about food, drink, clothing (v.31-32).
7. Do not worry: seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness (v.33).
8. Do not worry about tomorrow: live one day at a time (v.34).

1. (6:25) Worry—Anxiety (*merimnate*): the believer is not to worry about necessities, about food and drink, about body and clothing. The words "take no thought" mean do not worry; do not be anxious; do not be overly concerned and caring (cp. Phil. 4:6). The counsel is so needed it is given three times (Matthew 6:25, 31, 34).

Jesus is not suggesting that a man not prepare for life—that he be lazy, shiftless, and thoughtless with a no-care attitude. God will not pamper license, that is, slothfulness and lack of initiative, effort, and planning. A person has to look after his responsibilities (Proverbs 27:23; 2 Cor. 11:28; Phil. 2:20). He has to work in order to eat (2 Thes. 3:10). In fact, he is even to work extra in order to have enough to give to others (Ephes. 4:28). He must be diligent in looking after his affairs and profession and in helping and giving to others.

1. Jesus is talking about being preoccupied with the material possessions of life. Many fall into the trap of centering their mind and thoughts, energy and efforts on the necessities and luxuries of life. A believer is not to be wrapped up and entangled in the affairs of this world (2 Tim. 2:4). He is not to be groping for more and more and hoarding more and more. He is *not* to "seek ye first" the things of the world, but he is to "seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness," then God will see to it that he receives all these things (Matthew 6:33).

2. Jesus is talking about being so wrapped up in securing things that we become anxious, disturbed, and sleepless. Being focused upon the things of the world keeps a person from walking in the fullness and enjoyment of life. Worry and anxiety can cause serious health problems ranging from sleepless nights and headaches to ulcers, high blood pressure, and heart attacks.

3. Jesus is talking about being so consumed with *getting* that we think little of God. Fear of not having enough and spending all of our time trying to *get* more and more causes disbelief. A person who works to gain more and more security never knows God. He never knows God's love and care. He never learns that God looks after those who truly trust him.

4. Jesus is talking about being so entangled with the affairs of this earth that we forget eternity. We just forget to take care of our lives and bodies beyond this life (Luke 12:20; cp. Psalm 49:10-20; 2 Tim. 2:4).

The charge is clear. We are not to worry. We are to be consumed with God and people, not things. We are to seek God first and serve Him and our fellow man first. Then the necessities, and in some cases the luxuries, will be given us (Matthew 6:33).

Thought 1. There are two kinds of food, drink, and clothing. There are...

- the necessary items
- the extravagant or luxury items that lead to self-indulgence

Living sumptuously and extravagantly, at ease and in luxury in the midst of a needy and starving world is sin. It is a sin that condemns us to hell (see Deeper Study #1—Luke 16:19-21). The believer is not to be entangled in the affairs of material things (2 Tim. 2:4).

Thought 2. Food, clothing, and shelter are necessities of life. It is not wrong to work for these, nor to make them secure for our future. What is wrong is fourfold.

- 1) Ignoring and neglecting God while we work.
- 2) Working day and night and then worrying over how to keep what we have and how to make more and more.
- 3) Never being satisfied with the necessities, coveting to have more and more, to have bigger and better, to have as large and as good as the next person.
- 4) Neglecting the needs of others who have greater needs than we have (see outline—' Matthew 6:19-24 and notes—' Matthew 6:19-24).

2. (6:25) Life—Body—Food—Clothing: do not worry about your life and body. The point is clear and striking: a person's life and body are of more value—much more value—than the food he eats and the clothes he puts on. Why then should a person allow these things, secondary things, to consume and dominate his life? So many are controlled by the necessities and luxuries, the material things of the world.

A person can eat and wear only so much at one time. Enough is enough; more than enough is too much; too much means that a person is consuming it upon his lusts (see Deeper Study #1—James 4:1-3; note—' James 4:2). His life is being dominated by, instead of dominating, the things of the world.

Thought 1. Note several significant lessons.

- 1) Do not worry: think about your life and body and learn to trust God for food and clothing. Concentrate your mind and effort upon your life and body, not upon food and clothing.
- 2) The point is simple and clear. Life means more than just things, even more than food and clothing.

"Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (Luke 12:15).

"He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful" (Matthew 13:22).

"For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul" (Matthew 16:25-26).

"It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: for so he giveth his beloved sleep" (Psalm 127:2).

3) Materialism (worldliness and possessions) can enslave a person to such a degree that it dominates his life. In order to get and possess more, spouses argue, men steal, employees crave, employers hoard, children pout and nations war. Life—living and enjoying what God has given—is ignored and neglected in order to get and possess more and more.

