

Hidden Hills Sovereign Grace Baptist Church

Sunday Sermon

Date: December 20, 2020

Text: Matthew 6:16-34

Scripture Reading: Matthew 6:16-34

Subject: Sermon on the Mount, Part 6 – Fasting-Treasure-Anxiety

In the preceding message from Matthew 6:1-15, we considered:

1. Our Lord's words concerning the giving of alms and how he taught us to do ours in secret and the Father seeing in secret would reward us openly.
2. Moreover, we learned our Savior's words about praying in secret with a promise that the Father seeing in secret would reward us openly.
3. We also read and understood the LORD's teaching us the manner of prayer saying, "After this manner therefore pray ye..."
4. We were admonished that, as we pray to forgive those who have transgressed against us – and if we will not forgive, then the Heavenly Father will not forgive us.
5. We know that the Heavenly Father has promised to "remember our sins and iniquities no more" under the provisions of the New Covenant. However, we are bound to keep his commandments as we live our lives of service to him. One of those things is that we are to forgive as Christ also forgave us. Disobedience and unconfessed sins will always bring us the judgment of God by His chastening hand on us.

a. **Colossians 3:13 (KJV)** *Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.*

b. **1 Corinthians 11:31-32 (KJV)** *For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. 32 But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.*

1 Peter 4:17 (KJV) *For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?*

Hebrews 12:5-8 (KJV) *And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: 6 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. 7 If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? 8 But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.*

Let us now proceed to chapter 6, verses 16 through 34 for further study of part 6 of the sermon on the mount concerning giving of fasting, our treasure, and our anxiety or anxiousness. Therefore, we have three parts to this message.

- **Part 1 – Verses 16-18. When ye fast.**

Matthew 6:16-18 (KJV) *Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces,*

that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. 17 But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face; 18 That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.

This can be seen in the same light as our giving of Alms and our prayer in secret. Let's consider the three verses together.

Moreover when ye fast – Our Lord did not say “If ye fast,” he said “When ye fast.” This presumes that the disciples of Jesus Christ shall fast. He warned us to “be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance” when we fast. The hypocrites do it to be seen of men and being seen of men and complimented by them is their reward.

FASTING is a commendable practice. and we have reason to mourn over it because it is so generally neglected among all of us.

- Anna was much in fasting, [Lu 2:37](#).
- Cornelius fasted and prayed, [Ac 10:30](#).
- The primitive Christians were much in it, see [Ac 13:3](#); [14:23](#).
- Private fasting is supposed, [1Co 7:5](#).

It is an act of self-denial, and mortification of the flesh, a holy revenge upon ourselves, and humiliation of ourselves under the mighty hand of God. The most mature among us must hereby admit and mourn we are so far from having anything to be proud of - even that we are unworthy of our daily bread. Fasting is a means to curb the flesh and the desires of it, and to make us more responsive spiritually. Fasting is the exact opposite as fulness of bread is apt to make us drowsy. Paul was in fastings often, and so he kept under this body, and brought it into subjection.

Whenever we undertake to fast, let us before study to approve ourselves to God, and not to recommend ourselves to the good opinion of men. Our Lord does not direct to abate anything of the reality of the fast; he does not say, "take a little meat, or a little drink," no, let the body suffer, but lay aside the show and appearance of it; let us appear with our ordinary countenance and dress. While we deny ourselves bodily refreshments, let us do it so as that it may not be noticed of others, no, not by those that are nearest to us. Let us Look pleasant, *anoint thine head and wash thy face*, as we do on ordinary days, on purpose to conceal our devotion. Be encouraged! We shall afflict ourselves, but shall be no loser for having done it in secret unto the LORD; for though it be not of men, it shall be of God.

- **Part 2 – Verses 19 to 24 Lay up treasures in heaven.**

Matthew 6:19 (KJV) *Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:*

Consider this. Mr. Spurgeon said that money piled up is very much like manure. It does no good in a pile and needs very much to be spread around on the ground by the owner so it will help. Money piled up attracts thieves. Moths can eat up our paper money and rust can corrupt our silver and gold. Wonderful advice give us by our Lord and savior: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth..."

Matthew 6:20 (KJV) *But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:*

We have another “But...” Almost always when we find a but, we find God is doing something marvelous and wonderful. Sin may abound, but grace doth superabound! Men may mean it to evil, but God means it for good! ***But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven,*** -- Treasures in heaven! How do we do that? Let’s see if the Holy Scriptures give us any insight into that question.

Matthew 19:21 (KJV) [*Jesus to the rich young ruler*] *Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and **THOU SHALT HAVE TREASURE IN HEAVEN:** and come and follow me.* (Also recorded in Mark and Luke).

