

# The Cure for Anxious Care

by Paris Reidhead

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of trusting in God's provision and avoiding anxious care, which can lead to the destruction of faith and trust in God.*

**Duration:** 36:05

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:24-28, Romans 8:12, Romans 11:11

**Topics:** "Anxious Care"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of not setting one's goal solely on money. He shares a story about John Wesley's sermon, where the first point was to save all the money one can, but the third point was to give all that one can. The preacher highlights the need for people that God can trust and bless in our generation. He then focuses on the cure for anxious care, referencing Matthew 6:24-32, where Jesus teaches about not being anxious about food, drink, or clothing, as God takes care of the birds of the air and the lilies of the field. The preacher encourages proper concern but warns against excessive worry, using the example of Israel's journey from slavery to the promised land as a pattern for us.

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## Transcript

Matthew chapter 6 verses 24 to 32. I'll ask you to listen carefully while I read, and we give our attention for a few minutes to this important portion of this word, and to the theme, The Cure for Anxious Care. No man can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to the one and despise the other.

He cannot serve God and man. Therefore I say unto you, take no thought, no anxious care, for your life what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink, nor yet for your body what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment, with all the fowls of the air? For they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns, yet your heavenly Father feedeth them.

Are ye not much better than they? Which of you, by taking thought, can add one cubit unto his stature? Or why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow. They toil not, neither do they fit, and yet I say unto you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Therefore, if God so pulled the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore, take no anxious care saying, what shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or wherewithal shall we be clothed? For after all these things do the Gentiles seek, for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have needs of these things.

Last week we considered the right relationship to wealth. Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth, for moth and rust corrupts, for thieves break through and steal. Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven.

We saw in this that the purpose of our life is to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ in every hour of the day and every activity of the day. Worrying over poverty, however, is as fatal to spiritual fruitfulness as is groping over wealth. I am of the opinion that there has been almost as much harm committed by Christians against the presence of Christ by their worry over poverty, over the needs of life, as there has been committed by the wealth in their satisfaction and pleasure in the money.

And therefore, we would be able to trace the reason why there is so little profit to preaching. And what a grief it is to those of us that labor in the word, to realize that congregations hear truth, which when believed, is able to marvelously transform their lives. But they somehow consent to it, accept it, and forget about it.

One of the most amazing things in this regard was my first impression after, when I came into this society of which I am so glad to be a part, six years ago. For I've only been in the Christian Missionary Alliance since 1953. I had found the truth that I had been sharing with you, not from school or from books.

People ask me what the contact I've had with the Alliance was Dr. Simpson, and I say, well there's one reason, one qualification, perhaps two, for my being pastor of the Gospel Tabernacle Church, and those reasons are as follows. Neither Dr. Simpson nor I went to NIAC, that's the one. And the second is that neither of us got our understanding of the scripture from books that had been written about it, or from schools that were established to train and to teach.

It was with a hungry heart against all the prejudices of my indoctrination, that I moved into the word of God and came out here. Now that's the grace of God. I rejoiced in that because I didn't know where I'd come out.

My dear friend said, don't ever leave us, the only place you can go is into the ditch of fanaticism. I was in the ditch of dead orthodoxy and I decided that nothing could be worse than that, and so move I must, and then I came here. And it cost, it was a great price, but great joy and great blessing.

Then I began to share these truths with our people, and to my amazement they sat there and said, uh-huh, that's it, yes sir, he's kosher, that's what we believe, that's it, that's good, sound teaching, and they went home and did nothing about it. And I've been able to fill all that I had in order that the glory and wonder of it might become mine. And I wondered how can this thing be? The same truth, the same marvelous privilege and glorious relationship is just doctrine to some when it's right to others.

Why should it be? And I think I know something of the answer. For in the 13th chapter of Matthew and the 22nd verse, our Lord refers to the ineffectualness of much preaching by his analogy of the sowing of the seed. But in this 22nd verse, he speaks of that which is sown among the poor.

Some is sown on stony ground and some is sown one place and another, but he doesn't say anything about the ground. The ground is apparently good, it is capable of bearing vegetation. But in this ground, that ought to have received the seed, there is a previous growth, the growth of corn.

Notice the word. He also that received seed among the poor is he that heareth the word and the care of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word and become untruthful. And here we have the reason why so much preaching is profitless to those that hear it.

