Matthew: The Kingdom of Heaven

Matthew 6:19-34 | Seek First The Kingdom

→ Survey: Let's understand the background and context of the passage.

What are you bringing with you from this life to the next? Egyptian Pharaohs were known to store their many treasures in their tombs, but Jesus makes it clear that we either store up treasures on earth or in heaven - we can't have both. Many of us know this to be true, yet, our lives often demonstrate otherwise. We worry about what we have, or what we do, or where we'll be in the future. We get consumed by our grades, finances, relationships, self-image, plans, and so many other things. It's not to say those things don't matter, but we often begin to treat them as their own gods. As we finish Matthew 6 tonight, we will learn from Jesus that it is truly possible to not worry about those things.

Remember that Jesus is talking to a crowd on the side of a mountain, teaching them what it means to be Kingdom people. These people are to reflect the Kingdom of Heaven, which is full of life, love, sacrifice, and all things good and perfect. In the past few studies, Jesus taught that sin (missing the mark of perfection) isn't just the bad actions that we commit, but begins with our heart posture. He showed us how anger is the root of murder, and lust is the root of adultery. Though we may avoid certain actions, we are still subject to judgment when our hearts are in the wrong place. Even when we do righteous actions, like giving, praying, or fasting, our hearts can be in the wrong place. It's possible to do all the right things and still miss the heart of the Kingdom of Heaven. Kingdom people are supposed to show the world there is another way to live.

As followers of Jesus, we are called to be a light to this dark world. And a great way to reflect this is by being unworried people. Is this really possible? Let's see what Jesus has to say in Matthew 6.

Read: Matthew 6:19-34 (NIV)

→ Observe: Let's take a close look at what the text is saying.

1. What happens to earthly treasures (v. 19)? How are heavenly treasures different (v. 20)?
2. What follows your treasure according to Jesus (v. 21)?
3. What is the difference between healthy and unhealthy eyes (v. 22-23)?
4. Can we have multiple masters (v. 24)? Why not? What specifically does Jesus name?
5. What does Jesus say to not worry about (v. 25)?
6. What example does Jesus give about why they shouldn't worry about food (v. 26)? What contrast does Jesus make about the birds and the people listening?
7. What example does Jesus give next about clothing to help them understand (v. 28)? Who does Jesus contrast the flowers with (v. 29)?
8. What do pagans focus on (v. 31-32) and how is this different from followers of Jesus (v. 33)?
9. What results from first seeking the Father's kingdom and his righteousness (v. 33)?
10. How does Jesus summarize the main point he's making (v. 34)?

→ *Interpret: Let's seek to understand the meaning of this text in its original context.*

1. What are some examples of earthly treasures? Is Jesus saying having earthly treasures like money is bad? Why does the place in which we store treasures matter? How do verses 21-24 help us understand the point Jesus is making?

2. Does God care that people have needs, like food and clothes? How do the examples of the birds (v. 26-27) and flowers (v. 28-30) help us understand? What does Jesus want the audience to hear about their own lives in these examples? Who are the birds and flowers relying on?

3. What gain is there in worrying according to Jesus (v. 27, 34)? How is 'not worrying' a mark of someone that truly serves one master - God alone? What is the solution to worrying (v. 33)?

→ *Apply: Let's explore where the text intersects with our lives and our world.*

1. What would a 'not worried' lifestyle look like? Is there anyone in your life that lives this out well?

    - Why do you worry? What does it reveal about where your treasures lie?

    - Currently, what are your biggest worries? How would trusting that God cares for you even more than the birds and flowers change the way you respond to them? How can you live in a 'not worried' way?

2. If someone saw all the things you spend your time & money on, what would they say you treasure most? Are you truly seeking God's Kingdom above all else? If not, what change could you make to help reorient your heart towards storing up treasures in heaven instead of earth?

3. How can you be a faithful student without worrying? Is it even possible? Does choosing not to worry mean being irresponsible? How do you want to grow in balancing these things?