**Matthew 6:25-34**

I. Introduction to the Sermon on the Mount

 = Jesus’ invitation to live in God’s kingdom as God’s children

=Acknowledging our brokenness and dependence on him, trusting in his provision, and living for a singular passion for him and his kingdom

II. Jesus addresses anxiety in 6:25-34

A. Three times he says “do not worry” v. 25, 31, 34

B. The object of our worry in this passage is the basic provisions of our earthly life (food, clothes, tomorrow)

C. Anxiety is pervasive in our culture despite the fact that we have invented many things designed to insulate us from the insecurities of life and remove anxiety

III. Consider what Jesus says in this passage: two good reasons not to worry

A. Theological: Don’t worry because you have a heavenly Father who you can absolutely trust to provide for you

1. Look at the birds (v. 26)

a. Birds don’t prepare and farm and store their food. They simply take each day as it comes, and God provides daily food for them

 b. You are worth far more to God than birds

 2. Learn from the flowers (v. 28-30)

a. They don’t weave clothes, yet God clothes them intricately and beautifully

b. In fact, for all their preparation and fashion, no human has been more beautifully clothed

c. If God will take something so short-lived and clothe it extravagantly, surely he will see to it that his children are clothed

B. Practical: Worrying does absolutely no good anyways

 1. Worrying gets us nowhere in the end (v. 27)

2. In fact, worrying makes matters worse because we end up focusing on things that don’t even exist yet (the future) rather than focusing on the matter at hand

IV. Consider this passage in its context (Matthew 6:19-24)

 A. Where is your treasure (v. 19-21)?

1. Don’t store up earthly treasures (material possessions and other earthly values) because it’s a bad investment—they are inherently unstable and temporary

2. Store up treasures in heaven (pursue God, your relationship with God, his values, loving others and pointing them to God) because that’s a good investment—these are things that will last for eternity

3. The kicker: where your treasure is, there your heart will be also (v. 21)

 Our hearts natural get attached to our treasures

B. Where is your focus? (v. 22-23)

1. The eye refers to what we’re focusing on and fixing our attention on

2. The body refers to the rest of our lives

3. Jesus’ point: If you are focused on the right things (heavenly treasures rather than earthly treasures), your whole life will be in line with God

 4. The kicker: What you focus on will have a huge impact on your entire life

C. Who is your master?

1. The things we treasure and focus on actually become our master

2. We think they are serving us, but we end up serving them as they begin to control our schedules, priorities, and lives

 3. The kicker: you can’t serve both God and money

 At some point you have to make a choice

D. So Jesus is driving us towards a question: what is your treasure, where is your focus, who is master?

= What gets top priority in your life? God or earthly pursuits?

And you can’t have it both ways

And whatever choice you make will have huge implications on your life

E. Conclusion: Therefore, don’t worry about earthly things (v. 25); rather, seek first God’s kingdom and righteousness (v. 33). Make that your top priority.

1. Pagans who don’t know God as a Father run after earthly things, but you know God as a Father who provides, so you don’t have to obsess about all that (v. 32)

 2. Instead, stay focused on God and his priorities

F. This gives insight into the issue of anxiety

1. Anxiety is not just an issue of trust, it’s an issue of what our priorities and passions and treasures are

2. When we are focused on things that our hearts intuitively know are unstable, the result is anxiety

3. When we are focused on unchanging things like God, we can live with trust and freedom

V. Consider the story of Martha and Mary Luke 10:38ff

 Martha’s focus was in the wrong place, while Mary’s focus was on Jesus

VI. What would it look like for you to seek first the kingdom of God?

A. How can you create space in your life to be with God to focus on his word and prayer and worship?

 B. How can you seek him first even in the midst of all your responsibilities?

**Discussion Questions**

1. As we consider Jesus’ conversation about worry and anxiety, what are the specific issues in your life that tend to occupy the majority of your anxious thoughts?

2. As you consider Jesus’ words in v. 25-34, what was most helpful for you? And is there anything you would want to object to or ask further questions on?

3. Read v. 19-24. Is there a statement that stands out to you as being particularly compelling, relevant, or convicting? What is it, and why does it stand out to you?

4. Consider the big picture idea in v. 19-34 that Jesus is calling us to make pursuing God our top priority in life (to make him our treasure, focus, and master and to seek first his kingdom). As you look at the way you are living your life, what would you say is taking top priority, and how does that priority show itself in your daily experience?

5. What are some practical ways you have come up with that help you seek God first even in the midst of your various responsibilities?