

Matthew 6:19-34

“Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: for where your treasure is, there will be your heart also. The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness! No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. 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? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? 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. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, *shall he* not much more *clothe* you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles see:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness: and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.”

Living Our Lives In Light Of Eternity

Where Is Your Treasure?

...In contrast to that (the passage that just preceded this, on fasting), he gets to the motive of it all, **“Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth...”** You know, where is your focus? **“...where moth and rust doth corrupt and thieves break in and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, where thieves do not break through nor steal. For where your treasure is, there will be your heart also.”** (verses 19-21). He’s saying this, look, **‘Don’t lay up for yourselves, where is your focus?’** Look at these religious hypocrites, you know, they do all this phony religious stuff to be seen of men. But when you practice your faith, you want to be genuine, and you want it to be noticed by your Father whose in heaven, knowing that he’ll take notice, and one day you will be rewarded from him. So lay up your treasures in heaven, not on earth. Because anything you get on earth, it gets burnt up, it gets rusty, it wears away. James would say, you know, those of you that are hoarding gold. Let me tell you something, there’s a whole gold movement out there, and people are stacking up Kugerands. I’m not opposed to people handling their finances wisely. But Kugerands are not going to get anybody through the Tribulation [World War III], because it says a pound of gold is going to be less valuable than a pound of wheat. [I remember watching the old *“Death Valley Days”* program on TV as a child, and on one episode the rich man carrying a gold bar goes halfway across Death Valley, traveling with an old miner. The miner had a can of beans and a canteen of water. About halfway across, the rich guy’s canteen empty, offered all his gold to the miner for his can of beans. The miner, being an expert on desert travel refused, and went on. The other guy went for a little while and fainted. Later it showed his bones drying on the side of the desert road. TV stories like that taught a graphic lesson, unlike a lot of TV programs today. I’ve never forgotten that one. Not much different than what is predicted for the Tribulation period, when global food shortages, famines and pestilences stalk the globe.] When it comes down to it, you can chew on a Kugerand all day long [laughter]. So Jesus says, **‘Look, we’re to live with eternity in view, there’s a kingdom, it’s our Father’s kingdom, and we’re praying for it to come, and for his will to be done on earth as it is in heaven.’** So as we conduct ourselves here, it should be relative to that kingdom and to eternity, not just what’s carnal and fleshly, and not just eking everything out of this world that we can. Because, ultimately, it can be stolen. You know, it’s a dead give-away if somebody can steal your god, you got the wrong god. If your god gets rusty, wrong god. Don’t lay

treasures up on earth, have the right attitude, but in heaven, because where your treasure is, that's where your heart is going to be. And the human being is driven by the heart, not the intellect. The smartest people in the world do the stupidest things sometimes. The heart always makes a convert of the mind, and the heart is a much more powerful driving force than the mind, than the intellect, desire itself. And it is from the heart that the issues of life actually flow forth, so the heart, where your treasure is, that's where your heart is going to be. Where's our treasure? And I enjoy life, enjoy my home, my wife, my kids [sometimes]. But you know what? My future's secure. One of the reasons I'm not tortured about tomorrow, taking anxious thought, is because I know, I don't know exactly what tomorrow holds, but I do know who holds tomorrow, and he's my Dad. And I believe in eternity, and I know that's what we're really made for, and I know that he's calling us to set our affections on things above, not on things of the earth, and that we'd live our lives in light of that. We're going into this. And nowhere does he condemn prosperity, because I know people that are very wealthy, and they're wise enough to know that money is a great tool to use against Satan, it's a great servant, it's a terrible master. Money is a great servant, a terrible master, and there are many wealthy Christians who understand why God has prospered them, and that money is not their god, it is a servant. And that's a wonderful thing. He says here, **'Don't lay up treasure on earth, but in heaven.'** It doesn't corrode there, it won't be taken away. Because where your treasure is, your heart will be there also. Look, those of you who have lost loved ones who've gone to heaven, you in the truest way have laid up treasure in heaven, **'He shall lead his flock like a shepherd, he shall gather his lambs in his arms and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young'** it says in *Isaiah*. And sometimes the shepherd, when the weather changed, and the spring was coming, he would want to move those flocks to higher grazing grounds. What he would do to get that flock to follow, is he would take one of the lambs in his arms and carry it in his bosom, and that lead ewe, that dominant ewe would be crying out as her little lamb was bleating and crying, and she would follow the shepherd to higher ground, and the rest of the flock would then follow her and come along. And there are times that some of us, in the truest sense, have laid up treasure in heaven, and God has led our hearts to higher ground, and we are richer for the rest of the body of Christ. Yes, and there's tears, and there's brokenness and there's great difficulty, but aren't you looking forward to seeing them once again, aren't you looking

forward to seeing those eyes and that smile, aren't you looking forward to throwing your arms around that person again and feeling them? You have treasure in heaven. It affects our hearts.