It is amazing to me that this incident is recorded three times in the gospel record. Treasure in heaven is found in this verse (Mt. 6:20;) and in three places concerning the rich young ruler’s instructions from our LORD. Mt. 19:21; Mr. 10:21; Lu. 18:22. It seems very clear to me that the way to lay up treasures in heaven is to be diligent to give to the poor. Watch this:

Luke 12:32-34 (KJV) *Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. **33** Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, **a treasure in the heavens that faileth not,** where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth. **34** For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.*

Luke 16:9 (KJV) *And I say unto you, **Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness;** that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.*

This may be done by using our riches as we should do; that is, by not suffering them to entangle us in cares and perplexities dangerous to the soul, engrossing the

time, and stealing away the affections; by employing them in works of mercy and benevolence, aiding the poor, contributing to the advance of the gospel, bestowing them where they will do good, and in such a manner that God will *approve the deed*, and will bless us for it. Commonly riches are a hindrance to piety. To many they are snares; and, instead of positively benefitting the possessor, they are an injury, as they engross the time and the affections, and do not contribute at all to the eternal welfare of the soul.

Proverbs 19:17 (KJV) *He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the LORD; and that which he hath given will he pay him again.*

Matthew 25:35-40 (KJV) *For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: 36 Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. 37 Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? 38 When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? 39 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? 40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.*

1 Timothy 6:17-19 (KJV) *Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; 18 That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; 19 Laying up in*

store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

Luke 14:12-14 (KJV) *Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee. **13** But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: **14** And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.*

Matthew 6:21 (KJV) *For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.*

Matthew 16:25-26 (KJV) *For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. **26** For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?*

If our treasure is on earth and lies in earthly things, our hearts will be set upon those earthly treasures, and be in them, in our bags, our coffers and storehouses. So our souls will be in danger of being lost; which loss will be an irreparable one, though we should gain the whole world and lose our own soul, what doth it profit us? But if our treasure is put into the hands of God, our hearts will be with him, and be settled on him; our desires will be after heavenly things; our affections will be set on things above; our conversation will be in heaven, whilst we are on earth; and that will be the place and seat of our happiness for all eternity.

Matthew 6:22 (KJV) *The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.*

Like all scriptures, this verse and the ones that follow must be seen in the context. What is the context? That we lay not up for ourselves treasures on earth but have treasures in heaven. ***The light of the body is the eye:*** -- With reference to the context-- Jesus proceeds to illustrate by a reference to the eye. The eye is the candle of the body as the Greek word implies. When the eye is directed singly and steadily towards an object, and is in health, or is single, everything is clear and plain. If it *vibrates*, flies to different objects, is fixed on no one singly, or is diseased, nothing is seen clearly. Everything is dim and confused. The man, therefore, is unsteady. The eye regulates the motion of the body. To have an object distinctly in view, is necessary to correct and regulate action.

It is said that Rope-dancers, in order to steady themselves, fix the eye on some object on the wall, and look steadily at that. If they should look *down* on the rope or the people, they would become dizzy and fall. Likewise, a person crossing a stream on a log, if he will look *across* at some object steadily, will be in little danger. If he looks down on the dashing and rolling waters, he will become dizzy, and fall. So Jesus says, in order that the conduct may be right, it is important to fix the affections on our treasure laid up in heaven. Having the affections there--having the eye of faith *single*, steady, unwavering--all of our conduct will be as it is wont to be.

If our eye is single, thy whole body shall be full of light -- Our whole life will be illuminated, guided and governed by it; our minds will be cheerful and pleasant.

Matthew 6:23 (KJV) *But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall*

be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!

But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. – Please notice that the word evil (pertaining to the eye) comes from the Greek word “πονηρος *poneros pon-ay-ros*” which is found 76 times in the NT and is also translated as “evil 51, wicked 10, wicked one 6, evil things 2, misc 7. Pornos is the source of our English word pornography or pornographic – both of which are blatantly evil. If our eye be evil through covetousness, too much loyalty to the earth, or through envy, or through the prevalence of any other lusts or passions, our darkness will be exceeding great, we will not be able to set one step right; for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh, and according to the dictates and affections of the heart the hand and the whole man acts. Our whole body shall be full of darkness including our heart and mind.

If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness! -- As it is in the body, so it is with the mind; as when the eye, the light of the body, is put out by any means, all the members of the body are in entire darkness; so when the light of reason in the mind is so far extinguished by any prevailing iniquity, particularly the sin of covetousness, so that it is wholly influenced and governed by it, what irregular actions is it led into! What deeds of darkness does it perform! and what will be the consequence of it, but utter and eternal darkness, if grace prevent not!

