

The Way of Jesus: A Better Way to Be Human

Part 5: How to Stop Worrying About the Future... Jesus' Answer to Anxiety

Matthew 6:19-34

Summary: With Jesus, we can overcome anxiety and rely on God instead of money or success.

Main Ideas:

No matter how much we secure... it never quite feels like enough.

What we rely on to secure our future will either give us life... or steal it.

The Way of Jesus replaces worry with trust by changing what we rely on.

Treasure: What we rely on to give us the life we want.

Your treasure trains your heart.

Worry is the result of relying on the wrong treasure.

Faith is a daily and practical reliance on the love, care, and power of God.

When our reliance shifts from treasure to God, worry begins to lose its grip.

Our worry reveals our reliance.

When we rely on the love, care, and power of God... there's nothing left to worry about.

Invitation:

ASK: What are my top 3 worries?

READ: Philippians 4:6-7. Once a day this week.

PRAY: With gratitude.

Transcript:

IN: Let me ask you a question: What would it take for you to feel completely secure about your future?

- A certain amount of money in the bank?
- A paid-off house?
- A stable government?
- Healthy kids?
- A guaranteed retirement?

If you could just lock those things in... then you could finally relax.

But here's the problem. **No matter how much we secure... it never quite feels like enough.**

And that's why worry is so common.

Because deep down we know something uncomfortable: We can't actually control our future.

WE: When we look at our world, our families, the economy, politics, global tensions, even our own bodies, worry feels like the most logical response.

Because we don't have any control over the situation.

And when we realize that, we start trying to create a sense of control.

- With money we work harder and save more, hoping it will secure the future.
- With our kids we try to manage every detail of their lives.
- With our nation people grow more political and more angry, convinced that if their side wins everything will be okay.
- With our health we try to control diets and habits to prevent what we can't actually control.

We think control will give us security.

So we rely on whatever we think will help us control the future

And that's the danger.

- Because... **What we rely on to secure our future will either give us life... or steal it.**

In this series, we're discovering that the Way of Jesus isn't just about being more moral... it's an entirely new way to be human.

Jesus has challenged how we deal with anger, enemies, and approval... and today, he'll show us how to face worry

The Way of Jesus replaces worry with trust by changing what we rely on.

Important Note: I'm not minimizing real, clinical anxiety or mental health struggles.

- God has provided counselors, doctors, and a community to help us, and seeking help is wise.

But Jesus is addressing something deeper that touches all of us: what we rely on for security.

GOD: Jesus knew our tendency to worry.

And he also knew one of the main tools we use to create a sense of control... Treasure

So, in his teaching about the Kingdom of Heaven, he says...

Matthew 6:19 NLT Don't store up treasures here on earth, where moths eat them and rust destroys them, and where thieves break in and steal.

What does Jesus mean by treasure? It's not just money.

Treasure: What we rely on to give us the life we want.

- Money/reputation/power/comfort/security

In the ancient world storing treasure seemed wise.

- People often buried jars of coins hoping it would protect their future.
- And today people are still finding those jars of treasure... buried long ago, never used.

- The owner is gone. The treasure remained.
- All that effort... and it didn't secure anything in the end.

Jesus says earthly treasure is unreliable.

- Instead of bringing peace, it often creates more anxiety.
- Not only do we worry about not having enough... now we worry about losing what we have.

And Jesus isn't condemning planning or savings... **The issue is reliance.**

When your security is wrapped up in your money... how often do you check the account balance just to feel okay?

- And if the number drops... suddenly your peace drops too.

How do you feel when you actually need to use your emergency fund for its real purpose?

- Suddenly the thing that was supposed to make you feel secure... makes you feel anxious.
- It's a vicious cycle that never satisfies.

But, Jesus isn't saying we shouldn't store treasure.

- He's saying we should store it in the right place.

Matthew 6:20 NLT Store your treasures in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and thieves do not break in and steal.

Jesus says... invest your life in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Because what you invest your life in will shape what you love.

Jesus explains... **Matthew 6:21 NLT Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be.**

We usually assume... "My heart decides what I value, so that's where I put my treasure."

But Jesus says the opposite... **Your treasure trains your heart.**

What you consistently invest in becomes what you care about most.

Then he says something interesting...

Matthew 6:22-23 Your eye is like a lamp that provides light for your body. When your eye is healthy, your whole body is filled with light. But when your eye is unhealthy, your whole body is filled with darkness. And if the light you think you have is actually darkness, how deep that darkness is!

Your "eye" represents your focus... what you fix your attention on.

- What we focus on becomes the lens through which we see life.

If your focus is healthy, fixed on God and his Kingdom, your life fills with light.

