

Matthew 6:25 - 7:29

Day 1

Sermon on the Mount: A Believer's life style. Read Matthew 6:25-34

Anxiety

1. When we have chosen to put our priorities and focus on the Lord what should follow? 6:25 (Note the phrase "*For this reason/Therefore*" and what it points back to.)

- What did Paul say about worry? Philippians 4:6,7

2. What examples did Jesus use for reasons not to be "*anxious,*" not to "*worry?*"

- 6:26 God provides continuously and abundantly even for birds. Why worry since we are of much more value?
- 6:27
- 6:28-30
- 6:31,32a

3. What is important to remember in order not to worry? 6:32b (See 1 Peter 5:7)

- What do these arguments say about the unproductive and unnecessary nature of worry? What do they indicate about how we view our worth to God?

4. How should a believer view life? 6:33 (How can we tell if our possessions and pursuits are secondary to this?)

- What promise did Jesus give? 6:33b (Cf. Proverbs 3:5,6; Philippians 4:19)

Digging Deeper

What does scripture say about working to provide?
Acts 20:34,35;
1 Thess. 4:11,12;
2 Thess. 3:7-13

Food for Thought: "There are only two kinds of (devotion), the self-centered and the God-centered, so there are only two kinds of ambition; one can be ambitious either for oneself or for God." - John Stott (171)

"Jesus' instruction not to worry does not forbid thrift, thoughtfulness, and careful provision for the future; these qualities are good." - Africa Bible commentary (1123)

5. What practical advice did Jesus give? 6:34 What does that say about the reality of trouble even though we are told not to worry?
6. What encouragement are we given about facing trials?
- James 1:2-5
 - Romans 8:35-37
 - 2 Corinthians 12:9-10

FYI: "We need to learn to live a day at a time. We should plan for the future, of course, but not worry about the future... *'Each day has troubles enough of its own.'* So why anticipate them? If we do, we **double** them. For if our fear does not materialize, we have worried once for nothing; if it does materialize, we have worried twice instead of once. In both cases it is foolish: worry doubles trouble... To become preoccupied with material things in such a way that they engross our attention, absorb our energy and burden us with anxiety is incompatible with both Christian faith and common sense.. It is distrustful of our heavenly Father." - John Stott (169)

Applying the Word: Make a list of things that you are worried about. Mark those things that are future and which will you need to deal with today. Now look again at the list: Do you feel God is able to get you through the things you need for today? What should you do with the other things on the list?

Day 2

Sermon on the Mount: A Believer's Relationships. Read Matthew 7:1-12 ...

Relationship with our brothers

7. Why shouldn't we judge others? 7:1,2 (Cf. 5:7) (*Since we are told in scripture to be discerning about the actions of others (vv. 15,16), what kind of judging do you think Jesus is talking about?*)
- Who is the only one who can correctly judge a man and why? 1 Corinthians 4:4,5

FYI: "Jesus is speaking against being *judgmental*, that is, judging motives and the inner man, which only God can know. We can judge the *fruit* of a man, but we can rarely judge their motives with accuracy. In addition, Jesus...requires that our judgment be completely fair, and that we only judge others by a standard we would also like to be judged by." - David Guzik

8. Underline what scripture says about attitudes and actions toward evil.

- Proverbs 8:13 "The fear of the LORD is to hate evil; Pride and arrogance and the evil way And the perverted mouth, I hate. NASU
- Romans 12:9 Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good.
- 1 Thessalonians 5:21-22 But examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good; 22 abstain from every form of evil. NASU
- Romans 12:2 Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is-his good, pleasing and perfect will. NIV
- Ephesians 5:10,11 and find out what pleases the Lord. Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. NIV

9. What are we ignoring when we judge someone else? 7:3,4

- What do we need to deal with first? 7:5 Why would this help to see "clearly" (have full vision) in helping another?

Digging Deeper
 What is said about correcting others in:
 Galatians 6:1

 2 Timothy 2:24-26

FYI: "It is too easy for us to find fault with others, whilst being blind to our own failings. Besides this, We are never really in a position to fully comprehend all the facts, and we are prone to bias and prejudice."
 - Africa Bible Commentary (1124)

10. What discernment do we need to have when interacting with people? 7:6

- Since we are to reach out to unbelievers, what situations do you think this is referring to? (See Proverbs 9:7,8)

Relationship with our Father

11. List the three ways Jesus said to approach the Father and each corresponding result. 7:7,8 What level of intensity do you see in each?

