



Matthew 6

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Tape #8005
By Chuck Smith

Let's turn to Matthew's gospel, chapter six. Continuing our journey through the Bible, we're presently in the Sermon on the Mount, tonight the sixth chapter of the gospel according to Matthew.

Jesus, in His teaching method, would often make a statement and then He would amplify and illustrate what He meant by that statement. And so the statement that He makes at the beginning of this section is,

Take heed that you do not your righteousness before men, to be seen of men: otherwise you have no reward of your Father which is in heaven. (6:1)

Now in the previous chapter in the earlier part of the Sermon on the Mount, He had said to His disciples that "Ye are the light of the world. Let your light so shine before men that when they see your good works, they will glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Matthew 5:16) There's no contradiction with that statement in what He is saying now. Take heed how you do your righteousness. Be careful that your motive isn't to be noticed, to be praised by men. There are two ways by which we can let our light shine. The one is the proper way, and that is, that it brings glory to God. The other is the wrong way, it brings glory to us.

You can do your righteous deeds in such a way as you draw attention to yourself; you draw praise to yourself and glory to yourself. And unfortunately, this is very common. Now we are told that in the day that we stand before God to be judged, our works are going to be judged before God what sort they are. And many of the works that we have done, there will be no reward for them in heaven. Our works will be tried by fire and many of them are as wood, hay and stubble, they will be burned in that trial by fire. So be careful of the motive that, in your heart, there isn't that desire to be seen of men. You're doing things in such a way as you draw attention to yourself, that people go around whispering, saying, "My, isn't he spiritual, did you see what he did?" Oh, he sure hopes you did. And so be careful, Jesus said. It's a trap, because if you receive the reward of men, and if that is your motive, if your motive is to be noticed by men, to draw their praise and adulation, then you will have no reward from your Father which is in heaven. Your reward will be in that "Oooh," and in that "Aaahh" of the people.

Now Jesus illustrates this in three areas of the righteousness that we do. The first area is in our giving. The second is in our praying. And the third is in our self-effacement or our fasting. In illustrating what He is meaning, He first of all says that,

When you do your alms, [when you give], do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have the glory of men. (6:2)

Now I don't know if this actually happened or not. Perhaps it did. Person going to give a great gift to the synagogue, so he hires a band. Goes down the street in front of them and here he comes with his gift for the synagogue. Perhaps so, but perhaps... I don't know. But I do know that there are today those that would encourage you to give with the wrong motivation; that many times, when an offering is taken, it is taken in such a way as to bring glory and praise unto the person who gives.

Years ago when I was in Bible College in our senior year, we had a class that was called Pastoral Theology. It dealt with the practical aspects of the ministry—making calls on people in the hospital, how to perform a funeral, how to perform a wedding ceremony--and it dealt with the practical kind of aspects of the ministry.

One of the classes was devoted in how to take an offering. And the professor of this class had a clever way of teaching in that he would do it in sort of a dramatic kind of a style. He would have "play acting" and so you would... In calling you would have a pastor going to make a call and teaching us the danger of making calls on women in their homes during the day. I remember this one class where they had this fellow going to the house to make the call and it was a full drama kind of a thing. And while he was there calling on this woman in the home alone, her husband comes home and beats up the pastor for being there with his

wife; and it was just saying, "This is a no-no, you don't do this."

So in the taking of the offerings, they had one who got up. It was a senior class and we were supposed to leave a gift for the school and we were taking the offering for the gift for the school. The first one got up and told a few funny stories about giving and he took an offering and they counted it and I think it was \$67 or something.

The second one got up and made a real kind of an emotional appeal, how that we ought to really leave a real legacy there for the school from our class and really was quite emotional, and what we could do and how we could encourage students in the future and all; and he then took up an offering and it was a hundred and something.

And then the third person got up and this one said, "Now look, we want to really do something for God and God will bless you. 'Give and it shall be given,' and you're making an investment and God is going to pay rich dividends," and told stories of someone who gave fifty dollars and they got five hundred dollars the next week. And now, how many of you will give a hundred dollars? Stand up. And so this fellow raised a thousand bucks. And it was presented to us, if you really want to take an offering, do it in such a way that the people get some recognition. And I've seen that. "How many are... God's revealed to me there are ten people tonight going to give a thousand dollars. Where are you? Who are you? Stand to your feet." And as people stand up, everybody says, "Oooh, wow..." Listen, if you're standing there holding your thousand dollar check and everybody's "oooh-ing" and "aahh-ing", listen carefully, drink it in, because that's all the reward you're going to get.

