

Sermon on the Mount: Fearless Faith for Faithless Fears

by J. Glyn Owen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and trusting in God's provision for our needs.

Duration: 52:21

Scripture: Matthew 6:19

Topics: "Sermon on the Mount"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of taking care of the needs of others, as Jesus taught. He highlights that we will be judged by God based on whether we have fed the hungry, clothed the naked, given drink to the thirsty, and visited the sick and imprisoned. The speaker also shares a personal testimony of how he trusted in God's faithfulness to provide for his needs, even when he didn't have the money to pay his college fees. The sermon concludes with the assurance that God will take care of our necessities and that worrying is unnecessary and unreasonable, as God knows all our needs and will make provision for us.

Transcript

Continuing our process of learning from the Sermon on the Mount, we turn this morning to the passage that is next on the agenda. The passage beginning with verse 25 in chapter 6 and concluding to verse 34, that is to the end of the chapter. We have entitled our message Fearless Faith for Faithless Fears.

In the ongoing pursuit for what Jesus referred to in chapter 5 and verse 20 as a quality of righteousness that exceeds that of the teachers of the law and of the Pharisees, we are taught here in Matthew 6, 19 to 24, the entire passage read for us this morning, that we must recognize the infinite distinction of value between earthly and heavenly treasures. This is a basic lesson in the Christian life and living. There is something to be distinguished.

And having learned to distinguish between them and their respective values, we must then learn to seek only such treasures as, in the words of Jesus, can be laid up for us in heaven above. That's his language, not mine. The reasons given, of course, are evident.

You've only to look at the passage. The reasons for such a choice are, one, earthly treasures do not last nor satisfy, verses 19 to 21. Secondly, their pursuit all too easily distorts or darkens our vision.

The pursuit of material things makes our spiritual vision hazy, to say the least. And then thirdly, the search for material treasures can all too easily so influence us that we allow them to occupy that place in our hearts and in our lives that was meant and is meant only for God. And it is the easiest thing possible in this materialistic age to allow material things to occupy that central place in our thinking, in our planning, in our motivating, in every aspect of our inner life and of our outward behavior.

Now it is only when we have grasped with our minds the comparative durability of the two treasures, corruptible and incorruptible, the comparative usefulness of the two eyes, the eye that sees clearly and the eye that is darkened, and then the comparative worth and worthiness of the two masters, money or God, it's only when we have come to a positive conclusion and a Christian conclusion concerning these alternatives that we are prepared to make the choice and the decision to which Jesus calls us here. Having made our choice to lay up our treasures in heaven rather than upon earth, now the question arises, who's going to care for me? Who's going to look after me? How am I going to cope if my primary duty in life, as Jesus says it toward the end of the passage before us today, seek first of all, give primary a place to the quest for the kingdom of God and His righteousness. If we're to do that, who's going to look after me? Now that's the question that each one of us naturally asks.

I need food, I need clothing, I need this and I need that, and who's going to look after me? Now in this passage Jesus tells us that we have nothing whatsoever to worry about. If we are among those who seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, then, says Jesus, with all His authority, His divine authority, He says, look, your heavenly Father not only knows that you have need of all these things, but the kingdom of God and His righteousness will be given you and all these things that He knows you need will be added to you as well. I have nothing new to say to you good people this morning.

I'm sure you know this passage as well as I do, but perhaps we need to listen to it. Perhaps we need to bring our ears down to the voice of God as it comes over the lips of His Son and comes down to yours by the power of the Spirit and take this message in yet again. For if I, if I don't misread the situation, anxiety is not a thing of the past.

Anxiety is a companion of all too many of us gathered perhaps within these walls today. We are afraid to live and if the truth were only told, many of us are afraid to die. And we really do not know what it is to live without anxiety.

Now Jesus, our Lord Jesus Christ tells us, this is the way. And He drives home His message in many different ways. Now, it is against the background of such teaching that Jesus proceeds to address Himself to the matter of anxiety.

