

Lesson 38

Freedom from Life's Worries

Icebreaker:

What kinds of things do you worry about?
Why do you worry?

Introduction:

Jesus has just finished telling His disciples that they have no reason to fear God because they were His friends. And with His friendship comes the freedom from the fear of men, death and public speaking.

Reading The Scripture:

Luke 12:13-31 and Matthew 6:24-34

Storing Up Treasure

Luke 12:13-21

(Gospels forged together into one seamless story, in collaboration with New American Standard Bible,
authored by Michael Gibson, Founder of Spirit & Truth, dba Key 2 Changes: "Follow Me: A Message from God", a Journey with Jesus)

And someone in the crowd said to Him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me." But He said to him, "Man, who appointed Me a judge or arbiter over you?" And He said to them, "Beware, and be on your guard against every form of greed; for not even when one has an abundance does his life consist of his possessions." And He told them a parable, saying, "The land of a certain rich man was very productive. And he began reasoning to himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no place to store my crops?'" And he said, 'This is what I will do: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. 'And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years to come; take your ease, eat, drink and be merry.'" But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared?' So is the man who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

Freedom from Fear

Matthew 6:24-34 and Luke 12:22-31

(Gospels forged together into one seamless story, in collaboration with New American Standard Bible,
authored by Michael Gibson, Founder of Spirit & Truth, dba Key 2 Changes: "Follow Me: A Message from God", a Journey with Jesus)

"No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon. And He said to His disciples, 'For this reason I say to you, do not be anxious for your life, as to what you shall eat; nor for your body, as to what you shall put on. For life is more than food, and the body than clothing. Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap; and they have no storeroom nor barn; and yet God feeds them; how much more valuable you are than the birds! And which of you by being anxious can add a single cubit to his life's span? If then you cannot do even a very little thing, why are you anxious about other matters? Consider the lilies, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin; but I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory did not clothe himself like one of these. But if God so arrays the grass in the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, how much more will He clothe you, O men of little faith! And do not seek what you shall eat, and what you shall drink, and do not keep worrying. For all these things the nations of the world eagerly seek; but your Father knows that you need these things. But seek for His kingdom, and these things shall be added to you. Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has chosen gladly to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions and give to charity; make yourselves purses which

do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near, nor moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”

The Commands:

1. Do not be anxious for your life.
2. Consider the ravens.
3. Consider the lilies.
4. Do not seek what you shall eat, and what you shall drink, and do not keep worrying.
5. But seek for His kingdom.
6. Therefore, do not be anxious for tomorrow.

The Lesson:

He begins the lesson by telling a parable. *“The land of a rich man was very productive. And he began reasoning to himself, saying, ‘What shall I do, since I have no place to store my crops?’ Then he said, ‘This is what I will do: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, ‘Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years to come; take your ease, eat, drink and be merry.’” But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared?’ So is the man who stores up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.”*

It is evident from the parable that men make choices. They either choose to serve God or themselves. Jesus put it another way. *“No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.”*

Group Discussion:

1. Are you serving God or wealth?
2. How do you know?

The Lesson Continued:

Having begun the lesson with the sobering thought that men can choose one of two masters to serve, Jesus reassures the disciples¹ that they are serving God. He does this by issuing them a commandment. *“For this reason I say to you, do not worry² about your life, as to what you will eat; nor for your body, as to what you will put on. For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing.”* In other words, *“Since I have called you friends and you are following Me; you need not worry about food and clothing because God will provide them for you.”*

The concept that God provides for the people who follow Him was not a new one for the disciples. Their ancestors left Egypt following Moses and during the forty years of wandering in the wilderness they never lacked food or clothing. Also the Levites who served as the **priesthood** in Israel were not required to work but God provided for them through the sacrifices and freewill offerings of the people.

Many years later the Apostle Peter would make reference to this special covenant relationship that Christians have with God when he declared, *“But you are a **chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him***

¹ A disciple is one who learns from his teacher and then implements what he is instructed to do. “You are My friends if you do what I command you.” (John 15:14)

² Do not worry - don’t be anxious – take no thought of – do not be distracted.

*who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.” It is incumbent upon every Christian that he understands the story of the Israelites who came out of Egypt because it parallels the life of all Christians. The Apostle Paul used this admonition when writing his first epistle to the Corinthians. Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were **written for our instruction**, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. (1 Corinthians 10:11)*

Lets be reminded of the parallels:

1. The Israelites were in bondage while living in Egypt.
 - a. Christians were in bondage to sin while living in the world.
2. On the night of their deliverance the Israelites applied the blood of an unblemished lamb to the lintel and doorposts of their homes. Then they entered through the door and were spared by the death angel when he recognized the blood on their doorways. (Exodus 12)
 - a. Jesus Christ is the unblemished Lamb of God. His blood was smeared on the cross of Calvary in the same pattern as the Israelites applied it. The lintel is where the crown of thorns caused the blood to flow from His head and doorposts are where the nails pierced His hands. Jesus said, “*I am the door, if anyone enters through Me, he shall be saved.* (John 10:9)
3. The Israelites were all under the cloud³ and all passed through the sea.⁴ And all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. (1 Corinthians 10:1-2)
 - a. Christians are all baptized into Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit and in water. *For there are three that testify: the Spirit and the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement.* (1 John 5:7-8)
4. The Israelites received the Law of Moses written on tablets of stone at Mt Sinai.
 - a. Christians received the Law of Christ written on their hearts at Mt Zion.
5. The Israelites all ate the same spiritual food ... manna, the bread from heaven.
 - a. Christians all eat the same spiritual food ... communion bread, which is the body of Christ.
6. The Israelites all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from the spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Christ.
 - a. Christians all drink the same spiritual drink ... communion wine, which is the blood of Christ.
7. God was not pleased with **most** of the Israelites and they died in the wilderness. These people 1) craved evil things, 2) were idolaters, 3) acted immorally, 4) tried the Lord, and 5) grumbled against Him. They did not enter the Promised Land because of their unbelief (lack of faith).
 - a. Christians are cautioned against doing these things.
8. The Israelites never lacked for food, clothing or shelter on their journey.
 - a. Christians will not lack for food, clothing or shelter in their life.
9. When the Israelites engaged in battle they always won.
 - a. When Christians engage in spiritual warfare they always win.
10. The Israelites had their sins forgiven when they confessed them while laying their hands upon the head of a lamb.
 - a. Christians have their sins forgiven when they confess them to Jesus, the Lamb of God.

³ The specific cloud that is being talked about in Hebrew is called the Sh'khinah: the cloud of glory. It is the same cloud that led the Israelites in their wilderness wanderings, became a pillar of fire at night and filled the Temple of God. It always indicates the presence of God.

⁴ The Red Sea.

11. The Israelites were healed of their afflictions when by faith they looked to the bronze serpent on the staff.
 - a. Christians are healed when they look to Jesus Christ who was crucified on the cross.
12. The Israelites entered the Promised Land following Joshua.
 - a. Christians will enter the Promised Land (Heaven) following Joshua.⁵

As Jesus continues the lesson He provides additional assurance to the disciples when He tells them to, “*Consider the ravens.*”

- They neither sow nor reap ... they cannot make their own food.
- They have no storeroom nor barn ... they cannot hoard any food they find.
- And yet God feeds them ... even though they are unclean animals. *Who prepares for the raven its nourishment when its young cry to God and wander about without food? (Job 38:41)*
- Ravens have to trust God for their daily provision. Jeremiah also made the same point concerning God's people. *The LORD'S loving kindnesses indeed never cease, for His compassions never fail. **They are new every morning**; Great is Your faithfulness. (Lamentations 3:22-23)*
- And remember God even used ravens (unclean birds ... they and their food are non kosher) to feed the prophet Elijah in the midst of a famine. (1Kings 17:1-9)

Moving to His next point Jesus tells the disciples to, “*Consider the lilies.*”

- How they grow ... they allow God to supply the seed, the nutrients in the soil, the sunshine and the rain.
- They neither toil nor spin ... they don't make clothes for themselves.
- They are beautiful ... yet even the finest clothes that people can make for themselves are not as beautiful.
- The lilies trust God for their daily provision. Jeremiah also made the same point concerning God's people. *The Lord is my portion, says my soul, therefore I have hope in Him. The Lord is good to those who wait for Him, to the person who seeks Him. (Lamentations 3:24-25)*
- And remember it was God who cared enough about Adam and Eve, even when they sinned, to clothe them.

As Jesus begins to draw the lesson to a close He reminds the disciples again not to be anxious about necessary things like food, water and clothing. God will provide for them if they merely seek to establish His rule in their lives. Then to this He adds, that the disciples should give no thought for tomorrow because like manna His blessings are new each day. And how by being anxious or worry can anyone expect to increase his lifespan?

⁵ The reason I used the name Joshua here is to make the point that Jesus' name in Hebrew is Yawshua (Joshua), which means, “I AM SALVATION”. You should be reminded that Moses could not take the Israelites into the Promised Land because of his disobedience. This occurred when he struck the Rock, which was Christ, a second time to bring forth water. God had told Moses to speak to the Rock and it would bring forth water. The effect of this was that Moses gave a false prophetic sign: saying the Christ would be struck twice. However God only permitted His Son, Jesus, the Christ to be struck once: on the Lord's Passover ... at His trials, beatings and crucifixion. Moses also told the Israelites, “God shall raise up for you a prophet like me from your brethren.” The book of Numbers 27:12-23, indicates that it was Joshua whom God chose and it was he who led the Israelites into the Promised Land. Jewish people today have never made this connection concerning Jesus (Yawshua or Joshua) Christ as the one prophet who will lead the people to the Promised Land (Heaven).

Group Discussion:

3. What things do good governments try to provide for the people?
4. What things does God provide for His people?

The Point Of The Lesson:

God will take care of your needs.

Application:

Read Psalm 103