

**The Sermon on the Mount**  
**Mastering Materialism (Part 1)**  
**Matthew 6:25-34**  
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Well this morning, we return to our study of the most famous sermon our Lord ever preached, the Sermon on the Mount. We find ourselves in Matthew 6 where I invite you to turn with me this morning. One of the defining sins of our culture is the sin of worry. We use a number of different words to describe this sin. Sometimes we call it worry; other times, anxiety; and occasionally, fear. One of the more recent labels for this sin is “being under stress or being stressed out, but physical stress can be and often is the result of worry.” Worry is absolutely pandemic on this planet.

But there are a variety of ways that people attempt to deal with the problem of worry. Many try to distract themselves from worry by incessant entertainment. They simply try to cause their minds to forget whatever it is that worries them by keeping their mind occupied with mindless amusement. Some seek counseling or therapy to help them deal with their anxiety. A growing means to deal with anxiety is through the use of prescription drugs and psychiatry. Sedatives are prescribed literally by the tons in this country.

Some people try to bury their worry beneath the stream of constant pleasure of some kind or other, either sinful, illicit pleasure, or legitimate pleasures. Tragically, some even resort to alcohol or illegal drugs as a way to run from their anxiety and their worry. Now obviously, although some of the things in that list are acceptable for us as Christians, none of those responses is going to truly deal with the root causes of our worry and anxiety.

When you come to the pop Christian culture, the solutions that are offered us are no better; in fact, sometimes they're even worse. Go to the local Christian bookstore, and if you can find a shelf of books somewhere in the back (uh, you know, sorting through all the trinkets), you'll find on that shelf maybe a book about worry. And if you do, there'll be very few references to the Scripture in it, and those references that are in there will simply be taken out of context and will be offered because it would seem wholly inappropriate to have a Christian book on worry without having some texts of Scripture involved.

Most of the pop Christian answers to worry really come out of secular psychology. I'll give you one example. The two men who founded a network of quasi Christian counseling centers, Frank Minirth and Paul Meier, wrote a book along with Don Hawkins, entitled *Worry-Free Living*. Here was some of their advice to Christians about how to handle the issue of worry, "We suggest setting aside fifteen minutes in the morning and another fifteen minutes in the evening for active worry. If concerns surface during other times of the day, and of course they will, the person should jot them down on a card in order to deal with them during the designated period. Worry-free living (they say) involves confining the natural worry we all feel into a designated time slot of only one percent of a twelve-hour day."

The Minirth-Meier response to worry is to say, "Listen. You're going to worry so you can't stop it. So instead, you just want to isolate it to a, couple of times a day so that you're not bothered by it the rest of the time." As we will see, that advice is not only abiblical (that is, it's not found in the Scripture), it's also unbiblical.

In the paragraph that we begin to study today, our Lord truly teaches us how to deal with our worry, our anxiety, and our fears. And He does so not by applying some sort of a strange Band-Aid temporary fix, but instead by dealing with the root issues in our lives that feed our worry.

In this text, Jesus addresses specifically one of the major causes of worry in our lives, and it's the worry about our future financial needs, the needs of this life. Notice in verse 25 of Matthew 6, He refers to food, drink, and clothing; in verse 26, again to food; in verse 27, the length of our physical lives; in verses 28 to 30, He comes back to clothing; verse 31, food, drink, and clothing. Jesus is dealing with one of the major causes for worry in our lives, which has to do with having the necessities of life met in the future. Let's read it together. Matthew 6, beginning in verse 25. This is what our Lord says,

"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? 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? And who of you by being worried can add a single hour to his life? And why are you worried about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin, yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these. 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! Do not worry then, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear for clothing?’ For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. So, do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”

Now, just to remind you of the larger context here, back in verse 19 of this chapter and running through the verses we just read, through the end of chapter 6, our Lord is explaining to us how we should think about wealth and possessions. He’s really addressing the excesses of responding to wealth and possessions, materialism we could call it. We’ve defined materialism as preferring material possessions and physical comfort to spiritual values.

In this section, our Lord first of all helps us to recognize the dangers of materialism. We saw that in verses 19 to 24 that we’ve already looked at together. He helps us recognize the dangers that are inherent in the sin of materialism. He identifies three deadly dangers there. And again, we’ve seen these, just to review for you.

