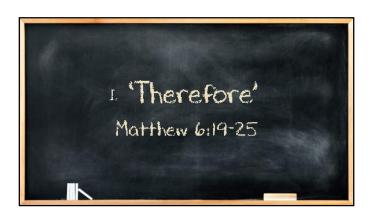


Living the good Life and Living a good Life pull in opposite directions. One cannot serve both God and wealth.

Thomas G. Long

A unit from the Sermon on the Mount: dealing with the tension of anxiety and faith



WHAT IS YOUR BEHAVIOUR?

> Storing up treasures (v19-20)

> What is your treasure?

WHAT DO YOU SEE? > Your behaviour flows from what you see (v22-23) > 'if your eye is healthy' (v22); 'if your eye is unhealthy' (v23) > What are you looking at/ desiring/ coveting

SEEING > YOUR PERSPECTIVE ON LIFE

- > What do you give yourself to or serve? (v24)
- > Wealth = mammon not reduced simply to money - it speaks to anything which can become an idol (a substitute for God)



WHAT ABOUT WORRY?

In the school of Christ we are not to be controlled by worry

TWO POETIC EXAMPLES

- 1. 'Birds of the air' see how God provides for them (v26-27)
- 'Flowers of the field' see how they blossom without toiling (v28-30)

NOT MEANING IRRESPONSIBILITY

- > It speaks to our compulsive anxiety using poetic language
- Our inveterate desire for security, and/or control no matter what

NOT AS THE GENTILES

- Those who have no faith in the Heavenly Father (v26,32)
- Theirs is a continued scrambling to control all the details of life

look > Really look, pay attention (v26) > See God's providing handiwork

CONSIDER > 'to learn' - as a disciple of God > Not a casual glance



But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

Matthew 6:33

SEEK RELATIONSHIP > Seek a relationship with the Heavenly Father (v33) > Before anything else - first seek God

NO SUBSINUTES > Don't substitute greed for God - a seeking after material things first - food, drink clothing, things

NOT CONTROLLED BY ANXIETY/WORRIES

- Such restless anxiety flows from a restless heart
- Often related to status, privilege, security

LIVE IN THE CONFIDENCE OF RELATIONSHIP

- Live one day at a time trusting God's hand - knowing God
- > Not rolling around in the future
- > Stay connected to today



1 A CAUTION

- › ßeware of a devotion to 'mammon' in our materialistic age
- > There is a need for a self-audit: check our own spending on such things as food, drink, clothes, purchases

2. BF AWARF

- The passage invites us to raise our awareness of those who are involuntarily poor How are we helping those in daily need?
- be instruments of peace and provision to others

3. THE POWER AND LOVE OF GOD

- We are invited to enter into the power + love of our Heavenly Father
- Check the spirit of cynicism + despair of our age - live as people of hope in a desperate world

JESUS: OUR CENTRE

- > Don't neglect our fundamental calling and vocation - make Jesus our centre as we live out our days
- Give Jesus the Little stressors that recur and chip away at our sense of peace