He is not, of course, and we must make this clear, He is not here saying that there are no causes of concern in human life. I'm not sure whether we ought to use the word worry there or not. Perhaps we can use the word even worry in a certain sense.

There are certain things that we may rightly worry about in the sense of being very concerned about. And Jesus does not mean to minimize that. If He did, He would be unrealistic and He would be contradicting Himself.

There is unquestionably a kind of worry or concern which, as a matter of fact, is hardly separable from the honest pursuit of righteousness and the kingdom of God. If you are seeking the gift of righteousness to be served, if you are seeking that righteousness be applied throughout the world and no one be denied justice, then surely you are anxious about it, you are concerned about it. And I believe it is something that ought to be weighing on every Christian heart this morning, that there are so many multitudes of men and women who really have never known a day when justice is done to them.

Not only in one part of the world, but in many parts. But there are other things. How can any thinking person not worry, using the word in one sense, the sense of genuine concern, how can any thinking person not worry, in one sense, about the spread of moral pollution in our society? Or the accepted promiscuity that has resulted in venereal disease of epidemic proportions, not only in North America, but in other parts of the world, where authorities simply do not know what to do.

Are you not concerned about that? Or the pollution of the air? If not for ourselves, then for our children's sake. Have we no concern? Are we not worried, in that sense, about these things? Or then again, who can, with utter nonchalance and unconcern, look at the manner in which the world of today breeds thugs and murderers and mutilators of human life, who will chase their victims into the air, across the sea, underground, here, there, everywhere. Does not that concern us? Do we not feel disturbed in our sleep even, as well as in our waking moment? Who can remain less than deeply anxious, particularly in this context, when righteousness, as we've indicated, or justice, is denied to so many people today.

The basic things of life are denied. Let it be clear that Jesus is not talking about such legitimate concerns of all reasonable creatures. He's addressing His people.

He's addressing His followers. He's addressing the subjects of His kingdom. Now mark that.

He's addressing those who are members of the kingdom of heaven, subjects of the kingdom of heaven, who say that they are under His authority and have received His rule and His life and His direction. And He says to them that there is no need whatsoever for any crippling anxiety, any unsettling disquietude, any fear that cripples your activity or your clear thinking. There is no need for these things at all in the lives of men and women who obey Him and who go out into life seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.

This is a word, you see, to the obedient, not to the disobedient. There are many disobedient saints who are expecting what they have no right to expect. Now God is merciful.

He causes His Son to rise upon the just and the unjust, but the unjust has no right to expect that, nor even the just. He is merciful beyond all measure towards the unworthy, but the unworthy have no right to expect that. But God has given His people certain promises that they may expect and they may launch out into a life of obedience, believing that God will keep His word.

And this is the life of faith. But it is a life with promises that are guilt-edged only to the obedient. Seek ye first.

Are you doing that? The kingdom of God and His righteousness? Then all these things that Jesus speaks about in the context, they'll be added to you. Go on laying up your treasures in heaven. Seek heavenly treasures and in process you will find that you have a heavenly Father that cares for your need.

I don't know everybody in our service this morning. It's such a joy to have so many visiting friends among us on this particular morning when it's not a very sunny morning. Let me welcome you as Mr. Lowe has already done.

But of the people that I know here this morning, I could pick out individuals in this congregation and ask them to stand up and say, When you gave your all to seek first of all the kingdom of God and His righteousness and launched out, what happened to you? Did not this become true? And I look at people from the front to the back and I see men and women who would be ready to say that it was only when they began to do this that God became the grand reality that He is. In all His fatherhood and might and mercy. You have not come to know God when you only know the doctrine about Him.

You have not come to know God when you simply believe what the Bible says that He is the almighty, all-sufficient, all-gracious God. You've come to know Him when you've acted upon His commands, expecting His promises, and you discover that He's a covenant-keeping God. I shall never forget, though I hadn't meant to say this this morning, how this was brought home to me.

