



THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

Mt. 6:31-34

*“Facing the Worries of Life”*

Mt. 6:31 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?

32 (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.

33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

34 Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day *is* the evil thereof.

## Review

Back in December we began the exegesis of this great sermon preached by the Lord Jesus Christ. Let's review the outline:

- I. THE DISCIPLE AND HIS BLESSINGS, 5:1-16
- II. THE DISCIPLE AND HIS BELIEFS, 5:17-20
- III. THE DISCIPLE AND HIS BIBLE, 5:21-48
- IV. THE DISCIPLE AND HIS BURDENS, 6:1-34
  - A. Burdens Connected with Worship, 6:1-18
  - B. Burdens Connected with Wealth, 6:19-24
  - C. Burdens Connected with Worry, 6:25-34
    1. Daily Life, 6:25-26
    2. Divine Logic, 6:27-32
      - a. Our Human Frame, 6:27
      - b. Our Halting Faith, 6:28-30

Early in the “Sermon on the Mount” the Lord Jesus emphasized His concern regarding “righteousness.”

Mt. 5:20 For I say unto you, That **except your righteousness shall exceed *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.**

## c. Our Heavenly Father, 6:31-32

### (1) A Command, 6:31

Mt. 6:31 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?

- ❖ As we began last week, this verse begins with a “Therefore,” and we are reminded to consider the previous verses which encouraged us to guard our hearts regarding our treasures.

❖ Like last week, we look at typical concerns of existence – food and clothing.

"There may be greater sins than worry, but very certainly there is no more disabling sin."

Mark L. Bailey, "A Biblical Theology of Paul's Pastoral Epistles," in *A Biblical Theology of the New Testament*, p. 342. Cf. H. F. D. Sparks, "The Doctrine of the Divine Fatherhood of God in the Gospels," in *Studies in the Gospels: Essays in Memory of R. H. Lightfoot*, pp. 241-62; James Barr, "Abba Isn't Daddy," *Journal of Theological Studies* 39 (1988):28-47.

❖ In Mt. 6:25 we emphasized that the word "thought" carries the idea of being "anxious" or "full of care."

**Original Word:** μεριμνάω

**Transliteration:** merimnaó

**Definition:** to be anxious, to care for

**Usage:** I am over-anxious; with acc: I am anxious about, distracted; I care for.

*merimnáō* – **properly, drawn in opposite directions; "divided into parts" (A. T. Robertson); (figuratively) "to go to pieces" because *pulled apart* (in different directions), like the force exerted by sinful *anxiety (worry)*.**

<https://biblehub.com/greek/3309.htm>

Luke 10:41 And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art **careful** and troubled about many things:

Phil. 4:6 Be **careful** for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

❖ Believers are to have a higher standard of “thought life.”



(2) A Comparison, 6:32a “(For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:)...”

- ❖ The fretting disciple lives as an unbeliever (Gentile) who disbelieves and disregards God.
- ❖ Such a person devotes too much of his or her attention to the accumulation of material goods, and disregards the more important things in life.

(3) A Comfort, 6:32b “...for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.”

- ❖ As our heavenly Father, God will take care of His children – trust Him!
- ❖ God, in His omniscience, knows everything, and that includes ALL of our needs.

Phil. 4:19 But my **God shall supply all your need** according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

- ❖ If a believer knows this, then why fret over such basic things?

### 3. Divine Laws, 6:33-34

#### a. What Must Be First, 6:33

(1) The Great Priorities of Life, 6:33a  
“But seek ye **first** the kingdom of God,  
and his righteousness...”

- ❖ Instead of fretting and worrying about basic needs, believers are “commanded” by the Lord to focus upon the more important priority of life.
- ❖ A believer can “take thought” and worry, or “seek” and focus on God and His kingdom.

