

**Matthew 6:19-34 (NKJV)**

**19 "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal;**

**20 but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.**

**21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.**

**22 "The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light.**

**23 But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great *is* that darkness!**

**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.**

**25 "Therefore I say to you, do not worry 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?**

**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.**

**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?**

**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. 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.**

In the last few weeks we have looked at **storing up treasures** and **the issue of our heart**.

Then we looked at how thinking wrongly of our surroundings can make our **whole self** dark.

Then we looked at the fact that **we cannot serve two masters**.

I am not sure I sufficiently brought out the danger of **stuff**. The devil wants your heart devoted to anything but God. The enemy of our souls wants our thinking **darkened** by thinking **according to the flesh**. And our adversary wants the desire for **the temporal**, for **the temporary**, for the things we will not take with us when we die,...he wants that to **master us**.

Our sinful desires lead to mastery. That is the nature of sin. Scripture calls these efforts by Satan as **fiery** darts. Getting hit with a dart, which was a weapon at the time, would be bad enough. It would inflict harm. But it would not be **great** harm. So the temptation to a single sin may not seem like a serious thing. Satan and his cronies probably has a different battle plan for each of us. Maybe it is **lusting** at some image on the internet. Maybe it is an effort to **run from the situation** he has placed us in. Maybe it is **bitterness over how we have been treated**. Maybe it is fixating on **some pleasure** we are looking forward to. The list is endless. If I did not hit on your weakness, please just fill it into the blank.

It is so easy for us to think that giving into that one sin is **no big deal**. But Satan's will for your life is mastery. And that dart has fire. It spreads. We cannot **trifle with sin** because **sin will not trifle with us**. Our intention with that sin may not be to **commit to** it. But the one sending sin our way **fully intends** for us to be **addicted**, for us to be **mastered**. For us to be filled with **darkness**, for our heart to be **owned** by this world's **stuff**.

We must not miss this. When we regard our sins as not really being all that serious, they are deadly serious if we are choosing to keep doing them. The devil's goal for sin is for sin to master us. And God is our only rightful master. And our God is a jealous God.

I like what our brother Jones says"

**But these things not only grip the heart and mind, they also affect the will. Says our Lord, 'No man can serve two masters'; and the moment we mention the word 'serve' we are in the realm of the will, the realm of action. You notice how perfectly logical this is. What we do is the result of what we think; so what is going to determine our lives and the exercise of our wills is what we think, and that in turn is determined by where our treasure is—our heart. So we can sum it up like this. These earthly treasures are so powerful that they grip the entire personality. They grip a man's heart, his mind and his will; they tend to affect his spirit, his soul and his whole being. Whatever realm of life we may be**

**looking at, or thinking about, we shall find these things are there.**

**Everyone is affected by them; they are a terrible danger.<sup>1</sup>**

This is a very helpful summary up to this point.

Brother Jones also makes a very insightful observation. You and I probably have a distain for **atheistic materialism**. In other words the belief that there **is no God** and we are just **chance accidents** in the universe. Yes. We know better than that. We say that we do not have that much faith, and I think that is all true.

But look where scriptures says- **You cannot serve God and mammon**. Do you know what that means? **All** materialism is **atheistic** materialism. All materialism has no trust of God in it. So if we think we can **live for** the world's **materials** and the **pleasures** and **the security** they can buy us, and we think that we can **also be walking in the Spirit**, living spiritually, we are wrong. Our trust in the world's stuff to give us **what our souls crave for** is always **atheistic** in nature. It is always drawing our will **away** from the one true God. And the problem with that temptation is that it is so difficult to see. We have so many ways of explaining our actions.

There is a good story that illustrates that.

A man had a cow that had twins. A **red** one and a **white** one. So the farmer told his wife that he was going to raise them both and dedicate the profit of **one of them** to God and **the other** he would keep. The wife asked him which cow will be the Lord's. He told her that we will worry about that later. One day he approached his wife with some very bad news. This is very bad, he said. The **Lord's cow**, the **white** one, just died. The wife said I thought you had not decided **which** cow was the Lord's. He said, oh no, I always **knew** it was the white one.

Brother Jones makes the point with the story, isn't it always the **Lord's** cow that dies? When money gets tight it is easy for tithes and gifts to the Lord's work to drop. When time gets tight it is easy for time in devotions and prayer and study and fellowship to drop. Our wills cannot be dedicated to two things. It may **do** two things, but it can only have **one** master.

