

Matthew 6:25-34 – What Jesus Says about Worry and Stress - Red Letters Series -

A Business man in the small town of MT Vernon Texas. Wanted to construct a new Bar in the town

A)But one of the local churches protested - They started a campaign to block the bar from opening w/ petitions/prayer

B)Work progressed right up until the week before the bar was supposed to open when lightning struck the bar and it burned to the ground.

C)The Bar owner sued the church on the grounds that the church prayers were ultimately responsible for the demise of his building,

D)The church responded by denying all responsibility or any connection to the building's demise

The Judge who presided over the case – said this is interesting -

A) “I don’t know how I’m going to decide this case. It appears that we have a bar owner who believes in the power of prayer, and an entire church congregation that does not.”

DO You know what the opposite of prayer is?

A)Worry!!! Worry is prayer in Reverse:

B)Worry is grabbing a hold of tomorrow and dragging it into today

C)RL Series part 6 What did Jesus say about Stress and worry? Matthew 6v25

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? Pause right there and give me your attention.

Context and Audience – Agrarian society

A)Mostly poor – hard working pp – Food, water, clothing were big issues- daily concerns

B)Those were the things they worried a lot about.

1)They didn’t have closets full of clothes – or Refrigerators full of food.

C)Food and clothing were daily necessities That they worried about

Most of us are not worried those things: We are not worried about if we are going to eat-

A)but where and what?

B)What places are open – will everyone agree on the same place –

1)So many choices – mood for Italian, Mexican, Sushi

And We are not worried about what we are going to wear. Most of us have more clothes than we need.

A)In fact - Some of you ladies tried on more than one outfit today trying to figure out what you wanted to wear. Lived with 3 girls in my house

B)AND Some of you guys probably should have tried on something else – because what you chose is not working at all. –

C)Clothes is not a issue for us - People in the first century might have been prone to look at us – think:

1)You guys probably don’t worry about anything/

But we have worries don’t we?

A)Our worries are different

- Jobs
- Stock market
- Retirement
- Paying for college
- Paying for weddings
- Our Health
- Paying for health needs

B)Young married couples– Will we ever be able to buy a house? Can we afford to live in CA

C)Boomers - Worry about – Am I going to be able to take care of my aging parents

1)Aging parent worry about - Who is going to take care of me when I can’t take care of myself.

So there are many things that we worry about – Jesus is going to challenge us in this way:

A) Why are you worrying? – 3 Cures for worry

B) The first CURE – first thing he wants us to understand: Is OUR VALUE as a child of God V.26

26 Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. (Look at the birds – not having Ulcers – not downing Maalox – Always singing

BIG QUESTION: Are you not of more value than they? (YES) GOD DID NOT SEND JESUS TO DIE FOR THE BIRDS

C) God Valued you so much – Valued having a relationship with you – SENT JESUS

1) Price for sin – Save you and bring you into relationship with Him

D) Think - What sense would it make for God to go to that great expense to SAVE YOU

1) And then leave you hanging now

E) Ok – now saved – on your own – Hope you can figure it out - NO – HE VALUES YOU.

1) Mom carries a child 9 months 20 hrs of labor – ok I did my part – now you are on your own!

Since he did not spare even his own Son but gave him up for us all, won't he also give us everything else? Romans 8:32

In the Same way – you value your kids – you want them to feel secure

A) They have a need – you want them to come to you and have confidence – you are there for them

B) How would you feel – Saw your kids on the side of the road begging – You ask - what are you doing?

1) “I wasn't sure you were going to make dinner tonight” – Don't I always cook dinner?

C) Now We don't want our kids to take for granted what we do for them and give them

1) But it blesses us to know – Our kids feel confident in our love for them – care – and value

1ST YOU ARE HIGHLY VALUED BY GOD

A) Way more than the birds and animals –

B) Look at the birds are not stressing out about their provision – So why should you

1) You are more valuable than they are

C) Birds are not worrying they are singing

1) God wants us to worry less – and sing more

27 Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? Now Does worry accomplish anything?

A) The word worry in the Greek language means – to be torn apart!

B) That is such a great description of what worry does. It tears you apart!

C) Picture a boat in a horrendous storm: Tossed to by the waves until it literally starts to break in half.

D) That is what worry does – Lives torn apart by uncertainty and unrest.

Corrie Ten Boom – Hiding place – Survivor Nazi Persecution WWII “Worry does not empty tomorrow of its sorrow, “it empties today of its strength.