"From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts. Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (James 4:1-4).

4) The basic problem of man is setting priorities and determining what is to be first in his life. The first priority of every man should be to take care of his life—eternally. Why should a man be concerned about a few short years when he has the opportunity to sustain life forever? Why seek the things that only sustain and adorn his physical body for a brief time and then fade away? Why would he not seek first that which can sustain and adorn his life forever? Seeking first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness should be the first priority of every man.

"And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares" (Luke 21:34).

Thought 2. A man will do anything to save his body if it is threatened. Therefore, two critical questions need to be asked.

1) Why does a man allow himself to become enslaved by possessions? If he does not have and possess, he is miserable, sometimes to the point of being physically sick with ulcers, high blood pressure, or migraine headaches. He is driven to seek and pursue and get. He is so enslaved that he misses out on real life.

2) Why does a man allow himself to become so enslaved to possessions that he neglects the eternal care of his life? He seeks and pursues thing after thing...

- ignoring and neglecting God.
- failing to lay hold on eternal life.

"And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses" (1 Tim. 6:8-12).

3. (6:26) Necessities— Life, Necessities of: do not worry about food and shelter. God gives food and shelter to the birds of the air. "Behold": look at them and study them. Use your eyes and learn thoroughly—learn from what you see around you. The providence of God takes care of the birds. Learn that God will likewise take care of the believer who really trusts Him. Note two points.

1. The believer is *better* than the birds.

a. Man is a higher being, on a much higher level of creation, than animals. He is more noble and excellent, a spiritual being made in the image of God and capable of a personal relationship with God. (See outline—Romans 5:6-11 and notes—Romans 5:6-11.)

"Who teacheth us more than the beasts of the earth, and maketh us wiser than the fowls of heaven?" (Job 35:11).

"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them" (Genesis 1:27).

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

b. The believer is a child of God. God is *the Creator* of birds, but He is *the Father* of believers.

"For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children" (Romans 8:15-16).

"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Galatians 4:4-6).

c. The believer is an heir of God. He is to receive all that God possesses in that glorious day of redemption.

"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together" (Romans 8:16-17).

"That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (Titus 3:7).

2. Four things can be said about the person who is preoccupied with material things.

a. He is covetous.

"Let your conversation [behavior] 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).

b. He is not as wise as the birds.

"Yea, the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but my people know not the judgment of the lord" (Jeremiah 8:7).

c. He is a backslider who has forgotten what Christ said, "I will never leave you, nor forsake you" (Hebrews 13:5).

d. He is not "seeking ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness" (Matthew 6:33).

Thought 1. Do not worry: watch the fowls of the air and learn to trust God for shelter and food.

Thought 2. God knows the needs of His followers. "I know all the fowls of the mountains," God says (Psalm 50:11; cp. Job 38:41; Psalm 147:9).

A sparrow "shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows" (Matthew 10:29-31).

1) God knows every fowl on the earth, the innumerable number of every sort and size. And He feeds and shelters them all.

2) God knows every believer on the earth, even the most minute details about him (the number of hairs). Therefore the believer need not fear. God will feed and shelter him if the believer will just seek Him first (Matthew 6:33).

Thought 3. "Ye are of more value than many sparrows" (Matthew 10:31). The believer can rest assured that God will feed and shelter him. God will not starve him. The believer's responsibility is to simply "seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness" (Matthew 6:33).

Thought 4. Nothing dampens a person's spirit and kills his testimony as much as the cares of the world (worldliness). (1 John 2:15-16; cp. Romans 12:2.)

Thought 5. God will not pamper license, that is, laziness, slothfulness, and lack of planning and initiative and effort. Jesus planned ahead (John 12:6) and preached industriousness (Luke 16:8; cp. Luke 16:1-10). The Bible is clear about the duty of man to work, even to work extra in order to have enough to give to others (Ephes. 4:28). (See notes—Matthew 6:25-34.)

4. (6:27) Worry—Anxiety—Stature: do not worry about your stature, for worry is pointless. The word "stature" (*hēlikian*) means height, quality or status gained by growth, and sometimes it means age. The word *cubit* (*pēchus* ^{PWS: 850}) literally means measure of space or distance (approximately 18 inches); but it can also mean a measure of time or age (John 9:21). Therefore, the verse can read either "who can add one cubit to his stature" or *one minute to his life span*.

