

Don't Worry!

Matthew 6 v 19-34

Context:

The season of Lent is a precious gift from God which can enable us to take some time to reflect on our lives in light of God's word and the example of Jesus, and empower us to walk more faithfully in step with the Spirit. I am sure the theme of our study today is relevant to every single human being. Stress and anxiety are a problem for us all, to different degrees, and can have a devastating and chronic impact on our spiritual, emotional, mental, and physical health, as well as our personal relationships, our work and our service for God. How wonderful that Jesus recognises this and addresses the issue head on in the Sermon on the Mount. Let's explore what he has to say.

Observation:

1. What does Jesus say we shouldn't store up and why in v 19?
2. What does he say we should store up and why in v 20?
3. Where does Jesus say our heart will be in v 21?
4. What does Jesus say our eyes are in v 22 and what will be the result if our eyes are healthy?
5. In contrast, what will be the outcome if our eyes are unhealthy according to v 23?
6. What two masters does Jesus mention in v 24 and what does he say about them?
7. What does Jesus say we shouldn't worry about in v 25 and why?
8. What illustration from nature does Jesus use in v 26 and why?
9. What question does Jesus ask in v 27?
10. What other illustration from nature does Jesus use in v 28-30 and why?
11. What two reasons does Jesus give in v 31-32 to back up his command in v 31 that we shouldn't worry?
12. What should we seek first and what will be the result according to v 33?
13. Why shouldn't we worry about tomorrow according to v 34?

Meaning:

1. What do you think Jesus means by '*treasures in heaven*' in v 20 and what is the main reason Jesus gives for storing *them* up rather than '*treasures on earth*'?
2. Why is it so important that we are careful what we give our heart to (v 21) and how can we make sure our heart is in the right place, that we store up the right kind of treasure?
3. What might be some of the consequences of storing up the wrong kind of treasure?
4. What do you think Jesus means in v 22-23 when he speaks of ensuring we fix our eyes on that which is healthy and will fill us with light?
5. How might we compare and contrast serving God and serving money (v 24) – how do we serve God and how do we serve money, what do these two ways of serving have in common and how do they differ?

6. The word *'therefore'* at the beginning of v 25 points us back to what Jesus has just said in v 19-24. So, how does the teaching of Jesus in v 19-24 lead to the conclusion that we should not worry about anything?
7. How do the two illustrations of the birds and the flowers (v 26-30) encourage us take Jesus' command not to worry seriously?
8. Can you think of any examples or experiences in your own life that prove Jesus' promise to care and provide for us when we are in need?
9. What does it mean to *'seek first His kingdom and righteousness'* (v 33) and what precious promise does Jesus also give in this verse?
10. The final words of Jesus in v 34: *'each day has enough trouble of its own'* can sound quite depressing on first hearing. However, what Jesus means is that God cares for those who belong to him, and, in His sovereign power, He will work in such a way that we will have all the resources we need to meet all the needs we face, on a daily basis. How have you experienced this promise in action and how do these words of Jesus encourage you not to worry?

Application:

1. What are you worried about at the moment? How does the teaching of Jesus challenge and encourage you?
2. In what practical ways can you obey Jesus' command to seek first his kingdom and righteousness – at home, at work, in the community or further afield?
3. What might it look like in practical terms for you to make Jesus your treasure, to give your heart more fully to him?
4. What difference might it make to your daily approach to life to know that God will work in such a way as to make sure you only have the amount of trouble each day that you can cope with by His strength (see also Philippians 4 v 11-13)?

Pray:

- Thank God for his precious promises in Christ.
- Ask God's forgiveness for the times you worry instead of trusting Him.
- Pray for his grace in the things you are anxious about right now.

Sermon Notes: