

Our Heavenly Father

Matt 6:24-34

SS Lesson for 12/14/2025

Devotional Scriptures: Isa 40:27-31

OUTLINE

LESSON BACKGROUND AND KEY VERSE

Background from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary
Key Verse: Matt 6:34

MAJOR THEME ANALYSIS

TRUST AND SERVE THE FATHER (MATT 6:24-29)

Trust and don't worry about physical things (24-26)

Food and other physical things do not bring us nearer to God, only our faith (1 Cor 8:8)
Even if we were to work and obtain many physical things, they are meaningless in terms of eternity (Eccl 2:21-23)
We must realize that our human appetite is never satisfied (Eccl 6:7)
As Jesus said, we do not live on bread alone (Luke 4:4)
In our physical toil, we must remember what is the most important between it and the words of Jesus (Luke 10:41-42)
We needn't worry about physical things because God has promised to provide for His righteous people (Prov 10:3)

Trust knowing the true meaning of life (27)

It is the Holy Spirit who gives life to the spirit (John 6:63)
God says that those who want to save their life must lose it in Him (Matt 16:25-26)
Life is a loss without God (Phil 3:7-8)
Jesus is the life of which everyone who gets it must come through Him (John 14:6)
God controls life, not man (Daniel 5:23)

Trust and don't worry about financial things (28-29)

We must learn to trust God with our finances and be content with our financial situation (1 Tim 6:6-10)
Financial things will forsake us, but Jesus never will forsake us (Heb 13:5)
Be careful of greed, our life does not consist of abundance (Luke 12:15)
By trusting God, He promises to bless us beyond our capacity (Mal 3:10)
By trusting God, He promises to make us rich in all the right ways (2 Cor 9:11)

LIFE WITHOUT WORRY THROUGH FAITH IN THE FATHER (MATT 6:30-34)

Faith in God because He is the ultimate provider (30-32)

The same God who supplies our physical needs is the same one that supplies our salvation (2 Cor 9:10)
God knows what we need before we ask Him (Matt 6:8)
God is more than able to provide all things at all times (2 Cor 9:8)
All wealth and strength comes from God (1 Chron 29:12)

Faith in God through seeking His Kingdom (33)

Seeking spiritual things
God's word is like spiritual food and therefore we need to ingest it daily (Heb 5:12-14)
We need to trust God by casting all our anxieties on Him (1 Peter 5:7)
Trust assumes faith (Luke 8:25)
God's grace is more than sufficient for us (2 Cor 12:9)
We needn't worry because God will not allow any temptation more than we can bear (1 Cor 10:13)
We need to trust God because our competence is only in Him (2 Cor 3:5)
In our time of need, we need to approach the throne of God (Heb 4:16)

Seeking heavenly value versus earthly value

Earthly things have no value because regardless of the amount accumulated, others will eventually reap the benefit (Ps 39:6)
Heavenly value is deliverance from eternal death whereas earthly value is worthless (Prov 11:4)
Heavenly values result in godly wisdom and understanding (Prov 16:16)
Earthly values are like chasing after the wind (Eccl 2:26)
Earthly values are never satisfying (Eccl 5:10)
Contentment is one of the virtues of heavenly values (Heb 13:5)
Remember that our citizenship is in heaven, not on earth (Phil 3:20)
Our hope is stored in Heaven (Col 1:5)
Our mind should be set on heavenly things, not only earthly things (Col 3:2)
Earthly values are uncertain, but heavenly ones have a Divine promise (1 Tim 6:17-19)

Faith in God regardless of troubles (34)

We need to enjoy daily life because we don't know what the next day will bring (Eccl 3:22)
We must only think of today because life is too short to worry about tomorrow (James 4:13-14)
Every man's days are full of trouble (Job 14:1)
Jesus showed us how to think of provisions and life – day by day (Matt 6:11)
It is only through God's great love and mercy that we are able to see another day (Lam 3:22-23)

CONCLUSION AND OTHER THOUGHTS

COMMENTARY THOUGHTS FROM J. HAMPTON KEATHLEY, III

Where is Your Trust? Commands Against Worldly Anxiety (Matthew 6:25-34)

Why it is Wrong to Worry

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS FROM THE NIV STANDARD LESSON COMMENTARY

Lesson Background and Key Verse

Background from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary

Today's lesson text comes from a section of Jesus' teaching called the "Sermon on the Mount" (Matthew 5-7). In his record of Jesus' life, Matthew sometimes arranges the material in topical rather than chronological order. The Sermon on the Mount is a case in point. It is located early in Matthew's Gospel, but it was actually delivered during the first half of the second year of Jesus' ministry. Some commentators have called this second year of ministry Jesus' "year of popularity" because large crowds gathered wherever he went (Matthew 4:25). Matthew 6 begins with Jesus' warning about hypocrisy as one serves God in various ways. Then come instructions on prayer, fasting, and priorities. Today's lesson text continues Jesus' teaching on living a life that depends on a loving heavenly Father's gracious provision of all our needs. Luke 12:22-31 and 16:13 are parallel texts.

Key Verse: Matt 6:34

Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

Major Theme Analysis

(Scriptural Text from the New King James Version; cross-references from the NIV)

Trust and Serve the Father (Matt 6:24-29)

24 "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.

25 "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes?

26 Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?

27 Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?

28 "And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin.

29 Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these.

Trust and don't worry about physical things (24-26)

Food and other physical things do not bring us nearer to God, only our faith (1 Cor 8:8)

But food does not bring us near to God; we are no worse if we do not eat, and no better if we do.

Even if we were to work and obtain many physical things, they are meaningless in terms of eternity (Eccl 2:21-23)

21 For a man may do his work with wisdom, knowledge and skill, and then he must leave all he owns to someone who has not worked for it. This too is meaningless and a great misfortune. 22 What does a man get for all the toil and anxious striving with which he labors under the sun? 23 All his days his work is pain and grief; even at night his mind does not rest. This too is meaningless.

We must realize that our human appetite is never satisfied (Eccl 6:7)

All man's efforts are for his mouth, yet his appetite is never satisfied.

As Jesus said, we do not live on bread alone (Luke 4:4)

Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone.'"

In our physical toil, we must remember what is the most important between it and the words of Jesus (Luke 10:41-42)

41 "Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, 42 but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her."

We needn't worry about physical things because God has promised to provide for His righteous people (Prov 10:3)

The LORD does not let the righteous go hungry but he thwarts the craving of the wicked.

Trust knowing the true meaning of life (27)

It is the Holy Spirit who gives life to the spirit (John 6:63)

63 The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life.

God says that those who want to save their life must lose it in Him (Matt 16:25-26)

25 For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it. 26 What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?

Life is a loss without God (Phil 3:7-8)

7 But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. 8 What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ

Jesus is the life of which everyone who gets it must come through Him (John 14:6)

6 Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

God controls life, not man (Daniel 5:23)

23 Instead, you have set yourself up against the Lord of heaven. You had the goblets from his temple brought to you, and you and your nobles, your wives and your concubines drank wine from them. You praised the gods of silver and gold, of bronze, iron, wood and stone, which cannot see or hear or understand. But you did not honor the God who holds in his hand your life and all your ways.

Trust and don't worry about financial things (28-29)

We must learn to trust God with our finances and be content with our financial situation (1 Tim 6:6-10)

6 But godliness with contentment is great gain. 7 For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. 8 But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. 9 People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. 10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.

Financial things will forsake us, but Jesus never will forsake us (Heb 13:5)

Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you."

Be careful of greed, our life does not consist of abundance (Luke 12:15)

Then he said to them, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."

By trusting God, He promises to bless us beyond our capacity (Mal 3:10)

Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the LORD Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it.

By trusting God, He promises to make us rich in all the right ways (2 Cor 9:11)

You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.

Life Without Worry through Faith in the Father (Matt 6:30-34)

30 If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?
31 So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'
32 For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them.
33 But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.
34 Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

Faith in God because He is the ultimate provider (30-32)

The same God who supplies our physical needs is the same one that supplies our salvation (2 Cor 9:10)

Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness.

God knows what we need before we ask Him (Matt 6:8)

Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

God is more than able to provide all things at all times (2 Cor 9:8)

And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.

All wealth and strength comes from God (1 Chron 29:12)

Wealth and honor come from you; you are the ruler of all things. In your hands are strength and power to exalt and give strength to all.

Faith in God through seeking His Kingdom (33)

Seeking spiritual things

God's word is like spiritual food and therefore we need to ingest it daily (Heb 5:12-14)

12 In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! 13 Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. 14 But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.

We need to trust God by casting all our anxieties on Him (1 Peter 5:7)
Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

Trust assumes faith (Luke 8:25)

25 "Where is your faith?" he asked his disciples. In fear and amazement they asked one another, "Who is this? He commands even the winds and the water, and they obey him."

God's grace is more than sufficient for us (2 Cor 12:9)

But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."
Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me.

We needn't worry because God will not allow any temptation more than we can bear (1 Cor 10:13)

No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.

We need to trust God because our competence is only in Him (2 Cor 3:5)

Not that we are competent in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but our competence comes from God.

In our time of need, we need to approach the throne of God (Heb 4:16)

Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

Seeking heavenly value versus earthly value

Earthly things have no value because regardless of the amount accumulated, others will eventually reap the benefit (Ps 39:6)

Man is a mere phantom as he goes to and fro: He bustles about, but only in vain; he heaps up wealth, not knowing who will get it.

Heavenly value is deliverance from eternal death whereas earthly value is worthless (Prov 11:4)

Wealth is worthless in the day of wrath, but righteousness delivers from death.

Heavenly values result in godly wisdom and understanding (Prov 16:16)

How much better to get wisdom than gold, to choose understanding rather than silver!

Earthly values are like chasing after the wind (Eccl 2:26)

To the man who pleases him, God gives wisdom, knowledge and happiness, but to the sinner he gives the task of gathering and storing up wealth to hand it over to the one who pleases God. This too is meaningless, a chasing after the wind.

Earthly values are never satisfying (Eccl 5:10)

Whoever loves money never has money enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with his income. This too is meaningless.

Contentment is one of the virtues of heavenly values (Heb 13:5)

5 Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you."

Remember that our citizenship is in heaven, not on earth (Phil 3:20)

But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ,

Our hope is stored in Heaven (Col 1:5)

the faith and love that spring from the hope that is stored up for you in heaven and that you have already heard about in the word of truth, the gospel

Our mind should be set on heavenly things, not only earthly things (Col 3:2)
Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

Earthly values are uncertain, but heavenly ones have a Divine promise (1 Tim 6:17-19)

17 Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. 18 Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. 19 In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.

Faith in God regardless of troubles (34)

We need to enjoy daily life because we don't know what the next day will bring (Eccl 3:22)

22 So I saw that there is nothing better for a man than to enjoy his work, because that is his lot. For who can bring him to see what will happen after him?

We must only think of today because life is too short to worry about tomorrow (James 4:13-14)

13 Now listen, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money." 14 Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes.

Every man's days are full of trouble (Job 14:1)

"Man born of woman is of few days and full of trouble.

Jesus showed us how to think of provisions and life – day by day (Matt 6:11)

Give us today our daily bread.

It is only through God's great love and mercy that we are able to see another day (Lam 3:22-23)

22 Because of the LORD's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. 23 They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.

Conclusion and Other Thoughts

Commentary Thoughts from J. Hampton Keathley, III

Where is Your Trust? Commands Against Worldly Anxiety (Matthew 6:25-34)

Jesus Christ made it clear that a mark of true spirituality was a right attitude toward wealth. The mark of godliness or the mark of a righteous man is his preoccupation with God and heavenly treasure rather than earthly treasure.

Scripture has a tremendous amount to say about money or material possessions. Sixteen of thirty-eight parables of Jesus deal with money. One out of every ten verses in the New Testament deal with that subject. Scripture has 500 verses on prayer, less than 500 verses on faith, but over 2000 verses on the subject of money. This is obviously important, but why? Because a person's attitude or bearing toward money is so determinative on his relationship with God, on the fulfillment of his purpose in this life, and on the character of his life.

Matthew 6:19-34 forms a complete section dealing with the subject of materialism and its impact on our relationship with God. Verses 19-24 stressed the pursuit of heavenly treasure in single-hearted devotion to God.

Now with verses 25-34 the Lord makes application. The Father will take care of us. Our primary responsibility is to trust God and give Him implicit, complete, whole-hearted devotion that is free from anxiety about the details of life. Our Father in heaven, who loves us, will take care of us.

The heart of the message of the passage is "stop worrying" or "stop being anxious" over the details of life like food, drink, and clothing. This is stressed three times: cf. vss. 25, 31, and 34. These items are illustrations of the details of life that so entangle us. Please note that these are commands. It is not an option. This is just as binding on us as "you shall not murder" or "you shall not commit adultery."

The first command of verse 25 is equivalent to “stop worrying.” The other two mean, “never be worrying.”

The Greek word for “anxious,” *merimnao*, means “to be troubled with cares, to be anxious, worried.” In its root idea, *merimnao* means “to be drawn in two different directions, to be distracted, divided.” A good illustration of this idea is found in the reception at Bethany where we find Mary sitting at the feet of Christ to hear the Word and Martha who was distracted with all her serving, was “worried (*merimnao*) and bothered (troubled) about so many things” (Luke 10:40-41).

When we are worried and troubled about the cares of this life, we become divided and distracted from devotion to God and from what should be our primary focus and pursuit.

The KJV’s “take no thought” (Matt. 6:25) is confusing and implies an unplanned disregard for future or even daily needs. Scripture teaches us we are to pray for daily needs, we are to work for our necessities, and we are even to plan for the future. The emphasis and problem here is anxious concern and preoccupation with material things because such will divide our allegiance and choke out the pursuit of God (vs. 33).

Five times the Lord employs provocative questions to show how wrong and unreasonable it is to worry about the details of life like “what you shall eat, or what you shall drink” (see the five question in vss. 25, 26, 27, 28, & 30).

This passage gives at least five reasons why it is wrong to be guilty of worldly anxiety or anxious concern over the cares of the world.

But why shouldn’t we be concerned with these issues? What’s wrong with it? The main body of the passage is devoted to setting forth five reasons why we must not be anxious.

Why it is Wrong to Worry

Matthew 6:25 For this reason I say to you, do not be anxious for your life, as to what you shall eat, or what you shall drink; nor for your body, as to what you shall put on. Is not life more than food, and the body than clothing?

(1) It is UNFAITHFUL because God is to be our master and because it distracts from the pursuit of heavenly treasures (6:25a).

“For this reason I say to you” takes us back to the preceding context. Since (1) heavenly values far exceed earthly concerns, (2) since you cannot serve two masters, God and materialism, and (3) because of the awesome consequences of an evil eye (cf. 6:23 with Prov. 28:22), this command against worldly cares is mandatory. Stop being overly anxious about worldly concerns, about the basic details of life because it has extremely destructive consequences.

Preoccupation with food, clothing, etc., will always divide our allegiance and distracts us from the pursuit of heavenly treasures. It causes us to ignore God and His Word and His purposes. **It makes us unfaithful to God who is our master.** Compare Mark 4:19, and 1 Timothy 6:9.

(2) It is UNREASONABLE because of the makeup of man (6:25b).

This question in verse 25, according to Greek grammar, demands the answer, “yes.” The question is directed against the spirit of the materialism in a world that lives as though the physical is all there is to life.

Jesus mentions three necessities (food, drink, and clothing) all of which are related to the body. Are we just a body or are we more than a body? Within the body is a spiritual being. The body dies, but the inner man, the soul and spirit goes on living. If saved, he lives with God, if unsaved he exists in hell and will be eternally separated from God.

There is a side to man that is much more important than the physical, yet taking care of the body has always been a common obsession with men. We pamper the body, decorate it, exercise it, protect it from disease and pain, slender it, build it and the whole nine yards, and when balanced properly, this is not wrong. But caring for the physical becomes wrong when it gets out of balance, when it becomes our purpose for living, when we become preoccupied with our bodies and the details of life so that we act as though life consisted only in food, drink, and clothing.

Listen to the confession of Erma Bombeck:

I did as I was told. I was fussy about my peanut butter, fought cavities, became depressed over yellow wax buildup. ... I was responsible for my husband’s underarms being protected for twelve hours. I was responsible for making sure my children had a well-balanced breakfast. I alone was carrying the burden for my dog’s shiny coat. ... We believed if we converted to all the products that marched before our eyes we could be the best, the

sexiest, the freshest, the cleanest, the thinnest, the smartest and the first in our block to be regular. Purchasing for the entire family was the most important thing I had to do.⁷

In response to this confession of the humorous Erma Bombeck, Tom Sine writes:

In our upwardly mobile lifestyles, being good consumers is for many of us the most important thing we do. Shopping has become a major leisure-time activity for many. Increasingly, our sense of identity and self-worth is integrally connected to what we buy. We have come to really believe we are what we own—and that the more we own, the more we are. Our entire view of the better future is seen largely in materialistic terms of what we consume.

The folks on Madison Avenue have done a remarkable job of tantalizing us and persuading us to scale their illusory peaks and buy into their empty dreams. They have tried to convince us that an ever-increasing level of consumerism is synonymous with happiness. And they constantly seek to convince us we have new needs that we didn't know we had and that can only be satisfied by the new products they offer. As a consequence, when they tell us to "move on up," "grab the gusto," and "have it our way," most of us obediently begin to lockstep up their mountain together—non-Christian and Christian alike.⁸

When we pursue this course, we have not only lost sight of the eternal, but we have lost sight of the basic makeup of man as created in the image of God and we have bought into the idea of a secular humanist world that man is nothing more than the product of time plus chance, nothing more than a highly evolved animal who only goes around once and needs to get all the gusto he can.

By comparison, how much time do we spend on our spiritual food and drink and on our spiritual clothing? (cf. Isa. 55:1-3; Rom. 13:14; Rev. 3:17-18; Eph. 4:22f; 6:10f)

(3) It is UNNECESSARY because of the much more care of our Father (6:26-30).

The basic thrust of these verses is that based on three object lessons or illustrations taken from God's creation, we have absolutely no reason to worry because God, through faith in Christ, is our personal and heavenly Father who, with a Father's heart, cares intimately for each of us with an infinite love far beyond any human father (cf. 6:11).

Object Lesson # 1: The birds of the air and its object lesson about food (6:26)

Here the Lord says in effect, learn the lesson of God's care for the birds. When God created, He assumed responsibility to provide for His creation. God has not abandoned His creatures. Well, if God has done that for even the birds, how much more will He not do for us whom He created in His image and who become His spiritual children by faith in Christ. Two things to keep in mind: (1) As human beings we have a special place in His plan above the animal kingdom. This is clearly evident in Genesis 1-2. And (2) as believers in Christ we stand in relation to Him as His children, sealed in His Beloved, the Lord Jesus Christ (cf. Rom. 8:31).

Object Lesson # 2: The longevity of life and question concerning man's inability to add to his life's span (6:27)

This question deals with the futility of worry. Can worry lengthen your life? No! In fact worry can shorten it.

Object Lesson # 3: The lilies of the field and the object lesson about clothing (6:28-30)

The first illustration dealt with the animal kingdom. This deals with the plant kingdom, and applies the same principle to demonstrate God's loving concern for His people. God clothes the field with the beauty of flowers so that they surpass even Solomon in all his glory, and these flowers are here today and gone tomorrow. Now if God does that for His plant kingdom, how much more will He not do for His children who have eternal purposes in the kingdom of God.

But it's imperative that we note the concluding words! When He says, "O men of little faith," the Lord puts His finger right smack on the issue.

First, He is showing the main reason for worry is a lack of faith in both the worth and trustworthiness of God. It is really a matter of independent living, of seeking to handle life and find happiness by our own strategies of self-management.

Second, He is reminding us that worry over the cares of this life is not a trivial sin. When we worry we are acting as though our heavenly Father is untrustworthy in His word and promises, that we do not believe He is enough, and that He will really care for us. We are showing we really are not living by faith.

This is the real heart of the matter. Little Faith. We talk about loving God, how much He means to us, about heaven and God's sovereignty, but then we live as though none of this really exists when the cares of the world or the details of life draw us away from the pursuit of God and heavenly treasures.

Verses 31-34 give us the Lord's conclusion and the final application of these facts on our lives. Note the "then" in verse 31. This is *oun*, a particle of consequence, and means "therefore, wherefore, or then." The idea is simply, "In the light of God's care and the issue of faith, the following is essential."

(4) It is UNBECOMING because of our testimony as God's children (6:31-33).

***The Command Repeated* (6:31)**

For emphasis to drive the issue home, the command against anxiety is repeated, only now it is followed with a fact to consider, a promise to know and claim, another command, the ultimate issue, and another promise to believe and live by.

***A Fact To Consider* (6:32a)**

The word "seek" is an intensive form, *epizeteo*, a double compound verb that means not merely "to search or seek," but "to search after" stressing direction toward an object. It has the connotation of "run or strive after or toward some object." The unbelieving world is constantly and striving after all these things.

The meaning of "seek" plus the present tense of habitual or continuous action brings out or portrays the rat race of the world in its pursuit of the details of life in its endless dither and struggle of daily living. But with that struggle is a depressing sense of going nowhere, like a dog chasing his tail, or a gerbil on its monotonous wheel.

This pursuit of the details of life characterizes the unbelieving world that eagerly seeks to accumulate, but it does so because the things it seeks like position, power, pleasure, possessions, financial security, etc., are the only security and source of happiness it has. The world is without hope because it knows not God. It has no God in whom it can trust.

Application: For the child of God to live like the world which has no faith or hope in a personal relationship with God through Christ is truly unbecoming to the child of God whose life should be anchored in three marvelous truths: (a) the finished work of Christ, rejoicing in the fact of our salvation from sin, (b) the eternal treasures and the heavenly hope kept by the power of God to be revealed at the return of Christ (cf. 1 Pet. 1:3f), and (c) the fact we stand under the omniscient and omnipotent care of a loving heavenly Father.

Anxious concern over the details of life, which distracts, divides ones attention, allegiance, and service to the Lord, hurts the testimony of the children of God as those who have infinitely more than the world has to offer. We have a heavenly Father who knows, cares, and has taken personal responsibility for His children.

Our heavenly Father knows our needs, whatever they may be and will supply (Phil. 4:19). Knowing this, we should relax and put first things first. So ...

***A Command To Obey* (vs. 33a)**

"But seek ye first ..."

"But" is a conjunction of contrast. In contrast to a world without God and its mad search for happiness in the details of life, there must be a completely different priority for believers.

"Seek," the Greek, *zeteo*, means "to attempt to do something, to endeavor, go about, to inquire after, or desire." It implies diligence, effort, and focus, a preoccupation with the object sought, i.e., the things of God.

Note also that the verb is in the continuous present tense. This must become the goal and pattern of our lives. But by implication there is the warning in this of the ever present pull of the world to get us preoccupied with other things, to distract, divide, and draw us away from the Lord.

"Seek first" drives this home as a matter of the highest priority. Why? Because of what is at stake, eternal treasures and the experience of God's righteousness versus the loss of those treasures and moral degeneracy. When the pursuit of earthly treasures becomes the priority, moral breakdown in society is never far behind.