The point is striking. Worry is senseless—just as senseless as trying to add to one's height or lengthen a minute to one's life span (when it is time for one to die). Everyone does not have a normal body. All bodies are not perfectly formed, not in this world. The world is corruptible and imperfect (see note—Matthew 6:19-20), but there is hope, a glorious hope in God—a hope that acknowledges that God loves and cares and has promised a new heavens and earth that will be perfect. In the perfect heavens and earth all bodies will be normal and perfectly formed. God shall "wipe away all tears" (Rev. 21:4; cp. Rev. 21:1-7; 2 Peter 3:10-12; cp. 2 Peter 3:3-18). See Deeper Study #1, Body—John 21:1 for more discussion.)

How does a person receive this hope?

"For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God" (1 John 5:4-5)?

Thought 1. Do not worry: think about your stature and learn to trust God. Do not concentrate your mind and heart and effort on the world. That is senseless. Concentrate and focus upon God and His righteousness. Such assures a perfect change in your life and body when you enter the next world.

Thought 2. Some things are senseless in this world, extremely senseless.

First, it is senseless for men to seek to add an inch to their stature, and to care for their body in the here and now and ignore the hereafter. Think about it. All men are immortal; they are to exist forever. It is senseless to concentrate on a few short years upon earth.

Second, it is senseless for believers to seek to add an inch to their stature, and to *worry* about their body in the here and now and *neglect* life hereafter. It is senseless for the believer to walk through life ignoring his Father and not trusting His care and love.

Thought 3. Some persons have abnormal and imperfect statures. How do they keep from being anxious and worrying?

1) There is a glorious hope for all.

"For our conversation [citizenship] is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself" (Phil. 3:20-21).

2) There is the assuring promise of God to work all things out for good to those who truly love Him.

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (Romans 8:28).

3) There is the strong challenge to be content with one's condition or lot in life.

"Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called....Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God" (1 Cor. 7:20, 24).

"Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:11-13).

5. (6:28-30) Clothing: do not worry about clothing. Consider the lilies, how they grow.

1. Lilies grow from a deep root. The roots are where they belong, in the soil to receive nourishment. The roots of believers are not to be in the material things of this earth. In order to receive their nourishment and fulfill their purpose on earth, believers are to put their roots where they belong, in God and His righteousness.

2. Lilies do not toil or spin at spinning wheels to adorn themselves with beauty. Their beauty comes naturally as they go about their purpose in the world. Believers are not to be consumed with toiling after material things in order to adorn themselves with the artificial and superficial coverings of appearance. They are to be laboring after God and His righteousness, letting their natural beauty shine forth, trusting God to provide "all these things" (Matthew 6:33).

3. Lilies die from the weather. They drop to the ground, decay, pass out of existence, and are gone forever. Clothing fades, wears out, goes out of fashion, and is laid down. Clothing just ceases to exist, but not man. Unlike the lilies and his clothing, man is immortal; he exists forever. Therefore, he is to center his life on God and His righteousness, not on material clothing and physical beauty. God will provide necessary clothing to the person who diligently goes about life putting his priorities in order: seeking God and His righteousness first.

Thought 1. Note seven significant lessons.

1) Do not worry: consider the lilies and trust God for clothing.

2) Clothing is used for protection and covering and adornment. The human body needs to be...

- protected from the weather.
- covered from being exposed to the public.
- adorned for attractiveness.

Yet, how foolish to place one's heart and fate in material clothing, especially when so many throughout the world have so little. A person's salvation is not found in clothing, nor in any other material thing, but in seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.

3) There are three concerns about clothing. (Sometimes the concern becomes so strong it turns into a literal fear.)

- a) The concern of popularity. A person fears not having the clothing necessary to make him popular. Sometimes the concern is so great that a person refuses to go to a particular function without the proper clothing.
- b) The concern of style and fashion. A person is concerned with the very latest in style and fashion. He cannot accept a single piece being outdated.
- c) The concern of acceptability. Most adults would fall into this category. Clothing is a matter that actually involves inward feelings. The concern over appearance is really there. Time and effort are expended to stay in style, at least enough to be acceptable.

The point Christ is making is this: do not fret or worry; do not be anxious over clothing. But seek ye first—center your thoughts and efforts upon God and His righteousness—and all these things (clothing) will be added unto you (Matthew 6:33).

4) Many judge others by their clothes. How often someone has walked into a place (even into a church) and been looked at askance and thought to be out of place. How often people have felt uncomfortable in welcoming such a person lest they be associated with them. Why? Because the person was wearing old clothes, long out of fashion. The worldly too often worry about clothes, to the point that their judgment of others is affected by clothing. This is often true of youth and young adults.

