

# Matters of Priority

## Introduction:

Wouldn't it be wonderful to live in a time when life was simple? Ultimate dream. What do you envision? What do these times look like? Very often, when we say we want to go back to the good old days – when life was simple – we mean: We wish we could live today's lifestyle in a time when today's standards would permit us to live without that age's common problems. What we forget – there has never been an age where life was not demanding, uncertain, stressful, and filled with opportunity for anxiety. Matthew 6:31-34 – Jesus says stress happens because we forget life's true priorities.

## I. Do we really believe Jesus?

- A. Too often we try to explain these verses away rather than understand what Jesus meant in 6:31-34.
  1. Back to *simple life* example. Was it *really* simpler?
  2. Day began at sunrise. No running water. No plumbing. No electricity.
  3. No security. Death: an ever-present reality.
- B. The difference between now & then? The common issue has changed.
  1. Today: How can we protect our lifestyle and improve it?
  2. Then: How can we survive? (Included enough clothing and food to eat)

## II. Reality has never changed. Life involves more than physical existence.

- A. God exists. Always has & always will.
  1. Physical existence is just one area of existence.
  2. Total life is concerned about existence in God's world.
    - a. That existence is permanent.
    - b. "Living well" with God is not dependent upon "living well" physically.
- B. You will continue to exist in God's world after you die.

## III. A close look at Matthew 6:31-34

- A. What were the common questions of anxious people who did not live by placing their trust in God? Questions would have centered on physical survival.
- B. Let's clearly understand the question Jesus asked them
  1. 6:31 – basically..."if you trust God, why are these your priorities?"
  2. 6:32a – these are the priorities of people who do not believe in God.
    - a. 6:32b – why do you seek the priorities of the godless as though God is not aware of your needs?
- C. In what ways should the priorities of those who trusted God differ from those who did not know God?
  1. 6:33a – *seek first His Kingdom ...*Christians seek to be under God's rule as a matter of priority.
  2. 6:33b – *seek righteousness ...*we seek to be a righteous people, not by our definition, but by God's definition.
  3. 6:33c – *and all these things shall be added to you.*
  4. 6:34 – Jesus: Do not waste your life by letting your anxieties about the future control your life.
  5. This is not an endorsement for laziness or irresponsibility.

## IV. Life should be lived one day at a time.

- A. The key to a full life is faith in God – not anxiety.

## Conclusion:

- A. The issue is priorities. Godly priorities determine a Christian's behavior.
- B. Who rules your life?