

Sermon Mark S. Aites
“BE ANXIOUS FOR NOTHING”
(Sermon Idea Borrowed)

TEXT: LUKE 10:38-42

INTRODUCTION:

1. We encounter Mary and Martha 3 times in **John 11** and **12**.
2. Text: focus is on Mary and Martha as Lazarus is absent.
3. In our brief story, Martha was concerned with her domestic responsibilities and showing hospitality, which certainly have their importance.
4. Mary, however, was sitting at the feet of Jesus. Her interest or concern was not in the physical cares of this life, but in the spiritual things of God.
5. Martha was distracted or “cumbered about” - means to be “drawn around.” She was led around by her cares.
6. Martha was so disturbed by Mary’s lack of interest in the domestic needs of that hour that she came to Jesus and reproved Him: *Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone?...*”
7. But Jesus, who knows the thoughts of all men’s hearts, knew that Martha was troubled by many things. She was so preoccupied with her worldly problems that she failed to see the importance of the spiritual blessings that Mary would receive from the Master.
8. Now this is not attempting to excuse Mary from meeting her earthly obligations, but rather to emphasize to Martha that Mary had her priorities in their proper order.
9. Martha, with her cares and concern, would fit in well with many lives today, as they worry about so many things.
10. Mary on the other hand, should help remind us of the importance of spiritual things.
11. *Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus (Phil. 3:13-14).*

DISCUSSION:

I. THE PROBLEM. (WORRY)

- A. Worry defined:
 1. English word (anglo saxon); “to strangle or choke.”
 2. Greek: “distracted; drawn in different directions.”
 3. Both definitions have merit and application for us today.
- B. Don’t misunderstand: it is not wrong to express concern, or be concerned.
 1. Paul was concerned for the church at Corinth: *Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all churches (2 Cor. 11:28).*
 2. I express concern for our sick.
 3. Worry is overconcern, to be greatly distracted, as was the case with Martha.
- C. Today: many are over concerned and distracted.
 1. One author writes: “We live in pressure cooker times of tension and stress, with heart attacks and ulcers, pep pills and tranquilizers as the order of the day.” (Boggess)
 2. Irony: 90% of what we worry about never happens.
 3. Is it a problem in the church? Yes it is!
 4. If worry was not a problem then the Bible would be silent about it; but it isn’t!
 5. Jesus knew it would cause people to fall away from the faith (“choked”, **Luke**

8:7,14).

7. In far too many instances, precious souls have been drawn away from God by the cares of this world.

II. THE ADMONITION (MATT. 6:24-34).

- A. No man can serve 2 masters.
 1. "Mammon" (syriac word) - "riches, wealth."
 2. To serve mammon - to be a slave to riches.
 3. "Mammon is the god of riches; the god which bestows, the worship of whom gives riches and worldly power as its reward." (Boles)
 4. The Lord makes it very plain that one cannot serve or be a slave to riches and still serve and be a slave to Christ.
 5. *Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break thru and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break thru nor steal: for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also (Matt. 6:19-21).*
 6. *Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God (Col. 3:2-3).*
 7. *For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. (1 Tim. 6:10).*
- B. Service to mammon leads to anxiety and worry. But Jesus says not to worry about your life (**6:25**).
 1. We shouldn't worry about the essentials.
 2. Life is more than food and clothing: if God will provide the greater; then why worry about the lesser.
- C. He illustrates His point (**6:26-30**).
 1. Birds of the air:
 - 1) Man is greater than the birds of the air.
 - 2) *And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and upon every living thing that moveth upon the earth (Gen. 1:28).*
 - 3) The birds don't sow and reap and gather the harvest into the barn like man, yet God provides for them.
 2. Man cannot change his height and stature (**6:27**). No matter how badly one may wish to be taller or even shorter, man cannot change it. Worry will not cause growth.
 3. Lilies of the field:
 - 1) Common to Palestine: had a very inherent beauty.
 - 2) Don't toil and spin - don't toil as men do to earn clothing; don't spin as the women did to make clothing; yet God took care of them.
 - 3) Even Solomon, the great king, with his vast kingdom and all of his external glory (**1 Kings 10**), could not compare with the beauty of these lilies
 - 4) Point: if God clothes the field; He will surely clothe you, and care for you.

- D. *O ye of little faith (6:30)*.
 - 1. God will certainly not forsake us any more than a father would forsake his children.
 - 2. *...your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask Him (6:8)*.
 - 3. Concerning the essentials: *(For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things (6:32)*.
- E. Our primary focus needs to remain on spiritual matters **(6:33)**.
- F. Hard part **(6:34)** -- do not worry about tomorrow.
 - 1. It is not wrong to plan for tomorrow.
 - 2. But don't be overly anxious about the future; today has enough problems for you to deal with.
 - 3. Unfortunately, some good folks worry about what happened yesterday, what's happening today, and what's going to happen tomorrow.
 - 4. Such worry will cause one to be distracted from spiritual things.
 - 5. We would all do well to learn the wisdom of only living "one day at a time."

