



# Sermon on the Mount: An Invitation to New Creation

## Session 8 “Material Wealth and Worry”

**“The human heart is an idol factory that takes good things like a successful career, love, material possessions, even family, and turns them into ultimate things. Our hearts deify them as the center of our lives, because, we think, they can give us significance and security, safety and fulfillment, if we attain them.”**

--Tim Keller, *Counterfeit Gods*

In Matthew 6:19-34, Jesus addresses some of the most common things that compete for space in our hearts: our material possessions and our money. And while he's at it, Jesus says these things not only begin to consume our hearts, but when they take up residence in our minds they lead to worry and anxiety. It makes perfect sense, when I look to money to satisfy me, I start to worry, “Will I have enough of it?” or “What if I lose it?” Can anyone relate?

Tim Keller says that our real problem is one of idolatry. It's not that it's wrong to enjoy the good things in our lives. The problem is when we give these good things first place in our hearts, when we look to them to provide ultimate security and fulfilment, which only God is truly able to give. And when we grasp so tightly to these things, is it any wonder that we also start to worry about them? The good news is that the antidote to idolatry and worry is one and the same; it is putting God back on his rightful throne. When we choose to worship him first, before all things, we also begin to trust that he is able to provide for all of our needs. Or as Jesus says, it's the daily choice to “Seek FIRST his kingdom and his righteousness” and trust that he will provide the rest. Will you allow your worship to begin to drive away your worry?

### Matthew 6:19-34

19 “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. 20 But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

22 “The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are healthy, your whole body will be full of light. 23 But if your eyes are unhealthy, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

24 “No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.

*continued on other side*

## **Matthew 6:19-34 (continued)**

### **Do Not Worry**

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 than food, and the body more 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 Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?

28 “And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers 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. 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—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.

### **Questions for Discussion**

1. What stood out to you, encouraged you or challenged you from this past Sunday's sermon?
2. What are some things you treasure? What do you think the difference is between enjoying material gifts and falling into the trap of “storing up treasures on earth”?
3. What “treasures” do you think have the potential to pull your heart away from the Lord?
4. Jesus makes a connection between our eyes and our hearts (Matthew 6:22-23). Why do you think the things we focus on (or put before our eyes) have so much power over the direction of our hearts? What are some ways we can “keep our eyes good”?
5. What do you think it looks like to store up treasures in heaven practically speaking?
6. What is an area of your life where you are prone to worry? Why does Jesus tell us not to worry? What reasons does he give?
7. What do you think it means to “seek first God’s kingdom”? What might need to change in your life in order to do this? How can your group members pray for you in this struggle?