**Original Word:** ζητέω

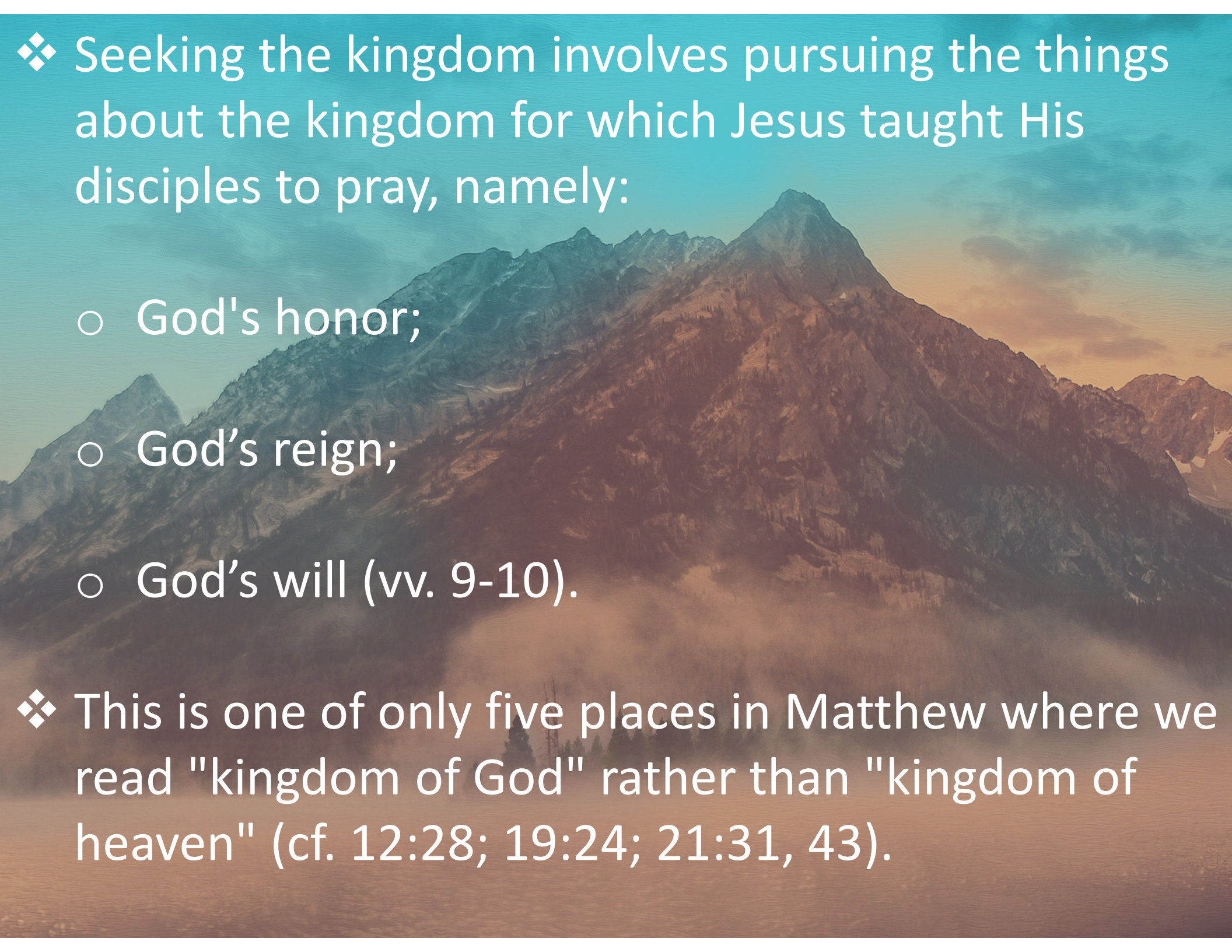
**Transliteration:** zéteó

**Definition:** to seek; **Usage:** I seek, search for, desire, require, demand.

*zētéō* – properly, to seek by *inquiring*; to investigate to reach a *binding (terminal)* resolution; to search, "getting to the bottom of a matter."

"The key to avoiding anxiety is to make the kingdom one's priority (v 33)."

Aída Besançon Spencer, "Father-Ruler: The Meaning of the Metaphor 'Father' for God in the Bible," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 39:3



❖ Seeking the kingdom involves pursuing the things about the kingdom for which Jesus taught His disciples to pray, namely:

- God's honor;
- God's reign;
- God's will (vv. 9-10).

❖ This is one of only five places in Matthew where we read "kingdom of God" rather than "kingdom of heaven" (cf. 12:28; 19:24; 21:31, 43).

A scenic landscape featuring a range of rugged mountains in the background, partially shrouded in mist. In the foreground, a calm lake reflects the surrounding environment, with a line of evergreen trees along the shore. The sky is a mix of soft blues and warm oranges, suggesting a sunrise or sunset. The overall atmosphere is serene and majestic.

❖ In each case, the context requires a more personal reference to "God," rather than a more oblique reference to "the kingdom of heaven."

(a) The Sphere of God's Rule —  
"...the kingdom of God...'