When you get to heaven and you see the little shack that God points out to you, you say, "But Lord, I gave a thousand bucks, don't you remember, Lord? Everybody saw me." "Yeah, they sure did. And that was your reward."

And so in giving, you're not to make a big show. You're not to do it for recognition of men. In fact, Jesus said that they do it that they might have the glory of men, but

Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. (6:2)

The glory that they receive from men is their reward.

But when you give your alms, don't let your left hand know what your right hand is doing: (6:3)

That your alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly. (6:4)

Your giving to God is a private matter. It's something between you and God and it's best that it remains that way; a private matter, something between you and God.

Now with the IRS today, I don't believe in giving the government any more of my money than I need to. I personally don't agree with the way they're spending it. And so I believe in taking every tax benefit that I can. Thus, in order to enhance the deductions, we do keep records of a person's tithe here at the church. But this is for the purposes of the IRS. These are strict and confidential records and I never look at these records. I have never looked at these records. I have no desire or interest in looking at these records. What you give is a personal matter between you and God. We will record it for you if you want deductions from the IRS. But otherwise, it's strictly a private issue between a person and God, and it isn't to be broadcast or published.

The thing is, when you do it in secret, "your Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly." (6:4) So do you want the rewards from God or from man? That's what it boils down to. When I do my righteousness, my righteous deeds, do I want man's approval or man's accolades, or do I want God's approval and God's reward?

When you pray, thou shalt not be like the hypocrites: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, (6:5)

The idea of praying in the corners of the streets was again to impress people with the fact that "I'm so spiritual, I can't even wait to get to church to pray." And so you see the Pharisees with their robes and their phylacteries and all, there in the streetcorner going through their prayer books. And you say, "My, look at that, so spiritual he can't even wait to get to synagogue." Had to stop in the corner and pray, and every corner he stops and prays. "My, he's so spiritual." And in his mind he's thinking, "I hope everybody realizes how spiritual I am. I hope they see me."

And I wonder but what if even in the bobbing itself and the movement isn't to attract attention. I don't know, I can't judge a person's heart but things to watch out for, drawing attention to yourself.

In some of the churches, there developed--and I don't know where it came from--this thing where, while you're worshipping, someone stands up while you're singing choruses. And usually they pick a front row, I wonder why. I rarely see people standing up in the back row. But they're in a prominent place and all by themselves, they're standing and raising their hands and all. Aren't they aware that they're attracting attention? If I were standing up while everybody else was sitting down, I would be very aware, I would be self-conscious. "I'm standing here, they must know how spiritual I am 'cause I'm standing to worship God." Be careful of anything that draws attention to yourself. Maybe I'm more impure than a lot of the people. But I know that I could not be standing there while the rest were sitting and not have it run through my mind that "I hope they notice how spiritual I am."

There are ways to affect spirituality. There's just subtle little ways. There are gestures, there are tones of voice that sort of give off that he's so holy, he is such a man of God. And you know what? My stupid flesh loves to have people think that I am deeply spiritual and I'm a very righteous man. My flesh loves that and there are ways of giving off the hand folded just... and head sort of turned, "Oooh, yes, I see." "Oh my! Isn't he holy, he has that tone of voice and oh..." Or while singing, if you will close your eyes and then just sort of go up on your tiptoes, that somehow gives off the essence of "oooh, you know."

Watch it! Watch it! Watch what's in your heart. Be careful that you don't do your righteousness before men to be seen of men. Be careful that that is not a thought or a motive that might be going through your mind. Because if that be the case, you have received the rewards. You have nothing as far as the heavenly Father is concerned with the reward for those kinds of things that draw attention to yourself.

So when you pray, you're to go into your closet, [Jesus said] and shut the door, and pray to your Father which is in secret; and your Father which sees in secret shall reward you openly. (6:6)

Prayer is a very deep, personal matter between you and God. Now there is a place for public prayer. "If two or three of you agree on earth concerning any one thing, it shall be done." (Matthew 18:19)

In the book of Acts when Peter and the disciples came back and reported to the church the things that had transpired to them while they were before the Council and the Sanhedrin, the church prayed together. And when Peter was in prison, the church was praying together. And so there is the place of public prayer. But I have to warn you that public prayer is a problem because many times the public prayer and the prayer from the pulpit is designed more to impress men than it is to impress God. If I feel that I haven't really got the message across adequately like I wanted to, I will sometimes in the closing prayer repeat the major points of the message. Hope you get it this time. And so, many of the prayers are for the people to hear, rather than for God to hear. Watch it. Be careful that you do not your righteousness before men to be seen of men. Or you pray not to be heard of men.

