

## LOOK AGAIN AND THINK - LIVING CAREFUL? Or LIVING FREE!

"Take no thought for your life." Matthew 6:25

A warning which needs to be reiterated is that the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the lust of other things entering in, will choke all that God puts in. We are never free from the recurring tides of this encroachment. If it does not come on the line of clothes and food, it will come on the line of money or lack of money; of friends or lack of friends; or on the line of difficult circumstances. It is one steady encroachment all the time, and unless we allow the Spirit of God to raise up the standard against it, these things will come in like a flood.

"Take no thought for your life." "Be careful about one thing only," says our Lord - "your relationship to Me." Common sense shouts loud and says - "That is absurd, I must consider how I am going to live, I must consider what I am going to eat and drink." Jesus says you must not. Beware of allowing the thought that this statement is made by One Who does not understand our particular circumstances. Jesus Christ knows our circumstances better than we do, and He says we must not think about these things so as to make them the one concern of our life. Whenever there is competition, be sure that you put your relationship to God first.

"Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." How much evil has begun to threaten you to-day? What kind of mean little imps have been looking in and saying - Now what are you going to do next month - this summer? "Be anxious for nothing," Jesus says. Look again and think. Keep your mind on the "much more" of your heavenly Father.

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## CAREFUL INFIDELITY

"Take no thought for your life, what you shall eat, or what you shall drink; nor yet for your body what you shall put on." Matthew 6:25

Jesus sums up common-sense carefulness in a disciple as infidelity. { *Which means that common-sense carefulness in a disciple hurts God's heart as much as infidelity would hurt a spouse's heart.* }. If we have received the Spirit of God, He will press through and say - Now where does God come in in this relationship, in this mapped out holiday, in these new books? He always presses the point until we learn to make Him our first consideration. Whenever we put other things first, there is confusion.

"Take no thought . . ." don't take the pressure of forethought upon yourself. It is not only wrong to worry, it is infidelity, because worrying means that we do not think that God can look after the practical details of our lives, and it is never any thing else that worries us. Have you ever noticed what Jesus said would choke the word He puts in? The devil? No, the cares of this world. It is the little worries always. I will not trust where I cannot see, that is where infidelity begins. The only cure for infidelity is obedience to the Spirit.

The great word of Jesus to His disciples is abandon.

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WHO WOULD THINK THAT I WOULD SO PERSECUTE MY SAVIOR, JESUS!

"Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" Acts 26:14

Am I set on **my own way** for God? We are never free from this snare until we are brought into the experience of a passionate, furious love affair with Jesus. Obstinacy and self-will will always stab Jesus Christ. It may hurt no one else, but it wounds His Spirit. Whenever we are obstinate and self-willed and set upon our own ambitions, we are hurting Jesus. Every time we stand on our rights and insist that this is what we intend to do, we are persecuting Jesus. Whenever we stand on our dignity we systematically vex and grieve His Spirit; and when the knowledge comes home that it is Jesus Whom we have been persecuting all the time, it is the most crushing revelation there could be.

Is the word of God tremendously keen to me as I hand it on to you, or does my life give the lie to the things I profess to teach? I may teach sanctification and yet exhibit the spirit of Satan, the spirit that persecutes Jesus Christ. The Spirit of Jesus is conscious of one thing only - a perfect oneness with the Father, and He says, "Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart." All I do ought to be founded on a perfect oneness with Him, not on a self-willed determination to be godly. This will mean that I can be easily put upon, easily over-reached, easily ignored; but if I submit to it for His sake, I prevent Jesus Christ being persecuted.

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Teaching people to live responsible lives tends to focus on the very things which choke out the life with and love for God. Should we ignore our duties? No. But should we be obsessed with making things happen to meet our own needs apart from God? No. "Casting all your care upon Him, because He cares for you (and takes care of things for you)." 2 Peter 3:9.

Jesus taught His disciples to be recklessly abandoned to God. He taught them to be responsive to His Father, not to be responsible apart from Him. He taught them that they need no make plans for their lives and ministry. He taught them that they need not even make provision for themselves. And is it not true that Abraham believed God in this very extreme way when he left family and friends and struck out with everything he possessed to go without a destination in mind because the Father asked him to?

Unless and until we have the same kind of faith as Abraham, where we cast our complete and utter trust on the goodness of God, even to our provision and purpose, we will not experience the fullness of God's blessing. Don't even think that because you are in training for specific ministry, you must do everything you can to make the ministry successful. The only successful ministry in the eyes of God is a trust so deep in Him that we immediately strike out in a new direction whenever He tells us to do so.

To put it in endearing relationship terms, when we strike out to do what our earthly lover desires, and most often are on our way before we hear the expressed words, we are so overwhelmed with desire to please our lover that we don't even think about doing anything else. Live with God as your VERY MOST significant other and you will begin to move immediately to bring pleasure to Him. And in that state, you will find the love, joy and peace of God to be enough!