

Do Not Worry

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[0 : 00] Psalm's version of Psalm 23, and that's on page 28. Psalm number 23, the Lord is my shepherd, no one shall I know. He makes me lie down where the green pastures grow.

He leads me to rest where the calm waters flow. We're going to sing the whole of the psalm. That's the new version, the Sing-Sams version of Psalm number 23, and we're going to stand to sing. Amen. He leads me to rest where the calm waters flow.

My wandering steps he brings back to his way. In straight paths of righteousness making me stay. Oh, I walk in death's alley where darkness is near.

[1 : 45] Because you are with me, no evil I'll fear. Your rod and your staff bring me comfort and cheer.

In the sight of my enemies at table you spread. The oint of rejoicing you pour on my head. My couple were close and I'm viciously fed. Though surely your covenant's mercy and grace will follow me closely in all of my ways.

I will threaten the house of the Lord all my days. Amen.

We're going to join together in prayer. Let's pray. Our Father in heaven, we thank you for the preciousness of these words that we were singing.

[3 : 11] Words which lie deep within our hearts. And which describe the unique relationship that exists between you and your people through the Lord Jesus Christ.

We give thanks for the bond that there is between the shepherd and his sheep. And for the truth that the shepherd only wants what is right and what is good.

For the well-being and for the health and the security of his flock. We give thanks, O Lord, that like the eastern shepherd. That you lead the sheep from the front.

That you know your sheep by name. That you call them by name. And that they are in your sight all the time. There isn't a moment when they are invisible to you.

And you lead them through the darkness and through the bright times. You lead them through the valley of the shadow of death. You lead them through to the green pastures and the calm waters.

[4 : 07] And at last you prepare a table before them. And they have the knowledge that for the days, for the rest of their lives, they will dwell in the house of God.

We pray that you will draw yourself close to us today. And speak to us as the shepherd speaks to his sheep. And feed us, O Lord, as the shepherd feeds his sheep.

And bring us, O Lord, that knowledge, that comfort, that instruction. That these loving reminders of what you have done for us in the shepherd becoming the sheep.

And laying down his life as the sacrifice that satisfies your justice. Our Father in heaven, we thank you that Jesus is our savior today.

And that we come in his name, confessing our sins as we do every Lord's day. And remembering that his blood cleanses us from all sin. We pray that you will give us true repentance.

[5 : 12] A true sense of horror and revulsion at what we see in our hearts. And much of what we do, O Lord, we pray that as your people, that we will be constantly aware of ourselves and our own tendencies.

Keep us from temptation. Keep us, Lord, from falling into the hands of our enemy who wishes to lead us along the wrong path. But keep our eyes, we pray, on the shepherd.

And help us, Lord, to follow him all the days of our lives. Our Father in heaven, we thank you for one another. And we thank you for the fellowship of your people that we have come, in which we have come to you today.

We speak to you and sing to you with one voice and one heart. We want to hear your words. We ask that you will open up our hearts and our minds and place us in a condition of worship.

We pray today. We pray, Lord, for young and old. We thank you for the children who are with us. For the families who are with us today.

[6 : 15] And we pray for them. Lord, we pray for those who are away from home at this moment in time, away elsewhere on holiday. We pray that you will take them safely back and give them a time of refreshment, time to be with their loved ones and with their friends.

We thank you, Lord, that this is a time of renewed acquaintance, when people can be reunited with parents and grandparents and other members of family.

We pray that you will bless these times. We pray for anyone who is with us here today from other parts of the country, or indeed from other parts of the world.

We pray that this time, this day, will be a blessing to them, and that you will draw them close to you and reveal yourself to them in a very precious and in a very unique way through your word.

We thank you for your word. We thank you for what it means to us. And we thank you for how precious it is to us. And we pray that it will be our guide and our supreme rule.

[7 : 16] We pray that everything that we do and think may be done in obedience to your word, loving obedience, because Jesus said, if you love me, then you will keep my commandments.

So hear us now, we pray, as we worship, take away every distracting thought from us, give us to gaze upon you, for we ask in Jesus' name. Amen. Well, boys and girls, today I am wearing a brand new shirt.

A brand new shirt. I'm sure you probably know that already because it is so white. When you buy a shirt like this one, you take it out of the packet, and there's just not a mark on it.

It's absolutely gleaming. And you're almost afraid to put it on because it is so white. Just like, I suppose, if you wear a school uniform.

I think school uniform still has white shirts. I'm sure you've got one at home. And you probably keep it for very special occasions. But I have to confess to you today that this is not the first time I've worn it.

[8 : 28] In fact, it's already been washed. And the reason it's already been washed was because I only had it on for about an hour when I got it dirty.

That's what happens when you wear a white shirt, isn't it? It's certainly what happens to me. Every time I wear a new shirt or a shirt that's just been washed, a white shirt, I sit down at the table.

And my wife has told me a hundred times not to sit at the table with a new shirt on. And I still, I don't listen to her sometimes. And I sit down and that's what happened.

