

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

MARCH 21ST-22ND, 2020 // BOOK OF MATTHEW

MASTERS (MATTHEW 6:19-24)

In each of Jesus' teachings in chapter 6 on praying, fasting, and giving, He emphasized the importance of seeking a heavenly reward from the Father over an earthly reward.

- Now He begins to further expound on seeking the rewards of heaven over those of earth by addressing how a disciple is to relate to money and material possessions.
- How we relate to money (and stuff) reveals our heart.

Someone who has a different kind of "righteousness" that flows from a heart changed by God should no longer be consumed with the things of this world.

- Instead, we're to live for eternity and the rewards of heaven.
- So we're not to "lay up treasures on earth" (vs. 19) because money & material possessions aren't permanent.

All of our material things are in the process of decay and none of our money is completely safe from theft or loss.

- We can't take any material possession with us into the next world.
- So if our hearts trust in our money & possessions for security, comfort, and certainty- we're doomed!
- But if our hearts are set on eternity- we're secure.

How do we "store up treasure in heaven"?

- We belong to and live by the priorities of the Kingdom of heaven.
- We make our 1st priorities the priorities of God- because those are the only things that are eternal and that truly last.
- When we seek to live our lives to please God and be a blessing to others, He sees and will reward us in heaven.

It all begins with what we take in (vs. 22-23).

- What we take in through our eyes will shape what we value and what we set our hearts upon, and if we take in darkness, it consumes us and distorts our values (vs. 23)
- Jesus is saying is that we must be careful with the kinds of things we place before our eyes in relation to material wealth and worldliness because it has an impact on our "whole body".

No one can serve two masters (vs. 24).

- What we serve will eventually become our master, and if we primarily live for the pursuit of wealth and material gain, we'll eventually become a slave to it.
- Money makes a horrible master because it's impossible to please, unstable & fickle.
- It's also impossible to serve God if we're living for money and stuff.

TRUST OVER ANXIETY (MATTHEW 6:25-30)

"Therefore"- in other words, because as a disciple you're living for the unseen reality of the Kingdom and the rewards of the Father- "do not be anxious about your life..." (vs. 25).

- Because if your dad is a King, why would you need to worry about anything like clothing, food, or drink?
- Life is to be about MORE than what's material.

Then Jesus reminds us of how God the Father is in the business of caring for and providing for His creation right in front of our eyes (vs. 26-29).

- "Look at the birds"- birds obviously spend time searching & hunting for food, but God provides for them daily in ways we don't even notice.
- "Look at the lilies"- they grow and are clothed in beauty and grace without even having to try because God has designed them that way.

"Are you not of more value than they?" (vs. 26b)

- God deeply cares for His creation and displays His provision every day through watching over the things that He's created.
- But He's created human beings in His image and likeness (Gen. 1:27), and to those who have received Him in faith He calls us His children (2 Cor. 6:18)!
- Even imperfect Fathers still love and provide for their children (Matt. 7:11).

Not only is your Father perfect, He owns everything in the world, He's all powerful, and He loves you.

- But besides that, what good comes out of anxiety? (vs. 27) Can being anxious or worried add a day to your life or a dollar in the bank?
- If God the Father is everything His Word says He is and He loves you, does worry or anxiety even make sense?

If God cares so deeply and so personally about the "grass" that gets cut down and used as "fuel for ovens" (vs. 30), how much more deeply & personally does He care about you?

- Then Jesus reveals to His disciples what's at the root so much of our worry or anxiety- it's the smallness of our faith (vs. 30b).
- Not all feelings of anxiety are simply because we "don't have enough faith".

Everybody at certain times gets feeling of anxiety living in this broken, uncertain world.

- It's isn't wrong for us to feel anxious or worried from time to time.
- The gift of King Jesus is an invitation to the belief that the truest reality of the Kingdom is that we have NO REASON to be anxious or worried.
- Peace comes when we start living more in this Kingdom reality than in the reality of how it may feel in our present circumstances.

SEEK FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD (MATTHEW 6:31-34)

"DO NOT BE ANXIOUS..." (VS. 31-32)

- If our lives are filled and ruled by constantly fretting and worrying over our basic needs, we're not living according to the reality of the Kingdom.

Jesus tells us two things

1. This kind of anxiety is downright pagan! (vs. 32a) - The "Gentiles" (those who aren't a part of God's kingdom) have no choice but to worry since they don't know God.
 2. This kind of anxiety makes no sense at all because your Father in heaven knows exactly what it is you need (vs. 32b).
- This kind of worry is completely unnecessary and it drains us of our energy, robs us for our joy, and it takes away our peace.
 - God is more capable than we are of providing for our own needs, so what good does it do to worry or have anxiety about it?

If our life is NOT to be preoccupied with worrying about our basic needs, what should be our primary concern?

"The Kingdom of God and His righteousness" (vs. 33a).

- We're to put His Kingdom, will, and His righteousness above everything else in our lives.
- First, that means we're to seek to live under the authority and submission to the King.

Secondly, we're to look for every opportunity to expand more fully this Kingdom, "on earth as it is in heaven" (vs. 10).

- That means we keep on minds and our eyes fixed first on what God is doing in the eternal, not just on what's going on in the temporary.
- For so many of us, we're consumed by the enticing, yet ultimately uncertain and temporary kingdom of this world- and that's why we worry.

If we're placing the pursuit of God and the promise of eternity as the first priority of our lives, we have a promise from God that "all these things will be added to you" (vs. 33b).

- Everything in our life begins to align once we properly place God as our first priority.
- Material necessities are important, but they're not as important as sometimes we like to make them out to be.

"Don't be anxious about tomorrow..." (vs. 34)

- An expression of trust in the Father is to live in the here and now- trusting in Him for the grace to cover the needs of the present.
- And when (and if) tomorrow comes, the Father will provide the grace to cover its needs also.
- This life is so short in comparison with eternity- and in the Kingdom we have an eternal inheritance that's greater than anything we can imagine.

We're never promised a life of ease or comfort (Jn. 16:33), only an assurance that no matter what comes against us, God is for us and through Him we can overcome any adversity.

- The closer we grow to Christ and in our understanding of the reality of the Kingdom, the further we move away from fear.
- God has not designed or intended us to live in fear, but in a simple, childlike trust of His goodness.

THE DELUSION OF CONTROL & THE REALITY OF OUR OWN HELPLESSNESS.

The Gift of Faith

1. Humility
2. Security.

What have we been "seeking first"? The Storms have Come (Matt. 7:24-27)

If you're feeling anxious and afraid, now is the time to accept Jesus' offer of a Kingdom that cannot be shaken (Heb. 12:28).