

## Lesson 7 – 12 September 2010

### Trust in Divine Providence

**Lesson Scope:** [Matthew 6:19-34](#)

#### Lesson Focus

As Jesus taught He used many examples from the natural world and from the Jewish people's own history. He referred to plant and animal life, slaves and masters, and King Solomon. He spoke of things they could identify with; such as riches corrupted by moths and rust or that are even stolen.

This lesson focuses on the attitudes of citizens of the kingdom of heaven. It brings into perspective trust in God in contrast with the anxious care that burdens much of humanity. God desires that we place implicit trust in Him to meet all our needs through His abundant provisions. He knows and understands our needs better than we do ourselves and is abundantly able to meet them beyond what we could ask or think. This lesson should be used to bring comfort and rest to the Christian. It also should stir in each of us thankfulness to God for His love, care, and abundant provisions that He so ably bestows upon His chosen.

Trust in God is not a reckless assumption that He will do it all for us. It is rather a complete trust in Him that when we have done what we can, He will provide.

Trust in God must be paramount in the life of the Christian. Anxious concern about the cares of this life is a breach of this trust.

**Lesson Aim:** To identify keys for overcoming anxiety.

**Theme Verse:** [Isaiah 26:4](#). Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength.

## **Lesson Text**

### **Proper Priorities**

#### **Matthew 6:19-24**

Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: <sup>20</sup>But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: <sup>21</sup>For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. <sup>22</sup>The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. <sup>23</sup>But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!

<sup>24</sup>No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

### **Unlimited Trust**

#### **Matthew 6:25-34**

Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? <sup>26</sup>Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? <sup>27</sup>Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? <sup>28</sup>And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: <sup>29</sup>And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. <sup>30</sup>Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? <sup>31</sup>Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? <sup>32</sup>(For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. <sup>33</sup>But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. <sup>34</sup>Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

## **Questions for Study**

### **Proper Priorities**

1. Define treasure.
2. How can we have earthly possessions without treasuring them?
3. How can we know where our treasure is?
4. How do we gain spiritual vision?
5. How can we determine if our loyalties are divided?

### **Unlimited Trust**

6. What is meant by the phrase "take no thought"?
7. How should we relate to the world's emphasis on preserving natural resources and protecting the environment?
8. How can we cultivate trust in God?
9. How does the Christian find rest in this uncertain world?

## **Analyzing the Passage**

Here are listed a number of negative teachings: "lay not up," "Ye cannot," and "take no thought." The last one, mentioned four times means "do not worry or be over anxious." We also notice positive teachings: "lay up ... treasures in heaven." "Seek ye first the kingdom of God."

These verses put in proper perspective the things of time and sense. Our great God can, and will, provide for all our needs.

Single (Matthew 6:22) means "sincere: without pride or pretense." The eye represents our life's focus. What we are focused on determines whether we dwell in the light or in darkness. A single eye cannot focus on God and mammon simultaneously.

## **Principles and Applications**

### **Proper Priorities**

1. Earthly treasures are fleeting yet if allowed yet they will captivate us and rob us of all that is of eternal value (Matthew 6:19). We all have to deal with earthly things, but they dare not become our treasure. They will all perish, and none can be taken with us when we leave this life. Earthly treasures have great potential to blind and destroy. They can easily come between us and God as well as separate us from His people. Riches also have a tendency to give us too high an opinion of ourselves, resulting in an independent spirit.
2. Heavenly treasures are enduring and indestructible, available only to

those who seek God (Matthew 6:20). Those who follow God will be laying up treasure in heaven. We can do so by using our earthly goods for kingdom work. Sharing with those in need or using time and money for outreach are some ways to do this. This can only be done by those who are right with God and continually seek His face. Here is an area where deception abounds: some believe that by giving, doing, and sharing, treasure can be transferred to heaven, even when one is not right with God.

3. The heart will seek and follow what it treasures (Matthew 6:21). What does our heart treasure? What are we seeking after? "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? (Jeremiah 17:9). Are we seeking prestige or honor? It may be so simple as wanting prestige, wanting our own way or wanting to be recognized. Are we seeking material superiority, ease, or pleasure? Could it be that we would be unwilling to be involved in kingdom work because it would impose upon our ease of life?

When one treasures heavenly things, he will be willing and ready to be used of God. This may be faithfully filling one's place in the home, school, or church. When asked to participate, do we willingly do what we can in such things as teaching, outreach work, or writing? May we never underestimate the positive influence of personal faithfulness nor the far-reaching effects of solid homes.

4. Spiritual vision and discernment must direct the physical and material (Matthew 6:22-23). To have clear spiritual vision, one must focus on the light. If we focus solely on the material, our decisions will make us servants to the same. But when we know God and seek His will, He will give wisdom to make decisions in light of their eternal consequence.

5. The effort to divide one's loyalties is folly and delusion. Satan desires that Christians be deceived into believing that they can have one foot in the world and one in Christ's kingdom. A person will put his efforts into either the eternal kingdom of God Or the kingdom of this world that will perish. No one can be loyal to God while looking toward the world. "Remember Lot's wife."

### **Unlimited Trust**

6. We must discipline ourselves to avoid anxiety about our physical sustenance. We must exercise Biblical stewardship, but to get caught up in the world's hype related to global warming, depletion of resources, and such things displays a lack of trust in God.

God provides for all of nature in ways far beyond our comprehension. Man is still discovering, after six thousand years, more of what God Perfectly and intricately has planned in nature. There is ample evidence of God's care for all of creation in nature, in history, and in our personal experience. As we spend time meditating on this, it builds our faith in Him.

7. The human tendency is to doubt God's knowledge of our needs or His ability to meet those needs (Matthew 6:31-32). To doubt God is unbelief! To Worry or unduly meditate upon our material needs is tip God. It is imperative that the Christian be able to take his burden to the Lord and leave it there. This will build faith and bring rest.

8. Seeking the kingdom of God first is an antidote to anxiety (Matthew 6:33). Cultivating the mentality that our greatest needs are spiritual and our greatest work is the enlarging of the kingdom helps us maintain a proper balance. God has promised to fill our lesser needs as we seek His righteousness.

9. We must not borrow trouble from the future (Matthew 6:34). There are many things we could become overanxious about: What will become of our children? How will the church be faithful? What if we face persecution? The Christian will rather focus on Him who holds the future in His hand. He also holds us in His hand, where none can pluck us out. May we ever keep ourselves in His omniscient, omnipotent hand, for then we can completely trust.

### **Important Teachings**

1. Earthly treasures are fleeting, yet, if allowed to, they will captivate us and rob us of all that is of eternal value (Matthew 6:19).

2. Heavenly treasures are enduring and indestructible, available only to those who seek God (Matthew 6:20).

3. The heart will seek and follow what it treasures (Matthew 6:21).

4. Spiritual vision and discernment must direct the physical and material (Matthew 6:22-23).

5. The effort to divide one's loyalties is folly and delusion (Matthew 6:24).

6. We must discipline ourselves to avoid anxiety about our physical sustenance (Matthew 6:25-30).

7. The human tendency is to doubt God's knowledge of our needs or His ability to meet those needs (Matthew 6:31-32).

8. Seeking the kingdom of God first is an antidote for anxiety (Matt. 6:33).

9. We must not borrow trouble from the future (Matthew 6:34).

### **Answers to Questions**

1. Define treasure.

Treasure is wealth or riches, but it can also be anything held dear or considered precious.

2. How can we have earthly possessions without treasuring them?

We must consider ourselves stewards of what belongs to God. Use them to benefit others and the work of God's kingdom rather than hoarding them or lavishing them on ourselves.

3. How can we know where our treasure is?

Take note what gets our attention—spiritual or earthly things. As we deal with earthly things, is our goal to get all we can or do we always bear in mind to leave a clear testimony for God? How does the thought of losing our possessions affect us? Can we readily forego material gain for the sake of the kingdom?

4. How do we gain spiritual vision?

To gain spiritual vision, we must focus on the light, Jesus. We do this by study of the Word, prayer, and being part of a body of believers who help us to have good spiritual vision.

5. How can we determine if our loyalties are divided?

We can learn by honestly asking ourselves some questions: Do we do the things we know God wants us to do? Do we find it easy to do what the church asks of us? Does our dress, speech, or hairstyle indicate that we are tuned to the world while professing to support the standards of the church?

6. What is meant by the phrase "take no thought"?

We should not worry, but rather trust God who is able and does provide for all nature and mankind, but especially for His own. It does not mean that we should avoid planning and laying up for the future, but we should not allow ourselves to become anxious about things beyond our control.

7. How should we relate to the world's emphasis on preserving natural resources and protecting the environment?

The Bible teaches good stewardship, and God's people should be among the best stewards of material things. We must recognize that the world has an end and that God has always provided for mankind and will continue to do so as long as the world stands. Each man is selfish by nature and tries to make room for his own waste and lavishness while making and verbally

supporting laws to preserve and protect.

8. How can we cultivate trust in God?

We need to ask Him to supply our needs and then thank Him for doing just that. Take time to read in the Bible and history how God has always provided for the needs of mankind, especially His people.

9. How does the Christian find rest in this uncertain world?

We seek God first. The Christian holds to the hand of God, who knows the future and is always in control. He is able to do "exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Ephesians 3:20).

### **Summarizing the Lesson**

I care not today what tomorrow may bring,  
If shadow or sunshine or rain;  
The Lord I know ruleth o'er everything,  
And all of my worry is vain.  
Living by faith, in Jesus above  
Trusting, confiding in His great love;  
From all harm safe in His sheltering arm,  
I'm living by faith, and feel no alarm.  
—*James Wells*

### **Research Guide**

1. Read in Nave's Topical Bible on the subject "Faith Exemplified."
2. Look up #3022 in the Thompson Chain-reference Bible.