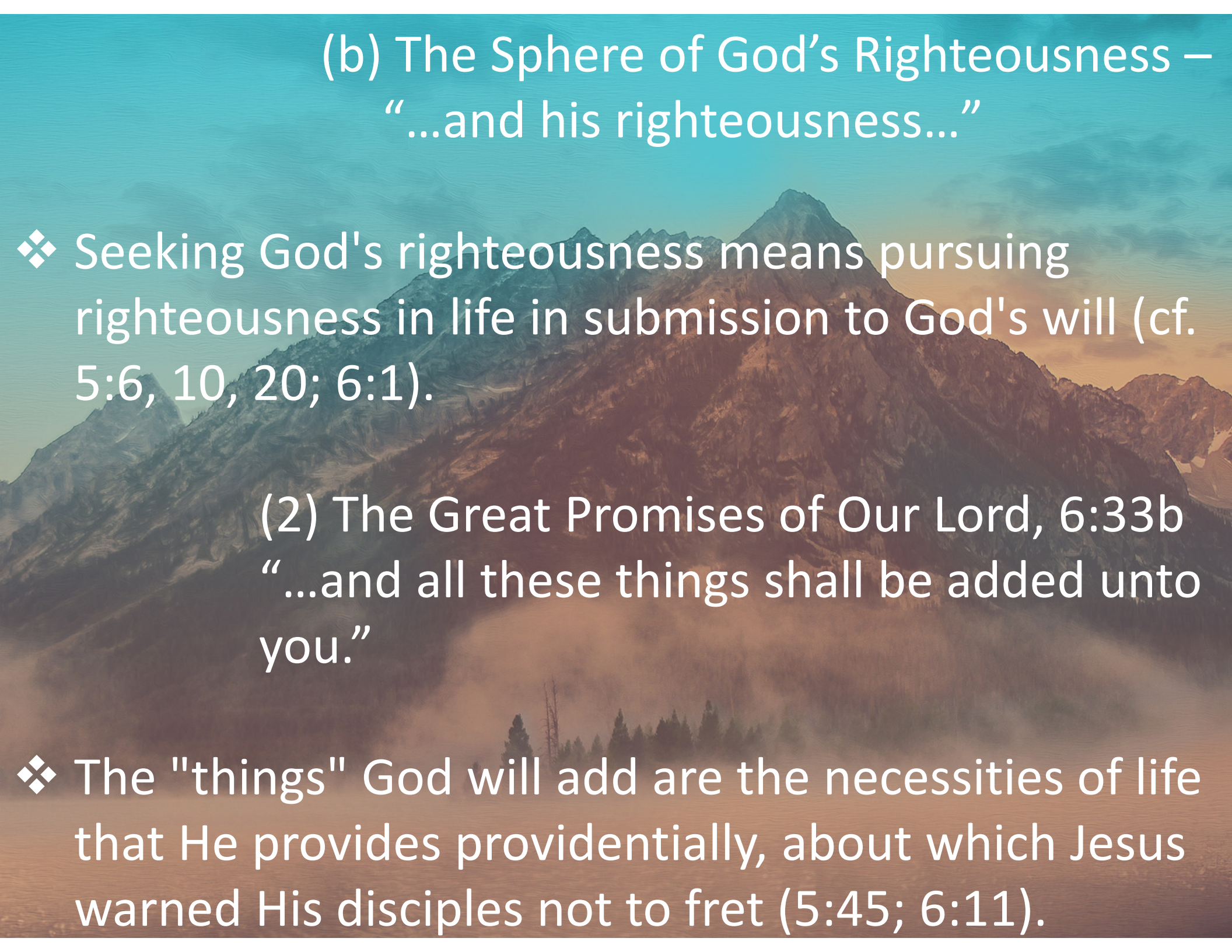
❖ God is a Spirit, and God's kingdom is a spiritual kingdom. Only spiritual individuals will be concerned with such spiritual activity.

Rom. 14:17 For **the kingdom of God is** not meat and drink; but **righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.**

"In the end, just as there are only two kinds of piety, the self-centered and the God-centered, so there are only two kinds of ambition: one can be ambitious either for oneself or for God. There is no third alternative."

Stott, John R. W. *Basic Introduction to the New Testament*. 1<sup>st</sup> American ed. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1964.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Message of the Sermon on the Mount*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1978.



(b) The Sphere of God's Righteousness –  
“...and his righteousness...”

❖ Seeking God's righteousness means pursuing righteousness in life in submission to God's will (cf. 5:6, 10, 20; 6:1).

