

On The Brink of Tomorrow

Text : **Matthew 6: 24-34 ; Philippians 3: 12-16**

S#1.

A. Again we stand on a precipice of time looking out at an approaching New Year.

1. For many, especially the worldly, tonight is a time of revelry and celebration.
2. Culturally, this is a time of internal reflection and self-evaluation. S#2.
3. It is interesting to observe the different attitudes people have toward the new year.
 - a. Young people are optimistic b/c anticipate having most of their life in front of them
 - b. Older people have experienced more and see a greater likelihood of sickness.

B. Years ago, I read a sermon by Charles Spurgeon who is called “the prince of preachers” and part of the introduction frequently comes to mind on ...

1. It was preached in London on New Years Eve back in 1877.
2. “Now brethren, concerning the next year upon which we are entering, I hope it will be a year of happiness to you. I very emphatically wish you all a happy new year, but nobody can be confident that it will be a year free from trouble. On the contrary, you may be pretty confident that it will not be so for man is born to trouble as sparks fly upward. We have each, beloved friends, some beloved faces in which we rejoice. May they long smile upon us, but may we remember each one of these may be an occasion for sorrow during the next year for we have neither an immortal child nor an immortal husband nor an immortal wife nor an immortal friend. Therefore, some of these may die within this year. Moreover, the comforts with which we are surrounded may take themselves wings before another year shall fulfill its months. Earthly joys are as if they are made of snow; they melt even as the hoarfrost and are gone even before we conclude our thanksgiving for their coming. It may be you will have a year of drought and shortness of bread. Years lean and ill-favored may be your portion. Aye, and yet more, perhaps during this year which is almost dawned you may have to gather up your feet in the bed and die to meet your father's God. *(will finish this later)*
3. These are sober words but true for scripture often reminds us of the brevity of life.
 - a. **Job 14: 1** – Man, who is born of woman, is short-lived and full of turmoil. S#3.
 - b. **I Pet. 1: 24** – For, "All flesh is like grass, and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls off, ..."

C. The thrust of the scripture is to urge us to prepare for the inevitable.

S#4.

1. **Heb. 9: 27** ... Unless Christ returns first, all men are destined to die.
2. **Amos 4: 12** – Therefore thus I will do to you, O Israel; because I will do this to you, prepare to meet your God, O Israel.

D. The objective of God's urging is not to cause man to be morose or to worry. In fact, our text indicated that just the opposite is true. Worry is forbidden.

S#5.

I. Broad context : Sermon on the Mount is an exegesis of the Law's moral demands.**A. Chapter 5 is an exposition of the moral demands of the Law.**

S#6.

1. The Law had commands for external compliance, but it had a deeper moral meaning.
2. That is, the commands addressed external acts, but they also had to do with internal spiritual realities.
3. For example, the 6th command forbids one person from taking the life of another, but Jesus taught it also forbade one from having a murderous intent.

Matt. 5: 21-22 – You have heard that the ancients were told, 'You shall not commit murder' and 'Whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court.' **22** But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court; and whoever says to his brother, 'You good-for-nothing,' shall be guilty before the supreme court; and whoever says, 'You fool,' shall be guilty enough to go into the fiery hell. S#7.

4. The 7th command forbade the committing of adultery, but Jesus explained that it also forbade the gazing upon another with a desire to sin.

Matt. 5: 27-28 – You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery'; **28** but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. S#8.

5. Jesus taught that it was hypocrisy to deal with the externals, and not address the internal spiritual aspects of sin.

B. Chapter 6 illustrates the principles taught in chapter 5.

S#9.

1. Step by step Jesus dealt with their hypocrisies.
 - a. **6: 1-4** ... The hypocrisy of their alms giving
 - b. **6: 5-15** ... The hypocrisy of their prayers
 - c. **6: 16-18** ... The hypocrisy of their public fasting
2. Sin is first of all an internal matter.

Mark 7: 20-23 – And He was saying, " That which proceeds out of the man, S#10. 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 mastered the art of appearing holy to others.
 - a. They wore special clothes with tassels and observed many rituals.
 - b. **Matt. 23: 27** ... External righteousness made them like "whitewashed tombs."
 - c. **John 4** ... Jesus taught this same lesson to the woman at the well. (in spirit)

- * 4. The sins hidden in our heart are the most dangerous sins of all because they are the fountain from which all other sins flow.

C. Our specific text (**Matt 6: 24-34) deals with the sin of worry.**

S#11.

1. Basically, worry is a sin of the heart; unlike murder, it isn't outwardly manifested.
2. It is easily hidden, but often openly admitted and discussed.
- * a. Some share their worries to illicit sympathy from others.
- b. Worriers act like "*it is no big deal*" because it is seldom rebuked.
- c. Though illogical and unfounded, worry is fostered by fear and fear condemns.

Rom. 8: 37-39 – But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. **38** For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, **39** nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (cf - **II Tim. 1: 7** ... *not a spirit of fear*)

II. Worry involves the sin of greed.

S#13.

A. Jesus gives clear instruction about where the Christian's heart must be.

1. **Matt. 6:19-21** – 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.
2. One's treasure makes clear where his heart is , on earth or in Heaven.
3. **Vs. 24** ... We must all make a **choice**. **Can't serve both**. Jesus won't share.
4. Worry stems from Greed. The desire for things and fear of losing or not receiving.

