

## **Taste and See**

**Sermon Text:** Psalm 34

**Study Texts:** Matthew 6:24-34

**Sermon Recap:** The main idea of today's sermon is this: Having tasted that the LORD is good, the redeemed magnify the LORD. Take time before your growth group to review the key points you noted from today's sermon.

**Sermon Connection:** Psalm 34 calls the Church to trust God in all things. The Psalmist notes that God invites us to "Taste and see that the Lord is good." The point of the Psalm is to instill a deep trust in God within the people of God. Such is the message of Jesus' teaching in Matthew 6:24-34. In this portion of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus is instructing people of God on to think about life, need, worry and anxiety, and how to honor God in the midst of it all. We can be so easily distracted by the struggles and frustrations of everyday life, and these things can create a deep sense of worry in our hearts and minds. Jesus, a good and kind Shepherd, meets us in these moments of worry with a word of hope. "Look at the birds," He says, "*they neither sow nor reap...yet your heavenly Father feeds them.*" Jesus' point is profoundly comforting: God cares for and sustains His people.

### **Lesson Plan**

**Lesson Goal:** To taste and see that the Lord is good to His people.

#### **Lesson Points:**

**Point 1: The Source of Worry and Anxiety** (vv. 24-25)

**Point 2: The Testimony of Creation** (vv. 26-30)

**Point 3: The Answer to Anxiety** (vv. 31-34)

**The Context:** Jesus' Sermon on the Mount is, perhaps, one of the most well-known of His teachings. It is comprehensive and broad-sweeping as Jesus takes up the Old Testament Law and applies in a radically new way. His intent is to show that God is not interested in the mere outward performance of religious people—which is what the Jews had been attempting to do. Rather, as Jesus shows throughout the sermon, God is concerned with the radical heart transformation of His people, and this can only come through the gospel work of Jesus

Himself. As we consider the portion on worry and anxiety, we are met with the realities of loyalty to Christ alone and holiness before the Lord.

**Point 1: The Source of Worry and Anxiety** (vv. 24-25)

- What reality about life is Jesus driving us to see in v. 24? Why does this create worry and anxiety in us?
- Why is it dangerous for the Christian to neglect the reality of v. 24?
- What is the result of neglecting this truth or of choosing the wrong master?

**Point 2 - The Testimony of Creation** (vv. 26-30)

- Why does Jesus reference the birds and the flowers? See also Romans 1:20.
- What do the actions and specific worries Jesus highlights in these verses reveal about our worries and anxieties? What do we tend to worry about?
- The doctrine of God's providence means that He supplies, sustains, and perfectly governs everything. How is this doctrine a sweet gift to the Church in moments of worry?
- How is Psalm 34:8-9 related here?

**Point 3 - The Answer to Anxiety** (vv. 31-34)

- How can Jesus command His people not to worry and be anxious?
- What is the answer to anxiety according to Jesus? Why can we often be dissatisfied with His answer? See also Ps. 34:10
- Thinking back to v. 25, why does Jesus' answer to worry and anxiety demand that our loyalty be to Him alone?

**The Big Picture - Contentment with Holiness.**

Psalm 34 is an expression of praise and thanksgiving to a God Who is faithfully there for His people. The Psalmist writes, "*Oh, magnify the Lord with me, let us exalt His Name together!*" Such is the attitude we are invited to experience in Psalm 34, for as he goes on to say, "*...taste and see that the Lord is good!*" The goodness of God toward His people is seen most readily through the gospel of salvation, through which God has saved us from our sin, eternal death in hell, and given us life eternal with Him. But lest we miss the immediate blessings of the gospel, Jesus reminds us in Matthew 6 that this very gospel delivers us here and now from sin and suffering.

We are so often bound by the sin of worry and angst. Our hearts long for peace and pleasure. We seek after it in so many ways, and yet in our seeking, we find that we are ultimately trying to be God. We try to arrange our lives by our own power; we attempt to meet our needs in our own power, and we worry because we know we cannot actually meet all of our needs. We end up slaves to the very things that God has given us for our good. But Jesus meets us in our worries, our anxieties, and our sin...and He invites us to know Him, to

trust Him, and to embrace holiness as the path to peace. We will face many struggles in this life: hurt, pain, fear, loss, worry, sorrow, the list goes on. But Jesus reminds us that we need to look no further than the birds and the flowers to be reminded of God's goodness toward us; He cares. He genuinely cares, and He is actively providing for all we need. The answer to worry, then, lies in clinging to Christ and His church. Trusting in His goodness and embracing His sovereign control over our lives. The Psalmist thus writes, "*Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all.*" Blessed be His Name.

### **Application Questions**

- How are you personally magnifying God in your life?
- In what areas are you worrying, and thus, not trusting God?
- How are you teaching your family to trust God over and above all else?
- How is your growth group teaching one another to "*taste and see that the Lord is good*"?
- How might you teach each other to seek first the Kingdom of God as a pattern of holy living?