It's sown among poor. The concern for how will I get the washing done? When will I get the ironing done? Will we have food enough for breakfast? Will I get plenty enough to pay the rent? And this pressure of the circumstances of life and the needs of life are such that the truth that is sown springs up only to find it is choked out by a previous growth. And thus we have reason to see why so much preaching produces so little result.

Anxious care, worry, worry is in truth staying on trouble when it isn't coming due. And the consequence of it is that it has just impoverished the life of God's people. And we find that it is accepted as being more or less of a well of a common complaint.

Everybody does it and so no one thinks it to be bad. Our Lord Jesus considers it a hate of sin and deals with it as a sin and says that it is an insult of the heavenly father and it is a foul of our faith in him and our trust in him. He deals with anxious care, with nervous worry, with frenzied concern about the things of the future on the basis of it being need to be dealt with as a sin.

Notice now in several of these verses, Christ's attitude towards over anxious care, overly, being overly anxious about the issues and the needs and the pressures of life. I'll have you see verse 25. Our Lord has said you cannot serve both God and man and therefore take no thought, take no, it isn't that don't give it any any thought in that sense, but do not become burdened by the contemplation of the possibilities of starvation or being without something to drink or something to wear.

And he gives this answer, is not the life more than me and the body than Raymond? The argument here is based upon the infinite goodness and the unchanging faithfulness of the creator. And he is saying that God who gave life to the body doesn't stop halfway. He provided for everyone, he does for the unfaithful, for after all the rain falls upon the just and the unjust and the sun shines and warms the field that causes the grain to grow upon everyone's field.

And God has concern for even the vilest of men to provide for them. If God is going to let rain come upon just and unjust while the upon the unjust while they are rebels against him, when you have repented, renounced your sin and savingly received Jesus Christ, how much more, how much more will he take care of you? Therefore he said that overly, being overly anxious and concerned and worried about future needs is needless, totally unnecessary. But notice verse 26, behold the fowls of the air for they sow not, neither do they reap nor gather into the barn, yet your heavenly father feedeth them.

And again the question, are ye not much better than they? Behold the fowls of the air. If God is going to take care of the fowls of the air and provide for them, how much more is he going to take care of you, his beloved child, whom he's loved with an everlasting love and to whom he's revealed himself as the Lord our provider. Therefore he said that anxious care is senseless.

Well I didn't mean to be rude, but that's what he said. If he cares for the fowls of the air, how much more is he going to care for you? Are you not better than they? Therefore being overly concerned and worried and burdened and worried is senseless. But notice verse 27.

Which of you, which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto its factor? There are certain things that you can do and some things that you can't do. But worry and fretting and being concerned and burdened to the point where it distresses and disturbs you is, well it's just useless, that's all. You can't add a stature to, one cubit to your stature, you can't change the color of your hair, you can't do a great many things.

So why should you worry? Worry is not going to add anything to you, it's not going to change your life in any particular, it's not going to help, it's useless. But notice now the 28th to the 30th verse. Why take ye thoughtful raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow, they toil not, neither do they spin.

Yet I say unto you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothes the grass of the field as today is and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? He said being overly anxious about the needs of life is faithless. But notice the 32nd verse.

For after all these things do the heathen seek. Do the heathen seek, that's the word Gentile, means heathen, but not be offended by it, that's exactly what it means. The nation, the heathen nation, the nations that do not have the written scripture, the nations that do not have the revelation of God, that do not have the revelation that God is our provider, our shepherd, who has said that we shall not want.

The Gentiles, the heathen, seek after these things to get them in such supply that there's no possibility of their want, and thus he says that to be overly concerned and burdened and worried is heathenish. That's what it is, it's heathenish. And then he proceeds to say that a solicitude for the future is the bottom of worldliness.

And if you want to go through that which you know the world today, and analyze it carefully, you'll discover that the pressure that's driving people to all kinds of dishonesty and duplicity is this desire to get security which is going to protect them against all of the eventualities of the future, and it's worldly mindedness. And you'll be amazed at how many people do things that they don't want to do, because they're desiring to protect the authority to be held by the world. People that don't like to drink learn to do it so that no one will mock them.

People that don't like to do many things do it in order that they shall escape criticism. And worldly mindedness generally flows out of a desire to protect our security in the group or in some other fashion. But let's summarize just a moment.

