

**SERMON ON THE MOUNT**

**PROGRAM 9 (#912179)**

**WEEK 2 (912340)**

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## ***PRECEPTS FOR LIFE***

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**SERIES: Sermon On The Mount**

**TITLE: Program 9 – Are You Worried? Your Heavenly Father Says Do Not Be Anxious**

### **THURSDAY**

### **OPEN**

It's God that is going to take care of you. You can't keep yourself alive. You can't change as we saw the color of your hair. You can't determine your height. You can't do those things. All you can do is realize that God is in control, that God is sovereign.

### **PART ONE**

You know when you look at this final portion of Matthew chapter 6, in verse 19 down through the end of the chapter you see a key repeated phrase and that key repeated phrase is "do not be anxious." He's very concerned about His people being preoccupied with the things of this world and forgetting that they have a heavenly Father. After all the kingdom of heaven is theirs and if God is their Father, isn't God obligated as a good Father, as a loving Father, as a sovereign Father, as an omnipotent Father? Isn't He obligated to take care of His own? Yes, He is. So He begins with this statement.

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(Matthew 6:19-20) “Do not lay up treasures for yourself upon earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in and steal....” Now why is he concerned about treasures on earth versus treasures on heaven? I mean isn’t it all right to have treasures on earth and have treasures in heaven? Well the problem is the next statement. (Matthew 6:21) “...where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” And God doesn’t want us to serve Him or love Him with a divided heart. And so He’s very concerned that we become focused on the things of this life. And really if you look at our society, if you look at all that we’re bombarded with and all the advertisements, isn’t the focus strictly on earth? Isn’t the focus on the treasures of this earth? I mean aren’t we sold day and night on television and magazines the fact that if we really want to be happy that this is where our happiness is going to come? This is what’s going to show our status in life. This is what’s going to show whether we’ve achieved or not the treasures that we have laid up on earth. And yet God knows that it’s very dangerous to have a divided heart or it’s even more dangerous to focus on the treasures of this earth and not even be concerned about the treasures that are in heaven. And so He goes on to say this, (Matthew 6:22-23) “The lamp of the body is the eye; if therefore the eye is clear, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!” He’s saying listen, your ability to see is so important. You know that as people get older that their vision becomes more dim. It becomes more clouded. He’s saying listen; you need to watch your eyes. You need to watch what you see. You need to watch what you focus on because what you see and what you focus on is what your heart is drawn to. And if the lamp of your body, the eye where we take in everything, is full of darkness then your body is going to be full of darkness. If your eyes are not clear, if your vision is not clear then you don’t have a healthy body. And He

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goes on to say this. (Matthew 6:24a) “No one can serve two masters...”

Now that word for “serve” in the Greek is in the present tense. And what He’s saying, Precious One, is you can’t have treasures down here on earth and treasures in heaven and really serve God the way you ought to serve. You’ve got to give yourself fully to treasures on earth or fully to treasures in heaven. The thing is that the treasures on earth can be taken away from you. You can open your closet and go to get out that beautiful winter outfit and find out that it’s full of moth’s holes and it’s useless. Or you can go to get out some silver and all of a sudden it’s rusted and it’s corroded and your treasure is gone. He says but if you’ll put treasure in heaven then moth cannot eat it and rust cannot corrode it. In other words that treasure that you put in heaven is absolutely secure. It’s not like the stock market. It will not fall in value. It will not alter. It will not go up and it will not go down. So God’s concern is the future. Why? Because this life is so temporal. The average, God says, is three score and ten, 70 years. (Psalm 90:10) And yet we have all eternity before us. And how we live these three score and ten years whatever they may be determines our reward in heaven. And so we want to think in long range investments. We want to think not in temporal gains but we want to think in eternal gains. And so He makes the statement that no man can serve two masters. When we try to serve two masters we will hold to the one and we will despise the other. He says, (Matthew 6:24b) “You cannot serve God and mammon.” Now when He talks about mammon, in essence, they believe He’s saying you cannot serve God and riches. And you may come back to me and say, “Is it wrong for me to be rich?” No, it’s not wrong for you to be rich. God makes rich and God makes poor. He says that in the scriptures as Hannah prayed to the Lord and praised God for the birth of Samuel and the son that He had given her that she might give him back to God. And that was her treasure but as she praised Him and thanked Him, she made the statement that God makes rich and God makes poor. The problem is is when we begin to love our riches. When we begin to clutch