The first danger in verses 19 to 21 is being completely consumed by materialism. Notice verse 21, “... where your treasure is, there your heart” [your entire inner self] “will be also.” [Wherever you invest your time and resources, that is where your entire inner self will be consumed. There’s a danger of being completely consumed by materialism.]

The second danger comes in verses 22 to 23. It’s being spiritually blinded by materialism. Notice the last part of verse 23, “If ... the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!” In other words, Jesus was saying that if your spiritual vision, if the eyes of your heart are blinded by materialism, then you will indeed be truly spiritually blind. It will be a great darkness.

The third danger comes in verse 24. It’s being a worshiper of materialism. This is when materialism becomes an idol of the heart. Notice the end of verse 24, “You cannot serve God and wealth.” You cannot be a worshiper of the true God and of wealth at the same time. You have to choose. Who’s going to be or what’s going to be your God?

Now, today we come to the second part of this larger section. And in the verses we just read, verses 25 to 34, Jesus takes the next step. Here He teaches us how to overcome the dangers of

materialism. He's already taught us how to recognize the dangers; and now in these verses, how to overcome them. We could call this section "Overcoming Materialism" or, as I've entitled my message, "Mastering Materialism."

Now, it's important as we begin to see the connection between these two paragraphs. Notice how verse 25 begins, "For this reason I say to you ...". Clearly, the paragraph we've just read together is closely linked to the paragraph that comes before it. How is that? Well, one of the most common ways that we as Jesus' followers are sucked into the sin of materialism is by worrying about whether our future needs will be met. Jesus is in essence saying to us, "Listen. You must master materialism or it will master you." But how? How can we master materialism in our lives? Well, our Lord explains in verses 25 to 34.

Now, before we begin to walk our way through it, let me make an important observation for you. Our Lord's instruction in this paragraph serves as a brilliant study and model of the process of sanctification. If you want to see how you should pursue sanctification about any sin in your life, let this paragraph be a model for you. It's a model because Jesus doesn't merely address the external action, but the flawed pattern of thinking that lies behind the action. He begins this section by addressing an action.

Look back at verse 19, the action of laying up your treasures on earth, of investing all of your resources in yourself and earthly things. That's the act, but then He addresses the sinful thinking behind that act. And in this case, it's the sin of worry – worrying about what you will eat or drink or put on in the future. But Jesus doesn't even stop there. He goes another level deeper.

Ultimately, Jesus traces the sinful pattern of thinking to wrong thinking about God, a misperception of God, when He begins to say, "Let me, let me explain to you who your Father is and what He's like. You've misunderstood who He is. You've misunderstood what He's like or you wouldn't be worrying."

Now, this is exactly how you and I must address every sin with which we struggle. We must not only deal with the outward action, but we must discover the sinful thinking patterns behind that external act. And then we have to go even deeper and, ultimately, we must trace every single sin we commit back to its flawed view of God.

You ever thought about that? Every sin you commit ultimately can be traced to wrong thinking about God. Let me give you an example. And I just chose this. There are countless other ones

that could be selected. Consider the external sin of sexual immorality. That is a sinful act. It violates God's law, and it must be dealt with, but you can't stop in dealing with the act. You must trace the act back to its sinful thinking pattern. And Jesus does that in Matthew 5 here in the Sermon on the Mount. You remember what it is? It traces back to lust, lust in the heart. But Jesus would not have us stop there.

We must go one level deeper and say, "What is the wrong thinking in the heart about God that leads to lust?" Lust essentially is fed by a flawed view of God that says, "God isn't good. He hasn't given me good gifts. He's holding out on me. There is something good outside of God and outside of His will." So understand then that the process our Lord takes us through in this passage is really a process for dealing with sin in our lives regardless of what that sin is.

It's also a wonderful expression of the pattern because He teaches us the balance between putting off and putting on. Paul gets to this issue, you remember, in Ephesians 4 where he says you need to put off certain behaviors, you need to be renewed in your thinking and put on other behaviors. Well, Jesus does that right here. He says, "I not only want you to lay aside or put off the idea of laying up your treasure on earth, but I want you to put on laying up your treasures in heaven.

