

Worry Free

Living & Giving

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WORRY FREE LIVING AND GIVING

by
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Americans are facing multiple financial challenges. Maybe you heard about it.

How should Christians, churches, and faith-financed organizations respond? How should you respond? Jesus answered the questions in **Matthew 6**. He said, **“Do not worry” (v. 25)**. In **verse 31** He added, **“Do not worry.”** And just in case you missed it, he concluded, **“Do not worry” (v. 34)**. Is that a little surprising?

Worry and money are related. Notice the contextual connection. Jesus said, **“Do not lay up for yourselves treasure on earth . . . For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. . . . You cannot serve God and mammon [wealth, property¹]. Therefore I say to you, do not worry . . .” (vv. 19, 21, 24-25)**.

Your money and possessions can be treasures. The Greek word means “material things stored up.”² Treasures are personal; they are the possessions you value, they are things you love.

A financial meltdown may devalue and threaten your treasures. Yet Jesus said, “Don’t worry about your treasures.” That is easier to say than do. So, how can you avoid worrying about your treasures? Notice Jesus’ answer.

INSTEAD OF WORRYING, SAVE YOUR TREASURES IN HEAVEN (vv. 19-24)

The statement sounds pious, but is it practical? Is it possible to face a robust stack of bills and an anemic checkbook without worry? Our churches have no Bank of Heaven ATMs in the lobby. How can you save treasure in heaven?

How?

First, *consciously surrender your treasures to Jesus*. Tell Him, “Lord, you have blessed me with all of my possessions. They are Yours, entrusted to me. I surrender myself and my possessions to You. Help me use them as You will.”

Second, *use your treasures as God commands*. Money is not your master. Jesus is Lord of your treasures. He commanded you to give your “**tithes and offerings**” to your local church (**Mal. 3:8-10**). You can also invest some offerings in priority, Great Commission ministries like Northeastern Baptist College. In so doing, you will lay up treasure in heaven.

Third, *hold treasures loosely*. Make everything you have available to Him. You do not own anything you cannot give away; it owns you. I believe it was Corrie ten Boom who said, “Hold things loosely. It won’t hurt as much when the Heavenly Father pries your fingers off of them.” Give and live under His Lordship and you will invest in heaven.

Why?

Someone may ask, “Why would I want to do that?” Good question.

Treasures on earth are temporary (vv. 19-20). Moths and mice may eat them, age and decay may deteriorate them, and thieves may steal them. Treasures are unworthy of your love and devotion (v. 21). Trust the eternal God instead of your temporary treasures.

Treasures in heaven help to *draw your heart toward God*. Jesus said, “**For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also**” (v. 21). Your heart follows your treasures, not the other way around. Is your focus in heaven or on earth?

Treasures in heaven help to *open your mind to generosity*. Jesus used the physical to illustrate the spiritual. “**The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good** [healthy, generous³], **your whole body will be full of light**” (v. 22). Neurologists and eye surgeons now know that we do not see with our eyes; we see with our brains. Our eyes simply

direct light into our brains. Are you amazed that Jesus knew that? **“But if your eye is bad [unhealthy, evil, wicked⁴] your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!” (v. 23).** Note the spiritual application of the physical illustration. The Bible says an **“evil eye”** is greed (Deut. 15:7-9; Prov. 23:6-7; 28:22), and greed is idolatry (Col. 3:6). Loving and trusting treasures is worshiping a false god. In contrast, laying up treasures in heaven opens your mind to generosity and draws your heart toward the true God.

Treasures in heaven help to *submit your will to God*. **“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 [wealth, property]” (v.24).**

If your treasure is not in heaven, money will be your master, greed will motivate you, and treasures on earth will be your passion. What will happen when a major financial crisis comes roaring into your life? Your idol will topple! Panic will overwhelm. So, how can a Christian respond?

INSTEAD OF WORRYING, TRUST YOUR FATHER IN HEAVEN (vv. 25-34)

If you know Jesus as your Savior, God is your heavenly Father (John 1:12). Trust Him instead of worrying.

Why?

Trusting your Father is beneficial; worry is futile. Worry will not change anything. It will not add stature to your body or seconds to your life (Matt. 6:27), nor will it reduce your sorrows (v. 34). Adrian Rogers said, “Worry doesn’t take the sorrow out of tomorrow, it takes the strength out of today.”

Trusting your Father nurtures your faith; worry shrinks your faith. “Now if God so clothes the grass of the field . . . will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?” (v. 30).

Trusting your Father is obedience; worry is sin. Jesus commanded, **“Do not worry” (vv. 25, 31, 34).** Disobeying a command is sin. Are you obeying His command?

How?

You can take four practical steps toward worry free living and giving.

First, you can *trust your heavenly Father today*. You are your Father’s treasure (vv. 25-26). He responds with abundance (vv. 27-30; cf. Rom. 8:32). He knows and He will satisfy your needs (vv. 32-33). Trust Him.

Second, you can *focus on your Father’s priorities* (v. 33). Have faith in your Father and put Him first and He will meet your needs. You have no reason to worry.

Third, you can *embrace a satisfyingly simple lifestyle*. Jesus promised to meet your basic needs—food, drink, and clothing—not all of your wants. But do not worry; you will not be the loser (v. 33b). A lifestyle adjustment may help to free you from worry.

Fourth, you can *live by faith today* (v. 34). Your greatest financial challenge is not in your bank account, but in your mind and heart. No matter what happens to the economy, living and giving by faith will set you free from worry.

ENDNOTES

¹William Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature*, rev. and ed., Frederick William Danker, ed. and trans. William F. Arndt, F. Wilber Gingrich, and Frederick W. Danker, 3rd ed. (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2000), s.v., “μαμωνᾶς.”

²Ibid., s.v., “θησαυρός.”

³Ibid., s.v., “ἀπλοῦς.”

⁴Ibid., s.v., “πονηρός.”

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