5) The believer is to labor. He is to work his fingers to the bone seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and he is to trust God all the while to meet his needs. God, who adorns the non-working lily of the field, will certainly adorn the believer who is living and laboring for Him.

6) Man is as the lilies of the field: here today and gone tomorrow. There is so little time; he does not have time to become entangled with worldly affairs. He must be seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness (Matthew 6:33).

7) It is folly to focus one's life and body on beauty and nice clothing:

"This...is their folly...they are laid in the grave; death shall feed on them...and their beauty shall consume in the grave" (Psalm 49:13-14; cp. Psalm 49:10-14. This is a descriptive passage covering this whole subject.)

"In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works" (1 Tim. 2:9-10).

"Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price" (1 Peter 3:3-4).

"And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these" (Matthew 6:28-29).

DEEPER STUDY #1 (6:30) Trust— Believe

6. (6:31-32) Anxiety— Worry: Christ says, "Do not worry: do not be thinking and talking about food, drink and clothing." There are two reasons why such things are not to occupy our thoughts and conversation.

1. The believer is different from the heathen. "After all these things do the Gentiles [the heathen, the lost] seek." Do not be like them, for the genuine believer is to be different.

The lost are wrapped up in the world and in the things of the world. They know nothing else. All they know is seeking and securing all they can of what the world has to offer. They seek *the good life* that comes from possessions. Life to them is money, houses, furnishings, food, cars, televisions, toys, clothing, recreation, property—all the material things of the world that give comfort, pride, power, fame, and recognition.

There is a reason the Gentiles (the heathen, the lost) live this way. The Scripture states it clearly (Ephes. 2:12, 19).

- a. They are without Christ (Ephes. 2:12). They are unwilling to accept Christ as the Messiah, the Anointed One of God, whom God sent into the world to save the world.
- b. They are aliens from God's people (Ephes. 2:12). They are not aware that God has a *family of genuine believers* on earth, a body of people who truly trust Him.
- c. They are strangers to the promises of God (Ephes. 2:12). They know little if anything about the promises of God and His care.
- d. They have no hope beyond this earth (Ephes. 2:12). They really know very little about a world beyond this life; therefore, they cling to this earth.
- e. They are without God in this world (Ephes. 2:12). They know nothing about His presence and care, His love and direction, and His correction.

They are strangers and foreigners to the things of God and to the hope of God (Ephes. 2:19). Therefore, they know nothing except to seek the things of the earth—to secure whatever and however much their hearts desire.

2. The believer has a heavenly Father who knows his needs. The believer is different from the Gentiles (the lost) in that he has a heavenly Father and he lives for heaven. He does not live for the earth.

⇒ He knows Christ and he knows God's people.

⇒ He knows the promises of God and the glorious hope of eternal life.

⇒ He has God and His presence in this world.

⇒ He is *not* a stranger and foreigner to God, but a fellow citizen with the saints of God's household.

Therefore, the believer is to seek "first the kingdom of God and His righteousness." He is to leave the cares of this world up to God as he diligently goes about his affairs upon earth. He makes his contribution to life as God has called him to do, and while so doing he knows that God will take care of all the necessities of life.

Thought 1. The lost and unsaved of the world face two serious problems.

- 1) They do not personally know the only living and true God. They know little if anything of His day to day care. They are left to their own materialistic search for things, both necessities and niceties. Tragically they have no assurance that all will be well.
- 2) They are strangers to the better hope of an eternal world. Most men have hope, some kind of hope in this world and in the things of this world. But they know little if anything about the eternal hope given by God in Christ. Therefore, their hope is seriously deficient. It is temporary, lasting only for a few short years. Their hope dies; it dies when they die. Therefore, when worldly hope crumbles, they crumble.

What is the answer for the worldly (the unsaved, the lost)? The answer is given in the words, "your heavenly Father." Make sure God is *your* heavenly Father, and get to know Him as "your heavenly Father."

What is Christ saying to the believer? Do not be as the lost and unsaved of the world: a stranger to God and to the glorious hope of eternity. But live, actively live in the presence of God now and forever. He knows your needs. Trust Him and His care.

"Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33).

"For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Matthew 16:26).

Thought 2. The testimony of the mature believer is: "I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me" (Psalms 40:17).

7. (6:33) Worry—Anxiety: do not worry, but "seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness." The word "seek" (*zēteō* ^{PWS: 3411}) means to seek; to go after; to strive; to pursue; to desire; to aim at; to search for; to endeavor to get. The believer's life is not to be preoccupied with material things, as necessary as some things are. The believer is first of all to be seeking after the kingdom of God and His righteousness.