Matthew 6:24 (KJV) 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. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

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. – “No man can...!” Can means ability? No man is able to serve two masters! No man! Remember the context – laying not treasures upon the earth, but laying them up in heaven. Christ proceeds to illustrate the necessity of laying up treasures in heaven from a well-known fact, that a servant cannot serve two masters at the same time. His affections and obedience would be divided, and he would fail altogether in his duty to one or the other. One he would love, and the other hate. To the interests of one he would adhere, the other he would neglect. This is a law of human nature.

Ye cannot serve God and mammon. -- Our supreme affections can be fixed on only one object. So, says Jesus, the servant of God cannot at the same time obey *him* and be avaricious, or seek treasures supremely on earth. One interferes with the other, and one *will* be, and *must* be surrendered.

Luke 16:9-11 (KJV) *And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations. 10 He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. 11 If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?*

The English word “mammon” comes from the Syriac word “*μαμμωνας* *mammonas mam-mo-nas*” which is found four times in the NT. It is translated as mammon all four times. It means money, wealth, riches substance, and everything that comes under the name of worldly goods.

The *Oxford English Dictionary* comments on the etymology of the word mammon this way: “The Aramaic word for ‘riches’, occurring in the Greek text of Matt. vi. 24 and Luke xvi. 9–13 and retained in the Vulgate. Owing to the quasi-personification in these passages, the word was taken by mediæval writers as the proper name of the devil of covetousness. This use appears in English in the 14–16th c., and was revived by Milton (P.L. i. 678, ii. 228). The word does not occur in the N.T. translations of Wyclif and Purvey (who substitute richness), but it was used by Tindale (1526–34) and subsequent translators, with the exception of those of the Geneva version. From the 16th c. onwards it has been current in English, usually with more or less of personification, as a term of opprobrium [əˈprɒbrɪəm] for wealth regarded as an idol or as an evil influence.

- **Part 3 – Verses 25 through 34 - Anxiousness**

Matthew 6:25 (KJV) *Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought 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?*

Therefore I say unto you, -- This is still in the context of laying up treasures in heaven and having an eye which is single.

Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. – The design of the next ten verses is to warn us who are Jesus’ disciples against covetousness, materialism and anxiety about the supply of our needs. In speaking of these things, our LORD addresses food and clothing which are the basic needs of this life.

Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? –

Ah, yes! Both questions are blessedly true. The Heavenly Father has given us eternal life through Jesus Christ, his son who by his once for all offering of himself, bought us spirit, soul, and body.

Matthew 6:26 (KJV) *Behold 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?*

Luke records this: **Luke 12:24 (KJV) *Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls?***

Psalm 147:9 (KJV) He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry.

I love this because it really does come home to those of us who live in Alaska. Question: Have any of us who live here ever seen a Raven starve to death? Ravens have no houses or barns in which to store up (neither any of the fowls of the air), yet the Heavenly Father feeds them. It is abundantly clear that you and I, human beings created in the image of God and now saved by His grace are much better in God's sight than the Ravens and other fowls of the air he feeds continuously. It is true that the Heavenly Father does not throw the food for the ravens and other birds into their nests; no they must go out and work for it.

Job 12:7-8 (KJV) *But ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee; and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee: 8 Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee: and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee.*

Matthew 6:27 (KJV) *Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?*

This third argument is taken from our extreme weakness and helplessness. With all our care we cannot increase our stature a single cubit or the length of our years one single day. God has ordered our height. Beyond what he has determined our powers are of no avail, and we can do nothing to amend it. It is so of raiment. He, by his providence, orders and arranges the circumstances of our life. *Beyond* that appointment of his providence, beyond *his* care for us, our efforts avail nothing. Seeing, then, that he alike orders our *growth*, and the supply of our needs, how obvious is the duty of *depending* on him, and of beginning all our efforts, feeling that He alone can grant us the means of preserving life!

Matthew 6:28 (KJV) *And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:*

What a marvelous, searching question – and what a wonderful illustration of the lilies of the field! They sprout, bring forth the blade, then the flower whose beauty is more than any us can ever be – but they do it, not of their own will, but of the power of God who gives and sustains life.

Matthew 6:29 (KJV) *And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.*

Our LORD directs our attention to the one man in history who had more riches than anyone before or after him; and had more wisdom than any of us can ever hope to have – a man who heaped up gold and silver in Jerusalem like stones. The queen of Sheba said of him:

1 Kings 10:4-8 (KJV) *And when the queen of Sheba had seen all Solomon's wisdom, and the house that he had built, **5** And the meat of his table, and the sitting of his servants, and the attendance of his ministers, and their apparel, and his cupbearers, and his ascent by which he went up unto the house of the LORD; there was no more spirit in her. **6** And she said to the king, It was a true report that I heard in mine own land of thy acts and of thy wisdom. **7** Howbeit I believed not the words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen it: and, behold, the half was not told me: thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard. **8** Happy are thy men, happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and that hear thy wisdom.*

Matthew 6:30 (KJV) *Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?*

These words are a conclusion from the former, and contain an argument from the lesser to the greater; that if God, for this is solely his work, so clothes the lilies, the flowers of the field, and whatever grows up out of the earth, in such a beautiful and splendid manner, as even to outdo Solomon, in his richest apparel; there's no doubt to be made of it, or at least ought not, but that he will much more provide clothing for men.