What are we to seek? The divine priority consists of two parts: God's kingdom and His righteousness and the two are always related as root is to fruit.

The word "kingdom" means rule, dominion. To seek God's kingdom is:

To seek His sovereign rule, His will, and authority in one's life.

It is to promote those things that will produce the same in those around us. It means to promote, support, and work for the edification and growth of believers and evangelism and outreach of the lost.

We also seek His kingdom when we yearn for His coming kingdom with the return of the King and live accordingly, with a view to heavenly treasures and the glory of God.

We are also to seek His righteousness. This in essence means Christlike character. But please note two things: (1) When God is in control of our lives we will experience His righteousness through the ministry of the Spirit. And (2) righteousness is to be a priority objective rather than the cares of a world which has its heart fixed on material possessions. WHY? Remember the principle? Outlook (our objectives) determine output. Where your treasure is there will your heart be also. If we replace God's righteousness with desires for the physical blessings of the world like position, power, possessions, etc., we lose God's control. We become the slaves of mammon. Mammon becomes our god and that always results, eventually, in unrighteousness—in fraud, in murder, in neglect of family, in a loss of concern for others at the expense of the almighty dollar.

A Promise To Claim (vs. 33b)

The command to "seek first" is followed with a promise, "and all these things shall be added to you."

Note the contrast: In verse 32 we have, "for all these things the Gentiles seek," now we have for those whose priority is God's kingdom and righteousness, "all these things shall be added to you."

There is a two-fold emphasis and promise:

- This is a promise that God will meet the needs of the believers if they will trust Him and put first things first. He has promised to supply all our needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus and to do exceedingly above all that we could ask or think (Phil. 4:19; Eph. 3:20).
- There is in this the promise of the future blessings and glories of both the millennial and eternal reigns of the King. All the physical blessings of the millennium will be forthcoming. We may suffer in this life, experience hardships and pain for the king, but it will be only temporary. Ahead are the blessings of the future kingdom.

(5) It is UNWISE because of the nature of today and the nature of tomorrow (6:34).

Jesus tells us, "do not be anxious for tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself." This is not a mandate against planning nor the careless philosophy of the hedonist who lives only for his present enjoyment, "live, eat, and be merry, for tomorrow we die."

It is right to make some plans for the future as several passages in Scripture teach (Luke 14:28; 2 Cor. 12:14; 1 Tim. 5:8; and Prov. 21:5; 27:23-24). But it is wrong to become preoccupied with it and to go to extremes, to think we have to have enough today for the rest of our lives before we can be secure. The child of God knows that tomorrow will take care of itself because it is in the Father's sovereign hands (Ps. 103:19; 115:3; 112:7).

"Someone has said that the average person is crucifying himself between two thieves: the regrets of yesterday and the worries about tomorrow."⁹

Jesus said, "each day has enough trouble of its own." The point is that worrying about tomorrow robs us of the ability to handle the potentials, blessings, and problems of today. We can't concentrate on meeting the temptations, trials, opportunities, and struggles of today if we are uptight about tomorrow.

We must each learn to live one day at a time. God promises His grace for tomorrow when tomorrow comes, but He only gives His grace one day at a time. Worrying about tomorrow cannot change tomorrow, but it can ruin today.

(Adapted from URL:<https://bible.org/article/perspectives-faith-kingdom-god-matthew-619-34>)

Concluding Thoughts from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary

All followers of Jesus can demonstrate the difference that living in the trust of a loving heavenly Father can make. Each of us has a sphere of influence that includes people to whom God seems far away. In some cases, this distance can become magnified during the Christmas season for various reasons. A change in people's understanding of God may not occur overnight through our efforts. Still, with patience and prayer, perhaps we can use the illustration in the Lesson Introduction, "pulling back the curtain" and helping people see how much their Father really does love them. In this season, when we celebrate how God came near in a special way, perhaps in some small way, you can show someone around you, through your simple acts of kindness, that their Father has not forgotten them.