But if your focus is fixed on temporary security, your life becomes clouded with darkness.

Misplaced treasure distorts how we see everything.

- Suddenly life feels fragile.
- And our thoughts get consumed by “what if.”

And eventually, we end up serving whatever we rely on.

Matthew 6:24 NLT *No one can serve two masters. For you will hate one and love the other; you will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and be enslaved to money.*

He doesn't only mean anger or hostility.

- He's describing apathy... neglect, indifference, tuning out or refusing to obey.
- In comparison to our true master, the other is simply ignored.

We will either rely on our treasure... or rely on God.

- And whichever one we rely on will shape our entire life.

That's why the very next thing Jesus says is:

Matthew 6:25-27 NLT *That is why I tell you not to worry about everyday life—whether you have enough food and drink, or enough clothes to wear. Isn't life more than food, and your body more than clothing? Look at the birds. They don't plant or harvest or store food in barns, for your heavenly Father feeds them. And aren't you far more valuable to him than they are? Can all your worries add a single moment to your life?*

See, worry isn't the root issue.

Worry is the result of relying on the wrong treasure.

When we rely on things that can be taken away... we worry they'll be taken away.

- But when we rely on God... the pressure lifts.

Jesus points to birds.

A bird's life is so much less secure than ours, but they aren't building barns and banks... they wake up, go eat some bugs, enjoy the view, and go home, and live the life God has for them.

Birds still work.

They still search for food.

But they don't build barns and store up security for ten years from now.

And God feeds them.

If God cares for birds, how much more will he care for you?

Then Jesus says go take a walk and smell the flowers...

Matthew 6:28-30 NLT *And why worry about your clothing? Look at the lilies of the field and how they grow. They don't work or make their clothing, yet Solomon in all his glory was not dressed as beautifully as they are. And if God cares so wonderfully for wildflowers that are here today and thrown into the fire tomorrow, he will certainly care for you. Why do you have so little faith?*

The care God gives to the beauty of nature (PNW) is proof that we can have faith in God's care for us...

In a sense, nature trusts the rhythms God has given it... life/death/rebirth/slow... but creates perfect ecosystem...

That is what life in the Kingdom of Heaven looks like... actually LIVING by faith/trust

Faith is a daily and practical reliance on the love, care, and power of God.

And Jesus concludes...

Matthew 6:31-32 NLT *So don't worry about these things, saying, 'What will we eat? What will we drink? What will we wear?' These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers, but your heavenly Father already knows all your needs.*

People who think they are on their own are dominated by worry.

- That's the default setting of humanity.

Jesus came to show us that we're not on our own...

- We don't have to rely on things that are so unreliable... including ourselves.

YOU: So how do we actually live this way?

Matthew 6:33 NLT *Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.*

Be seeking... Reliance on God isn't a one-time decision. It's a daily choice about where we put our trust.

Seeking the Kingdom means investing our lives in what matters to God... his justice, his mercy, his love in the world.

- And when our reliance shifts from treasure to God, worry begins to lose its grip.

This doesn't mean God guarantees us an easy or affluent life. But it does mean he knows exactly what we truly need, spiritually, physically, and relationally, and he is faithful to care for us in ways that shape us for his Kingdom.

So what keeps you up at night...

- What fills your thoughts...
- What you keep trying to control...

What are you worried about?

- That's usually where we've placed our treasure.
- Because our worry reveals our reliance.

And Jesus says... Instead of relying on things that fade, fluctuate, and fail... we can rely on the love, care, and power of God.

So this week **ASK:** What are my top 3 worries?

And **READ:** Philippians 4:6-7. Once a day this week.

Philippians 4:6-6 NLT *Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.*

Then **PRAY:** with gratitude.

And we can trust him because Jesus has already proven his love.

Our greatest security is found in Jesus' work on the cross, securing our place in the Kingdom both now and forever.

If he was willing to give his life for our greatest need... what other need would he refuse to care for?

WE: And listen... Jesus never asks us to trust him with the rest of our lives.

He asks us to trust him with today.

Matthew 6:34 NLT *So don't worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today's trouble is enough for today.*

You don't have to carry the weight of the future.

- Just trust God with today.

Today you can rely on the love, care, and power of God.

Today you can seek his Kingdom.

Today you can let go of trying to control everything.

And when we rely on God like that... something changes.

- Worry begins to lose its grip.

Suddenly, we're free.

- Free to love people.
- Free to give generously.
- Free to enjoy the life God has given us.

That's the life Jesus calls the Kingdom of Heaven.

When we rely on the love, care, and power of God... there's nothing left to worry about.