B. The command not to worry is not a command not to plan or prepare.

1. It is not sinful to buy insurance, have an emergency fund, or prepare for retirement.
2. God showed **Joseph** how to prepare for 7 yrs of famine while there was plenty.
3. God used Solomon to instruct us to do likewise.

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.

C. Prepare for the future, but do not focus on it.**S#16.**

1. One who thinks more or works more for his retirement than his eternity is in trouble
2. Vs. 25 ... One's life does not consist in earthly possessions.
3. Everything on this earth is perishable, seek that which is eternal.

D. Worry is forbidden so trust God and live for today, i.e., for God's glory today.**III. Worry involves the sin of idolatry.****S#17.****A. We cannot serve both God and the things of this world.****S#18.**

1. **Matt. 6: 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.
2. In the KJV the word wealth is translated "*mammon*."
 - a. Mammon is a transliteration of the original word in the Greek text "mamōnas"
 - c. This word personifies their pagan god of riches, avarice and greed
3. Thus, those who worry about food, clothing are worshipping the idol mamōnas.

B. Worry cannot add to your life, but it can shorten it.**S#19.**

1. **Matt. 6: 27** – Who of you by being worried can add a single hour to his life?
2. Doctors say those who have anxiety when ill are 20% more likely to die.
3. Worry leads to many negative behaviors.
 - a. Overeating resulting in weight gain (contributes to diabetes, high blood pressure)
 - b. Worry can cause depression
 - c. Worry often leads to negative habits : smoking, alcohol consumption, drugs

IV. Worry involves the sin of unbelief.**S#20.****A. Worry is not a minor infraction, it is a manifestation of unbelief.****S#21.**

1. **Matt. 6: 30-31** – 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?'
2. Worry is a manifestation of the absence of faith in the promise of God.

Heb. 13: 5-6 – Make sure that your character is free from the love of money, **S#22.** being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, "I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you," ⁶ so that we confidently say, "The lord is my helper, I will not be afraid. What will man do to me?"

3. Unbelief causes worry resulting in one concentrating on physical things.
 - a. Remember Vs. 24 ... When one serves the things of this world he rejects God.
 - b. Worry is part of the process of falling away from God. S#23.
Heb. 3: 12 – Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God. **13** But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called "Today, ...

B. The evidence of God's goodness and watchcare is all around us.

1. Vs. 26 ... God feeds the birds
2. Vs. 28 ... God clothes the flowers
3. You are created in God's image; will God not care for you as well.

C. Vs. 31-33 ... Don't worry, you can trust God.

S#24.

V. Three practical lessons from our text that should characterize the Christian.

A. The only cure for worry is Vs. 33 ... "Seek ye first the kingdom ..."

S#25.

1. If your mind is filled with thoughts of the kingdom, there's no room for ...
2. If your mind is fixed on the Heavenly, the earthly can't shake your faith.

B. Worldly cares are a great threat to one's spiritual wellbeing.

S#26.

1. Fearfulness and worry can be fatal, especially to the faith of a new Christian.
2. **Luke 8: 14** ... the seed was choked with worries and riches and pleasures of *this* life,

S#27.

C. It is absolutely foolish to borrow trouble from tomorrow to worry about today.

1. **Matt 6: 34** – So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself.
Each day has enough trouble of its own.

2. **I Cor. 10: 13** ... The way of escape comes WITH the trial.

3. **Matt. 6: 11** ... Jesus prayed, "Give us our DAILY bread."

4. Quote from Matthew Henry, 1710

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. (*This is a second hand quot. I do not read Matthew Henry.*)

D. Exod. 16: 15 ... God taught this lesson very clearly giving the manna to Israel.

1. The manna came every day, but they could not store it up.
2. It would not rot on Friday night, but it would on Saturday night.

E. TRUST GOD ...**S#28.**

1. **Rom. 8: 28** ... God will ultimately work every event to your good and His glory.
2. God sends sufficient grace to enable you to stand day by day every day.

Lam. 3: 22-24 – The Lord's lovingkindnesses indeed never cease, For His compassions never fail. **23** They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness. **24** "The Lord is my portion," says my soul, "Therefore I have hope in Him."

CONCLUSION :**A. I want to end as I began, with the rest of that quote from Charles Spurgeon :**

Well now, concerning this approaching year and its mournful possibilities, shall we grow gloomy and despondent? Shall we wish that we had never been born or ask that we may die? By no means. Shall we on the other hand grow frivolous and laugh at all things? No, that wears ill-becoming in a heir of God. So, what shall we do? We will breathe this prayer : "Father glorify thy name. That is to say, if I must lose my property, glorify thy name in my poverty. If I must be bereaved, glorify thy name in my sorrows. If I must die, glorify thy name in my departure." When you pray in that fashion, your conflict is over. No outward freight nor inward fear remains if that prayer rises from your heart. You've now cast aside all gloomy forebodings and you can thoughtfully and placidly pursue your way into the unknown tomorrow.

S#29.**B. This is our challenge for the coming year, to devote ourselves to the glory of God.****C. We have no reason to worry or to fear the future for God is with us. Trust Him.****INVITATION :****S#30.** ... Communion slide

Lesson Text :**Matthew 6: 24-34**

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.

Philippians 3: 12-16

12 Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. **13** Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, **14** I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. **15** Let us therefore, as many as are perfect, have this attitude; and if in anything you have a different attitude, God will reveal that also to you; **16** however, let us keep living by that same standard to which we have attained.