The Pursuit Of Life Is To Find The Right Master

“The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!” (verses 22-23) The reason that I look around, full of light, it's the eye, that's where the light is let in. ***‘If therefore your eye is single, or healthy is the idea, your whole body is full of light, your perspective. If your eye is evil, pernicious, in contrast to a healthy eye, so if it's ill or something's wrong with it, your whole body is full of darkness (try shutting your eyes closed tightly, it's dark, isn't it?). If therefore that is what your light is, the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness.’*** He's talking about our perspective. If you are laying up treasure in heaven, your body is filled with light, you're seeing, you have perspective, it's healthy. If darkness is your perspective, and all you're doing is laying up treasure on earth, then how great is that darkness. If that's your whole focus, how great is it, really? Where is your treasure? Is it in heaven (i.e. God's Kingdom)? What's your perspective? **“No man can serve two masters, for he either will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. He cannot serve God and mammon” (verse 24).** Man can serve two things, but he can't serve two masters. Sadly we get a divided heart, but we can't serve two masters. One of those things is going to be our master, money, mammon, material things, or God. And it's “slave for,” no man can slave for two masters. Our Father's in heaven. How do we conduct ourselves when we pray, when we give alms, when we fast? Is it with eternity in view, with heaven in view, are we laying up our treasures there? Are we filled with spiritual light, is our perspective healthy or is it ill? Are we doing things just for now, for the present, for the day, with carnal desire? Are we serving mammon? No man can serve both, he says. ***And the pursuit of life, for those of you who have not discovered, is to find the right master.*** Drugs is a cruel master, it destroys the person who serves it. And many of you, including me [Pastor Joe speaking], have served there for a time in our lives. Pornography, immorality, cruel master. Life

is the pursuit of the right master. And when we finally come to the Master who does not destroy, but who hung on a wooden cross and bled his life into the ground so that we can have life, now we've come to the right Master, the Master who lays down his life for us. Instead of taking our life away, he gives us life. But you can't serve two masters.

'Take No Anxious Thought,' doesn't mean 'Don't work.'

"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 more than raiment?" (verse 25) No this doesn't say *'Don't use your brain.'* King James translates **"take no thought"** which literally is **"take no anxious thought"** for your life. So Jesus is saying ***'Worry turns our hearts away from God, from the right Master.'*** You can't serve two masters. If you're going to serve God, you can't serve him and then worry every day *'What am I going to eat? What am I going to put on? How am I going to live like this and serve God?'* **"Give us this day our daily bread, forgive us our debts, lead us not into temptation."** We have a Father whose taking notice of everything. **"Therefore I say unto you, take no anxious thought for your life,"** guys and gals, **"for what you shall eat,"** gals, **"for what you shall put on,"** guess everybody's included there. ***'Is not life more than food and clothing?'*** **"Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?" (verse 26)** Now look, Jesus is not saying *'Don't work.'* Look at the sparrows, they don't have jobs, they don't reap, they don't sow, they don't gather into barns---that's not what he's saying here, he's saying, **"take no anxious thought."** He's saying ***'you never saw a sparrow with an ulcer,'*** that's what he's saying. And I know there's no one in this room that ever saw a sparrow with an ulcer. He calls workers, he called the disciples, they were mending nets, he called Moses, he was tending flocks [and shepherding is hard work], he called David, he was tending his father's flocks, he called Gideon, he was grinding grain, God loves workers in his Kingdom. He's not saying *'Don't be industrious, don't work.'* He's not saying *'Don't be concerned,'* we all have to be concerned with the day and age we live in. God has called us to live like he's coming today, and he's called us to live like he's coming in 100 years. Investment is not a bad thing, handling finances wisely is not a bad thing.

