

More Carefree Than Alfred

Text : **Matthew 6: 19-34**

INTRODUCTION :

Nostalgia .. first time in many years I saw MAD magazine in WalMart.

A. Remember when Alfred E. Newman was the official standard bearer of the pre-teen years ? (*He been around since at least 1895.*) S#1.

1. He is a perpetual candidate president and once got as many votes as Ralph Nadder.
2. Every president since I became aware of presidents has been caricatured as Alfred.
3. Whatever the circumstances his response was always, “What ? Me worry ?”

B. Christians can live more carefree than Alfred E. Newman. S#2.

1. Alfred’s confidence was based upon ignorance and folly.
2. The Christian’s confidence is based upon faith in the sovereign ruler of the universe.
3. That is the lesson that Jesus taught in the text that this lesson will open to us.

C. Our text is part of Jesus’ most famous sermon, *The Sermon on the Mount.* S#3.

1. **Matt 5: 1-12** ... Jesus explains the attitude God desires His followers to possess. S#4
 - a. He emphasizes the meek and humble attitude God desires.
 - b. He taught an attitude that is polar opposite to the attitude of the Pharisees.
2. **Vs. 13-19** ... Jesus explains the way God expects followers to use their attitude.
 - a. They are to be of great benefit to others ... salt and light are essential to life.
 - b. They are not to fade into obscurity, but be visible in contrast to the world.
3. **Vs. 20** ... They are not to use the Pharisees as their role models.
 - a. The Pharisees had set themselves up as a standard for others to emulate.
 - b. Jesus points out that the Pharisees fall far short of what God requires.
 - c. “*You must do better than those you view as the best.*”

S#5.

D. He demonstrates that the Pharisees didn’t understand the Law’s spiritual nature

1. **Matt. 5: 21-26** ... Do not murder involves more than abstaining from killing.
 - a. One must not bear hostility in his heart toward another. (*Sin stems from desire.*)
I John 3: 15 – Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer; and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.
 - b. Christians must treat others (*even enemies*) with dignity and respect.
 - c. Animosity prevents worship from being accepted. **Make peace, then worship.**

2. Moral behavior is more than abstaining from overt physical acts.
 - a. The desire to commit immorality is equally sinful to adulterous acts.
 - b. One must do whatever it takes to discipline his mind. (*Pluck out eye*)

E. Chapter 6 begins with Jesus demonstrating the hypocrisy of the Pharisees. S#6.

1. Def. = **hypocrisy** = Any action that is not motivated by one own value system.
- III. – **Movie stars that advocate for causes, but don't do what they ask others to do.**
2. **Matt. 6: 1-4** ... Jesus showed the hypocrisy in their alms giving ... blew trumpet
3. **Matt. 6: 5-15** ... Jesus showed the hypocrisy in their praying ... standing on corner
4. **Matt. 6: 16-18** ... Jesus showed the hypocrisy in their public fasting ... seek attn.

F. Jesus teaches us that sin is first of all an internal thing, a matter of the heart. S#7.

1. **Proverb 23: 7** – **For as he thinks within himself, so he is.**
2. Thus, we have not dealt with sin until we deal with our hearts. **S#8.**
Mark 7: 20-23 And He was saying, "That which proceeds out of the man, that is what defiles the man. ²¹ For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, ²² deeds of coveting and wickedness, as well as deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride and foolishness. ²³ All these evil things proceed from within and defile the man."
3. The Pharisees had perfected the externals, but had not addressed their hearts.
 - a. They had taken care of what man sees, but had neglected what God sees.
 - * b. God is intimately familiar with every person's heart. **S#9.**
Rev. 2: 23 – ... all the churches will know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts; and I will give to each one of you according to your deeds.
 - c. The Pharisees appeared holy, but they were hypocrites ... whitewashed tombs

G. God's Law given through Moses was designed to mold hearts. S#10.

1. What's in one's heart matters MOST because it is the fountain from which all flows.
2. **James 1: 14-15** But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. ¹⁵ Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.
3. Sins that can be hidden within one's self kills the soul without others knowing it.

In our text Jesus focuses on one of those internal sins that can be easily S#11 hidden, but which many don't bother to hide ... the sin of worry, of anxiety.