For the first time in my life as a Christian, when the Lord had saved me and called me to follow Him into some kind of full-time work. And the only member of my family that understood what had happened to me spiritually was my grandfather on my mother's side. I've mentioned this to one or two of you.

And he understood it. And when everyone else was proving a bit difficult, he said to me, It's all right, Glyn, he said, I'll pay your fees throughout your college days, however long it takes you to train for the Lord's work. I'll pay, I'll see to that.

He wasn't rich. He says, I'll see to that. And I praised the Lord, and I went to college.

My third day in college, I had a telegram to say, Your grandfather has suddenly gone to be with the Lord. And I was left without the first check. And you know, it's a great thing, a simple thing maybe.

Some of you, of course, have gone much wider than this, and you would have much more to say. But for a young fellow there in college, and I knew that God had called me, I said to myself, Now what? Till I realized that God was inviting me to prove his faithfulness. And to me, it's a tremendous thrill to be able to say that I was never late in paying my fees.

Not a day, not an hour. Sometimes I did not have them the night before. But I never had to eat humble pie, because I trusted in the Lord.

The Lord will provide. Now I only say that not to hold up myself as an example, but I say it in order to bear testimony to the fact, from my little experience, that God is faithful. So then we come to the first major statement of the passage.

It is the major statement of the passage. It's a command. Jesus prohibits anxiety in his people.

He says, Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink, or about your body, what you will wear. The necessities of life, says our Lord Jesus, are in the covenant promises. You see to the things to which God has called you and commissioned you, and God will see to the things that you need.

Maybe, of course, you're expecting too much out of life. Maybe you want things from life that God has not meant you to have. Well, he doesn't promise those.

But the things that you need, and let us be honest and let us be fair and consistent and true. God never, very rarely at any rate, gives us bread without jam. And sometimes the jam is as thick as the bread.

He gives good measure, pressed down and running over. He does not withhold his mercies, but he is lavish to those who trust in him. So Jesus prohibits anxiety in his people.

Did you know that? I was brought up with a jerk. You know, you learn a lesson in life and then you forget it, or it becomes dim. I was pulled up with an awful jerk when one day in reading Wesley's journals, I came across this statement from John Wesley, I could as easily worry as I can commit adultery, as I could commit adultery.

I said, John Wesley, what are you saying? What he is saying is that it is as much a sin for a believing man and woman to live in a condition of cocking, heart-wearying anxiety about the necessities of life, as it is for that man to commit adultery if he is married. Now, some further clarification. Actually this is a passage that really can be misunderstood in many, many ways.

And I don't want anybody to have a false guilt trip arising out of what I'm saying this morning. I believe that most of us who have been called of the Lord may feel guilty about certain things here. But I don't want any false guilt to arise out of what I'm saying.

Neither did Jesus, of course, and that's the important thing. Over and above what I've already said, we need to note that this kind of worry is to be sharply distinguished from a number of things. First of all, it's to be distinguished from thoughtlessness or total lack of forethought.

You know, there is a kind of attitude, there is a kind of person who refuses to worry about anything because he refuses to face the facts. And he shuts everything out of his mind and he says, I'm perfectly happy. Jesus is not talking about that kind of person.

Neither is he talking about the kind of person who for one reason or another refuses to make any provision for tomorrow. It's very unfortunate that the King James translation of the verb, as some of you will know, you're probably reading the King James this morning, it says, take no thought for the morrow. Just take no thought about it.

Don't think about it. Now that's not, brothers and sisters, what Jesus said. And I'm sorry to have to say it, but there the King James is really misleading.

A moment's reflection will suffice to correct the false notion that Jesus discouraged prudent forethought. He forcefully warned people to prepare for certain things ahead, to prepare for the judgment, to prepare for his coming, to prepare for a myriad of things. He told his disciples to be prepared to go out and to prepare themselves to go out to preach the word, to make disciples.