I not only want you to put off the sin of worry. I want you to put on the confident trust in God and seeking His kingdom." So, understand then, that what our Lord teaches in this section will not only help you to deal with the sin of worry, but it'll also become a paradigm in dealing with all the sins that you struggle with.

Now, before we begin to work our way through this text verse by verse, let me show you the flow of Jesus' thoughts, so you know where we're going. First of all, you have Jesus' command not to worry about the needs of this life. Look at the first part of verse 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 will you put on." There's the command – straightforward command.

Beginning in the middle of verse 25 and running through the rest of the paragraph, verse 34, we have Jesus' arguments for not worrying about the needs of this life. He's commanded us not to worry in the beginning of verse 25, and then He lays out a series of arguments for why we shouldn't worry.

There are arguments from God's character beginning in the middle of verse 25 going down through verse 30. Because God is this way, you shouldn't worry. In verses 31 to 33, there is an

argument from kingdom priorities. He says, “Listen. You’re a member of God’s kingdom now. Don’t act like the pagans. That’s inconsistent with who you are. Instead, seek first His kingdom and His righteousness.” And then in verse 34, Jesus closes with an argument from simple logic. He says, “Listen. You can’t deal with tomorrow’s troubles today. God’s only going to give you the grace you need for today. You can’t address tomorrow today.”

So, let’s begin then today with Jesus’ command not to worry about the needs of this life. Look at verse 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.” [There is a simple, straightforward command. Jesus says,] “For this reason” [because of the dangers inherent in materialism that I’ve just told you about I tell you,] “do not be worried....”

The sin of worry is the heart of this passage. In fact, Matthew uses the Greek word for “worry” seven times in his gospel. Six of those are here in this paragraph. But the word for “worry” in Greek is more complicated than you might imagine. The Greek word for “worry” is used not only for the sin of worry, but it’s also used to describe a virtue. It is used, first of all in the New Testament, of acceptable care, or legitimate care and concern, for your duties and responsibilities. This same word translated “worry” in this passage is used in other places in the New Testament to refer to legitimate care and concern for your duties and responsibilities.

For example, 1 Corinthians 12:25, Paul there is dealing with the issue of the abuse of tongues. And he starts by addressing the issue of understanding spiritual gifts as a whole. And in 1 Corinthians 12:25, he says this, “I don’t want these gifts to lead to a division in the body, but that the members may have the same care” [there’s our word,] “may have the same care” “for one another.” [You and I are to worry – not sinfully worry, but we are to worry about something. We’re to worry about one another. We’re to care for one another. That is a duty, a responsibility that we have.]

Turn over to 2 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians 11. You see another example. The apostle Paul has gone through the litany of all of the things that he had faced and the troubles and trials of his life, imprisonments and stonings and shipwrecks. And then he comes to this in 2 Corinthians 11:28, “Apart from *such* external things, there is the daily pressure on me *of* concern” [the same Greek word translated “worry” back in Matthew 6; he says there is the daily pressure I feel of care or concern] “for all the churches.”

Paul says there is a legitimate sense of pressure, a legitimate sense of weight based on the care and responsibility God has placed on me for the churches. In fact, in verse 29 he says, “Who is weak” [in those churches] “without my being weak?” [I feel that, he says.] “Who is led into sin without” [literally, my burning] “my passionate concern?”

You see this same legitimate care and concern in Philippians 2:20. Paul’s talking about Timothy and sending Timothy to the Philippian church. And he says, “... I have no one *else* of kindred spirit who will genuinely be concerned” [same Greek word] “for your welfare.” Timothy is going to rightfully, legitimately worry about you and your needs and your concerns.

Now understand then, that based even on how this Greek word is used, there is in fact legitimate care and concern for your duties and your responsibilities. This is really important for us to note, because, frankly, there are some people who are naturally carefree and sort of happy-go-lucky, and they never worry about anything. That’s because they never take anything seriously, including their duties and responsibilities.

So, they hear a message on not worrying, and they sort of congratulate themselves, “Ha-ha, I never worry.” Jesus doesn’t mean that. He doesn’t mean that we’re not to have legitimate care and concern about the duties and responsibilities He has given us. Paul felt the pressure of those duties and responsibilities, whether those duties are toward our families or in our jobs or in the church or in some other area of responsibility.

In fact, let me put it bluntly. If you don’t have any care or concern about your duties and responsibilities, then Jesus would not say to you, “Don’t worry.” Instead, He would say to you, “Go to the ant, you sluggard, consider her ways and be wise, which, having no chief, officer or ruler, prepares her food in the summer and gathers her provision in the harvest.”

You need to feel the weight of the duties and responsibilities God has given you and prepare and plan and give careful thought to these things. D.A. Carson says we miss the point of Matthew 6 and Jesus’ command not to worry if we don’t remember “the curses on carelessness, apathy, indifference, laziness and self-indulgence that are expressed elsewhere.”

So then, understand that the Greek word translated “worry” can describe the virtue of having legitimate care and concern for your duties and responsibilities. But here’s where it gets tricky. This same Greek word is also used to describe sinful worry and anxiety about anything. Obviously in Matthew 6, worry is a sin because our Lord says, “Stop worrying. Don’t worry.” In

Philippians 4:6, Paul says, “Be anxious for nothing” [same Greek word] ...” [Literally, it says,] “For nothing, worry.” [That’s what Philippians 4:6 says in the word order of the Greek text,] “For nothing, worry.”

So, in this sense, this negative sense, the Greek word for “worry” is used to describe something that is sinful. Now the root idea in this word for “worry” means to divide or to separate or distract. Worry is something that divides our minds, that distracts us from what we ought to be doing. Now this is very complex. I want you to understand that. Sorting out legitimate care and concern from worry is a challenge because sometimes our cares and concerns can be both right and sinful at the same time.

For example, I can be rightly concerned about loving my family and providing for their future needs. That’s a legitimate care and concern. That’s a responsibility given to me by God. But at the same time that I’m rightly concerned, I can also be sinfully worrying about where that provision is going to come from. So, what’s the difference? What’s the difference between legitimate care and concern and worry? Or to ask the question a different way, when do legitimate cares become sinful worry? What’s the line that passes from one to the other?

Well, the Scriptures speak to this issue. Let me give you some practical help of how to distinguish between legitimate care and concern for your duties and responsibilities and sinful worry. First of all, it is worry when legitimate concern begins to distract you from kingdom priorities – when you expend more effort, more time, more thought, more emotional energy on the cares of this life than you do on our Lord and His kingdom. Jesus is going to get there in Matthew 6, but let me give you just a little bit of a preview. Look at Matthew 6:31. He says,

“Do not worry then, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear for clothing?’ For the Gentiles [the unbelieving pagans] eagerly pursue all these things; [listen, unbelievers live for these things but] “... your heavenly Father knows that you need ... these things.” [He understands that.] “But” [I want you, He says, to] “seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.”

Those legitimate cares and concerns become sinful when they begin to consume more of your time and energy and emotional energy than the things of Christ and His kingdom. At that point, it’s becoming sinful worry.



There's a second way that we can distinguish sinful worry from legitimate care, and that is when you are shouldering legitimate concerns alone rather than casting them on God, when you are shouldering those concerns and you're not taking them to God in prayer and relying on His strength. Turn over to Philippians 4. I alluded to this a moment ago, but Dusty has just been taking us through this passage on Sunday evening. Great text – look again at Philippians 4:6, “Be anxious” [there's our word] “for nothing” [literally again, it says, “for nothing, worry”], “but instead in everything” [that might cause you to be anxious, in everything] “by prayer and supplication with” [an attitude of] “thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.”

He says, “Listen. Those things that could be simply cares, legitimate cares but that are possibly going to make you anxious – everything I want you to bring to God in prayer.” And if you don't do that, if that isn't your pattern, then it's undoubtedly become sinful worry in your life.

Peter makes this same point over in 1 Peter 5. First Peter 5:6. He says, “Listen. You're going to, you're going to encounter difficult circumstances.” And when you do, “humble yourselves” [under God's providence] “under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time” [but what do you do in the middle of those circumstances that could create legitimate care and could become sinful anxiety?]

