

## Sermon Notes on Mt. 6:25-34, Trinity XV

1. Vs. 25 begins with "therefore." It points back to vs. 24. Why should you not worry about your life? Because you cannot serve God and Mammon. God is the true, Triune, saving God. Mammon is the god of temporal things: food, clothing, etc. You cannot serve two masters at the same time. Unbelievers serve Mammon. Believers serve God and His kingdom, His righteousness.
2. Vss. 32-33 show the contrast between the heathen and God's children. The heathen seek only the Mammon of this world. God's children seek His Kingdom, His righteousness, the Gospel. God promises: "If you seek His Kingdom, His righteousness, He will take care of the rest." See Rom. 8:32. What is the Kingdom of God? Rom. 14:17 says: "For the Kingdom of God is not food and drink but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." Col. 3:1-2 reads: "If therefore you have been raised up with Christ, seek the things above where Christ is at the right hand of God. Think about the things above, not the things on earth." One commentator said: "In the right use of the earthly things given to us, we really mind and seek heavenly things." Food and clothing are temporal gifts of God to be used rightly. But forgiveness of sins and eternal life are the heart of true religion.
3. Vs. 25 says: "Your body and soul will live forever. Food and clothing are only for this life. Body and soul are worth much more than food and clothing. God will take care of body and soul."
4. Vs. 26 says: "Birds should make us ashamed of ourselves. They know that God will provide even though they do not work hard and save up food. Aren't you worth much more than birds which don't have souls?"
5. Vs. 27 says: "You can't add five minutes to your life. Worry can't do that. Why then should your worry about lesser things?"
6. Vss. 28-30 are a unit. The wild grass and flowers are so beautiful. They are even more beautiful than Solomon in all his glory. See I Kings 10 and 11. And II Chron. 9:13 and following. But they last only a day and then are good only for the fire. But you have an immortal soul and will last forever. Flowers don't worry. Why do you worry?
7. Worry is sin. Worry reveals a lack of faith and trust in Jesus to provide. We pray in the Lord's Prayer: "Give us this day our daily bread." But then we doubt our prayer and begin worrying. That is sin.
8. The questions in vs. 31 are not questions of information but questions of anxiety. Worry is caused by greed and greed is never satisfied. It always wants more, more, more.
9. Read I Tim. 6:6-11. True faith in Jesus gives contentment with only necessary food, clothing and shelter. It always says: "I came into the world with nothing. I leave it with nothing." Then Paul shows that the desire for riches leads to grief and sorrow. The love of money and things leads to destruction. Then Paul says that we should pursue righteousness, piety, faith, love, endurance and meekness.
10. In the OT we have the example of Elijah, a man of simple food, dress and life. But the Lord took care of him. In the NT we have John the Baptist, a man of simple food, dress and life. But the Lord took care of him. We also have St. Paul who gave up everything when he found the righteousness of Christ. But our greatest example is Jesus Himself. Foxes have holes. The birds of the air have nests. But the Son of man had nowhere to lay His head. His heavenly Father took care of Him.
11. Seek not as do the heathen. Vs. 32. But always seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. He'll take care of everything else.
12. Usually our worries are not about today but rather about tomorrow. Christians should live just one day at a time. Live like little children. They know and believe that mama and papa will provide.

Sermon Outline on Mt. 6:25-34, Trinity XV

Theme: JESUS TEACHES THOSE WHOSE FAITH IS SMALL

Introduction: Faith in Jesus and His Gospel drives worry out of our hearts. Jesus looks at this problem from different angles. And then He tells us to seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. Is. 26:3 says: "You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You." See also Jn. 14:27.

I-HE USES ILLUSTRATIONS FROM NATURE TO HELP THEM

A-The wild birds teach us not to worry about food. The wild birds do not sow, harvest or gather into barns. And yet your heavenly Father provides for them. These birds have no souls. Their life is only temporal. But you have a soul. You will live forever. Aren't you worth far more than the birds which God feeds? Doesn't He love you? Your life is worth much more than food. Your body is worth much more than your clothing. You worry. But your worry is sin.

B-The wild flowers teach us not to worry about clothing. In spring we see wild flowers growing everywhere. Who makes them grow? God. They don't weave. They don't spin. And yet their clothing, their petals, their flowers are more beautiful than Solomon who was known far and wide for his luxurious living. I Kings 10 and 11. II Chron. 9:13 and following. These wild flowers bloom today but dry up tomorrow and are good only for fire. Their life is very short. But you will live eternally. Aren't you worth far more than wild flowers? You worry. But your worry is sin.