When we live materialistically, but we think we are living spiritually, that is when **the light within us is darkness**. And how great is that darkness.

Ok I think that adequately catches us up to our current passage.

We will start with verse 25 today and go as far as we can.

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<sup>1</sup> Lloyd-Jones, D. M. (1976). [\*Studies in the Sermon on the Mount\*](#) (Second edition, pp. 409–410). England: Inter-Varsity Press.

<sup>25</sup> **"Therefore I say to you, do not worry 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?"**

The therefore connects this passage to what was said before it. It is all in the light of the **danger of the worlds goods mastering us**.

This is really a continuation of how we are to live in the presence of God. It's focus is on being about **one thing**, having a **good eye** that sees from God's perspective, having **one focus** on eternity, having service to **one Master**. In these verses Jesus says "**Seek ye first**". Do you see the continuity. He is urging us to **the same thing** and letting us see it from many angles.

Up until now the focus has been on **not allowing ourselves** to be caught in the **pursuit of stuff**, the **love** of stuff, the **obsession with obtaining** and protecting stuff.

Now Jesus turns his focus to **worry** about stuff. It is very different from what came before it. But it is still a focus on worldly goods.

The devil is very crafty. He does not care if we fixate on **obtaining goods** or if we worry about **not having goods**. They are two sides of the same coin. It both displays a **trust in goods**, a **wrong view** of goods, **darkness** about goods. And it casts a very bad light on our God when we display the traits Jesus warns against.

Now it is interesting what we are going to see. There are some who truly believe that the secret to spiritual growth is to have **recurring experiences** of a spiritual nature. They believe that it is the **power of those experiences** that will carry us through hardship and temptation. But look how Jesus teaches. What we will find is he poses **logical arguments**. His speech was designed to help people **think differently**, help people to think lightly (to **think using light**). Jesus wants light thinkers. Our most stubborn failures do not **continue** because we don't have much **willpower**. They continue primarily because of **unbelief**. We believe lies that flesh has taught us. And we refuse to let them go and believe the truth instead. What Jesus said here aims for **the mind**. He is doing business with **how we think**. So we need to listen to Him closely. If we have a problem with worry, Jesus is going to teach us what to believe and why. If that is how Jesus ministered, I think we do well to copy his focus.

Jesus will give us **4 commands** and **6 reasons** not to worry. He does not just say, "**Cut that out because it embarrasses me.**" He gives us reasons. And the reasons are ultimately why we should trust Christ.

Then Jesus next says- **do not worry about your life**

The Greek word means "**to be anxious. To be troubled with cares.**"

The Bible Exposition Commentary says this:

**The Greek word translated *take no thought* literally means "to be drawn in different directions." Worry pulls us apart. Until man interferes, everything in nature works together, because all of nature trusts God. Man, however, is pulled apart because he tries to live his own life by depending on material wealth.**

*Bible Exposition Commentary (BE Series) - New Testament - The Bible Exposition Commentary – New Testament, Volume 1.*

I am glad that the New King James did not repeat the King James Translation where it says "**Take no thought**" Evidently a lot of people have taken that wrongly and would do nothing but pray. They would not make any preparation to provide for themselves because they viewed that as being disobedient to God. That is not the point.

Matthew Henry says that we surely **must take thought** to carrying out our obligations and taking care of our families and those in need. We must think about those things, but the thoughts we should **not** think are these.

**1. A disquieting, tormenting thought, which hurries the mind hither and thither, and hangs it in suspense; which disturbs our joy in God, and is a damp upon our hope in him; which breaks the sleep, and hinders our enjoyment of ourselves, of our friends, and of what God has given us.**

**2. A distrustful, unbelieving thought. God has promised to provide for those that are his all things needful for life as well as godliness, the life that now is, food and a covering: not dainties, but necessaries.**

*Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible.*

Worry divides the mind. It causes us to look in two directions at once.

And it turns **perfectly good time** into a **waste of time**, time for which we have nothing to show for it. Not a thing is gained when we worry and much is lost.

Even the world can see the danger and futility in worry. They are not concerned about the reflection an attitude of worry casts upon God. But they regard it as something detrimental to our enjoyment of life.