And you remember that in one or two places the illustrations he used are significant. He likened the kind of preparation that was required to the wisdom of a builder, setting down to work accurate estimates of his needs before starting on a building venture. You see, that's prudent forethought he's asking for.

Or again, to a king who carefully assessed the opposition and counted his own resources to make sure that he had adequate military resources before he committed himself to war. See what Jesus is saying. You really need to think ahead of tomorrow and make such provisions as you can for the exigencies that you can foresee.

He's not telling us you don't need to do anything. That would be contrary to the Old Testament teaching, contrary to what the epistles tell us. In the Old Testament, in the book of Proverbs, for example, the ant, the little ant of all creatures, is held up and we're told, go to the ant, you sluggard.

Look at the way the ant gathers its food together during harvest time and during summertime so that when the day of need comes, it's got its stock ready enough for one season. And yet the ant doesn't stock ahead for two or three years. But it stocks ahead for as long as the little creature can foresee.

Now, I don't know the way the ant reasons, but at least I know that the Old Testament holds up this principle. So prudent forethought is not forbidden. Moreover, that same kind of forethought is encouraged in the epistles of Paul and elsewhere in the New Testament.

Scripture not only stresses that work is a divine institution, Genesis 3, 17 to 19, but also the human responsibility to work in order to provide for the needs of others. Today and tomorrow and as far as we can foresee. Let me give you one or two illustrations.

In writing to the Thessalonian church in the second letter, chapter 3, Paul says this. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, he writes, We command you, brothers, to keep away from every brother who is idle. Idle, of course.

Idle by choice, not by necessity. When there are people who are forced to be idle because of unemployment, that's a different cup of tea. We are to get near to them and help bear their burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ.

But when men are idle, out of choice, and they disdain the divine ordinance of work, says Paul, keep away from them. And then later on again in the same chapter, he says, we hear that some among you are idle. They're not busy, they are busy bodies.

Such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the bread they eat. And he puts it even more forcefully, I think in 1 Timothy 5.8. He says, if anyone does not provide for his own relatives and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. Now, I am quoting these passages in order that no one should have a false guilt.

Work is an ordinance of God. We are responsible to use the energy and the gifts that God has given us in so far as we can to make provision for ourselves. And the apostle Paul, so often, paid his own way as he preached the gospel by making tents.

He used the gifts that God had given him. He foresaw that he would need bread and a little bit of butter and some clothes and a few parchments every now and again, though he lived on such a meager subsistence. But he made provision for it.

The passage before us, therefore, needs to be carefully and sensitively handled. Some have made our Lord's words appear as if his followers are here commanded to be careless and thoughtless of their own and of others' needs. Brothers and sisters, that is not so.

That is a travesty of the truth. That is a basic contradiction of the attitude, actions and teaching of our Lord. He says that you and I will be judged by God at last according to whether or not we fed the hungry.

And you can't feed the hungry out of nothing. Whether we clothed the naked. And you can't clothe the naked if you are not doing something to make such provision.

Whether we gave drink to the thirsty. Whether we visited the sick and the imprisoned in His name. We will be judged by this kind of thing.

So, you see, it's not just a matter of forget all the needs of your own self and your family and everybody. Just go on looking to the Lord. No, no.

The Lord expects us to work. He expects us to labor. He expects us to plan.

He expects us to do what we can. He expects reasonable forethought. Nevertheless, as you go out into a hostile world to give priority to the search for God's kingdom and righteousness, you don't need to worry about food and drink and what you have to eat.

The God of the covenant, says the Lord Jesus Christ, has all this in mind. He knows all your needs and He will make provision for you. Now, what are our Lord's reasons for saying this? How does He drive it home? And of course, you must read more of this passage on your own than I can possibly expand now.

But it's rather wonderful really. It is a marvelous passage of Scripture. Why shouldn't I worry? Why shouldn't you believer worry? Why shouldn't we worry? It's so natural.