But what he's talking about is being eaten up with worry. If we're serving God, and he's telling us throughout this chapter that God is our Father, that he takes notice, that he cares for us, and that he even cares for the sparrows, how much more will he care for us? He's telling us not to get ulcers over all of these things, but he's not hailing laziness. That's not his point here as he goes into this. Paul tells us if we won't provide for our own household, we've denied the Faith, we're worse than an infidel. So he's not saying *'Don't work.'* He's saying **"Consider, behold...Which of you by taking thought"---*anxious thought by worrying*---"can add one cubit unto his stature?"** I don't think he's saying *'Which of you can make yourself 18 inches taller by worrying?'* This word "stature" is also used for life, for your station in life, probably speaking of your "life-span," not for those who are vertically challenged. ***'Which of you by taking anxious thought can add another step to your life?'*** That's his point, you can't make your life longer by worrying, by fear [no, you'll make it shorter]. And he's saying the anxiety of things in this life can take your heart away from serving God. **"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. Wherefore if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the over, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?" (verses 28-30)** He's talking about, those of you guys who have been to Israel with us in the spring, we head down the Jordan Valley and you see those red poppies, how incredible they are. We've had to pull the bus over sometimes, because it almost looks like an optical illusion, it looks like a sea of red, it's so beautiful. And under a microscope, they're way more intricate than anything Solomon wore that was made on a loom. **"Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow, they don't toil, they don't spin, and yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all of his glory, was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?" (verses 28-30)** Worriers are people who lack faith. He doesn't say "thinkers are people who lack faith," he says ***'worriers are people who lack faith.'*** And there are whole industries built on that. They understand, fear is such a powerful selling point. You know, you see these commercials for a senior citizen who falls down in their own home, and they show them laying on the floor, *'Help me, I've fallen, and I can't get up,'* and there's nobody there, but if you have this little beeper, and you push

this button on this little beeper, and immediately people come to your house. [That lady that did that ad, btw, died a few years ago, just for all you worriers, the beeper didn't do her any good.] And so you're thinking, I know I don't have the beeper, so if I fall down, I'll be that *'Help me I've fallen down and can't get up'* person, and nobody's going to know I'm there. Or, the 7 signs of cancer, you cough or got a pain, *'Oh no, that's sign #3, I know that the rest of them...we're so prone to that.* I'm always amazed at the commercials that do bugs, mosquitoes, roaches, cartoons, you know. And sadly, advertisers gear their advertisements to an eleven-year-old mentality, because that's how they sell the most product. No offense [laughter]. But, they show you a cartoon of your wall at home, and inside your wall are either ants or roaches or termites, something's in there [I've got red squirrels in mine, I'm still looking for an effective poison for those little buggers]. And they're not just in there, they're multiplying. And it's a cartoon. And all you need to do is buy this spray and you spray it, and this spray has the ability to get behind the cove-molding, through the caulking, through the sheetrock that is screwed to the studs [to say nothing of giving you cancer, another thing to worry about], and it goes up there and all those little bugs fall over on their backs and they kick their legs. *Aggh!* And they die. And people run out and buy that stuff. Because they know those bugs are in there raising families in their wall, because the cartoon showed them that they were in there raising families. Jesus says, ***'Look, the Kingdom, you can't serve God and mammon. If you're going to serve God, you can't let yourself be consumed by worry.'*** You have to be practical, you take care of your family, you do those things, none of that is condemned. What he's condemning is ***anxiety.*** We see people that are millionaires, and because the stock market makes a dip, they blow their brains out. You're going to be clothed, you're going to be fed. ***'If God so clothed the grass of the field, which today is and tomorrow they would gather it for fuel, and the sirocco, the winds blow it dry, they'd use it for their ovens,'*** and God says, ***'If that's their destiny, how much more will he take care of you, O ye of little faith.'***