II-HE USES AN ILLUSTRATION FROM PEOPLE WHO DON'T KNOW THE TRUE GOD

A-The life of heathen nations. Jesus says: "The heathen nations seek all of these things (food and clothing)." They are not as wise as wild birds or wild flowers. Because they do not truly know God they think that these things are more important than their bodies and lives. They do not know that they will live eternally. They are absorbed with concern about food, clothing and the body. They are like the rich man in the parable at Lk. 12:16-21. They treasure up for themselves but are poor toward God.

B-The people who don't know God will lose their souls. Read I Tim. 6:6-11. Godliness with contentment is great gain. But people who worry and want to be rich pierce themselves through with many sorrows.

III-JESUS HELPS THE WEAK IN FAITH WITH A COMMAND AND A PROMISE

A-He tells them to seek first the Kingdom of God. What is the Kingdom of God? John the Baptist and Jesus both came saying: "Repent for the Kingdom of heaven is here." That means: "Confess your sins and trust in the forgiveness of sins." Confess all your worries to the Lord. Then hear Him say: "Come unto Me all you who labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." He hears St. Paul say: "The Kingdom of God is not food and drink but righteousness and peace and joy in the Lord." Rom. 14:17. The Gospel of Jesus Christ cleanses our hearts by faith in the message of Jesus.

B-He promises that all these things (food, clothing etc.) will be given to us by Jesus Who takes care of us. He takes care of wild birds and wild flowers. Won't He care for sinners who repent and then seek the Kingdom of God? St. Paul says: "He who did not spare His own Son but gave Him up for us all, won't He with Christ freely give us all things?" Rom. 8:32. Will a mother abandon a helpless child? Surely not. Will our Lord Jesus abandon a believer? Surely not.

Conclusion: When we listen to this text we understand what Jesus means by the last sentence: "Do not worry about tomorrow. Because tomorrow will worry about itself. Sufficient for today are the evils of today." Worry only makes double trouble. Trust in Jesus gives contentment.

Sermon Notes on Mt. 6:19-24, Trinity XV

1. Today's text is made up of three paragraphs which have the thought of covetousness in common: vss. 19-21, 22-23, 24. These vss. are found in Jesus' Sermon on the Mt., which occurred during His Great Galilean Ministry. The same thoughts occur in Luke at a later time, the late Judean and Perea Ministry. Cf. Buls' study on the Life of Christ, pages 3-4. In Luke these thoughts occur at Lk. 12:33-34, Lk. 11:34-36 and Lk. 16:23. Like any good teacher, Jesus often repeated Himself.
2. As said above, these vss. warn us against the sin of covetousness. To covet means to seek for something with eagerness or to set one's heart on something. God condemns covetting earthly, temporal things. Cf. Ex. 20:17 and I Cor. 6:10. But he blesses people who covet heavenly, eternal things. Cf. I Cor. 12:31. Read I Tim. 6:6-12.
3. Wealth in itself is not wrong. God blessed Abraham in his wealth. Job was very wealthy. God permitted Satan to take these things away, not because Job was covetous but to test him. God restored Job's wealth. Poverty in itself is no virtue. The poor beggar in the parable at Lk. 16:19-31 was not saved because he was poor. God blesses the poor in spirit, Mt. 5:3. Repentant sinners admit their spiritual poverty. They cannot save themselves. Both wealth and poverty can be a trap for a Christian. Prov. 30:8 reads "Give me neither poverty nor riches. Feed me with the food You prescribe for me; lest I be full and deny You, and say 'Who is the Lord?' Or lest I be poor and steal and profane the name of my God." To set one's heart on earthly, temporal things is sin both for the wealthy man and the poor man. In our text Jesus is asking all of us: "Where is your treasure?" "Are you walking in darkness or in the light?" "Whom are you serving, God or Mammon?" Mammon includes all temporal, earthly possessions.
4. God made and owns everything, even our bodies. We are only stewards of God's gifts. We are only caretakers, not owners. God lends us our bodies and possessions for a few years to test our faithfulness. He says: "Be thou faithful unto death." Rev. 2:10. Read the parable of the talents, Mt. 25:14-30. God does not give each of us the same number of talents. Some receive more, some less. But God expects each to use the talents faithfully. They must give an account on judgment day.
5. Mammon, earthly possessions, in themselves are not wrong. God does not condemn the use of Mammon. He does condemn the abuse of Mammon. Cf. Proverbs 5. Men are told to enjoy their wives, even physically. But they are warned about covetting women other than their wives. This can lead to loss of soul in hell. The greedy, covetous rich man in the parable at Lk. 12:21 thought his earthly goods would be with him forever. He lost his soul. The greedy rich man in the parable at Lk. 16:19-31 spent all his goods only on his own pleasure. He had no time for the Word of God and the beggar at his gate. He too lost his soul in hell.
6. Jesus often used simple illustrations and parables from everyday life. It is an excellent teaching method. Sometimes He left the hearer or reader draw the proper conclusion for himself. But sometimes He Himself explained. Our text today contains three illustrations. For each one Jesus stated the conclusion clearly. The preacher or teacher of God's Word must take great care to state the precise point of comparison of a text clearly so that the intended lesson will stick in the hearer's mind and memory.
7. A treasure is that which is precious to the owner. Moths destroy clothing. Rust destroys metal. Thieves make all earthly possessions unsafe. Moths, rust and thieves cannot destroy forgiveness of sins, faith and everlasting life. Heart denotes the center of the personality. For example: "You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your might." Deut. 6:5. This means to trust in God and His promises entirely.