Everybody worries. Why shouldn't I worry? Why can't I enjoy the luxury of worrying every now and again? Well now, I want to mention three things and I can't deal with them at any length at all. But I want to mention three things.

First of all, anxiety is sheer folly for subjects of God's kingdom. And all absorbing anxiety of the type we are here considering, that Jesus here had in mind, is utterly foolish. Now that's where He starts.

It is totally unnecessary and it is inconsistent, both with our present position in His kingdom and in His care, and with our ultimate prospect at the consummation of His kingdom. It is unworthy. It is unnecessary.

It is sheer folly. It is totally unnecessary and it is inconsistent, both with our present position in His kingdom and in His care, and with our ultimate prospect at the consummation of His kingdom. It is unworthy.

It is unnecessary. It is sheer folly. Now Jesus appears to stress two aspects of this folly.

One, perhaps I can put it like this, such anxiety is unreasonable. A second part of verse 25. Is not life more important or of more value than food? And is not the body more important than clothes? You say, how does that relate to the subject? Well, the point is this.

Who gave you life? Who gave me life? Of course, we believe that life came from God. God gave us life. And life is greater than the maintenance of life, than the provisions for living.

Now what our Lord is saying is this. It is utterly unreasonable to believe that God, who made all things and sustains all things, in whose hands and under whose control the breath of every man and woman remains, it is inconsistent to believe that He gave us the larger gift of life and will not give us adequate food and

enough to clothe ourselves and to drink. Whilst we are involved in His business.

You see, it doesn't make sense. It makes God an awful being. It reflects upon the very character and nature of God.

It undermines the whole teaching of Jesus about God. The God whom I represent, says Jesus in other words, couldn't act like that. He's given you the greater.

There is no reason whatsoever why He will not give you the lesser. Clothes on your back, food for your stomach and drink. He's given you life.

This is something that those committed to the obedience of His word need to be assured of. Now this applies to everybody. But I'm quite sure it has a special application to those among us this morning that are contemplating moving into a country to serve the Lord where normal provisions that we would have here are not always available.

But here is a gilt-edged promise of our almighty and omnipotent God given through His co-equal Son, written into His word by the Spirit. God knows that He will care for the necessities of life. Moreover, such anxiety is as thoughtless as it is unreasonable.

It shows that we're not thinking. Jesus puts it like this. The beginning of verse 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.

Such anxiety is thoughtless, says Jesus, in that it does not learn from God's faithfulness to His subhuman creatures. The birds of the air, for example. Jesus bids His followers take a good look at the birds and consider something that perhaps they're quite familiar with but it just hasn't come home yet.

It just hasn't hit them between the eyes. Intellectually they know about it, but as a principle of living, it's not gone through yet. What is that? Observe intently, is one translation of the verb used here.

Look into this matter. God feeds the birds of the air. Are you of not much more value than many birds? Now the significant fact is that He who is the Christian's heavenly Father, and that's the thing I want to come to stress.

He who is the Christian's heavenly Father, the Bible never says that God is the Father of the birds. He's their creator. The Bible never says that God is the Father of the creatures He has made.

He's their creator and He's their preserver. But believer, you men and women that have come into the kingdom through the throes of the Beatitudes, humbled in spirit, confessing your sins, learning something of purity of heart and a search after righteousness, with you it is different. You're His children.

He cares for the sparrows as their creator. But He's your Father. He's your Father, Christian.

He's your Father by night. When you wake up in the middle of the night and you don't know what to think about and something's haunting you about tomorrow or yesterday or a year ago or a year ends, He's your Father, man. He's your Father, sister.

He's your Father if you're a Christian. And your Heavenly Father cares for His humblest creatures, a bird fluttering in the air, a little sparrow worth only less than a farthing on the market. He cares for them.

It is unreasonable to think that He will not care for you, whom He has bought with the blood of His Son, whom He indwells by His co-equal Holy Spirit. It's thoughtless. And it's an indictment of His character and of His goodness, you see.