As sure as anything, especially spaghetti. Can you, are you able, are you able to eat spaghetti without getting food on your clothes? Well, let me tell you, I am not able to eat spaghetti with tomato sauce on it without getting, so sure as anything, if I wear a white shirt, as I did with this brand new shirt, you would think I would have more sense, but I wasn't very sensible.

And there it was, a big tomato stain on my gleaming white shirt. So I try to hide it first of all, because that's what you do when somebody's going to be annoyed at you because you didn't listen to them.

[9 : 47] And you try and hide it first of all, but you can't really hide a stain like that. Sure as anything, it's only a matter of time before people will see it and they'll ask, where did you get that stain?

And you have to tell them. You have to, you feel a complete fool because you're being so stupid as to eat spaghetti with a white shirt. And so you try to hide it, you try, you wear a tie over it and that tries to hide it.

And, but then your tie, you can't keep a tie on all the time. And then you try and rub it out. You get a towel or something and you rub it. Have you ever tried to do that? Well, don't, because it doesn't work.

It just makes it ten times worse because it spreads the tomato all over the shirt. There's only one solution, I'm afraid, and that is just to confess what you've done and just to have it washed properly. And, you know, that is what the Bible is all about, isn't it? When God made us at the very beginning, it was like that brand new shirt.

[10 : 51] We were perfect. Adam and Eve went way back at the very beginning when he made Adam and Eve. They were perfect. There was no sin whatsoever.

But it didn't take long before sin came into the world. Adam and Eve were so foolish, they didn't listen to God. And they did exactly what God told them not to do.

And what happened? They became dirty. And they became stained. And they tried to hide it. Remember? Genesis chapter 3.

Soon as they realized what they had done, they tried to hide from God. How foolish is that? How stupid is it for anybody to try and hide from God? They should have known you can't hide from God. Because God sees everything about us. We still try, don't we? We try and hide from them. We're so silly that we think that there are things that God doesn't know. There are no things that God doesn't know.

[11 : 49] God knows everything. Anyway, Adam and Eve tried to hide from God. God knew exactly where they were. And he came in and he followed them and he found them. And he had to put them out of the garden.

The perfect place that he had created for them. But God washed the world from sin. He sent his own son into the world to wash us from our sin. And today, if you're trying to hide from God, and if you're trying to get rid of your own sin and your own badness, you'll never be able to do it.

There's only one place that we can come and God will wash away our sin. And that is the Lord Jesus Christ. Because when he died on the cross, that's what he did.

He died to wash us completely from our sin. So today, there was a stain on my shirt and it's gone. Completely gone. Because it's been washed. And there was a stain in my heart as well.

[12 : 52] And it's gone. And if you come to the Lord Jesus Christ today, and if you ask him to take away your sin, that's what he does. He washes us and makes us as white as the snow.

And that's why we're here today, to give thanks, to thank the Lord for what he's done for us in the Lord Jesus Christ. And we're going to sing a psalm now that tells us all about how God washes us from our sin.

It's on page 68, Psalm 51. We're going to sing from verse 7 down to verse 15. Psalm number 51, and it's page 68.

And we're going to sing from 7 down to 15. Cleanse with hyssop. Purify me. I'll be whiter than the snow. Let the bones you crushed be joyful.

May I joy and gladness know from my failure. Hide your face. Blot out all my wickedness. That's what we're asking God to do when we're singing these words.

[13 : 53] We're asking him to wash our sin away and make us whiter than the snow. Psalm 51, verse 7 to verse 14. That's these three verses we're going to stand to sing.

Let the bones you crushed be joyful.

May I joy and gladness know from my failure. Hide your face. Let the bones you crushed be joyful.

May I joy and gladness know from my failure.

Hide your face. Blot out all my wickedness. For create a pure heart in me.

[14 : 59] And a steadfast mind renew. Do not ignore spirit from me.

Cast me not away from you. Give me back the joy I have.

Keep my willing spirit found. Then I'll teach you ways to sinners.

Pray those will turn back to you. Free me from what killed my Savior.

For most merciful unto. Then I'll praise you, righteousness.

[16 : 05] Teach my lips your name to bless. Amen. Amen. Amen.

We're going to read together from the New Testament, the Gospel of Matthew and chapter 6.

Matthew's Gospel chapter 6. And we're going to read from verse 19.

It's on page 978 in the edition that I have. It may be on a different page in your edition. But it's Matthew's Gospel. It's the first book of the New Testament. And we're going to read from chapter 6 and verse 19.

verse 19. Verse 19. Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

[17 : 22] The eye is the lamp of the body. So if your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness.

If then the light in you is darkness, how great is that darkness. No one can serve two masters. For either you will hate the one and love the other, or you'll be devoted to the one and despise the other.

You cannot serve God and money. Therefore, I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will put on. It's not life more than food, and the body more than clothing.