And when you pray, don't use vain repetitions, as the heathen do: because they think that they are going to be heard for their much speaking. (6:7)

Somehow this whole idea has crept in to our thinking process where the longest prayers are the most effective prayers, and it's the length of the prayer that creates the effectiveness rather than the earnestness of the prayer or the faith by which we pray.

Now when Jesus warns against vain repetitions, a person thinks that he is heard for his much speaking. We need to realize that prayer is talking to the Father. It's laying out our heart before Him. It's baring my soul unto God. And thus, our prayers ought to be thought out and articulated well. If someone would come up to me and talk to me like they talk to God, using vain repetitions, I would think, *What's wrong with them?* And we can use vain repetitions in just "Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah, oh praise God, hallelujah, praise God, bless God"; that can be a vain repetition. It's just words, not necessarily coming from your heart. I can't help but think that the "Hail Mary's" and the "Our Father's" are vain repetitions, thinking that we'll be heard for our much speaking. So He said,

Don't be like them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before you ever ask him. (6:8)

God knows your needs. You come into your Father. You can pour out your heart to Him. You can share with Him the most intimate feelings; even your doubts, your fears, your anxieties. In fact, He wants you to

just cast those on Him. And so,

This is the manner in which you should pray: (6:9)

And in giving us the Our Father, it is a model, not necessarily to be repeated by rote, but it's just a model, it gives you sort of the model for prayer.

When we were at sea this past week, I was sharing with the people a little bit on prayer and I was telling them how that you can use your hand as a pattern for prayer. Your thumb is the closest to you, so it can be a reminder to pray for those who are closest to you, the family members, those friends who are closest to you. We want to remember to pray for them. Your second finger is your pointing finger, and when the teacher is teaching you he is often pointing, "And now I want you to get this." So it can be a reminder to pray for those who are instructing you. Pray for me. Paul asked the church to pray for him. Your third finger, or your middle finger, is your tallest finger. A reminder to pray for those who are in the high places of government. "Pray for those in authority over you," (1 Timothy 2:1,2) the scripture says. The next finger is the weakest finger that you have. Talk to a piano player, and it's the weakest finger. And thus, a reminder to pray for those who are weak. The last finger is your littlest finger, and that should remind you of yourself. Pray for yourself.

Now Jesus said when you pray, this manner,

Our Father which art in heaven, (6:10)

[Prayer begins with relationship, and if you don't have this relationship, then your prayer is meaningless. If He isn't your Father, if you don't have that father-child relationship, then your prayer is meaningless. You might as well go pray to the wall. "Our Father which art in heaven," first of all, prayer is for the children. It's the privilege of the children to come to the Father. And the recognition of the fact that He is a caring, loving Father in heaven,]

Hallowed be thy name. (6:10)

How holy and marvelous the Name of God. The Old Testament stresses the Name of God. "Hallowed be thy name." "Reverend is His name," the scripture says. (Psalm 111:9) Now, the only name that the Bible says is reverend is the Name of God, the Name "Jehovah." There's nothing reverend about my name. And I get embarrassed when people say, "Rev. Smith." There's nothing reverend about Smith. "Hallowed be thy name." The first petition is,

Thy kingdom come and Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. (6:10)

Jesus said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness." (Matthew 6:33) It should be manifested in our prayers. The first desire, the first interest should be, "Lord, Your kingdom, let it come. Let Your will be done here on this earth, even as it is in heaven. Lord, bring an end to the ungodly reign of Satan over the earth. Establish Your kingdom, Lord, in my heart and in this earth." And then, we get to our own needs. There's nothing wrong with personal petition. "The husbandman must first be partaker of the fruit." (2 Timothy 2:6) I cannot impart to others what I do not have myself. And so,

Give us this day our daily bread. (6:11)

And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. (6:12)

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, the power, the glory, for ever. Amen. (6:13)

Starts with God, it sort of ends with God: "Hallowed be thy name." "Thine is the kingdom, the power, the glory, forever, Amen."