I would like to read some quotes. If you want to know who they are from you can look at the notes.

I like some attributed to Mark Twain.

**I have been through some terrible things in my life, some of which actually happened.** (I particularly like this one because it shows just how much is wasted by worrying about something that we don't even know will happen.)

I read that he said this next quote too:

**Worrying is like paying a debt you don't owe.**

Here are others from various people.

**"Worry never robs tomorrow of its sorrow, it only saps today of its joy."**

**"Worry often gives a small thing a big shadow."** Leo F. Buscaglia

**Worry is like a rocking chair. It gives you something to do but it never gets you anywhere.** Van Wilder

**"If you want to test your memory, try to recall what you were worrying about one year ago today."** George Burns

**"Worry does not empty tomorrow of its sorrow, it empties today of its strength."** Corrie Ten Boom

**"Never worry alone. When anxiety grabs my mind, it is self-perpetuating. Worrisome thoughts reproduce faster than rabbits, so one of the most powerful ways to stop the spiral of worry is simply to disclose my worry to a friend... The simple act of reassurance from another human being [becomes] a tool of the Spirit to cast out fear -- because peace and fear are both contagious."**

**"Pray, and let God worry."** Martin Luther

The point I am trying to make is the unproductiveness of worry. And we are not given advice that it would be **best** for you not to worry. It is way bigger than just ourselves. We are told by our maker **DO NOT WORRY**. Period. Don't do it.

So if we are prone to worry. And especially if we are prone to worry and excuse it because we have anxious tendencies, we need to pay attention here. If Jesus is commanding this thing, not worrying must be possible. Maybe not perfectly in this life. But we can grow from **lots of worry to less and less** worry. We can grow in trust.

We need to really **start with that** in this first sermon about worry.

You **need not live** in the grips of the **anxiety of worry**. God has better for you. If you do not believe that, I would welcome a discussion on it. I would like to be shown anywhere where **God commands** something that He does not **enable**.

I believe we need to approach these sermons prayerfully, asking the Lord to show us how to be **freed** from this monkey on our back that steals so much of our joy. We are hearing directly from the Lord here when we read what Christ said. These are the words of God. It is **God's will for your life** that you be set free from worry. You can pray for **"Thy will be done"** in this area of your life and you will see God move. It **IS** His will, for sure.

I think we will find this study challenging, but also encouraging. Christ does not leave us foundering looking for a way not to worry. He gives us **truth** to do battle against worry and to inspire us to trust. And really **trust** is what Christ is driving us to. It is not that we are to just **stop worrying**. Yes we must **put that off**. But what we are putting on is so comforting, so soothing to our souls, that once we understand it, we are hard pressed to explain why we would ever prefer to worry.

And we need to make no mistake. Scripture treats it as **a decision**, not as an **illness**. Worry does not happen to us. We decide it. Oh maybe the first thought happens to us. The temptation to worry happens to us. We may even be born with a natural proclivity to worry. I certainly was born with a natural proclivity to the sin that most easily besets me. But that does not give us any excuses. If Jesus tells us to stop worrying, that means we are **able in His strength** to stop worrying. We just need to get about the job.

Now notice that Jesus says **do not worry about your life**

Our life? Wouldn't it have been easier if Jesus said, now don't worry about **someone else's life**. Just worry about **your own**. But no, He hits us on the very thing we are **most prone** to worry about. Don't worry about **your life** and what might happen or not happen in your life.

One of the quotes I left out above is this.

**"Worry pretends to be necessary but serves no useful purpose"** Eckhart Tolle

Don't we defend ourselves sometimes with the **necessity** of worry. It is almost like we think we are being **responsible humans** when we worry and if we **did not worry** we would not be **doing our jobs**. Aren't we sometimes irritated when people encourage us **not to worry**. We think, "they just do not understand how important this is. They haven't considered all that could happen. They simply do not care as much about what you care about. No I must worry," we think. If we are being a caring human we must worry. And you know, if it was anyone but God who was saying this, I might be swayed. Shouldn't I worry when my child may be in danger? Shouldn't I worry when a friend is headed in a bad direction?

Scripture is clearly full of references for caring about our brothers and sisters and family. We should do those things we can do for them. Our concern should drive us to action of some kind. Prayer. Seeking them out.