It's thoughtless. And it's reckless thoughtlessness. Well did John Newton sing, The birds without barn and storehouse are fed.

From them let us learn to trust for our bread. His saints, what is fitting, shall ne'er be denied, so long as it is written, The Lord will provide. Or that little bit of doggerel that puts it better, I believe, shows my simplicity of taste, may not be as, it may not be quite as accurate theologically on every point, nor indeed poetry.

But oh, it puts it beautifully. You know it, said the sparrow to the robin. I would dearly like to know how these thoughtless human beings rush about and worry so, said the robin to the sparrow.

I think surely it must be that they have no Heavenly Father such as cares for you and me. Now I believe, as I've indicated, that it is theologically incorrect to say that God is father to the sparrows, or the robin for that matter. But he's their creator and he has a creative interest in them.

But the thrust of that little bit of doggerel is true. He's your father and mine in Christ. Are you not much more valuable than they? 626, and we must reply, yes, according to both revelation and redemption.

Yes, we don't understand it. When we look at our own hearts and we look at our own lives, we don't understand it. But it is true we were made after His image and we were redeemed for that image to be renewed in us.

And He's promised us that we shall live with Him forever. We mean something to God and we are redeemed with His blood and indwelt by His Spirit and the recipients of His Word. Very, very well then.

Makes nonsense to doubt Him. The second thing, anxiety is an exercise in sheer futility anyway. I believe Jesus had a sense of humor too.

Though He could have been speaking these words very soberly to proud people, I don't know. But He says, who of you by worrying can add, and the translation here is uncertain, a single hour to your life or a single inch to your height, never mind which it means, who of you can add anything to your life? Was that what He said? No. Can I repeat it? What did Jesus say? Well, let me put it in a negative and a positive.

Jesus did not say that you cannot add a little under any circumstances to the length of your life. Had He said that, medical science would have contradicted Him. Because we know that over the past 100 years the expectation of life has expanded.

The expectation of life, especially in some parts of the world, is far greater today than it was 10, 20 years ago. But Jesus didn't say that. What did He say? Well, listen to His words.

Which of you, by worrying, by worrying, can add a single hour to your life? That's what He said. Go on and worry. But what's the good of it? It'll not add an hour to your life.

It'll not add a moment to your life. Not worrying per se. If worrying will do anything, it'll take away from your life.

It may give you an ulcer, an extra one. It may be partially responsible for a heart attack. It may add to this or add to that.

But it certainly won't add to your life. It's more likely to take away from it than to add to it. That's what Jesus said.

In other words, worry anyway, whether it be for a Christian or a non-Christian, is sheer futility. This is most challenging when you realize how much time, energy, thought and emotion is devoured by anxious care. It can nevertheless do nothing to prolong anyone's life at any time.

It can only shorten it. It cannot sweeten it, in the least, but only sour it. Worry is as fruitless and futile as it is foolish.

It cannot undo your yesterdays, nor help your todays or your tomorrows. Its sole and unvarying contribution is that it mars our todays and casts a deadly shadow over our tomorrows before tomorrow is born. Lastly, anxiety is not only foolish and futile, but it is faithless.

Now to an unbeliever, I was preaching this morning to professing unbelievers. Well now, of course, this wouldn't mean very much. But if, as I believe most of the people here this morning, trust Jesus Christ as personal Savior and Lord, if you acknowledge Him as your own personal Savior, and you're a committed Christian, and you want to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, then the last thing in the world you really want is to be faithless with regard to your Heavenly Father.

And to maintain this condition of anxiety about basic things whilst you are involved in the Lord's work is a matter of faithlessness. And Jesus says so later on, Oh you, He says, of little, of minutest faith. You're doing something that dilutes your faith even if it does not slay it.

To worry about clothing is as thoughtless as was the anxiety about food already mentioned. Who clothed the lilies of the field, says Jesus. Possibly He was talking about the ordinary flowers of the field.