Here's what you do, verse 7,] “casting all your” [care or] “anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.” [You throw it on Him in prayer. If you're not doing that, if there are areas of your life that are legitimate cares and concerns that you are shouldering alone, and you're not letting your requests be made known to God, you're not casting it on Him, then I can promise you it has become sinful worry.]

There's a third way to distinguish between sinful worry and legitimate care, and that is when your legitimate concern for duty or responsibility becomes fear and a lack of trust. Listen very carefully to me. This is absolutely crucial for you to understand. At its heart, worry is simply an expression of fear. That's what worry is. It is fear. When you hear yourself in your own mind or out loud saying, “I am worried about ...,” substitute the word for fear, “I am fearful that ... I am afraid that ...” That's what you're really saying, and that's what you're really doing.

When you're worried, you are filled with fear about that specific situation. Worry is when your response to your duties and responsibilities becomes fear rather than faith. Again, our Lord is going to deal with this in Matthew 6, but let me give you another preview. Look at Matthew 6:28. Jesus says, “Why are you worried about clothing?” And then of course He talks about the

wildflowers and how God causes them to grow and adorns them. Verse 30, “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?” [And then He gets to the real issue.] “You of little faith!” He says, “Listen. You worry or fear because you don’t have faith. You don’t trust and have confidence in God.”

So, understand then, that in this text Jesus is not forbidding thought about these things, nor is He forbidding forethought and planning about these things. He is forbidding anxious thoughts about these things. He’s forbidding worry and anxiety. In fact, when the negative sense of this Greek word occurs in the New Testament, the New American Standard translators primarily chose the English word “worry” as they did here in Matthew 6. And that’s because it’s the English word that best captures the idea behind this word.

You know where the word, the English word “worry” comes from? The English word comes from an Old English word “wyrge,” which means “to choke” or “to strangle.” In fact, here’s a little detail that you can throw out over the water cooler tomorrow at work or at school. Listen to this. The first, the primary definition in the *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* for “worry” is not the one you expect. Listen to the primary definition, “It is a dog’s action of biting and shaking an animal so as to injure or kill it; specifically, a hound’s worrying of its quarry.” That’s where the word came from, and what an amazing description of worry. This is what it does to us. It grabs us by the neck. It chokes us. It strangles our life, ultimately trying to destroy us.

The second definition of “worry” in the *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* is this, “It is a state or feeling of mental unease regarding or arising from one’s cares or responsibilities.” Look again at Jesus’ command in verse 25, “For this reason I say to you, do not be worried …” Do not allow or tolerate a state or a feeling of mental unease or anxiety caused by your cares and responsibilities. Now, the way this is phrased in the original construction, this could be a general command that Jesus is giving us to avoid this habit of worry as a habit of life. Or it could be a command “to stop.” It could be “stop worrying.,” Or it could be both.

Clearly, all of us are tempted to worry. Certainly, Jesus’ disciples were. Look in verse 28. Jesus says to His disciples, “Why are you worried?” [He knew their hearts. He knew they were struggling with this issue of worry.] Verse 30, He says, “You are of little faith!” [Why? Because they were worrying. They weren’t trusting God.] Martha is a wonderful negative example of this in Luke 10:40,

Martha was distracted with all her preparations; and she came ... to ... [Jesus] and said, “Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to do all the serving alone? Then tell her to help me.” But the Lord answered and said to her, “Martha, Martha, you are worried and bothered about so many things;” [We often give in to the same temptation.]

Now notice in verse 25 what Jesus says we are not to be worried about, “... 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.” The word translated “life” here is the normal Greek word for “soul,” but the word is also used as it is here to refer to physical life. And of course, physical life is tied to our bodies so He mentions that as well. So, Jesus is saying, “Listen. Don’t worry about the things pertaining to your physical life, what you eat, what you drink, what you wear.” Spurgeon calls those three things “the trinity of worldly cares – food for the body, drink for the body, and shelter or decoration for the body.”

I want to give you a little assignment. This week, pay attention to the advertisements that you encounter, either in print or in whatever other medium. Pay attention to the advertisements. How many of them are geared to the food you eat, to the drink that you put into your bodies or to other things for the body. Jesus says don’t be worried about those things.