Look at the birds of the air. They neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns. And yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? Which of you, by being anxious, can add a single hour to his span of life?

And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow. They neither toil nor spin. Yet I tell you that even Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these.

[18:28] But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? Therefore, do not be anxious, saying, what shall we eat or what shall we drink or what shall we wear?

For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. Therefore, do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

Amen. And we pray together that the Lord will bless that word that we have just read. We're going to once again join together in prayer.

We want to, O Lord, come together in one voice and in one heart. We want to pray for the needs that we know about. We want to bring our friends, our family, our people that we are aware of who are distressed or going through difficult times at this present moment.

[19:36] Father in heaven, we pray that you will remind us that we can intercede for one another. Indeed, not only can we, but we must. We are given this great privilege of being able to pray for one another.

And if we know of people who are in trouble or in difficulty or in distress or ill or where there is bereavement, we pray, Lord, that we will bring them to you and knowing that you are hearing and answering our prayer.

We remember, Lord, the Skinner family at this time. Remember Jesse and the family. We pray that you will uphold them and guide them, Lord, in their loss. And as they come together, we pray that they may be deeply conscious of the presence of God comforting and guiding them, Lord, and blessing their memory.

And we pray that you will bless David's witness. We give thanks that he, at a relatively late age, professed his faith in Jesus Christ. And we pray that you will bless that witness in the days and the months that follow.

Oh, Lord, our God, we pray that you will make, remind us all of the passage of time. And that we are only here for a few short years. And the day will come when we must leave this world.

[21:01] And we pray that we may be ready for that day by being reconciled to God through Jesus Christ and through his death and resurrection. We remember the family of Mrs. McClemon, who passed away earlier on this week and whose funeral we had.

We pray, Lord, for them also. And that as these times bring people together as a community and as friends and families, we pray that as your word is read, that we will be brought back to you and that we will hear the sound of your voice.

We want to pray for the work of the church. We pray, Lord, for the work of the gospel. We ask, Lord, for the work of missions. We pray, Lord, that wherever the gospel goes out today, both locally and nationally and internationally, that you will bless that work.

We think, oh Lord, of the great countries in Southeast Asia today. We think of China and the number of people that are being converted, the number of churches that there are, and the growth in the church in China.

And much of it has to be discreet. But we pray, Lord, that you will bless your people there. And we pray that you will equip them and train their pastors and their missionaries.

[22:14] We pray that you will raise up men and women who will be a witness to you in these places. Places that we know so very little about. We think, oh Lord, of the work of our own church and our mission work.

We think of Alistair Wilson, who intends to leave Dumasani to go and take up a position in Inverness. And we pray, Lord, for him.

We pray that his position as principal of Dumasani will be replaced because we recognize how important it is for the local students who are going to be pastoring and doing missionary work in South Africa.

To be trained and to be trained properly and well and grounded in the scripture. So we pray that you'll provide for Dumasani at this time. We ask, Lord, that you'll bless our own work near our home.

We think of the camps that are taking place at the moment. Youth camps in various places. And we ask for protection. We pray that you'll bless those who lead and those who organize and those who cook, those who drive.

[23 : 20] And, Lord, everyone who has a part to play. We think of the responsibility that the leadership has to take upon itself for the safety and security of our young people.

And we ask, Lord, that they may be very conscious of your own protection and your guidance. And we pray, Lord, that as they come together, when young people come together under your word, that they may be influenced by it.

And that their lives may be changed forever. Lord, these things we bring before you. There are so many, so many issues that we want to bring before you. And we ask that you will, that you will burden us and give us a compulsion to pray and to continue to pray and to watch in the same with thanksgiving in Jesus name.

Amen. We're going to sing together in Psalm 131. It's on page 422 in Saint Psalms. It's the traditional version of the psalm. Psalm 131.

There are only three verses in it. My heart not haughty is, O Lord, my eyes not lofty be, nor do I deal in matters great or things too high for me.

[24 : 29] We're going to sing the whole of Psalm 131 on page 422. And we're going to stand to sing. Amen. We're going to sing. Amen. Amen. I want to sing.

My heart not body is, O Lord, My nights not lofty be, Nor do I deal in matter's day, Nor do I deal in matter's day, Or things too high for me.

I truly have myself behaved With quiet spirit and mild, As child of mother wean my soul, As child of mother wean my soul, Is like a weaned child.

Upon the Lord let all the whole Of Israel rely, Him from the time that present is, Him from the time that present is, Unto eternity.

Let's turn together to the chapter that we read in Matthew chapter 6, And we're going to take up the reading Again at verse 25.

[27 : 06] Matthew 6 and verse 25, Therefore said Jesus, I tell you, Do not be anxious about your life, What you will eat, Or what you will drink, Or about your body, What you will put on, Is not life more than food, And the body more than clothing.

Look at the birds of the air, They neither sow nor reap, Nor gather into barns, And yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And then jumping to verse 33, Seek first the kingdom of God, And his righteousness, And all these things will be added to you.

Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, For tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

You would think that, Jesus being the son of God, That when he opened his mouth, No one would be able to understand What he had to say.

Because as God, His knowledge would be infinite. There's nothing that God doesn't know. So you would expect that, Anything he had to say would be so complicated, That everybody would be lost, Within a couple of seconds.

[28 : 26] But in actual fact, It was the opposite. Jesus had an amazing ability. There was nobody ever, Ever like him before or since. At being able to talk, On the same level, As everyone else.

And that's because, He had been born into a real family, And he had grown up, His earthly father was a carpenter, And probably a relatively poor family. And in the process of his growing up, That he had got to see real life.

He was part of the real world. He watched, He listened, He knew, He interacted with people. And that meant that, When it came time for him to speak, About the kingdom of heaven, Or the kingdom of God, He spoke in terms, That people could understand, Using language that people could understand, And illustrations, That people could understand.

And he also knew, The way that people operated. He knew what, Made them tick, We would say. He knew, The realities of life.

He met people at their point of need, Because he was there himself, And he saw, First hand, The sadnesses, And the tragedies, The illnesses, The sorrows, The anxieties, And the worries that there were, In the real world.

[30 : 00] What a contrast, This world was, To the world which, He had created, At the very beginning. Remember that, As God, He is creator.

He was creator. And he was there, In Eden, When Adam and Eve, Lived in perfection, And peace, And joy, Unbroken, Perfect, Joy, And happiness.

There was, Nothing to spoil, That happiness, In Eden. But now, The world having become, A broken world, Separated from God, Because of, Sin, It was not a happy place, At all.

Full of misery, And sadness. There were people, Who were possessed, By evil spirits. There were people, Who were desperately sick. There were people, Who were dying.

There were people, Who were cheating, And lying, And murdering, One another. That wasn't the world, That God created. That was the world, As it had become, In its rebellion.

[31 : 10] But it was, Into that world, That Jesus came, To rescue that world, By giving his life, On the cross. One of the features, Of humankind, Was, The anxieties, That he saw, In the world, Around him.

The worries, That people had. And so, A major part, Of this great, Sermon on the mount, The sermon on the mount, Of course, Lasts from the beginning, Of chapter 5, To the end of chapter 7, It's the most famous, Sermon in the world, It's the most quoted, Sermon in the world, And it is, A piece of, Of history, That people, Can never get away from, Because in it, They recognize, The profundity, The truth, Of these words, From the son, Of God, Himself.

But it was a sermon, That spoke directly, To where people were, With their needs, And in all their darkneses. And so, This part of it, Speaks to people's, Worries, Their anxieties, Their stresses, Their frustrations.

He's not saying, For a moment, That there are never times, When we shouldn't, That there are never times, When we should worry. Of course, Someone who is, Serious, Diagnosed with a serious illness, Of course, That's going to bring, Desperate distress, Into the person's, Mind. And into that person's life. Someone whose family member, Is killed, Or in danger, Or kidnapped, Or something happens to them. Of course, There are times, Of when worry, Is legitimate, And understandable.

[33 : 00] But that's not the kind, Of worry and stress, That Jesus is talking about here. And in order to understand this, We actually, Have to go back, To what he said before, In verse 19.

Because, In verse 25, He says, Therefore, So that means, That he's following on, From what he started, In verse 19. Where he starts by saying, Do not lay up for yourselves, Treasures on earth. In order to really grasp this, You have to grasp, The very beginning. Do not lay up for yourselves, Treasures on earth, Where moth and rust destroy, And where thieves break in and steal. But lay up for yourselves, Treasures in heaven.

Then he goes on to say, In verse 22, The eye is the lamp of the body. So if your eye is healthy, Your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, Your whole body will be full of darkness. But then he goes on in verse 24, To say something else, To give a different scene. No one can serve two masters, For either he will hate the one, And love the other, Or he will be devoted to the one, And despise the other.

[34 : 03] Now I want to suggest to you, At the very beginning, That what makes most logical sense, Out of this whole passage, Is when we see the connection, Between laying up for yourselves, Treasures on earth, Having a bad eye, And serving money.

There's got to be a connection, Between these three things. They're not divorced. And the connection is this, That we are what we've invested, Our lives in. That's where it begins. He says this, This is what I'm going to speak about.

Here's what I'm, Here's my point. I'm going to explain it, And I'm going to work it through with you, But here's the main point, Of what I'm going to say. Do not lay up for yourselves, Treasures on earth.

And what he's saying to the people around him, Is he says you've got a choice. The choice as to the way you spend, The rest of your life, You've got to see the rest of your life, As an investment.

