

## How God Can Redeem and Heal Our...

### #2 -Anxiety Matthew 6:25-34

“Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.” – Jesus in Matthew 6:34 (New International Version)

#### Anxiety is so important that Jesus addressed it extensively in the Sermon on the Mount

- Throughout the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:3-7:27), Jesus challenges His disciples to pursue a way of living that honors God the Father *internally* (a \_\_\_\_\_ from the heart) rather than merely *externally* (a \_\_\_\_\_ focused primarily on rituals or “righteous” behaviors). True faith is an inward transformation expressed outwardly.
- In chapter 6, Jesus compares the “*acts of righteousness*” that will either be rewarded by people or by God the Father. An “earthly” reward is simply the praise, recognition, or adoration of people. A “heavenly” reward is given by God the Father and is based on how we worship/serve Him in “secret” (e.g., anonymous giving to the poor, prayer, fasting, etc.). The issue is the focus of the \_\_\_\_\_.
- In 6:24 Jesus bluntly states that our heart can only have one master. We will either serve/worship God or some kind of \_\_\_\_\_ (false god).
  - Serve (worship) money = idolatry = \_\_\_\_\_
  - Serve (worship) God = righteousness = \_\_\_\_\_

#### Anxious or Anxious?

- “Anxious” is a strange word. It has two related, but essentially opposite meanings. It can either be “nervous excitement, \_\_\_\_\_ anticipation” or “nervous apprehension, \_\_\_\_\_ anticipation.” In English, “anxious” is mostly equated with worry.
- Etymologically, “anxious” comes from the Latin *angere*, which means to “choke, strangle, squeeze.” The primary cause of anxiety is \_\_\_\_\_.

“My life has been full of terrible misfortunes, most of which have never happened.”

“He who fears will suffer, he already suffers from his fear.”

- French philosopher Michel de Montaigne (1533-1592)

- Anxiety and its twin, depression, is the #1 mental health care issue in the U.S. with prescription numbers increasing at an alarming rate. [A pastoral note regarding mental health medications. For some conditions, under appropriate professional medical supervision, medication can be needed and helpful. However, we must be careful to not cover \_\_\_\_\_ signs for real underlying spiritual, emotional, or mental issues.]

#### Jesus on Alleviating Anxiety

**WARNING: THIS IS HOW TO PROGRESS AS A DISCIPLE OF JESUS – THE PATH OF HIS TRUTH SETTING US FREE (JOHN 8:31-32) AND RECEIVING FROM HIM “LIFE TO THE FULL” (JOHN 10:10). HIS TEACHINGS ARE NOT A “QUICK FIX” OR TRITE SOLUTION.**

**DISCIPLESHIP IS DYING TO THE SELF AND THE THINGS OF THIS WORLD (LUKE 9:23-24)**

- Realign your thinking to the right perspective (Romans 12:1-2). How we view (i.e., \_\_\_\_\_) circumstances makes us “*full of light*” or “*full of darkness*” (Jesus’ point in vv. 22-23).
  - Life is more than stuff, even the essential stuff we need to live. Life is more than existing.
  - Worry doesn’t \_\_\_\_\_. Anxiety takes life.
- Replace the fear of the unknown with \_\_\_\_\_ your heavenly Father.
  - Birds – Luke’s account specifies them as ravens (12:24), an “unclean” scavenging, pest of a bird. God still provides through the miracles of nature’s seasons. If God provides for creatures that don’t work, how much more will He provide for those who do work hard? - e.g., Proverbs 10:4; 12:11; 14:23; 21:5].
  - Lilies – the intricate design and resulting beauty showcase God’s “attention to detail.”
  - God loves & \_\_\_\_\_ us more! Only humans are created in His image. Such creatures are temporal. Humans are eternal souls.

“If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!”

- Matthew 7:11 (English Standard Version)

- Pursue “bigger faith” (contra “*little faith*” – v. 30). If we can trust God to take our sin and forgive us through the crucifixion of His Son Jesus, we can trust Him to give us new life and \_\_\_\_\_ through His resurrection (John 10:10; Colossians 2:10; Ephesians 3:19).
 

“Worry is practical atheism.” – William Mounce
- Set your spiritual priorities and practices \_\_\_\_\_.
  - Don’t get distracted from the path of God with pagan pursuits.
  - Seek the Kingdom first – set your thoughts (mind) and affections (heart) on God’s \_\_\_\_\_ (Colossians 3:1-2).
  - Practice personal holiness with specific choices/actions:
    - What will you do *for* God today?
    - What will you *not do* because of God today?
  - \_\_\_\_\_ deeply and verbally confess your daily dependence to trust God. Do all you can do, trust God with what only He can do.