An attitude towards the needs of life which is worried and frenzied and distressed is now by Christ said to be needless, senseless, useless, tasteless, heathenish, and worldly mindedness. Looks as though he's pretty well summarized it doesn't he certainly put his finger on it. But you say isn't it possible for for us to have some proper concern? Yes there is a proper care, but I'd like to have you see what happened to Israel.

It's a pattern, it's a picture, it's an illustration, and these things were written as an example for us. Israel this company of people that were slaves in Egypt were delivered by the stretched out arm of God. Marvelously delivered by the obedience to the Lord in putting the blood of the Passover lamb on the doorpost.

These firstborn were saved. Then by rising and fleeing and as Moses commanded, they were carried across the Red Sea while the Egyptian army was destroyed. And then God provided water for them when they were without it.

And he provided bread for them in the form of manna. And gloriously cared for his people in the wilderness. And finally he brought them to Jordan's banks and told them that they'd go in and obey him that it would be a land flowing with milk and honey.

They'd already had spies go in and brought out the grapes to Geshon and the milk, the honey, the proof that the land was a plentiful land and that this was to be theirs. If they would make no allegiance with the people, if they would destroy the God, if they would break down the idols and slow down the temple, they would have the blessing of God upon them. God had kept every promise he'd made.

He dealt with them in perfect honor and complete fulfillment of all of their needs. He supplied them even with their shoe leather not wearing out, though used for the 40 years that they wandered around in the wilderness. But they came into the land and they said my what a pity, that's such a beautiful building we won't tear it down.

And that statue, isn't that a handsome feat? No use to break that down. And these people, such gracious, hospitable, kindly people, what a weight to slay them. And so they made with the people.

And the first thing you know, they said, how come you've got such a good crop? They were after all in the land. Oh, well, we, uh, we sacrifice to Baal, the owner of the place. You do? Oh, yes.

You see, there's an invisible personality, a demon here. And if you just get on his good side, he'll bless you and you have a Baal over there. You see, I used to live on that land before you came.

And I'll tell you, we have more crops than you've got. And why don't you just slip out and remember that idol there? You hated it. You just put some grain there.

And you talk to that idol and see what he's got. And because of avarice, because of worry and fretting about whether they'd have grain enough in the barn to keep them through the winter, the Israelites went sacrifice to Baal. Then they wanted bigger farms.

And so they said, well, how can we be sure that we will have children enough to work the land if we get the land? And they said, well, well, why don't you sacrifice to Ashtaroth? She's the goddess of secularity. And if you just sacrifice to her, you'll have children. And then you can have a bigger farm.

And so because of worry and concern and distress about the future, and of course what happened was that when they disobeyed God, God withheld the rain, and he withheld blessing as he said he would. And so then they went to the gods of the nation. And the first thing you know, their concern about their, the future had dropped them into a relationship with God where they had to turn it back on them.

Because of their unbelief, their faithlessness, and their disobedience. And there was thus that our Lord Jesus spoke, saying there are two things that you must beware of lest you're led into the religion of the people around you. One, you must not set your goal upon money for its own sake.

Oh, I wish that all of us could hear the sermon of John Wesley again. They tell about the man from Edinburgh that came to London and heard him preach. He was tremendously impressed with the first point of John Wesley's sermon.

It was, get all the money that you can. And he said this is the kind of preaching that it's worth the trip to hear. Then he became almost elated to the place of just shouting when he heard the second point.

Save all the money that you can, without depriving your family or failing to fulfill your responsibilities. But he got up and he walked out of the church when he heard the third point. Give all that you can.

And we recognize that there are many people that God cannot trust. I am sure that God is looking for people today that he can trust. Where are the people that we are going to find in our generation that God can afford to bless? I think of that young man who left his New England home.

And as he walked down the street, taking his leave to go out to make his way in the world, a dear old saint of God saw him and called him over and said, son, where are you going? Well, he said, my father said, there's no use for me to stay on the farm. It's not enough to keep me there. And so I'm going out.

Well, what do you have, son? What are you taking from your father? Well, all I've got is mother's recipe for soap. I've made soap all the years since I've been able. And I'm going to go now with this recipe.