The same way as if you've got a little bit of money, And you go to the bank, And you ask what the best interest bearing account is, Or if you're going to invest it in some, I remember, When we lived many years ago, In the city, And the door opened one day, I've told you this before, But this was the, Oh, It was one of these really, Really bad winters night, And, No, It was about five o'clock, And the doorbell went, And I opened the door, And there was this poor, Little man at the door, And he was drenched, Because it was just such a terrible night, And he told me who he was, He was a stockbroker, And he was going around the area where we lived, Trying to interest people, In investments, So, I'd actually never spoken to a stockbroker in my life before, And I said, Look, I said, I don't think I'm going to be able to give you any business, I said, But it's a terrible night, I said, How about coming in for a cup of coffee, You can explain what you're doing, So, Took him in, And I think he was quite happy just to do,

[36 : 02] To sit there for half an hour, And to explain, Well, I tell you, I have never forgotten that afternoon, What I learned, This was a world I had no idea about, I had no idea about how stocks and shares work, This guy explained the whole thing to me, And he explained what companies were, Were up and coming companies, And the ones that I should invest in, And I should place some money into, And all the rest of it, And then he said, What job do you do?

And I said, I'm a minister, And he said, I've seen his face just fell completely, Because he knew that he was on a loser, Because there was not much chance of me making him rich on his commission, But in any case, I've never forgotten this, I've never forgotten this, This, This lesson that I got, In half an hour over a cup of coffee, On investment, And it taught me a lot about, It enlightened me, As to passages like this, Where Jesus says, Your life is an investment, And he says, The choice is this, You either store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, Or on earth, Now he says, If you're going to store up, If you're going to invest your life on earth, Prepare for a disappointment, Because all you're ever going to get in the world, Is moths, And rust, And thieves, After all your hard work, After all the energy, And the years, That you put into, Spending your life, For what you think you're going to get out of it, You're not going to get, Take my word for it, Said Jesus, You're only going to be disappointed, However, If you invest in heaven, Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, Where neither moss, Nor rust destroyed, And where thieves do not break in and steal, Then, Then, You will discover, What life truly is about, And that's what Jesus came, He said, I have come to give you life, And have it to the full, Which means that I've come for you to rediscover, What human life is all about, As God created you, For God, Not for ourselves, But for God, Now, This is, Here's the connection between the next scene that he puts, The eye is the lamp of the body, Either you've got a good eye, In which you're going to see everything clearly,

Your perspective is going to be, The right perspective, Or you're going to have a bad eye, And everything is going to be all over the place, If you invest in heaven, You're the rest of your, During the rest of your life, You're going to see everything in its proper perspective, And it's the same, When he came in verse 24, To the third imagery, Which is the two masters, Because if, You invest in this world, You're not only going to be disappointed, You're going to find yourself serving, The wrong master, Now, Perhaps somebody, Listening to Jesus, The same way as someone here, Might say, Well, I don't serve anyone, I am my own man, I am my own woman, I am a free agent, No, Says Jesus, You're not, Whether you like it or not, Whether you agree or not, You're serving someone, You're either serving God, Or else you're serving something else, That's the choice, So there's a link between,

The treasures on earth or heaven, The good eye and the bad eye, In which we see things, Either from a right perspective, Or a wrong perspective, And the right perspective, Is always God's perspective, Or, And, The two masters, Either we serve one, Or the other, So that's Jesus, Laying down, Sometimes, Preachers, They start their sermon, By simply saying, This is what I'm going to say, I'm going to tell you right away, What I'm going to say, And that's what Jesus is doing, He's saying, I'm going to tell you, This is what I'm going to say, Do not lay up for yourselves, Treasures on earth, Lay up for yourselves, Treasures in heaven, And the way to do that, Of course, Is Jesus himself, Coming to faith in Jesus, And accepting, And trusting in what he has done for us, And worshipping him, And asking him to forgive us, And cleanse us, And to create within us, A new heart, But there's got to be more than that, Isn't there?

[40 : 33] And there is, How do you work this principle out, In real life? And that's what Jesus spends, The rest of this chapter talking about, He says, Therefore, He says, I tell you, Do not be anxious about your life, What you will eat, Or what you will drink, Or what you will, Or your body,

What you will put on, Is not life more than food, And the body more than clothing, He's not talking about, Whether or not, You have, Food or clothes, He's talking about, The choices that we make, And the perspectives, And the perspectives, That there are, In everyday life, The priorities, That there are, In living, For the Lord, And I think you'll agree with me, That this is an immensely practical, And an important, Manifesto, For the Christian life, The Christian life, Is an alternative life, It's a different life,

It's a different way of thinking, Not just about God, In that we see him, No longer as an enemy, But as a friend, But in the way we think, Of the world around us, The habits, And the routines, And the expectations, Of the world around us, Our lifestyle, And that's why, Jesus begins, At the very beginning, With the three categories, That amount to our lifestyle, He talks about, What we eat, And what we drink, And what we wear, These are three categories, And as Jesus looked around, At the world around him, He saw that they caused, No end of fuss, And worry, And stress, Sounds familiar, Doesn't it?