12. What example did Jesus use to illustrate the desire to give? 7:9,10

- What phrase describes how God's giving compares? 7:11
- To what "good" things do you think this is referring? See Luke 11:13b; James 1:17 (*If you ask and don't receive or receive something else, what can you conclude?*)

13. Why do you think God wants us to ask since He already knows our need? Hebrews 11:6

FYI: "There is no doubt that our prayers are transformed when we remember that the God we are coming to is 'Abba, Father,' (Romans 8:15) and infinitely good and kind."
- John Stott (185)

14. Underline the conditions put on requests in the following:

- James 4:3 You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures. NASU
- 1 John 5:14 This is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. NASU
- Ps 66:18 If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened; NIV

Relationship with all

15. The ancient Jewish Talmud stated "What is hateful to you, do not do to anyone else." How does Jesus' command in 7:12 surpass this?

- What does having this attitude and action achieve? 7:12b (See Galatians 5:14)

Applying the Word: It has been said that the Lord will always answer our requests with a "yes, no, wait." When have you seen a "no" or a "wait" work out to be a wonderful and better answer than yes?

Day 3

Sermon on the Mount: A Believer's Choices. Read Matthew 7:13-20

Two ways

16. List the phrases that Jesus used to contrast two different choices. 7:13,14.

FYI: "broad is the way" There is plenty of room on [the broad way] for diversity of opinions and laxity of morals....It has no boundaries of either thought or conduct. Travelers on this road follow their own inclinations, that is, the desires of the human heart in its fallenness."
- John Stott (194)

"The narrow road is neither obvious nor the natural way to live. As Jesus has made clear...it is not easy, but it is immensely rewarding and is ultimately the only way."
- The Africa Bible Commentary (1125)

Digging Deeper
See the choice Moses gave: Deut. 30:15,19

Joshua: Joshua 24:15

Jeremiah: Jer. 21:8

17. What did Jesus say He was in John 10:9? How did Jesus describe what people would find when they entered? 10:9-11

- Note: Jesus gives no middle road and no other gate or destination. How do you see people trying to water down or explain away this choice?

Digging Deeper
How did Jesus describe Himself in John 14:6?

How *narrow* is the way? Acts 4:12

How *all-encompassing* is the invitation? John 3:16; Romans 10:13; 1 Timothy 2:4

True and False Teachers

18. How is the double nature of a false teacher described in 7:15?

19. What does “*sheep’s clothing*” imply about their place in a flock?

- How deceptive can this be? 2 Corinthians 11:13-15

20. What does “*ravenous/ferocious wolves*” imply about their motives? (See Acts 20:29-30)

- To whom did Jesus apply this warning in Mark 12:38-40?

FYI: “False prophets are adept at blurring the issue of salvation. Some so muddle or distort the gospel that they make it hard for seekers to find the narrow gate. Others try to make out that the narrow way is in reality much broader than Jesus implied, and that to walk it requires little if any restrictions...Yet others, perhaps the most pernicious of all, dare to contradict Jesus and to assert that the broad road does not lead to destruction but that as a matter of fact all roads lead to God, and that even the broad and narrow roads, although they lead off in opposite directions, ultimately both end in life.”
- John Stott (199) (See Jeremiah 23:16-18)

21. How can we distinguish between true and false teachers? 7:16-20 (How might this apply to both their manner of living and their teaching and its effect?)

- What do you think is different about this kind of discernment compared to the idea of not judging others (vs. 1)?