1. He is to seek to become a citizen of God's kingdom, and he is to seek others, encouraging them to become a citizen of God's kingdom. This is to be the first pursuit of his life.
2. He is to seek after God's righteousness for himself and for others.

Thought 1. There are two ways to go about taking care of oneself in this world.

- 1) Working and seeking in one's own strength: depending upon one's own ability and energy alone; fighting and struggling to make it through life and fretting and worrying about succeeding.
- 2) Working and seeking in both God's strength and one's own strength: trusting and acknowledging God while doing all one can; putting one's hand to the plow and plowing; working and working and not looking

back, and while working, trusting the results to God. God says He will see to it that such a trusting person will always have the necessities of life.

Thought 2. The believer whose work fails in the eyes of the world can know four sure things—if he has really put God first.

- 1) His failure is temporary. God will help and strengthen and even teach him through the trying times.
- 2) God will work all things out for good, for he loves God and has been called by God (Romans 8:28f).
- 3) God will see to it that the necessities of life are given him.
- 4) God has much better things in store for him—eternally. The believer has been faithful in his work, so God will reward him as a faithful servant, even if his labor has failed in the eyes of the world.

The believer who goes through a failure needs to remember just one thing: be faithful—continue to be faithful. In putting God first, God will lift the believer up now and eternally.

Thought 3. God made man a spiritual being. Therefore, the only way man can ever be satisfied is to seek God and His righteousness first. This world and the things of this world will not satisfy.

Thought 4. Man's major mistake is this: material things can only make a person *comfortable*. The things of the world can only look good, taste good and feel good, but this is all they can do. Think about it! They are external, *outside* man, and this is just the problem. The need that man senses within is not to be *externally comfortable*, but to be *inwardly satisfied and spiritually satisfied* (see note—' Ephes. 1:3).

- 1) Material things cannot touch the inside of man. They can only make him comfortable outside.
- 2) Man really knows down deep within that all material things pass away, even himself. He subdues the knowledge, pushes it out of his thoughts, yet he knows it.

Thought 5. Man can have the necessities of life; but he has to do one thing: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness...."

"And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened" (Luke 11:9-10).

"Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?" (James 2:5).

8. (6:34) Worry—Anxiety: do not worry—live one day at a time. The believer is not to be preoccupied with tomorrow and its affairs. He is to seek God's kingdom and His righteousness today, and leave tomorrow and its needs in God's hands.

Christ is not forbidding a man to *take care of tomorrow*. He is striking at man's obsession with getting more and more and ignoring and neglecting God and His righteousness.

Thought 1. There are five attitudes about the future.

- 1) *A no-care, worldly attitude.* A person eats, drinks, and is merry today, letting tomorrow take care of itself. The future is of little concern. It will take care of itself. Earthly pleasure, power, and fame are the major concerns of life. He needs to get all he can now, while he can.
- 2) *A fretful, anxious attitude.* A person worries all the time, wondering if he is secure and if he will have enough to take care of himself and his family.
- 3) *A fearful, panicky attitude.* In the face of trial and failure, a person can barely function. Tragedy has hit: his job is lost, cutbacks have to be made, adjustments are needed. The strength and confidence to act and to continue on is lacking.
- 4) *A self-assured attitude.* A person has complete confidence in himself and his ability. He knows he can make out and take care of himself in this world, and he does it. But there is one thing that this person fails to see and it is fatal: the confidence that he has in himself will end. He will die, and he will only have taken care of himself for a few short years. He will find out that self-confidence cannot bridge the great gulf between heaven and earth, time and eternity, God and man.
- 5) *A calm God-centered and trusting attitude.* A person goes about living and working ever so diligently and calmly, trusting God to take care of all. He does all he can about the necessities of life, both for himself and for others, but he seeks God and His righteousness first (Ephes. 4:28).

"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?" (Matthew 6:25).

"He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful" (Matthew 13:22).

"Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you" (1 Peter 5:7).

DEEPER STUDY #1

(6:30) **Trust—Believe**: the words "O ye of little faith" can mean at least two things.

1. It can be a challenge to strengthen a person's faith. Christ could be saying, "Your faith is small right now. Believe, trust, strengthen, and enlarge your faith. God cares and will provide. You can trust Him. Just believe."
2. It can be a rebuke because a person's faith is terribly weak: "You are worrying, overly anxious; therefore, you are displeasing and disappointing God. God knows you need these things. Quit being distrustful and going through so much anxiety and so many sleepless nights. Turn from the world and trust God."