Commentators differ. Or was it the lily of, one of the lilies? Doesn't matter. But there was beauty.

A little flower blossoming in all its glory, whatever the flower was. Who clothed it, says Jesus? Your Heavenly Father, Christian. Such beauty as they had was not produced by worrying or by fretting, by running around in circles.

Jesus uses the word spinning here. I rather like that as a comment upon many lives. You know, we go around in circles, spinning, heedlessly, aimlessly, thoughtlessly.

We're just running around in circles hoping for the best. It's the manifestation of a heart that knows not rest in God. So what? Verse 30, If that is how God clothed the grass of the field which is here today and tomorrow dies, no, no, no, no, no, that's not what He said.

And tomorrow is thrown into the oven, into the fire. Will He not much more clothe you who are seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness? Will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? Failure to see this and then to act upon it is simply to be faithless. And faithlessness is characteristic of the pagan world.

And this, of course, I believe, is one of the last knocks that Jesus gives with His hammer on the nail as He hammers the truth home. Look, He says, that's the characteristic of the pagan world. What is the characteristic of the pagan world? You and I worship the triune God of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

The pagan world, generally speaking, says, Jesus worships at the shrine of a trinity too. But the trinity is this, eating what they eat, what they drink, what they wear. And that is the characteristic of the pagan world around, eating, drinking and wearing.

It's the life of the body of the carcass. None of the soul. Now, says Jesus, when you cease to have faith in God, you know what you've done? Do you know what you've done, child of God? You come right down to the level of the pagan that knows not God.

You are living as one that knows nothing of God, nothing of His fatherhood, nothing of His tenderness, nothing of His greatness, nothing of His immutability, nothing of His covenant. You're living in ignorance of God. Far from being a witness for Him, you're a witness against Him.

Brother and sister in Christ, fellow citizens of the heavenly kingdom, subjects of the rule of God, we should not be anxious about anything. In so far as we should be anxious, it should be a concern to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all that that implies for ourselves and others. We should cast all our anxieties upon Him, because as Peter says, He cares for us.

Can we not do that today? Can we not start afresh a life like that? Will you not, will you not in the quietness of your heart, will you not make a covenant with God this morning to aim more honestly and consistently at this? Shall we not do that? Can we not do it? Ought we not? Of course we should. Then let's do it. As a hymn that we don't often sing, and one of its stanzas goes like this, We have not known Thee as we ought, Nor learned Thy wisdom, grace, and power.

The things of earth have filled our thought And trifles of the passing hour. Lord, give us light, Thy truth to see, And make us wise in knowing Thee. God wants us to know Him, and to know Him we must be a trusting, believing people, resting in Himself and His promises.

Let us pray. Dear Heavenly Father, Honesty requires of us to confess in response to your word that we have not lived on this plane very much. It may be that some of us have never come, never begun, and we've never seen the need to trust in you because we've got so many material things, and we've never risked the loss of them for the sake of your kingdom.

And we've never seen that in the midst of our material things our life is altogether in your hands. Draw us into a relationship of faith with yourself. Now.

Then, our Father, some of us have missed the glory of that. Perhaps we once experienced it, and we've not consistently enjoyed it and lived up to it. We acknowledge our faults, our sins.

Forgive us, Lord, and forgive us especially that we have descended to live on the level of the pagan unbelievers of this twentieth century in thinking of the body as the end of everything and of material things as the be-all, end-all of life. God, forgive us. By your Holy Spirit and your word, come with us as we go out from here today, and do not allow us to shrug this word of the Savior's, to shrug it off and run away from it.

Follow us, we pray, into this afternoon. Let no drowsiness of body or of mind permit us to evade the challenge of your word. Rather, make us men and women of faith for the glory of your name, for the extension of your kingdom of righteousness and peace, through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord.

Amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/4/SID4616.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/j-glyn-owen/sermon-on-the-mount-fearless-faith-for-faithless-fears/>

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