

FIRST FAITH RIGHTEOUSNESS

THESIS: Seek First Faith

TEXT: Matthew 6:19-34

OPEN: (Video excerpt “Mysteries of the Abandoned—Port Royal”)

In **Matthew 6:19-34** let’s discover how “first faith” righteousness secures your future and subdues worry.

SEEK FIRST FAITH RIGHTEOUSNESS TO SECURE YOUR FUTURE AND SUBDUE WORRY.

Matthew 6:19-20 “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in Heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal.”

1. *Secure your future and subdue worry by devoting yourself to Heaven instead of earth.*

A. **Matthew 6:21, 24** “For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also...No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.”

1. **Money** (Greek: *mamonas*) means assets, earthly goods, possessions, or wealth.

a. Serve the interests of the Lord instead of interest in money. How?

1. **Luke 16:9** “I tell you, use worldly wealth to gain friends for yourselves, so that when it is gone, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings.”

a. Serve God by sharing your money and material goods with others.

1. **1 Timothy 5:3-4** “Give proper recognition to those widows who are really in need. But if a widow has children or grandchildren, these should learn first of all to put their religion in practice by caring for their own family and so repaying their parents and grandparents, for this is pleasing to God.”

2. **Application:** “The Lonely Life” by Dave Branon

Statistically speaking, it should be impossible to be lonely on planet earth. After all, there are more than 6 billion of us roaming around on this big rock, but many people are lonely. Using God's Word, discover how the following actions can help ease loneliness:

1) Learn contentment in the Lord. Read Philippians 4:10-13, then ask God to help you to depend on Him each day and to learn to be content in any situation.

2) Do good to someone. Read Hebrews 13:1-3, then look for someone in need of help. It will help rid loneliness for both of you.

3) Worship with God's people. Read Hebrews 10:21-25, then encourage someone to praise God with you by coming to church.

These actions can redirect your thinking and remind you that with God you are never alone. Someone once wrote:

If you are feeling all alone, Reach out to someone who's bereaved;
You both will find encouragement And loneliness will be relieved. —
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Many people are lonely because they build walls instead of bridges.

2. **Luke 16:10-11** “Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much; whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much. So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches?”

a. Serve God by stewarding (managing) faithfully what He has given you.

1. **1 Timothy 6:17-19** “Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.”

2. **Illustration:** “Count Your Blessings” (author unknown)

If you have never experienced the danger of battle, the loneliness of imprisonment, the agony of torture, or the pangs of starvation...you are ahead of 500 million people in the world. If you can attend a church service without fear of harassment, arrest, torture, or even death...you are more blessed than many in the world are. If you have food in the refrigerator, clothes on your back, a roof over your head and a place to sleep...you are richer than a good part of the world. If you have money in the bank, in your wallet or purse, and spare change in a dish someplace...you are among the world’s wealthy. If you can hold up your head with a smile on your face and are truly, truly thankful...you are blessed because the majority can, but most do not.”

b. The problem is not money itself but how we acquire it and what we do with it. Do we trust wealth and pursue it more than we do God and His righteousness?

2. *Secure your future and subdue worry by focusing yourself on Heaven instead of earth.*

A. **Matthew 6:22-23** “The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eyes are bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!”

1. **Illustration:** (DOJ press release “Man Admits To Defrauding Clients”)

Man Admits To Defrauding Clients Out Of Nearly \$1 Million Dollars

(Department of Justice—Western District of Virginia press release 01/29/13)

A former Virginia financial advisor was sentenced to 40 months in prison on fraud charges. United States Attorney Timothy Heaphy said the Roanoke man “in perpetrating his long-running Ponzi scheme stole money from his elderly clients and deprived many of their life savings. He falsely promised high investment returns then used client funds for his personal benefit.” The then 56-year old confessed to depositing investor money into a general checking account which he used for personal and outside business interests. He defrauded investors out of nearly \$1 million dollars.

a. Focus first and foremost on the eternal and heavenly instead of the temporal and earthly.

1. **Proverbs 23:4-5** “Do not wear yourself out to get rich; have the wisdom to show restraint. Cast but a glance at riches, and they are gone, for they will surely sprout wings and fly off to the sky like an eagle.”

2. **Insight** from J.W. McGarvey on The Eye As Lamp Of Body (*The Fourfold Gospel*, p. 256-257).

“Jesus represents our affections as if they were an eye. If a man’s heart is single in its love towards God and the things of God, then he has clear views as to the relative importance and value of things earthly and things heavenly. But if the heart looks with a double interest upon both earthly and heavenly treasure, it makes the man double-minded, and so spoils his life. God does not permit a double affection any more than He does a double service, and a man who seeks to continue in it will soon be visited with great darkness as to the things of God, and will become blind in heart and conscience.”

- a. Focus first and foremost on pleasing the Lord instead of yourself. Why?
1. **Luke 12:32-33** “Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in Heaven that will not be exhausted, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys.”

CONCLUSION: Why should we not worry about our future but instead seeking first faith righteousness?

Matthew 6:26, 30-34 “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. Are you not much more valuable than they?...God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the pagans run after all these things, and your Heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”

Insight from Randy Sheridan (“What, Me Worry?”)

Worry has become the favorite American past time. The rich worry about tomorrow because they have money, and they’re afraid they’ll lose it. The poor worry about tomorrow because they don’t have money and don’t know how they’ll manage. The educated worry about tomorrow because they know so much to worry about. The uneducated worry about tomorrow because of the unknown. The young worry about tomorrow because they wonder how they are going to keep on living for 50 more years. The old worry about tomorrow because they don’t know if they’ll live through the week. Ours is the age of anxiety. Former UNC Tarheels basketball coaching great Dean Smith once said, “If you treat every situation as a life and death matter, you’ll die a lot of times.” He clearly understood the importance of identifying legitimate concerns verses being a slave to mental speculations. Has your worry ever done any good? Worry has never lifted any burden nor dried a tear. Worry is a useless exercise.

Hebrews 13:5-6 “Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, ‘Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.’ So we say with confidence, ‘The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?’”

CLOSE: Seek first faith righteousness of God’s Word to secure your future and subdue worry.