Things haven't changed, He could be talking, If he lived in our day, He would say exactly the same, About the way that, Human beings run around, Trying to improve their lifestyle, Trying to better themselves, Trying to fit in, With the world's expectations, Around us, As to what we eat, How we look, What we do, How much we earn, How successful we are, What amounts to, Human value, In this life, This passage is so relevant, It's so up to date, Read it again, When you get home, And apply it, Ask some searching questions, Of yourself, Ask, In what way, Do I stress, Or become stressed out, About my life, Now of course, Life is much more, Than what we eat, Or drink, Or what we wear, But I want us to think, Of these things, When you think about it, It all actually, Our lifestyle, Adds up to these things,

For example, Your job, Why do you do a job? You do a job, In order to get income, In order to maintain, Your lifestyle, What you eat, What you drink, And what you wear, Your house is the same, It's what you eat, Or what you drink, Or what you wear, Your lifestyle, Now remember, That Jesus was not just, Talking to poor people, There were poor people, At that time, But remember that, That, That region, Was actually quite prosperous, It always was, Historically quite prosperous, Because it was a region, Where traders, Used to come from the north, And the south, And they all used to do, Their trading, In the middle east, So we're mistaken, If we think that Jesus, Was only talking to people, Who were on the bread line, He wasn't, He was talking to people, Who, Exercise, Just as much choice, As we do, They may not have had mobile phones, Or laptops, Or iPads, But nevertheless, Their lifestyle,

Was a complicated one, In which they had to manage, Their choices, And their priorities, And that's what makes this passage, So relevant, And so important, I want you to notice, That there are four rhetorical questions, You know what a rhetorical question is, In, In, In, In, In language, It's a question, Where there's an obvious answer, And the obvious answer, Is either yes or no, And the first of these, Is found in verse 25, He says, He says, Is not life, More important than food, And the body, More important, Than clothing, Is there not more to life, Says Jesus, Than food, And the body, More important than clothing, Now remember, He's not talking to people, Who don't have any clothes, He's not talking to people, Who don't have any food, He's talking to people, Who, Who wrestled,

[45 : 23] With the same kind, Of, Of, Trying to fit into, The world around them, And the expectations, Of the world around them, And how much of our, Human life, Is wrapped up, Not with the necessities, Not with the important things, But with the, Issues which are trivial, And yet, Very often, It's these, Trivial issues, That cause us, The most stress, And here is, God's wake up call, And say, Look, Come back to basics, Ask yourself, What life, Is all about, And it extends, To all kinds, Of different areas, Of our lives, It extends to, The way we look, The kind of clothes, That we wear, The way we present ourselves, Our homes, And how, The expectations, Of the world, Can get in the way, For example, You know, I think sometimes, Of people's, People's homes, And the ways, In which people,

People get stressed out, Over the fact that, Oh, Maybe, My house is not as good, As this other person's house, And I can't be asking, Someone in for a cup of coffee, In case they compare my house, With someone else's, Or, You go and buy something new, And you're comparing yourself, With someone else, And you're getting stressed out, About, I wonder if someone else, Has the same thing, Or, Is this, Is somebody going to, Is somebody going to tell, I'm amazed, At, When I read, I get a lot of this information, From my, Internet service provider, AOL, I sometimes read some

of the, Some of the articles, That they have there, It just fascinates me, How, People can, Celebrity culture, Has taken over, So much, Of our thinking, It's one thing, I guess, They didn't have, In Jesus' day, It was the religious men, That were the celebrities, In those days, And, They were, Very prominent, In that time, But today, Of course, In a secular world, It's, It's the, It's the celebrities, The film stars, And the singers, And the, The actors, The actors, The actors, The actors, The actors, And, You know, When these people are seen in public, Not only, Not only are we told where they were, But what kind of dress, Or what kind of shoes, Or what kind of handbag they were, And, And people seem to know how much they cost, And all that kind of stuff, And all of these become our expectations, And one of the most worrying things, Is that our young people, Our, Our current, The current generation is growing up, With these expectations, And so you, If you ask them, What would you like to be, If you, When you grow up, They want to, They say, I want to be famous, I want to win the X factor, I want to go on Britain's Got Talent, And because someone else, Goes on it, Or because they see someone else, Or they hear someone else, Who's got a good voice, And they don't have a good voice, They feel kind of inferior to that, They feel left out, And life is all about, Being in a certain circle of frames, And having, Having a, The latest smartphone, My 10 year old granddaughter, Is stressed out, Because she says that, Everyone in our class, I don't believe her for a moment, Everyone, She says, Everyone in my class has got an iPhone, I don't believe that, But that's her perception, And she feels stressed out, Because of that, So we're raising a whole generation, With expectations, Which are, Which are, Are damaging, And which take our mind, Away, From, What life is all about, Jesus says, Look, Life is not about, What you eat, Or what you drink, Or what you wear, Or what you look like, Or how good a, Footballer you are, Or how successful you are, Life, Is about, Your relationship, To the Lord, You are what God, Has made you, And, If you follow Jesus, You are, As God has restored you, You have a new life, A new beginning, You have peace with God, If you've got Jesus, You've got everything, You don't need any more, And yet, Trying to convince us all of that, Is a very different thing, Altogether, Isn't it? [49 : 48] Is not life, More important than food, And more important than clothing, I remember, And this can, This can creep into the Christian life, So easily, Can't it?