Now it is interesting that as Jesus closes off this model for prayer, there is one of the petitions that He stops to re-emphasize. Only one. And that was the petition, "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors." He stops to emphasize the importance of forgiveness, and this is a theme through the ministry of Jesus and the teaching of Jesus. Over and over, He emphasizes the importance of our forgiving others. And in the Lord's prayer, the only petition that He stops to emphasize and He declares to us,

For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: (6:14)

But if you forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. (6:15)

You say, what does that mean? It means that if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will forgive you. But if you forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

I won't touch it. It's important that we are forgiving. Jesus gave parables by which He illustrated the importance. And the idea was God has forgiven us so much, we surely do not have the right to hold little grievances against our brothers, such minor issues.

Remember the servant that the master called him in. And he owed his master some ten million dollars. He said, "Oh, I can't pay you now. Give me a little time and I'll see what I can do." And he said, "Forget it, write off the debt." Forgave him the debt. He went out and got hold of a fellow servant that owed him sixteen bucks, and he said, "You've owed me that for a long time, I want payment now." "Oh, I can't pay you now, give me a week." "No, no," and he has him thrown into the debtors' prison for the \$16 debt.

He makes the illustration almost ludicrous to illustrate the point. How much I've been forgiven and yet, how I'm holding such small things in my heart against my brother. And the master heard of his deed and he called him in and he said, "How much did you owe me?" He said, "Ten million bucks." He said, "I forgave you the debt, didn't I?" "Yes." "How is it that I hear you had a fellow servant thrown into debtors' prison for \$16 debt?" And he said, "Throw him into the prison until he's paid the last penny." It's emphasizing again the importance of forgiveness.

Now Peter finally felt that he is catching up. And he's always trying to make points. So he said, "Lord, how often should I forgive my brother the same offense? Seven times?" And I'm sure that he was stretching it in his mind, just to make points with the Lord. And Jesus said, "Peter, seventy times seven." (Matthew 18:21,22)

Forgiveness is not a matter of mathematics. It's a matter of spirit. And it's important that we are forgiving. We'll get this now as we're coming into the Gospels. And as you go through the Gospels, we're going to be getting the lessons that Jesus taught on the importance of forgiveness. But it is interesting to note that in all of the petitions in the Lord's prayer, only one is emphasized at the end. Amplified.

Now the third issue. Giving. Praying. The third issue, fasting.

Moreover when you fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast.

They would put ashes on their face and they go around just looking haggard and you say, "What's wrong with you, man?" "I'm fasting for the Lord." They would do things that would draw attention, that everyone would "Oh, look at that, fasting again. Isn't he spiritual?"

Verily I say unto you that they have their reward. (6:16)

[...again, in the fact that men are looking at them in sort of a reverential awe, because of their deep spirituality.]

But when you fast, anoint your head, wash your face; (6:17)

That you don't appear unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly. (6:18)

In the earlier years of my ministry, I fasted more than I do now. There would be times when I would be fasting, and I would go to visit a family and the lady would bring out a cake and offer me cake. I'd eat it. I'd break my fast, because I didn't want to say, "No, thank you, I can't eat that, I'm fasting," 'cause I would have lost the reward. So I'd just go ahead and enjoy the cake, break the fast.

Again, the idea is doing things to impress people, or to please God. And if I'm doing it to impress people, the feedback that I get from the impression they get is all of the reward that I'll get for those righteous actions. It's interesting you can do the right thing with the wrong attitude and it nullifies what you've done. And that's basically what Jesus is saying. And so in doing things for the Lord, don't do them to draw attention to yourself and the applause of men. But just do it as unto God. Now, that isn't easy. When you do something that's very magnanimous and very generous and very wonderful, oh how you want people to know what you've done. You've done something great, you want the world to know.

Like the preacher who got into golf. He became so addicted that he even started going out early Sunday morning and getting in nine holes before the first service. And his guardian angel was sharing with one of the fellow angels of the problem he is having with this pastor that he was guarding, and how the guy was getting into golf and how it was beginning to hinder his ministry and all. "I've got to do something." And he said, "I'll go with you this Sunday morning, we'll watch him." And so at the second hole which was a par

five, 533 yarder, the friend of his guardian angel said, "I've got an idea. I'll take care of him." So as the fellow teed off, the angel took the ball and carried it through the air, all 535 yards and dropped it in the cup. And the guardian angel said, "I thought you were going to take care of it. What in the world have you done, giving him a hole-in-one on a 535 par five, you're crazy! What have you done?" He said, "Who's he gonna tell?" The torment, I've done something remarkable, nobody knows. I'm tormented! I want the world to know.

Now Jesus teaches us concerning our goods and our attitude towards our material possessions.

Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: (6:19)

But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: (6:20)

For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. (6:21)

When you give, don't let your right hand know what your left hand is doing, but do give. Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven. The whole idea is that you can't take it with you. I was reading of these fellows who were grave diggers. And they got this order to dig this exceptionally large grave. And so they wondered why they had to dig such a big hole. And they said, "Well, this lady has this pink Cadillac and it was something she wanted all her life and she just treasured it so much, she just was so proud of it that she wants to be buried in the pink Cadillac instead of a casket." And so as the crane was letting this pink Cadillac, she was sitting there at the wheel, corpse, and as they were letting this pink Cadillac down into the grave, the one fellow turned to the other and he said, "Man, that's living." But you can't take it with you.

Someone said, "How much did he leave?" And the other one says, "Everything." And that's how much you're going to leave.

We have a little experience with currency when you travel in a foreign country. Every nation has its own currency. And when you go to a foreign nation, you first of all usually stop at the airport, go to the bank there and exchange your dollars for whatever is current in that particular country--Shillings or Franks or Coronas or whatever's current--because you'll find that many places, your dollar won't buy you anything. The storeowner doesn't want your dollar bills. It's not current in that country, you have to go and exchange for what's current there. Now, your dollar bills are not current in heaven. Gold is not current in heaven, it's asphalt up there. So you have to do the exchanging while you're here, laying up treasures in heaven. Currency exchange is here.

Jesus talked about a fellow who was an accountant or a bookkeeper fired by his boss. He said, "Get the books straightened up, you've got two weeks and you're through, you're fired." So the fellow says, "Oh man, what am I gonna do? I'm ashamed to beg and I surely don't want to dig ditches, I know what I'll do." And he started calling in all of the creditors, he said, "How much do you owe my boss? A thousand bucks? Here, let me have the bill." He wrote five hundred. "How much do you owe my boss? Twenty-five hundred? Here, let me have your bill." Writes a thousand. And he cuts all of the bills. He said, "So that when I am out on the streets, I've done these... then they'll owe me a favor. I can go and I can ask them for favors." And so he used his present position to set himself up for what he knew was coming. I'm going to be fired, going to be out in the street, but by making them obligated to me by cutting their bills...

And Jesus said that He commended... and that's the... Commended him? The guy's a crook! He didn't commend him for what he did, but for the wisdom of what he did. Because He said, "The children of this generation are wiser in this generation than the children of light; the children of this world, wiser in this generation than the children of light." (Luke 16:8) He was using his present position to set himself up for the inevitable future. And so that's wisdom, and it's wisdom for us to use our present position to set ourselves up for the eternal dwelling with God.

8 And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.

So, laying up for ourselves treasures in heaven. There they cannot be corroded by rust, eaten by moth, they can't be stolen... where is your money safe today? Which bank do you have it in? Are you sure the bank is solvent? You're reading all these, "1995, The Big Crash." Maybe they're right, who knows what's

going to happen to all your assets if the banks all close the doors. There is one investment you can be sure of, and Jesus encourages it.

Now the reason why is, where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. And if you have invested in spiritual things, your heart's going to be in spiritual things. Your heart will follow where your treasure is, there your heart will be.

The light of the body is the eye:

[Be careful what enters through the eye gate. Be careful what you see. Be careful what you look at. "The light of the body is the eye..."]

if therefore thine eye be single,

David prayed, "Unite my heart, O God, to fear Thee, reverence Thee." (Psalm 86:11) If your eye is single, single-minded,

Your whole body will be full of light. (6:22)

But if the eye be evil, thy whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is dark, how great then is that darkness! (6:23)

No man can serve two masters: because you will either hate the one, and love the other; or you will hold to the one, and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon. (6:24)

He said, "Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven." You can't serve God and mammon or money.

Now Jesus teaches us concerning worry and anxiety.

Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought [anxious thought] for your life, what you're going to eat, what you're going to drink; nor for your body, don't worry about what you're going to wear. [The question,] Is not life more than meat, and the body more than raiment? (6:25)

Life is more than just eating. The body is more than just dressing up, clothes. Don't be worried about these things, don't give anxious thought to these things. Don't give extensive thought to these things. Take no thought, don't spend a lot of time thinking about these things, food and raiment.

[But] behold the fowls of the air: they sow not, neither do they reap, nor do they gather into barns; and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much better than they? (6:26)

Argument from the lesser to the greater, so often in the New Testament you find that.