Intervening. Coming up with a plan to help. Whatever. But not **worry**. Not wringing our hands as if we have no God or that none of His promises are true here. As if this thing we are concerned about **falls outside** of His promised

good will toward us. Even when it **looks bad**. Even when **it is bad**. That is still not a reason to worry.

### **Philippians 4:6 (NKJV)**

**6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;**

That word for anxious is the same word Jesus used. So we know it applies. And it does not say, be anxious for only the big things, the important things. Nope. **No thing**. Not one single thing.

We are just beginning the next few sermons on this passage, but Jesus gave us a living example of the kind of worry He was talking about.

It is found in Luke 10

Jesus was invited to the house of Mary and Martha and Lazarus. Now by now Jesus would have been seen as a **big deal**. He would have been a **VIP**. He deserved **royal treatment**. At the same time what Christ was focusing on was not his **creature comforts**. What He was focused on was the salvation and sanctification of people. He did not care about stuff.

So **Mary** focused and prioritized what **Christ** was focused on. And **Martha** focused on stuff. She clearly loved Jesus and wanted to do good things for Jesus. But she was not in touch with the good things Jesus wanted. So she was driving herself and everyone else crazy with her focus on getting stuff done.

This is what Christ said to her.

### **Luke 10:41-42 (NKJV)**

**41 And Jesus answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things.**

**42 But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her."**

Martha was **worried**. This is the same word that Jesus told us **not to do**. Do not worry about your life. We need to look at this closely. Didn't someone **need** to prepare food? If your husband said what Jesus said to you, would you not be **instantly angry** and tell him how **important** this task is, especially because **he** wasn't thinking about it and did not appear **to want to** think about it. He just wanted to hear Jesus.

This is helping us understand things about worry. It is a great illustration of it. Mary was serving the Master, not stuff. She was storing up eternal treasure, not trying to impress everyone with what great hospitality she was showing. Nor was she allowing the priority **of stuff** to rise about the priority of the **Kingdom**. Mary was going to get **joy** from her service. She was seeking first the kingdom. Her eye was good and it was letting in light. She was all those things that Jesus said were what He wanted.



Martha was **distracted** from all those things by a **wrong focus**. Maybe she wanted to impress Jesus with what she produced. Maybe she wanted the onlooking crowd to be impressed. Maybe she had an internal “**should**” that she wasn’t even aware of. A “**should**” that drove her actions. A wrong “**should**”. We don’t know. All we know is that her mind was **divided**. It was looking all over. It was stressed. It was worried about the many things that were **fleshly expectations** that were not even **required** or **asked for** or **desired** by Christ. Martha was **stressing out** and **flipping out** and probably making anyone close pay a price for not getting with **Martha’s program**. They weren’t willing to join the Martha program. They were **useless**, just sitting there **listening to Christ**.

Martha was worried about lots of things. In her self chosen service to Christ she was displaying a complete disobedience to Christ and a lack of trust in Him. She was creating **discord and chaos** where there should be peace. And the fact that she approached Christ about it tells us that her seamer was clearly telling her that **she was in the right**. I’ll bet she was shocked when she found out she had it all wrong. I’ll bet she was shocked when she found out she could relax and sit next to Mary and everything will be ok. I’ll bet she was shocked when she found out that Jesus did not want what **Martha could do for Him** as much as He wanted Martha **to fellowship with Him** and to **worship** Him.

Worry distracts us from that one thing that is most important. Worry comes from the **bad eye** Jesus talked about. It interprets the surroundings from a **fleshly perspective** and causes us to do all the wrong things, or at least to do them with the wrong attitude.

None of the things Martha did in her worried state **gave her joy**. Even the good acts of service turned bad because of **her thinking**. She could have gotten great joy had she just trusted Christ in this situation. Had she thought, evidently God does not have a design for others to help me right now. That is fine. I am just happy to serve my Master this way. And Christ must not expect more than I can do because He has not provided extra help. What a difference that would have made to Martha’s whole demeanor and the peace in that household. Trust in God’s character and God’s provision is the remedy to worry.

What we will be looking at the next few weeks is how and why to get the **monkey of worry off our backs**. I think we can look forward to the journey. I doubt that anyone really enjoys worrying. So lets listen to Jesus about how to **rid our lives of it**.