1. People don't bother to hide it because they don't think it is very serious
2. Some share it out of a desire to receive sympathy over what they are worried about.
3. Jesus makes it abundantly clear that worry is a very serious sin. (*deadly as the 7*)

S#12.

I. Worry involves the sin of greed.**A. Matt. 6: 19-24 ... Most worry can be traced back to the desire to possess things.**

1. Vs. 19-21 ... People desire to have more than they can use in the present. “lay up”
 - a. People want to have sufficient resources to be in control of their lives.
 - b. This life is brief, one’s primary concern should be the life that is eternal.
2. Vs. 22-23 ... One who has his eyes on physical things desires darkness.
 - a. Being concerned about physical things prevents one from seeing spiritual things.
 - b. One must develop eyes (*values*) that can see light. (*goodness*)
3. Vs. 24 ... Jesus requires that one make a decision ... Him or this life.
 - a. One cannot pursue both the spiritual and the physical at the same time.
 - b. Satan tries to convince us that we can have it all ... this world and the next.

B. Matt. 6: 25-30 ... God provides so don’t sweat the small stuff. Don’t worry! S#13

1. Matt. 6: 25a – Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on.
2. The verse starts with “**Therefore**” which indicated “*because of what went before.*”
 - a. Because having your eyes focused on this world is darkness ... spiritual corruption.
 - b. Because one must choose to follow after Christ and His kingdom or after the world
3. COMMAND ... “**Do not worry about your life.**” S#14.
 - a. To violate a direct command is SIN.
 - b. Thus ... to worry is sin.
 - c. It’s a sin that is easily hidden sin and one that is not taken very seriously.

C. Jesus here makes it clear that worry is a serious sin.

1. Worry robs Christians of the peace Jesus died to make available to them. S#15.
Phil. 4: 6-7 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.
2. Christians are instructed to turn our problems over to God and accept His decision.
 - a. **I Pet. 5: 6-7** Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, S#16. that He may exalt you at the proper time, 7 casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.
 - b. Remember ... **Rom. 8: 28** ... Humbling to God means to trust Him to

S#17.

D. This command is NOT to be interpreted as requiring fatalistic unpreparedness.

1. Those who just set back and wait for God to provide are to be rebuffed. S#18.

II Thess. 3: 10 – ... if anyone is not willing to work, then he is not to eat, either.

2. **Prov. 27: 23-27** Know well the condition of your flocks, *and pay attention to your herds;* ²⁴ For riches are not forever, nor does a crown *endure* to all generations. ²⁵ When the grass disappears, the new growth is seen, and the herbs of the mountains are gathered in, ²⁶ The lambs *will be* for your clothing, and the goats *will bring* the price of a field, ²⁷ And *there will be* goats' milk enough for your food, for the food of your household, and sustenance for your maidens.
3. **Prov. 6: 6-8** ... The industriousness of the ant is held up as a model.
4. **Genesis** ... The story of **Joseph** teaches us the value of reasonable preparation.
5. Having life insurance and a 401K are reasonable, but must never be our objective.

S#19.

II. Worry involves the sin of idolatry.

S#20.

- A. Vs. **24** (NKJV) **No one can serve two masters;** for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

1. “**Mammon**” is a transliterated word from the Syriac word “manuna.”
2. Manuna was an idol that was worshipped by people in Syria ... the god of wealth.

S#21.

- B. Therefore, Jesus equates being concerned about earthly things as idolatry.

1. **I John 2: 15** – Do not love the world nor the things in the world.
If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. S#22.
2. **James 4: 4** – You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. (Cf. – **Col 3: 5** .. idolatry)

- C. Jesus is urging His followers to choose to trust God to take care of them. S#23.

1. Vs. **26-30**
 - a. God takes care of the birds. They are totally dependent upon God's provision.
 - b. Worry cannot change one's physical circumstances. **Taller or live longer.**
 - c. The wild flowers have no value, but God clothes them splendidly.
2. God is the God of the future as well as the past and present. S#24.

Psa. 31: 14-15 But as for me, I trust in You, O Lord, I say, “You are my God.”
¹⁵ My times are in Your hand; Deliver me from the hand of my enemies and from those who persecute me.