"If God spared not His own Son but delivered Him up for us all, how much more then shall He not freely give us all things?" (Romans 8:32) Now here, if your Father feeds the birds, they don't have to cultivate the soil, they don't plant seeds, they don't store into barns, your Father feeds them; how much more will He take care of you because you're better than the birds. And He's your Father; He's their Creator, but He is your Father.

Don't let the environmentalists snow you. You are better than the birds. They would have you to think that you're not; that the birds are more important than you. If you destroy the egg of an eagle, you can be subject up to a thousand dollars fine and six months in jail. But the government will pay you to abort the unwanted child. Because you see, they call it just tissue and all, but why don't they call the egg of an eagle just white and yolk, tissue. They know the life is there and that's why they will fine you a thousand dollars because it's an endangered species. But in God's eyes, you're more important than the birds. Maybe not the government's, but God's eyes. And that's what really counts. I don't give much count to the government anymore but I do to God.

Why take thought for your clothes, your raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: (6:28)

They don't spin cotton or they don't spin the wool into threads to make the fabrics and so forth, or the yarn to make the fabrics.

And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all of his glory was not arrayed like one of these. (6:29)

He wasn't dressed as beautifully as God dresses the fields with the beautiful flowers. There in Israel, the wild flowers are just absolutely breathtaking. Hillsides covered, look like a carpet, beautiful colors. In the springtime, the wild flowers are just so beautiful.

God clothes the fields, the grass of the field, which to day is, (6:30)

[The season for wild flowers is usually just a month or so. And then as the spring turns into the summer,

they die very quickly and the hills turn brown. If God will so clothe 'though the grass of the field which today is,]

and to morrow is gone, how much more will He clothe you, [The problem,] O ye of little faith? (6:30)

Trust God, He's aware of you, He's aware of your needs and He'll take care of you. David said, "I have never seen the righteous forsaken, or God's seed begging bread." (Psalm 37:25)

Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we wear or, What shall we drink? (6:31)

(For after all of these things do the Gentiles [or the heathen] seek:) your Father knows that you have need of all these things. (6:32)

You don't have to worry about these things, your Father knows you need them. Don't worry about these things. But you,

Seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. (6:33)

Now that goes beyond just eating and drinking and wearing clothes. For some of you who are greatly concerned about who does God have for me to spend my future with? And you're all worried and concerned and keep looking around to see who God has for you, seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; and all these things will be added to you. God will take care of you. Put God first, that's the whole idea. God first. You don't have to worry about the issues of life if God is first. He knows what you need, He'll take care of what you need. He's a loving Father, He cares for you. Just seek Him first, His kingdom and the life then will be in balance.

But if these other things are top priority in your mind, then your life is out of balance. Have a well-balanced life. You've got to have God at the top; seeking Him, His kingdom, His righteousness. Your relationship with God is the most important relationship in your life. And in reality, your relationship with your fellowman cannot really be right, or all that it should be, unless you have a right relationship with God. Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, get that relationship uppermost. Top priority, the other things will then be taken care of, they'll be added.

Take therefore no thought for the morrow [or for tomorrow]:

You know that most of our worry comes about and is concerned with things of tomorrow or next week or next month. You don't worry too much about today because today is usually covered. But I don't know what I'm going to do next month. I don't know what I'm going to do tomorrow. And it's usually, the worry is about what is ahead. When we get there, we oftentimes find that God has preceded, taking care of it, and all of the...

The women on the way to the tomb, the day that Jesus rose from the dead. On the way to the tomb, they were discussing who's going to roll away the stone. And all worried about who's going to roll the stone. When they got there, the stone was already rolled away. And we find that is so true about many of our worries. By the time we get there, it's gone. The worry was a futile exercise that didn't profit. And so Jesus is saying, "Don't worry about tomorrow,"

for tomorrow will take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. (6:34)

You've got enough to take care of today. Don't worry about tomorrow, just live for today. Take care of the things of today. And tomorrow, the Lord who saw you through today, will see you through tomorrow. And He'll see you through next week, and next month. He is faithful. And "Having began a good work in you, He will continue to perform it and He will perfect that which concerns you." (Philippians 1:6)

Father, we thank You for the important teaching that Jesus has given to us concerning life. Help us, Lord, that we might take heed to the things that we have heard lest at any time we should drift away from the truth. But Lord, plant these truths deep in our hearts, we might live by them. Help us, Lord, we need Your help and we thank You, Lord, that You have promised that You would help us in our time of need. Let the Holy Spirit, Father, take the Word of God and impress it deep upon our hearts and may we be doers of the Word, and not hearers only. In Jesus' Name we pray, Amen.