...which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven,-- The grass and flowers of the field flourish in the morning, continues for the day in its glory and lushness, is cut down at evening, and withers and dies, then is given to the flames.

Matthew 6:31 (KJV) *Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall*

we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?

Therefore take no thought – The phrase “take no thought” means stop being anxious in light of what I have just set before you. Don’t frustrate yourselves by wringing your hands and hearts to say what shall I eat, drink, and wear? How shall I get it? Worry, worry, and worry!

Matthew 6:32 (KJV) *(For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.*

(For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) -- That is to say, that those who know nothing of the grace of God in salvation make it their *chief anxiety* thus to seek food and raiment.

for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. – Our heavenly Father, the almighty God who created us in His image knows our every need. He knows that we have need of these things every day of our life on this earth. Every word of this encourages us to believe and to live by faith in Him who freely give us all things. Therefore, “Take no thought.”

Matthew 6:33 (KJV) *But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.*

But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness;
-- What is the kingdom of God?

Romans 14:17 (KJV) *For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.*

Colossians 1:12-13 (KJV) *Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: **13** Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:*

Those of us who have believed in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior are rightfully expecting that the Kingdom of God is a future realm which we must enter when Christ returns. We shall reign with him in his kingdom on this earth. What about now? Today? When asked about his kingdom coming, our Lord told the unbelieving Pharisees “the kingdom of God is within you.” That is, it was in their midst. Certainly it was not within (inside of) the unbelieving Pharisees.

Luke 17:20-21 (KJV) *And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: **21** Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.*

To seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness is to seek for own personal self his rule, his reign in our lives, his sovereign pleasure. In the midst of the self-righteous Pharisees, were those who believed in and held to God’s righteous rule of themselves and their lives according to His word and sovereign pleasure. They had believed on the one whom The Father had sent.

John 6:28-29 (KJV) *Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? **29** Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.*

In our seeking FIRST the kingdom of God and his righteousness He has promised us - ***And all these things shall be added unto you.*** -- Food, clothing, and the supply of all our needs according to his riches in grace.

Matthew 6:34 (KJV) *Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.*

Take therefore no thought for the morrow: -- The phrase "take thought" is from the Greek word "μεριμνάω merimnao *mer-im-nah'-o*" as in verses 25, 27, 28, 31 and here. We have read "Take no thought," "taking thought," "take ye thought," "take no thought," and now "take therefore no thought." It means NOT to take care, be careful in the sense of anxiousness and troubled with cares. ***For the morrow*** -- "Boast not of thyself tomorrow" (Pro. 17:1): a man cannot promise or assure himself that he shall have a morrow, and therefore it is great weakness and folly to be anxiously thoughtful about it.

For the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. -- Anxiousness for the morrow is one of those *foolish and hurtful lusts*, which those that will be rich fall into, and one of the *many sorrows*, wherewith they *pierce themselves through*. *Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof*. This present day has trouble enough attending it, we need not *accumulate* burdens by *anticipating* trouble, nor borrow puzzlements from to-morrow's evils to add to those of this day. It is uncertain what to-morrow's evils may be, but whatever they be, it is time enough to consider them when they come.

Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. – The vexations and troubles of today and tomorrow are enough for each day. Let us not borrow trouble from tomorrow.

In closing, allow me to tell you what I have told you from the precious Word of the LORD. We have been taught –

1. How to conduct ourselves when we fast with assurance of a sure reward from our Heavenly Father.
2. To lay not up for ourselves treasures upon the earth where moth, rust doth corrupt and where thieves break through and steal, but to lay up for ourselves treasures in heaven. We saw clearly that **NONE OF US HAVE THE ABILITY TO SERVE TWO MASTERS – WE CANNOT SERVE GOD AND MAMMON (THE IDOL OF WEALTH).**
3. To **NOT** take thought (be anxious) for food, drink, and clothing – our needs. We saw that even the lilies of the field are arrayed much better than the richest man who ever lived – Solomon. We saw that our Heavenly Father feeds the birds. Our Father knows we have need of these things. Let us not **TAKE THOUGHT – BE ANXIOUS.**

May it be so in us all. Amen!~