We're Able To Think About The Future, But We're Not To Be Tortured By It

Verses 31-32, "Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles

seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth [he's always in the process of being aware of the fact] **that ye have need of all these things.**" The unbelieving world acts that way, and our testimony will go out the window if we act just like they act, if we have the same value system them have. Look, there's people out there that are freaking out, they're watching the news, we are a culture and a generation that is bathed in information. And we have all kinds of things to worry about that the generation that came before us never had worried about. **And the Bible says you and I are supposed to give an answer to the lost world in regards to the hope that we have in Christ.** And what Jesus is saying, ***'If you look just like they look, and if you're worried about everything they're worried about, why should they through your example want to know the truth about my love and my Kingdom?'*** There should be a distinction. So he challenges us to live a different way. ***'After all these things the unbelieving world seeks after, but your Father in heaven knows you have need of these things.'*** But rather, **"Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."** (verse 33) "Be seeking," this is continually, "first." There's nothing wrong with having those other things, **"but seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."** God will see that you're fed and clothed. **Verse 34, "Take therefore no [anxious] thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." "Therefore take no anxious thought, saying, What shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or wherewithal shall we be clothed."** Don't be eaten up by these things. ***'Don't you have enough to worry about today?'*** is what Jesus is saying. ***'Don't take anxious thought about tomorrow.'*** You know, most of our worries and most of our fears are borrowed from the future, they're in the "What if" category. *'What if this happens? What if that happens? What if they think that? What if they do this? What if this happens?'* We get an ulcer. Now you know people like that, so do I. I am content, most of the time, to live a day at a time. But you know people who live "in the past, present and future" all at once. I don't know how they do it. Physically we can only live today. But mentally and emotionally, some people try to escape the space-time continuum, and enter other dimensions, because they don't have enough to worry about today [Star-Trekies of the mind]. So they need to worry about what's gonna happen, what might happen. It doesn't say *'Don't have forethought.'* There's wisdom. [My father had huge

financial forethought, and before he died, had basically set up my mother with a stock portfolio that takes care of her, no matter whether the market goes up or down. He wasn't a worrier, but he had tremendous forethought and care for his loved ones. That is Biblical.] Jesus said, **"Lead us not into temptation."** ***We're able to think about the future, but we're not to be tortured by it.*** He says **"Sufficient unto the day..."**, we have enough to worry about today. I don't know about you guys, anybody have a shortage of what to worry about? Did you get here tonight and feel gypped? Yesterday was such a good worry day, today was a bummer, I had nothing to worry about. Look, if you have that kind of day, call here, we'll give you a list of things to worry about today that you can pray about for us, we'll give you some stuff, we need some help worrying today. But that's how people get tortured, worrying about the past---we should be forgetting about those things that are behind, Paul says. And he had a load of things he could be condemned about, but he was busy pressing onto the mark of the high calling of Christ. Nowhere does the Bible condemn thinking, but if we're just as afraid as the world is, if we're crucified between two thieves, in the sense of regrets of the past, and I know people that never get free of the past [and the other thief is future worries]. Now we have to be able to do that, because Jesus, when I got saved forgave all of my sins, they're gone. Old things are passed away, he said to me. All things are new in Christ. And yet some people are not willing to let go of the past bitterness, they're not willing to let loose of hurt and anger and things, and I understand that's difficult, and some of you are not even able to trust when God says to you, he's your Father, because of what you experienced in life with a father who didn't represent what a father should be. And we want to pray for you tonight. You have a heavenly Father, who loves you, and has made every provision for you. And he has secured the past, the present, and the future. He's the one who said **'You're justified, the past, sanctified, the present, glorified, the future.'** He's the one who is the present, who was the past, and who is to come. And because he's in all of those places, he's the God that calls things that are not as though they are, and he's got your life nailed down in Christ. And you are worrying about things that he does not see anymore. So we can't be tortured by the future, and we live in an uncertain world. But I had enough to worry about today, tomorrow could be disastrous, I don't know that. Could be another 9/11, I don't know that. I don't want to worry about that, I had enough to worry about today. I said *Aya-yi-ya, aya-yi-ya* more than once today [laughter], I don't have to borrow

any *aya-yi-ya*'s from the future. You know, I'm out of *aya-yi-ya*'s, I go gypped today. Let me think of what might happen, *aya-yi-ya*, that might happen. [laughter] People will do that. They get ulcers. Our Father has a Kingdom, there are no grandchildren, there are only sons and daughters, and we are his kids, and he provides, and he cares, and he rules over all, he's all powerful. And he has our lives, past, present and future secure. And what he asks from us is our religious practice, in our faith, and in our walk, that we would do those things in relationship to him and in relationship to eternity, and not to be seen of men, not like religious hypocrites, not in insincerity, not only caring about this present life, but that we'd live our lives with eternity in view...[transcript of a connective expository sermon on Matthew 6:19-34, given by Pastor Joe Focht, Calvary Chapel of Philadelphia, 13500 Philmont Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19116]

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