And I think I'm going to go to the city and start a soap business. Well, he said one thing, son, make the best soap that you possibly can and study as hard as you can to make a better product every year. Boy, the first dollar you get, give the Lord his time.

And then when he gives you enough so that you don't need it all, give him two times. And then when he gives you a little more, so you don't need all of that, give him three times. And then when he gives you a little more, give him four times.

Because, son, after all, all you need is food and clothes and shelter. And there's no use just keeping it up for yourself. Boy, if you'll keep faith with God, God will bless you.

And when Colgate, whose name may be heard but known by some of you, finished his course, he was giving 90 percent of his income to the work of the Lord. He had learned that it was no end in itself but a means to glorify God. I'm sure there are some here that God would love to bless, but he can't trust you.

If he were, if he were to bless you in the measures that he'd like, so chances are that it would probably be that it would fall in the course of others. Ah, it's a strong man that God can trust. And I feel that we are in a day when we've got to have the exhortation here.

You can serve God and man, and you serve God, but not man. By the same token, dear friend, whereas to some of you it may be a problem of what you do with your surplus, it's an equal sin for you to worry about your small amount, and wondering whether or not you're going to be able to make it through. It seems that the church of Jesus Christ has failed more in this second regard than it has in the first.

Because we are often looking at a congregation, you seem to feel that there are worried, fretting, frenzied people who, because of the concern of the cares of this world, have let the footprints of worry carve themselves into their faith. You know, not only the heathens have their tribal marks, I think when you see the lines that are cut so deeply into the faces of men, they're cut equally deep into the hearts of men. But why should you, why should you, that are sons of the living God, born into the family of Almighty God, become the Lord's good angels, then the Son of God himself has said that he shall be your provider.

Why, I say, should you let your spirit be distressed and disturbed, as do the Gentiles, as do the heathens. No, there is a sin here. A sin that has caused us to become so concerned with how we can pay for this, and secure that, and just the other, that it has robbed our hearts of the peace and quiet that's needed, if the word of God is to spring up and bear fruit, and have free course, and be glorified in.

There is, however, a proper care, a proper care, a Godly concern, not inordinate. An ordinate, a proper, a righteous concern. Let me tell you what God's word says.

In Romans, the twelfth chapter, in the eleventh verse, you read, be not frothful in business. What a pity it is that to hear men say, I'm not too sure, Christian virtuous men, whether I should employ Christians any longer, because they seem to be often more interested in talking with others than they are about doing a good day's work. I feel, my dear, that when a man hires a Christian, he ought to be getting at least fifty percent more for his money than anyone else would be able to get in, because of the fact that he's not frothful in his business.

If you are working for someone, you owe it to that one for whom you serve to pour your heart into it, not just to fulfill the eight hours that you serve. You say, well, I have to hurt it so I can get out and serve the Lord. My friend, if you are not serving the Lord while you work, you can't serve in any event.

Whatever you do in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus. Therefore, it's your responsibility to labor as for Christ in the most menial and humble task that it falls to your hand to do. Romans, the eighth chapter, says that we are, or the twelfth chapter, rather, says that we are to provide things honest in the sight of all men.

There is to be no finickling. There's to be no twisting. I know of one Christian businessman in a distant part of the country who told me in confidence that his whole business was built on, quote, quite tight of checks, unquote, quote.

He had two bank accounts, and he didn't have quite enough capital, and so he'd draw a check here, expect him to get it in, and by the time the check cleared, and he was always just one jump behind. Just one jump behind. And the whole lot of God was jeopardized in the large area where he testified simply because of the fact that he hadn't the moral courage to admit to himself and to others the status of the business that he was carrying on.

He had not provided things honest in the sight of all men. This is what we are to do. Not to be overly worried, but to have a heart that fits and sets to provide things honest.

Then, the scripture says in Romans 13, 8, all men anything. Now I wouldn't want to say anything against our great national institution of the buying on time. I'm sure we don't want to touch that.

That is the sacred cow that we shouldn't, we shouldn't affect, because someone says it is unpatriotic in America today to criticize that. Well, I don't know whether that be the case or not. I would say this, however, that as long as the equity and the products that you're purchasing exceeds the amount you owe on it, the man from whom you're purchasing it is protected and he is covered.