Digging Deeper
What is the source of good fruit and bad fruit?
Galatians 5:19-22;
See also John 15:5

22. Underline the problems with the teachings, actions, and motives of false teachers:

- Galatians 1:6-7 I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel- 7 which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ. NIV
- 2 Timothy 3:5 They will act religious, but they will reject the power that could make them godly. Stay away from people like that! NLT
- 2 Timothy 4:2-4 2 Preach the word of God. Be prepared, whether the time is favorable or not. Patiently correct, rebuke, and encourage your people with good teaching.
- 3 For a time is coming when people will no longer listen to sound and wholesome teaching. They will follow their own desires and will look for teachers who will tell them whatever their itching ears want to hear. 4 They will reject the truth and chase after myths. NLT
- Titus 1:16 They profess to know God, but by their deeds they deny Him, being detestable and disobedient and worthless for any good deed. NASU
- Romans 16:18 For these are the kind who do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own appetites. By their smooth talk and flattery they deceive the minds of the naive. NET
- 2 Corinthians 11:13-15 For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. 14 No wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. 15 Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, whose end will be according to their deeds. NAS
- Colossians 2:4,8 I tell you this so that no one may deceive you by fine-sounding arguments...8 See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ. NIV
- 2 Peter 2:1-3 But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them-bringing swift destruction on themselves. 2 Many will follow their shameful ways and will bring the way of truth into disrepute. 3 In their greed these teachers will exploit you with stories they have made up... NIV
- Jude 4 For certain men whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly slipped in among you. They are godless men, who change the grace of our God into a license for immorality and deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord. NIV
- 1 Timothy 6:20-21 20 Timothy, guard what God has entrusted to you. Avoid godless, foolish discussions with those who oppose you with their so-called knowledge. 21 Some people have wandered from the faith by following such foolishness. May God's grace be with you all. NLT

Applying the Word: *How would you explain the narrow way versus the wide invitation?*

Day 4

Sermon on the Mount: A Believer's Choices (cont.). Read Matthew 7:21-29

Words and Deeds

23. What did Jesus say He about the difference among those who claim to know Him? 7:21
24. What does 7:22 say about the extent of the deception that can occur with false teachers? (Cf. Matthew 24:24)
25. In spite of the spectacular words and works they claim to do, what is the problem? 7:23 (Cf. Luke 6:46)

FYI: "Here are people who call Jesus '**Lord**' with courtesy, orthodoxy and enthusiasm...What can be wrong with this? In itself nothing. And yet everything is wrong because it is talk without truth, profession without reality...Their confession concerned their lips only, and not their life." - John Stott (207)

Two Foundations

26. How did Jesus describe how a wise man and a foolish man handle His words? To what were the foundations they were building on compared? 7:24, 26
27. How did the foundations respond to adversity? 7:25-27
- What is the only firm foundation on which to build? 1 Corinthians 3::11 (What is Christ called in Acts 4:10-12?)
28. On what tone would you say Jesus ended the sermon on the Mount? 7:27
29. How did the people respond to Jesus' teachings and why? 7:28,29 (Look back through the sermon. What do you think are some of the most remarkable claims Jesus made about Himself?)

FYI: "**Not as the scribes:** Scribes would often cite authorities in order to lend credence to their statements. Jesus' words were self-authenticating... '*I say to You.*'" - The Nelson Study Bible (1588)

30. Underline other reactions of people to Jesus' words or reasons for being astonished.

- Luke 4:22 And all were speaking well of Him, and wondering at the gracious words which were falling from His lips; and they were saying, "Is this not Joseph's son?" NASU
- John 7:15 The Jews then were astonished, saying, "How has this man become learned, having never been educated?" NASU
- John 7:44-46 Some of them wanted to seize Him, but no one laid hands on Him. 45 The officers then came to the chief priests and Pharisees, and they said to them, "Why did you not bring Him?" 46 The officers answered, "Never has a man spoken the way this man speaks." NASU
- Mark 6:2 When the Sabbath came, He began to teach in the synagogue; and the many listeners were astonished, saying, "Where did this man get these things, and what is this wisdom given to Him, and such miracles as these performed by His hands? NASU
- Matthew 22:46 And no one was able to answer Him a word, nor did anyone dare from that day on to ask Him another question. NAS
- Luke 13:17 When he said this, all his opponents were humiliated, but the people were delighted with all the wonderful things he was doing. NIV

31. What did Jesus say about His teachings? John 7:16; 8:28,38,40

Applying the Word: *When have you seen a beautiful example of someone who has weathered a difficult storm in life because of their firm foundation in Christ?*

*"Therefore do not worry about tomorrow,
for tomorrow will worry about itself.
Each day has enough trouble of its own.
Matt 6:34 NIV*