S#25.

III. Worry involves the sin of unbelief.**A. This is the main reason worry is not a little sin.**

1. Worry is a practical expression of unbelief. *It is the very essence of unbelief.*
2. Jesus clearly states the issue :
Vs. 30 – **You of little faith!**

B. Things are never out of God's control ... even in the midst of calamity.

S#26.

1. Why are you worried about even the small things? *Food & Clothing*
2. Vs 32 ... When you're concern about such things you're acting like unbelievers. S#27
“For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.”

C. Trust God to take care of you and make Him your top priority in life.

S#28.

1. Vs. 33 – **But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.**
2. God is faithful ... Trust Him.
3. This is the beginning point of faith. ...
 - a. **Believe** He really will provide our needs.
 - b. God always keeps His promises.

IV. Some practical lessons to remember from this text.

S#29.

A. The only cure for worry is to seek first the kingdom of God & His righteousness.

1. If you fill your mind with spiritual things, you won't have time to sweat the minutia.
2. Remember the song : “*Earth Holds No Treasures.*”
 - a. We sing “Heaven holds all to me ...” but live like this earth is all there is.
 - b. When Heaven really does hold all, it changes our whole perspective on this life.

B. Worldly cares are a great threat to our spiritual wellbeing.

S#30.

1. Worrying about physical things saps the spiritual vitality out of our souls.
2. Worrying about the cares of this life can even be spiritually FATAL.

Mark 4: 18-19 And others are the ones on whom seed was sown among the thorns; these are the ones who have heard the word, ¹⁹ but the worries of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.

3. We can't have our attention focused on two targets at the same time. **S#31.**

Rom. 8: 5-7a For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. **6** For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, **7** because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God, ... (*not just one set on sin*) **S#32.**

- C. It is absurd and irrational to borrow trouble from tomorrow. **S#33.**

1. Vs. **34** – **So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.**

2. Matthew Henry has a good comment on this verse: (*Don't like quoting but ...*)

What a folly it is to take that trouble upon ourselves this day by care and fear, which belongs to another day, and will be never the lighter when it comes? Let us not pull that upon ourselves all together at once, which Providence has wisely ordered to be borne by parcels. The conclusion of this whole matter then is, that it is the will and command of the Lord Jesus, that his disciples should not be their own tormentors, nor make their passage through this world more dark and unpleasant, by their apprehension of troubles, than God has made it by the troubles themselves. By our daily prayers we may procure strength to bear us up under our daily troubles, and to arm us against the temptations that attend them, and then let none of these things move us. **S#34.**

3. God gives the grace to bear up under the troubles He allows to come on us today.

- a. **Lam. 3: 22-23** (ESV) **The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; 23 They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness.** **S#35.**

- b. **I Cor. 10: 13** – **No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.**

- D. The Christian's walk with the Lord is a day-by-day experience. **S#36.**

1. This is the lesson God taught His people in the wilderness when He gave manna.

- a. **Exodus 16: 15-24**

- b. Jesus taught us to pray, **"Give us this day our daily bread."** **Matt. 6: 11**

2. Fear and doubt should never be a factor in the Christian's world view. **S#37.**

- a. **II Tim 1: 7** – **For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, (kjv = fear) but of power and love and discipline.** **S#38.**

- b. **I John 4: 18** – **There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, ...**

Invitation :

Have you entrusted your future to God. *There is no reason to live in fear.* **S#39.**

Can you confidently pray *..Your name be glorified in all things ..* Come ! **S#40.**

Lesson Text :**Matthew 6: 19-34**

19 Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. **20** But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; **21** for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

22 The eye is the lamp of the body; so then if your eye is clear, your whole body will be full of light. **23** But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness! **24** No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.

25 For this reason I say to you, do not be worried about your life, as to what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, as to what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? **26** Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they? **27** And who of you by being worried can add a *single* hour to his life? **28** And why are you worried about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin, **29** yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these. **30** But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is *alive* today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, *will He* not much more *clothe* you? You of little faith! **31** Do not worry then, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear for clothing?' **32** For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. **33** But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

34 "So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.