III. THE SOLUTION (PHIL. 4:6-7)

Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. and the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus (Phil. 4:6-7).

- A. Prayer:
 - 1. Song we sing: "What a friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear, What a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer. O what peace we often forfeit, O what needless pain we bear, All because we do not carry everything to God in prayer."
 - 2. James admonishes: *Ye have not, because ye ask not (James 4:2)*.
 - 3. When Paul faced a shipwreck: *Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me. (Acts 27:25)*.
 - 4. *Perfect love casteth out fear (1 John 4:18)*. We must have faith!
 - 5. When we take it to the Lord in prayer, we must leave it there! (Illus. "Are you finished with it yet Lord?")
- B. Trust:
 - 1. *I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content (4:11)*.
 - 2. Paul learned at Philippi; in prison and stocks, singing praises to God **(Acts 16:25)**.
 - 3. *Rejoice in the Lord alway (Phil. 4:4)*.
 - 4. Too many Christians sing, "Tis so sweet to trust in Jesus" on Sunday morning, then close up their trust in the songbook and go home and worry all week with the rest of the world." (Boggess)
 - 5. One has to wonder: are we really standing on the promises of God?
- C. Paul tells us to focus our thoughts: *Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. (Phil. 4:8)*.
 - 1. The items under consideration are spiritual.
 - 2. The more we focus our minds on spiritual matters, the less inclined we will be to worry over temporal matters.
 - 3. *Casting down imaginations; and every high thing that exalteth itself against the*

knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ (2 Cor. 10:5).

IV. THE CONSIDERATION.

- A. One must be careful to not take a lesson like this to the extreme where one develops the attitude of "I don't care what happens in this life."
- B. I do not believe the biblical record concerning Mary at the Lord's feet conveys that Mary didn't care about other things.
 1. Some have cited **John 11:20**, on another occasion when Martha heard that Jesus was coming: *Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met Him, but Mary sat still in the house.*
 2. But if one reads on: *And when she had so said, she went her way, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, the Master is come, and calleth for thee. As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly, and came unto Him (John 11:28-29).*
 3. Some would have Mary as being so indifferent to the affairs of this life that they picture her as being oblivious to earthly affairs.
 4. Such is an injustice, for Mary teaches all of us the importance of putting first things first; of putting the spiritual ahead of the physical.
- C. Granted, one can develop the extreme of ignoring the things of this life and suffering for it.
 1. One could say, "I am tired of paying bills; they cause me to worry, so I am going to ignore them." That is not eliminating worry, but trying to escape responsibility.
 2. One could say, "I am tired of working, and the constant stress of a hurried life; so they quit their job, draw welfare, and sit at home." Paul had some choice words for those who would not work: *For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat (2 Thess. 3:10).*
 3. Point: Neither Jesus, nor Paul, suggested that we should ignore the affairs of life. Much to the contrary:
 - 1) *Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers...whosoever resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation (Rom. 13:1,2).*
 - 2) *For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers...render therefore to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute is do; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour (Rom. 13:6,7,8).*
 4. What we must be careful of, is that we do not let the affairs of this life overpower us; over-preoccupy us that we neglect spiritual matters.
 5. We have to live in this world, but we do not have to be of this world (**2 Cor. 6:17**).
 6. If our earthly and temporal affairs are causing us to spend a lot of time in worry; if we find that we are putting these things before God, and that it is keeping us from serving God; then we need to do something about it!
 7. The solution is not to "bury out heads in the sand" like the ostrich, but to learn to cope with things in faith (**2 Cor. 5:7**).
- D. When we stop and consider that our life here is but for a few short years, perhaps 70 or 80 (**Psa. 90:10**); or even 90 or a 100; we need to ask ourselves, is it really worth it to worry about all of the cares of this life? After all, eternity is what matters!!!

CONCLUSION:

1. We need to learn to take our problems to the Lord in prayer (**1 Pet. 5:7**).
2. We need to learn to trust and seek strength from fellow Christians (**Gal. 6:2**).
3. We need to avoid the extremes, and center our priorities around spiritual matters.
4. *Blessed are all they that put their trust in him* (**Psa. 2:12**).
5. *O Lord my God, in thee do I put my trust* (**Psa. 7:1**).
6. *Yea though I walk thru the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with Me, thy rod thy staff they comfort me* (**Psa. 23:4**).
7. *..In God have I put my trust; I will not fear what flesh can do unto me* (**Psa. 56:4**).
8. *The Lord is on my side; I will not fear; what can man do unto me?* (**Psa. 118:6**).
9. *Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the Lord Jehovah, is my strength and my song; He also is become my salvation* (**Isa. 12:2**).
10. *Perfect love casts out fear* (**1 John 4:18**).