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those riches to us. When we become preoccupied with those riches when we're just watching them constantly and our emotions go up or down according to our financial state or according to the threats that might come of a depressed economy or a depression or a recession or a falling stock market or war on the scene or whatever. And He says don't you know that when you take these things and you clutch on to them that you're showing that something is wrong with your understanding of God because it's God that is going to take care of you. You can't keep yourself alive. You can't change as we saw the color of your hair. You can't determine your height. You can't do those things. All you can do is realize that God is in control, that God is sovereign. We're looking at what it's like to belong to the kingdom of heaven. We're looking at those that are followers of Jesus Christ, true disciples. And as He talks to these true disciples He is so concerned. He doesn't want them to have a divided mind and a divided heart because it will keep them from being and receiving all that they need to be and all that they can receive when that reward in heaven is given. You cannot serve God and mammon. You cannot serve God and riches. And yet if you were to ask your society, if you were to ask the people of the land where you live what they want more than anything else, they would tell you that they want to know that their future is secure and to have a secure future they have to have money and so what do they do? They begin to pursue it. When instead if they would only pursue the kingdom of heaven, they would have a guarantee from God that He would take care of everything. I want us to turn to I Timothy to the last chapter and I would suggest that next to verse 24 that you write I Timothy chapter 6, verse 6 and then the verses that follow. So that would be "I Timothy chapter 6, verse 6 ff," for the verses that follow. And listen to what He says, (I Timothy 6:6-8) "...Godliness actually is a means of great gain, when accompanied by contentment. For we have brought nothing into this world, so we cannot take anything out of it either. And if we have food and covering, with these we shall be content."

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Now I want to ask you a question. Will you be content with food and covering or do you have to have a lot of treasures around you? Do you have to have a lot of gold and silver and expensive statues and marvelous paintings and things like that? Do you have to have a lot of decoration to go with that food and clothing for you to be content? He says no, just be content with food and clothing because those are the essentials of life. Now if God wants to give you more then that's fine and you don't have to be ashamed of it. If you have the money to buy those things, you don't have to be ashamed of it as long as those are not your treasure. As long as those are not the focus of your life. Listen to what He says. He says, (I Timothy 6:9) "But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction." I don't know if you've ever watched the television program Biography, but they give the biographies of people all over the world. And one of the things that you see is once they begin to become famous, once they begin to gather riches and treasures, you find their lives falling apart. They fall into as it says all sorts of snares into ruin and destruction. Their relationships fall apart. Their marriages fall apart. Their children are all of a sudden neglected because you get more and you want more, and you want more, and you want more. Why? Because it's a love of money. He says, (I Timothy 6:10) "...the love of money is the root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it," longing for money, "have wandered away from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many a pang." You know, your treasures cannot love you. Your money cannot hold you. They cannot talk to you. They cannot give you fellowship. All they can give you are material possessions. You say, "But I'm not concerned about that. I'm concerned am I going to have enough to survive? I'm concerned am I going to be all right in the future? Well here we sit on the Mount of Beatitudes and on this beautiful, beautiful day we're reminded of the words that Jesus had to say. The words that talk about stop being anxious. Listen to what He says. He says in verse 25,

(Matthew 6:25) “For this reason I say to you, do not be anxious for your life,” “as to what you shall eat, as to what you shall drink; nor for your body, as to what you shall put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?” Now some of us think, “No, the body’s all about clothing. It’s all about the right labels from the top of our head to the tip of our toes, it’s about the right labels. It’s about being in style.” Oh no, Beloved. It is far more than that. And what God is telling us is this. Stop being anxious. I know its written do not be anxious but it’s an imperative. It’s a command. And He’s saying stop being anxious. Listen, I can sense that there’s anxiety in your life. He says now I want you to stop it.

## **PART TWO**

“Look at the birds of the air,” look at them. He says “... they do not sow, neither do they reap, nor do they gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they? And which of you by being anxious can add a single cubit to your life span?” Can you say I’m going to live longer than I planned? I’m going to live an extra 20 days, an extra 30 days. You can’t determine the number of days that you’re going to live because God is the one that does all these things. (Matthew 6:28-29) “And why are you anxious about clothing?” He says, “Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil or spin, yet I say to you that even Solomon in all of his glory did not clothe himself like one of these.” God sustains them. God brings back those blooms year after year. It’s God. You can’t do that. You can’t come up with such beauty on your own so why are you anxious about these things? And He says listen, (Matthew 6:30) “...if God so arrays the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, will He not do much more do so for you, O men of,” what, “little faith.” What is He dealing with here? He’s dealt with the selfishness of hypocrisy. Wanting to be thought of better than you are. Wanting to make an impression. Now He’s dealing again with self. A self