We, I suppose we're all products of, Of the world that we live in, Aren't we? And, There's almost a sense in which, You begin to adopt, If you're not careful, You begin to adopt, The expectations, And the lifestyle, I remember, Once, And this was, Maybe I've told you this before, But, I remember, There's one time in my life, That, I, I bought a brand new car, This was 25 years ago, Way before I went to the ministry, When I was in business, I bought a brand new car, And, I remember when I decided on this, I, It was, It was in 1989, And, We went all the way down to, We lived in Upper Call at the time, And I can tell you, From the moment, I took possession of it, It was just nothing but stress, It was just nothing but worry, I'm not saying there's anything wrong, With buying a brand new car, I'm not saying that at all, But I'm saying, For me, It became an idol, It became the number one object, Of my affections,

This was a Christian, And, I thought about this all the time, Beforehand, And when I got it, And, Every, When I parked it, I would be looking at it, And I would go into this kitchen, And I would come back out, And look at it, And remember the first time, The first night, I left it out on the street, And I couldn't sleep, I was getting up at night, And I was looking out the window, Because I was so afraid, Somebody was going to scratch it, It was completely, Absurd, And, I'll tell you how, And maybe I've told you this before, I'll tell you what the Lord did to me, I had never forgotten this, Took it home, And our kids were small, And our MC, Our Mary Catherine, Was about three years old, And she was playing with her, With her pals out the back, Where the car was, And I looked, I was talking to somebody, I looked out the window, And I kid you not, She picked up this brick, And she walked, For to this day, I do not know why she did it, She walked over to my brand new car, And slammed the brick on the bonnet, And then dragged it, Right across the bonnet, And there was nothing I could do, She didn't do anything wrong, She didn't do anything bad, That was just her playing, I just completely freaked out, But then all of a sudden, It came to me, This is the Lord, And I tell you, To this day, I believe that was the Lord's intervention, Because from that moment, I stopped thinking about my car, It ceased to be an idol, And I believe that, That's what the Lord is telling us, In this chapter, You get stressed out, About the wrong things, The wrong things, Take the priority, Instead, Of enjoying the Lord, Who you serve, And who you know, And who has done more for you, Than anyone else, Can ever possibly do,

The Lord has peculiar ways, Of teaching us lessons, Sometimes in life, And that was my lesson, In idolatry, Maybe I've learned it, I hope, I hope that I have, There are three central truths, That govern our anxieties, According to the Lord, In this passage, First of all, He tells us, In verse 32, That worrying is characteristic, Of an unbelieving world, Verse 32, The Gentiles, Seek after all these things, If you decide on a course, Of being stressed out, About all the wrong things, What you're actually saying, Think about what you're saying, You're actually, You're actually living, As if God didn't exist, The Gentiles didn't believe in God, They didn't worship God, They didn't love God, So when you act that way, What you're saying is, You're leaving God, Out of the equation, Don't ever leave God, Out of the equation, If you're a Christian today, God is the center, He's the number one, Everything that we do,

[54 : 08] Revolves around the Lord, Everything we do, We do for the glory of God, God takes the first place, The predominance, In everything, And if you become stressed out, On all these, Remember, That great passage, In Luke chapter 10, And this happened to a child of God, Martha, Remember Mary and Martha, They invited Jesus, Into their home for dinner, Nothing wrong with that, Remember what happened, Martha was in the kitchen, She was running around, Stress, You can imagine her face was red, And she was just completely, Tired out, With everything that she was trying to do, And she stopped, She came into Jesus, And said, Lord, She said, Do you not care that my sister has left, Because Mary was all the time, She was sitting with Jesus, Listening to what he had to say, And Martha said to him, Do you not care, That my sister has left me alone, To do all the work, At first you think, Well Martha's got a point,

Is Mary being lazy about this, And it's not fair leaving her, But in actual fact, The reality of the situation was, That, Martha, Was fussing about too much, What mattered to her was, The detail, Of what the meal, Was going to be like, For Jesus, And according to Jesus, That was not, The first priority, He said, Martha, Martha, You are troubled about so many things, But Mary, Has chosen the good thing, For Mary, There was a choice between what was good, And what was better, And it's the same with ourselves tonight, Today, Our choice was between, Very often between, What is good, And what is better, So he says, There are three central truths, That govern our ends, Worrying is characteristic, Of an unbelieving world, Secondly, He tells us in verse 32, That your heavenly father, Knows,

What you need, He knows everything, About so often, I think we live our lives, And we live our lives, As if God wasn't there, Do we take the Lord, Into everything, Do we ask the Lord, To lead us, And to guide us, In everything, Including our thoughts, Our decisions, Our choices, Our priorities, Do we ask him, To shape them, On from a day to day basis, And then the third thing, Was that if he clothes the grass, And feeds the birds, Will he not much more provide for you, Verse 26, And verse 30, The argument of course is, You can see where Jesus is going, If God, Look at the, Come out into the countryside, Says Jesus, Let's take a wee, Let's take, Let's take a break, And come with me, Into the countryside, First of all, Look up, What do you see?