Now, for those listening to Jesus in the first century, this was shocking because many of Jesus’ disciples were poor members of an agrarian society. Their food right now depended on enough rain. The crops were often destroyed by locusts and fires and disease and winds off the desert. Most of their water supply was from shallow, hand-dug wells that quickly ran dry in times of drought. Most of the rivers were wadis that only had water in them. They were dry river beds that only had water when it rained during the rainy season a couple of times a year.

All of these people would have personally experienced hunger and dehydration. Famine and drought were constant realities. And in that culture, if you got sick, or you were injured, or you just got old, you couldn’t work, and very quickly you would find yourself without the basic necessities of life. And it was to people living in those conditions that Jesus says don’t worry.

We could add to Jesus’ list other necessities for sustaining physical life in our age. We might add things like a home to shelter our bodies, a car to transport our bodies, medical care to sustain our bodies. Jesus says stop worrying about those things necessary for your physical lives here.

So, what are those things for us? What do we worry about? Here are some different kinds of sinful worry that we engage in. Let me give you a little list.

First of all, we worry if our future needs will be met at all. As we look at the economic climate, as we look at the nation's economy, the specter of inflation, a potential stock market decline or crash, another possible war for our country, another great recession or depression, and for Christians the possibility, the looming possibility of coming persecution. We look at all of that, and we can easily begin to worry about whether our future needs will be met at all.

Secondly, we worry if our future needs will be met adequately in keeping with our desires. Will we have the quality of life we desire? Will we have the quality of food and drink and clothing and housing that, that we have and want to have?

We worry about our future health. Will we get cancer or have a stroke or some other debilitating disease or have heart disease or a heart attack? And if we get sick, will we have adequate medical care? And right now, am I being wise in how I'm caring for my health today to ensure my long-term health?

Can I just stop and say this is where a lot of unbelievers and Christians get into bizarre behavior, diets, and fads? Unfortunately, the church is filled with people who are hawking megavitamins and health potions and magic elixirs. Just drink this, and it'll revolutionize your physical health. Maybe I should eat no meat, or no sugar, or no fat, or no additives. Maybe only organic or no gluten. Or maybe I just shouldn't eat at all.

Fourthly, we worry about our personal safety, both our own and that of those we love.

Fifthly, we worry about how long we're going to live. Again, here is where reasonable care can easily become sinful worry. We ought to try in moderation to be good stewards of our health in terms of exercise and sleep and diet, but let's just be frank. For many people, physical exercise, and what they eat and don't eat, have become bizarre obsessions. It's nothing but worry disguised as a legitimate concern for health.

Now look at that list that I just gave you. Do you see the illusions that are hiding beneath the surface of those worries, the wrong thinking? Let me give you some illusions that are buried in those worries – the illusion that I can accurately know what's healthy and what's not with certainty. Really? Have you read any history? I am the one who truly provides for me and my

family. I can protect myself and those I love from danger. And if I exercise enough, and if I eat properly, through my own efforts I can prolong my life. I am the primary one responsible for my future. Listen. Those are all illusions, and Jesus is going to explain that to us as we work our way through this passage.

Obviously, you and I must be good stewards. If we are irresponsible, God may factor our irresponsibility into His sovereign plan that affects the length of our lives or our needs being met or not met. But if we are seeking to please Him, and if we are attempting to be reasonable stewards, Jesus says, “God will provide for our needs. God will sustain our lives.” If you want to avoid the dangers of materialism, here is the sinful pattern of thinking you must avoid at all costs. Stop worrying about your future needs. But how do we do that? Well, that’s for next week.

Let’s pray together.

Father, we bless You and thank You for Your Word. And yet, even as we study this, we ask for Your forgiveness. Forgive us for acting like we don’t have a heavenly Father.

Forgive us for acting like we don’t have a heavenly Father who knows our needs. And Father, forgive us for acting like we don’t have a heavenly Father who provides for all of His creation, who of course will provide for His own children.

Father, as we work our way through this passage, I pray that You would address the sin of worry, address our lack of faith, instruct us in who You are through the words of our Lord so that we may find You utterly and completely trustworthy with our future.

We pray in Jesus’ name. Amen.