

UPPER ROOM SUNDAY BIBLE STUDY
Living the Life of the Beloved/Belonging: Matthew 5-7
Teacher Richard Edwards
Spring-Summer, 2018

Lesson 18 – (July 15, 2018) Matthew 6:24-34

Lessons from Last Week:

- a. What you treasure is what is precious to you.
- b. What is precious to you will cost you: time, energy, worry about, sleepless nights, money, etc.

Matthew 6:24-34

“No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.

- a. **“serve” – (doulein: “be enslaved to”) -**
- b. **“two masters” – (kurios: “absolute owners”)**
 - a. Slave-life, in Jesus’ day, had two realities:
 - i. The slave was not considered a person, but rather a thing: a living tool; material possession.
 - ii. Once a slave; always a slave (unless his freedom had been purchased for him – redemption).
 - b. **“No one can...”**
 - i. Being a Christian is a full-time job, regardless of the circumstances!
 - ii. You are God’s “beloved,” full-time, regardless of the settings in which you serve and how people treat you!
- c. **“Either...or...hate/despise...love/be devoted” –** Not the emotions of “hate” and “love,” but setting of the priorities by which you choose to spend your time/energy pursuing and preserving.
 - a. **Example: Whatever is your top priority in life, will consume most of your time/energy to achieve it...and then to keep it.**
- d. **“God and money.” – (“mammon” – material possessions).**
 - a. Comes from the root word meaning *“entrusted to.”*
 - b. Money or possessions a person would entrust to a banker to hold on deposit for him/her, i.e. nest egg.
 - c. Eventually, became identified as *“that which a person would depend on for his/her security in life,”* i.e. his/her god.
- e. **“You cannot serve both...”** Jesus’ truth is that both God and “mammon” demand your full devotion and focus.
 - a. Devotion to God keeps the importance of “mammon” in proper perspective, and it tempers the temptation to become anxiously obsessive in acquiring and holding on to your mammon.

- b. Devotion to God fills you with the fruit of the Spirit, which curbs devotion of mammon.
 - i. **Galatians 5:22-23**. *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.*
- c. Devotion to God keeps you in a state of gratitude and humility; devotion to mammon propels you into a prideful focus on your own achievements.
- f. **The Beloved Life Principle #39**: Humans are built to serve _____ master. You can't have it both ways!

²⁵ "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? ²⁶ Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? ²⁷ Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life^{lel}?"

- a. "Therefore" – On the basis of the previous verses...
- b. "do not worry about your life"
 - a. Jesus is not objecting to normal and prudent foresight and preparation.
 - b. "meremnam" – obsessively worry.
- c. "is not life more than...Are you not much more valuable"
 - a. How do you measure the worth or value of your life?
 - b. Two exclusive interests (God or mammon) compete for your devotion:
- d. "and yet your heavenly Father feeds them."
 - a. How does God "feed" the birds?
 - b. How does God "feed" you?
- e. "Can any of you, by worrying, add a single hour"

²⁸ "And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. ²⁹ Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. ³⁰ If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? ³¹ So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' ³² For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. ³³ But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. ³⁴ Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

- a. "you of little faith" – Jesus draws a connection between "worry:" and "faith."
- b. "pagans run after" – "chase after" the priority of temporal security in mammon.
- c. "seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things"
 - a. The priority of "seeking" is devoting yourself to your relationship with God:
 - i. Devotional life
 - ii. Stewardship of resources, i.e. money, time, energy, etc.

- iii. Living in gratitude and humility
- iv. Balancing focus on self and others
- d. **“Each day has enough trouble of its own.”**
 - a. Focus on one day a time: Finish the tasks of each day.
 - b. Prepare, each day, for the bigger, longer-term projects.
 - c. Pray daily.

Regarding Clinical Anxiety/Depression:

- a. Clinical anxiety is a chemical imbalance in the body/brain.
- b. Anxiety disorders; obsessive-compulsive disorders; etc.
- c. Treatments include medicine; attention to self-talk; hormone treatments; counseling; coaching; nutrition, mindfulness; relaxation-training; making changes in one’s social/work environment; etc.
- d. Clinical anxiety can affect one’s personal confidence in God’s promises; but it does not affect the validity of the promises themselves.

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Upcoming Lessons:

- July 29-August 19:** **“One Week Wonders” (Individual, stand-alone lessons each week)**
- August 26:** **Comfort Dog Ministry Installation: Passing of the Leash (No Upper Room Bible Class)**
- September 2:** **New Series (yet to be determined)**