You see birds, They're flying around, They're nesting, They're feeding, They're going from tree to tree, You can see this in the castle grounds, And you can see this on the beach, Or whatever, Are they, Are they stressing?

No they're not, Why? Because the, The father in heaven, Who made them, Provides for them, It's the same with the lily of the field, Look down, Look at the grass of the field, Look at the lily, Look at how beautiful, That plant is, That flower is, I tell you, Said Jesus, Compare that with Solomon, In all his glory, And look at all the effort, And energy, That Solomon put into, His buildings, And his gold, And his, And his edifices, And his carvings, And the architecture of his palace, He says, It's like night and day, No comparison, Said Jesus, Because God clothes, The lily of the field, Now, Said Jesus, If God, Makes a point, Of providing, For the lily of the field, And the birds of the air, Will he not much more, Are you not, First of all, Are you not of more value, Than them,

[58 : 25] Rhetorical question, Yes we are, But there's a deeper point, Than that, Will God not, Much more, Clothe you, You who follow me, You who are my disciples, You for whom, God is your heavenly father, A father, A father, Is someone who provides, For his children, In every respect, And we lose sight of that, So easily, At least they did, In Jesus' day, But the apostle Paul, Goes one step further, And he puts it this way, And this is what we have, Through the, By way of the rest, Of the new testament, Because what he says is, If God did not, Spare his own son, Here's the crowning, Argument of all, If God did not, Spare his own son, But gave him up, For us all, How will he not, Also freely,

With him, Give us all things, The truth is, That in Christ today, If you and I belong to Jesus, Then we have everything, And all our provisions, Are met, He has withheld, No good thing, From those, Who love, Him, I want to, Close this morning, By reminding, Each one of us, That salvation, Is holistic, That means that, God has saved us, As a whole, Not just my soul, Salvation is not just, Being a Christian, It's not just about, My sins being forgiven, And who cares, About the rest of my life, That's not the way, It is as a Christian, God is concerned, About every aspect, Of my Christian life, My finances, Belong to God, My house, Belongs to God, My bank balance, Belongs to him, My health, Belongs to God, He is in control, My children, My wife, My work, He's led me, Day by day, He knows the irritations, And the burdens, And the uncertainties, Of life, He knows my temperament, And the extent, To which I can cope, With the various challenges, From a day to day basis, He accepts me, As I am, I don't have to try, And be someone else, For him, I don't have to look, A certain way, I don't have to impress, God, In any way, To him, It doesn't matter, How old I am, He's not ageist, He's not racist, He's not, Intelligent, My worth is not, The same way as it is, Like to a boss, Matter of what I can achieve, My health, Is in his hands, My future is in his hands, Whatever he chooses to happen, To me, He knows how to make, All things, Work together, For good, And when we're accepted, By him, Then surely, That's all we need, Why do we spend, Our lives either, Trying to be somebody, We're not, Or anticipating, Some future event, That may not happen, Or dwell upon, Some past event, That you can't change, And you end up, Failing, To enjoy, God, Let's ask him today, To turn our eyes afresh, Upon Jesus, To look full, In his, Wonderful face, And the things of earth, Will grow strangely dim, In the light, Of his glory, And grace, Let's bow our heads, In prayer, Our father in heaven, We ask lord, That you will, Take your word, And open up our heart, And dwell, In our heart, May your word dwell, And rule, And govern, Our hearts, In Jesus name, Amen,

Psalm 62, To close with, It's the traditional version, It's on page 295, Psalm 62, From verse 9, We're going to sing, The last four verses, Verse 9, To verse 12, Surely mean men are vanity, And great men are a lie, In balance laid, They wholly are more light, Than vanity, Trust ye not in oppression, And robbery be not vain, On wealth set not your hearts, When as increased is your gain, Psalm 62, Verse 9, Down to verse 12, The last four verses, Surely mean men are vanity, We're going to sing, To live, To live, Mean men are vanity, And great men are a lie,

[63 : 33] In balance laid, In balance laid, For life and vanity, Trust ye not in oppression, In love, In love, Reveal be not vain, On wealth set not your hearts, When as increased is your gain, On wealth is spoken once to me, Nay this I heard again,

The power to almighty God, The Lord doth have pertain, In mercy also unto thee, Belongs, O Lord, alone, For love according to his word, Rewardeth everyone, And may the grace of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, The love of God the Father, And the communion and fellowship of the Holy Spirit, Rest on and abide with each one of us, Both now and always.
Amen. Amen. Amen.