Our English word worry comes from an Anglo Saxon word that means to Strangle.

A) That too is a good description – Worry strangles your peace – your joy – it can strangle the life right out of you.

B) All of us know what that feels like and I would venture to say that some of you are feeling that way right now!

1) Worry has a STRANGLE HOLD ON YOU!

Dr. Martin Lloyd Jones- “The result of worrying about the future is that you are crippling yourself in the present.”

C) People crippled by worry – can't make decisions – can't move – Marriages torn apart by worry

D) So worry doesn't do any good – but it does a lot of bad.

Notice how Jesus ends this subject in V.34
34 Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for

tomorrow will worry about its own things.
Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

Dr. E Stanley Jones: “Worry is the interest we pay on tomorrow’s troubles.”

A)Worry is dragging tomorrow’s trouble into today.

B)Worry doesn’t accomplish anything- only tears apart

²⁸“So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; ²⁹and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. ³⁰Now 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?”

C)Jesus wants us to not only remember **our Value** - **#2 Our Fathers Care**

D)Look at the Lilies - Awesome flower – beautiful they don’t toil or spin. – not straining

1)They are simply standing tall in the sunlight – like they don’t have a care in the world

E)The Lilies are shining – beaming – the beauty of being a part of God’s creation

1)How God wants you and I to live –

More beautiful Solomon in all of his glory!
Solomon dressed in finest linen: Imported –

A)Massive wealth – all the designer fashions – always styling – Cover of GQ –

B)But he Doesn’t compare to the Lilly - Jesus says Look at the lilies = Look close – Magnify –

1)Magnify a Lily – you know what happens – even more glorious –

C)**Magnify Solomon’s Linen** – see the flaws

D)Jesus point : Father takes care of the Lilies – He’ll take care of you.

E)When we are caught up in worry it shows that we are simply not trusting in God.

1)Our faith in God is faltering

One day a man was rushing through the airport to catch his plane because he was late.

A)He started **weaving in and out** of the crowds walking to their gates with moves that would make an NFL running back proud.

B)Then he bumped into a man dressed in a flight uniform, - Passenger paused to apologize

1)The man in the uniform – what is the hurry?

The Man replied – I don’t want to miss my flight!

A)The man in the uniform asked: “Where are you going?” What is the Flight number?

B)The Man told him –“I’m going to Austin, ON Delta flight 334

C)the man in the flight uniform he replied with a smile **relax and stop worrying,”**

D)**“I’m the pilot on that flight, and that plane won’t go anywhere without me.”**

1)Follow me – I will make sure you get on the flight

E)Immediately the worried traveler was able to slow down and rest “because he knew who the pilot was.

1)**I am ok – I am with the pilot !**

F)So too - Knowing who God is and our relationship to Him should cause us to RELAX TOO

1)Live with a sense of confidence rather than fear.

Song: Fear doesn’t stand a chance – standing in your love

A)Cure for worry – Know – You are valued highly by God

B)#2 God is a father who cares deeply for you

³¹“Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ ³²For after all these things the Gentiles seek.

V32b For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.

C)#3 The Father knows your needs –

1)He loves to take care of our needs

In Luke’s account of this teaching – he adds –

³²“Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father’s

good pleasure to give you the kingdom. - Luke 12:32

A) **It is his good pleasure to give you the Kingdom**

B) Translation **He is so blessed by BLESSING YOU!** – Do you Believe that?

C) First time I ever read that – I about fell out of my chair –

1) I was so focused on trying to earn God's favor

God says- I get so much joy out of blessing you

A) So much Joy out of taking care of you.

B) My kids all grown now – So much Joy – one of them calls – dad- favor or advice

C) My grandson – store with me – So stoked to buy him something – bless him

God says – I Value you- Know needs – and I enjoy caring for you

A) Now if you really believe those truths – it should radically affect the way that you live

B) Our whole focus changes - our pursuits and priorities change –

1) Which is exactly what Jesus is suggesting when he says: ³³ **But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.**

C) **Seek = to pursue or even crave**

1) You know what is **the convicting word** in v.33 – **THE WORD FIRST.**

D) See If Jesus simply said – **So SEEK the kingdom** of God - Ok – I will add it to the list

SEEK FIRST - #1 Priority

A) first in order or importance, and priority, holding the highest place in all our affections.”