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that thinks, “I’m my provider. I’m my sustainer. I’ve got to do it. If I don’t take care of me none will.” Now He’s not saying you’re not to work. As a matter of fact in 2 Thessalonians He tells you if you do not work, you do not eat. He’s always told us that we are to labor. That we are to work diligently with our hands. And yet it is still God that provides because He gives us the ability to earn money. He goes on to say, (Matthew 6:31-32) “Do not be anxious then....” Now He’s said do not be anxious four times in these short verses. “Do not be anxious then, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘With what shall we clothe ourselves?’ For all these things the Gentiles eagerly seek; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.” Now once again He’s showing that division. Once again He’s saying okay, this is what the Gentiles are seeking. Those Gentiles don’t have me as their Father. They have refused to believe on Me. They have refused to become a disciple of Jesus Christ. And He says consequently they don’t have the promise that you have. But I’m your Father. And you know what? As your Father, I have promised you that I am going to take care of you. So I don’t want you to be anxious. Now what does anxiety do to us? Well I want you to go to Mark chapter 4. In Mark chapter 4 Jesus tells the parable of the sower of the seed. He talks about a sower going out to sow and later He explains that the sower is sowing the Word of God. And then He tells where the Word of God falls along the road and it doesn’t even go down. It doesn’t germinate at all. Then the second seed is sown among the rocks. And because it’s among rocks and there’s so little soil instead of putting it’s roots down it immediately springs up. And it’s doing well until all of a sudden affliction comes then they fall away. In other words, they made a profession of faith but the circumstances show that they truly were not born from above. Now the next soil is a soil where we have the seed falling among thorns. And those thorns do great damage. These are the ones who have heard the word, and the worries of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires of other things enter in and choke the word, and it

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becomes unfruitful. What is Jesus' concern? Jesus' concern is that you and I, as children of the kingdom, understand this: the kingdom of heaven is yours and because God is your Father, He has promised to supply all your needs. Now He says, beware of thorns. What are the thorns? It says the worries of this world. What is Jesus saying on the Sermon on the Mount? Do not be anxious. So He's saying the worries of this world. He's saying the deceitfulness of riches. Why are riches deceitful? Riches are deceitful because we begin to depend upon them instead of depending upon God. We begin to say okay, my welfare depends on my riches. But you see riches are fleeting. Read through Proverbs. Read what God has to say about riches. And you will know that you can be rich one day and you can be in poverty the next day. All of a sudden there can come a terrorist attack. And all of a sudden when the twin towers went down the finances of our country went down and it impacted the whole world. But listen, if you have God it does not matter. He says, (Mark 4:19b) "...and the desires for other things enter in and choke the Word..." Now what's the desires for other things? It's the desire that causes you to lay up treasures on earth instead of laying up treasures in heaven. And so those desire for other things are going to occupy your mind. Listen to what Galatians says. Galatians chapter 1 and its verse 10. Paul is talking about some people that are giving some wrong teaching. And he says to them, "...Am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God?" He says, "Or am I striving to please men: If I were still striving to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ." Which brings me to another point. So many times we're pressured for things. We're pressured for accomplishments. We're pressured because they're saying, "I want this." "I want that." "Oh I wish I could have that. And it begins to put pressure. And so then we turn to pleasing men instead of pleasing God. And listen to me. If you start pleasing men instead of pleasing God eventually it's going to hurt your family because it puts the emphasis on earthly things instead of on heavenly things. Well let's go back to Matthew chapter 6. And as we go



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back to Matthew chapter 6 He makes this statement. (Matthew 6:33)

“...Seek first His kingdom,” seek first God’s kingdom, “and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you.” Now what is He saying? I, God, the sovereign ruler of all the universe. I, Jesus, the representative of God, who speaks only the words that the Father speaks, who only does the works that the Father does. I am telling you that if you will seek first His kingdom. If you will seek first His righteousness, if you will make the pursuit of godliness, the pursuit of holiness your passion, He’s saying, I am promising you that all these things will be added to you. In other words you will never have any lack. You will never have any want because God is the sovereign ruler of all the universe and He has promised to supply all your needs. I want you to go to Philippians chapter 4. In Philippians chapter 4 Paul is commending the church at Philippi because they shared with him. They sent him money. They sent him support. He didn’t ask for it. He didn’t require it but he certainly did need it. He says, (Philippians 4:19) “You supplied for me, “And my God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory through Christ Jesus our Lord.”

What’s the bottom conclusion? One more. (Matthew 6:34) “Therefore do not be anxious for tomorrow; for tomorrow will take care of itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.” And God’s in control of that day.