But I do believe that the scripture has here an economic factor as well as a spiritual factor. And when your life becomes cumbered with debt, you have put yourself in the place where, and every one of us attempted in this direction, of course, because of the fact that we live in a day that makes it so simple and so easy to do it. But there still remains this fact that the scripture has indicated that to be in debt is a place where it becomes a saddling burden, where to be actually a denial of our faith and confidence in our trust in the Lord.

Then we read in 1 Timothy the 5th chapter and the 8th verse, He that provideth not for his own is worse than an infidel. There is a responsibility that falls upon us to provide for our own. Here it spoke of the widows that were dependent upon them, and it makes it abundantly clear that we have a responsibility to our family.

But this can be ordered, and ordered of God, and directed of God. But this must not be extended beyond the due bounds that God has set. May I suggest four rules for you? You ought not be so occupied in providing for yourself and your family and others that you neglect your duty.

Nor should you be so occupied in providing for your future that you fail in your responsibility to the present. How many persons there are who have inordinately saved against the rainy day, and in so doing they have kept from the nail-pierced hands of the Lord Jesus the means that he would use to reach those that were going out into a Christless eternity. There is a balance here, however, and a balance wherein when you consider that all you possess and all you own is held by the Lord Jesus in custody for him, that he can take it as he would.

But I submit to you that no man dare call anything his own today any more than in the first century. The Lordship of Christ must cut right straight across all of the other interests. And that person that says, this is mine from which I give to the Lord, has not come into the kindergarten of understanding his relationship to the risen Christ.

A man who can look at all that he possesses and owns and holds and says, none of it's mine. It all belongs to Jesus Christ, holy and reservedly his, and I am but a steward of that which is his. That man has come to understand the right relationship to the world in which he lives and the Lord whom he serves.

I believe that we ought not to so provide for ourselves as to indicate a distrust in God. For God himself has said, I will supply. Oh, I believe the laziness, groveliness, carelessness, and the misuse of that which God gives, certainly is to be condemned.

But I do not believe by any stretch of the imagination we ought to so live as to indicate a distrust in him. Nor should we be so consumed after seeking the things that we need, that we neglect the seeking of the best interest of our spirit. How many persons there are who said, well now I have a wonderful opportunity for overtime, but the overtime has left them too exhausted in order to have the privilege of being fed on the things of God.

And I therefore submit to you that there's a responsibility not only for these things that will pass away, but for our never-dying soul. Then we are certain of this also, that we ought to labor as to Christ, if it's planting of the field, to do it as unto the Lord, if it's working, if it's studying, if it's going to school, anything that you do, it ought to be done to the Lord, and then the increase of it be in his hands. You do the best you can.

You serve Christ, and then you commit it to him, and you become to that place that David did. The Lord gives, the Lord takes away. God has never committed himself to your prosperity of money.

He's committed himself, however, to confer you to the image of his son. If you will stop serving mammon and serve the Lord in your job, in the task, and do the best that you possibly can, then you can happily commit it to the Lord, and you can say, now I exhort you, my dear. You say, but if you only knew the problems we have.

Well, I think I'm reasonably well acquainted with them. I may have five times as many in one direction as some of you have, and perhaps more. But the fact still remains that I'm not unacquainted with them.

But I do believe, then, that we can love him with our whole hearts, and trust him with our entire lives, and know that he has said, I will never leave you. Cast all your cares on him, he cares for you. And David said, I am old, I was young, but I have never received the righteous estate, nor his seed, begging land, or

Hamas.

But he has said, the Lord is my shepherd. I shall not want any good thing. No soul shall take your ease.

Rest in him. Your work, your friendship, your concern. Don't sin against the Lord, and let the thorns choke out the good seed.

But learn what it is to commit your way unto the Lord, to trust all sorts of things, for he will bring it about. Let's stand together, friends. Be thou to our hearts, our fathers, our Lord, should there be one among us that does not know the joy of sin forgiven, nor have peace with me.

Troubled by the things of time, and by the things of eternity, and may they linger behind to seek the help that we long to give. Show such a heart, but for my dear children, that may have sinned against thee, not by being inordinately proud of the money they possess, but being worried by that which they do not have. May they hear the Lord Jesus Christ, as he so seeketh for the kingdom of God and his righteousness.

All these things shall be added unto you. Let thy blessing, triune blessing, of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be in abide with thy dear people now. In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen.

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