B) His Kingdom is to hold the place of highest importance in our lives

C) That is exactly what Jesus modeled for us as a human being

1) Did you know that Jesus talked about the Kingdom of God more than anything else

D) Kingdom of God and Kingdom of heaven used synonymously 126 times in the gospels

Jesus began his public ministry – Mark 1:14-15

Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, ¹⁵ and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand.

The message of God's Kingdom was not only the beginning of his ministry

A) Jesus constantly proclaimed the Kingdom of God in his preaching – demonstrated it in Healings/ miracles

B) After his Resurrection – he gathered his disciples to teach them for 40 days about – guess what?

1) The Kingdom of God Acts 1:3

C) Jesus spent so much time talking to his disciples about the Kingdom of God

1) not because it was just another thing they needed to learn.

D) The kingdom of God was the framework for everything they needed to learn

E) According to Jesus what matters most in life is the Kingdom of God

What is meant by the Kingdom of God and how do we seek it?

A) The Kingdom starts with the King! – **The Kingdom of God is already among you- Luke 17:21**

B) Why was it suddenly among them? – Jesus was there – he is the King of the Kingdom

C) So to seek first the Kingdom of God is to seek first Jesus the King

1) Priority on building intimacy with Jesus

D) Devotional life – Draw near to – study Jesus

Jesus taught on prayer – He instructed his disciples to pray – Your Kingdom come – your will be done

A) Seeking the Kingdom involves being preoccupied above all else – with what is important to Jesus

B)His will and rule in my life.

1)To seek first the Kingdom of God is to prioritize His Kingdom in your life

C)His Kingdom speaks of His Agenda – His Rule His heart – **Your way over my way: family career**

1)It is remembering: I have been redeemed to be a part of His Kingdom – I have a Purpose.

Seeking first the Kingdom means I am being invited by Jesus to be a part of something bigger than me.

A)Jesus wants us to understand: We have been brought into something HUGE – his Kingdom

B)We have a purpose to play in that Kingdom

C)Ambassadors of the King – His Kingdom agenda

D)Life takes on a whole new perspective

Seeking first his Kingdom means - Being willing to follow him – even when it doesn't make sense –

A)Abraham – Gen 15 with Isaac

B)Not going to pick and choose – parts of the Bible

1)I like that – don't like that

C)Jesus is my king - Following his will and way.

Seeking first the Kingdom is looking at life through a Kingdom lens

A)What would Jesus do - how would he respond – how would he react to this situation

B)What does God think about this situation

1)Number one thing on my mind – as I get ready to vote

C)All issues and candidates through a kingdom lens

Seek first the Kingdom and His Righteousness

A)His Righteousness mean?

B)Pursuing personal righteousness – not allowing for compromise in my life

1)I don't want my life to be spiritually weakened by anything -

C)I don't want there to be anything in my life that cuts me off from my King – his blessings/resources

1)Disqualifies me from being used

Seeking after righteousness – Standing for righteousness in our culture

A)I am going to champion the things that – represent and are in line with my King – his kingdom

B)Seeking his righteousness – treating others rightly

1)Respect

C)People around me are people that God Values

1)He cares for sent Jesus – to die for

Now some might hear this and think – that sounds restrictive?

A)But The opposite is true: His Promise- ³³ But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

C.S. Lewis put it this way- “When first things are put first, second things are not suppressed but increased.”

B)See What matters MOST gives perspective to anything that matters at all.

C)Prioritizing the kingdom does not minimize the other aspects of our life – it puts them in perspective

The Kingdom of God doesn't have to compete with our work, hobbies relationships and other important aspects of life.

A)In Fact when rightly understood, the kingdom will enhance every area of life,

B)Infusing them with meaning and significance.

C)To Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness

1)is to View all of life – Possessions, jobs, hobbies and every relationship through that Kingdom lens

As we close today: -

A)Let me ask this question: What is at the center of your life?

B)What in your life has the biggest gravitational pull on all your decisions and desires?

C)Good question:

Quote From Jeremy Treat – Reality LA

“If the dream or passion at the center of your life is something that is constantly changing or temporary, you will constantly feel pulled in different directions and you will always feel like you are one bad decision away from falling apart.

If the center of your life is something that is temporary – it will not hold.

Only the Kingdom of God is powerful enough to order and unite the various aspects of your life. That is why seeking first the Kingdom is about more than setting priorities.

The Kingdom is not another thing on a long list of priorities; it is the framework determining the priorities.

The Kingdom of God if you are willing to understand and embrace it, has the power to reorder your life with coherence and purpose.”

Seek first the Kingdom.....

Pray