Theme: WHICH WAY AM I GOING?

Introduction: Our text is not Gospel but Law. It does not tell us how we are saved. It tells us to examine ourselves concerning our daily living. Our text is addressed to people who already know that they are saved. But all of us need to examine ourselves constantly. There are only two ways, the broad way and the narrow way, Mt. 7:13-14.

I-THE WRONG WAY. Both ways are described in three illustrations in our text, the treasure, the light, the master. Both ways have a treasure, a light and a master.

A-It is the way of wrong treasures. This is the way of earthly treasures. It is the things which moths can destroy and rust disfigures. They are the things that thieves can steal. These are temporal things like our money, home, profession, fame. Do not make gods of these things. This attitude is pictured in the parable at Lk. 12:16-21. Earthly gifts are blessings from God but should never become our gods. I Tim. 6:6-10.

B-It is the way of the wrong light. Jesus says in vs. 23: "If the light in you is darkness, how great the darkness!" This is the light of human reason which departs from the Gospel. It is pictured at II Cor. 4:3-6. The children of this world pride themselves in the accomplishments of their mind and thinking. But the light of sinful, human reason is actually darkness. It is like a diseased eye which cannot see correctly. Darkened human reason refuses to confess its sins. Darkened human reason does not find salvation in the Gospel. Darkened human reason leads to sinful living.

C-It is the way of the wrong master. If a person will not confess his sins, believe in Christ and live a Christian life, his master is Satan, the murderer and liar, Jn. 8:44. Such a person is following the way of the flesh, not the way of the Spirit. Gal. 5:13-26. Such a person is walking the wide way which leads to destruction. Mt. 7:13-14. No man can serve two masters at the same time.

II-THE CORRECT WAY. This way is described in the three illustrations found in our text. The correct way is the way of the correct treasure, the healthy eye and the correct Master. I Tim. 6:11-12.

A-It is the way of the correct treasure. Our text is not telling us how to be saved. It warns us to cling to the correct Way. The correct treasure is the heavenly treasure which cannot be taken away by moths, rust and thieves. That treasure is the Gospel which brings forgiveness of sins, everlasting life and peace with God. The Christian sets his heart on this treasure. He would rather suffer death than to give up this treasure. This treasure causes him to lead a God-pleasing life.

B-It is the way of the healthy eye. When a person has healthy eyes his whole body benefits from this. When a person has a true, simple faith in Jesus Christ his whole body and life benefits. The Gospel enlightens that person's soul, his thinking, his choices, his entire conduct. "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." Ps. 119:105. "Open my eyes, that I may see wondrous things from Your law." Ps. 119:18. Jesus said: "I am the Light of the world. He who follows Me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life." Jn. 8:12. Eph. 1:18 describes the believer thus: "----the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of your calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints."

C-It is the way of the correct Master. The word for "Master" in our text is actually "Lord". God is called our Lord hundreds of times in the Bible. The first is at Gen. 18:14 where the Lord says to Abraham: "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" Of course not. It occurs the last time at Rev. 19:16 where Jesus is called "King of kings and Lord of lords." But Satan is NEVER called the "lord". People who serve Satan as lord and master are following a very dangerous path.