(2) The Great Promises of Our Lord, 6:33b  
“...and all these things shall be added unto you.”

❖ The "things" God will add are the necessities of life that He provides providentially, about which Jesus warned His disciples not to fret (5:45; 6:11).



❖ Here, God promises to meet the needs of those who commit themselves to seeking the furtherance of His "kingdom" and "righteousness."

b. What Must Be Fought, 6:34

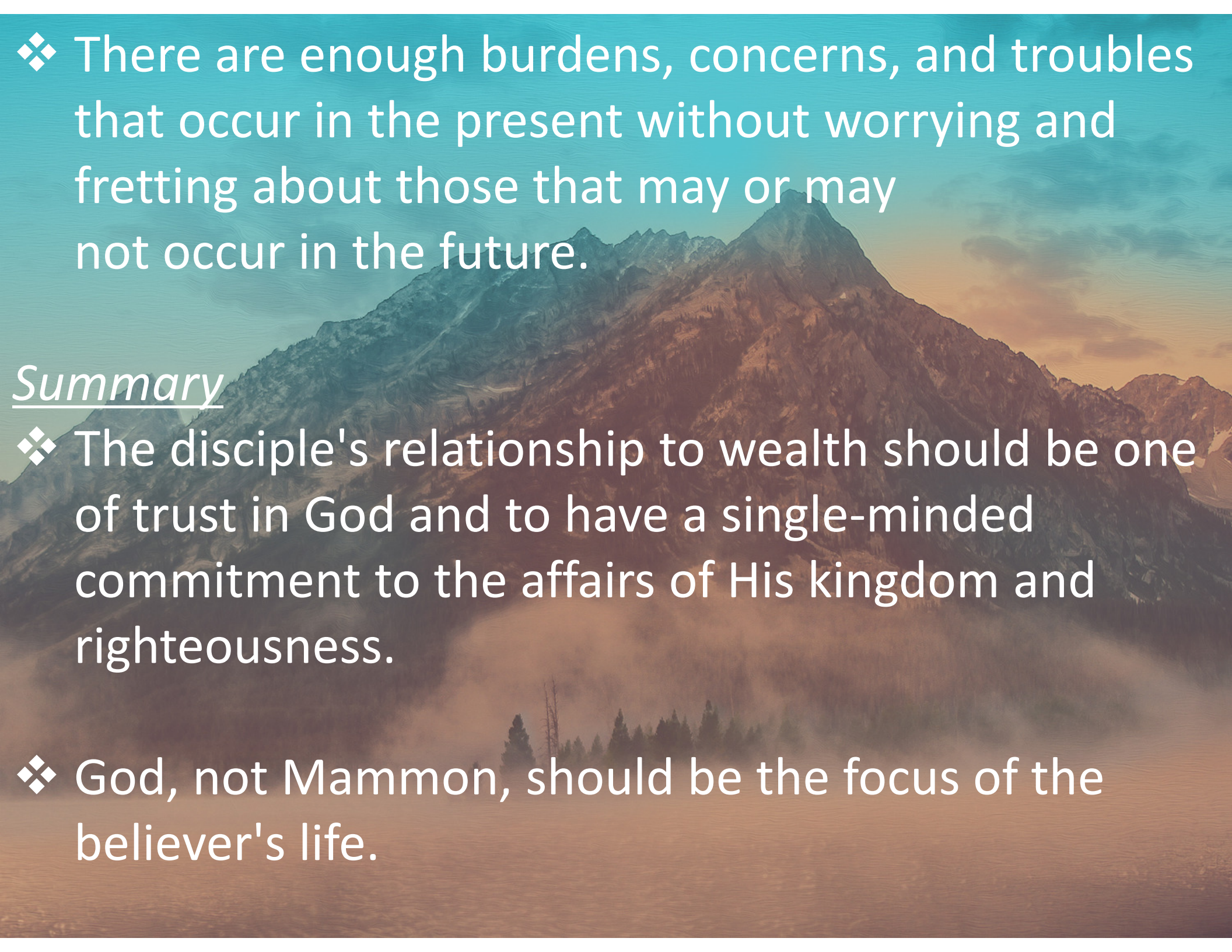
(1) Tomorrow's Worries, 6:34a "Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself..."

❖ Since we have such a promise, backed up by the testimony of divine providence, we should not “take thought” or fret and worry about “tomorrow.”

❖ Today has enough “trouble” or evil for us to deal with.

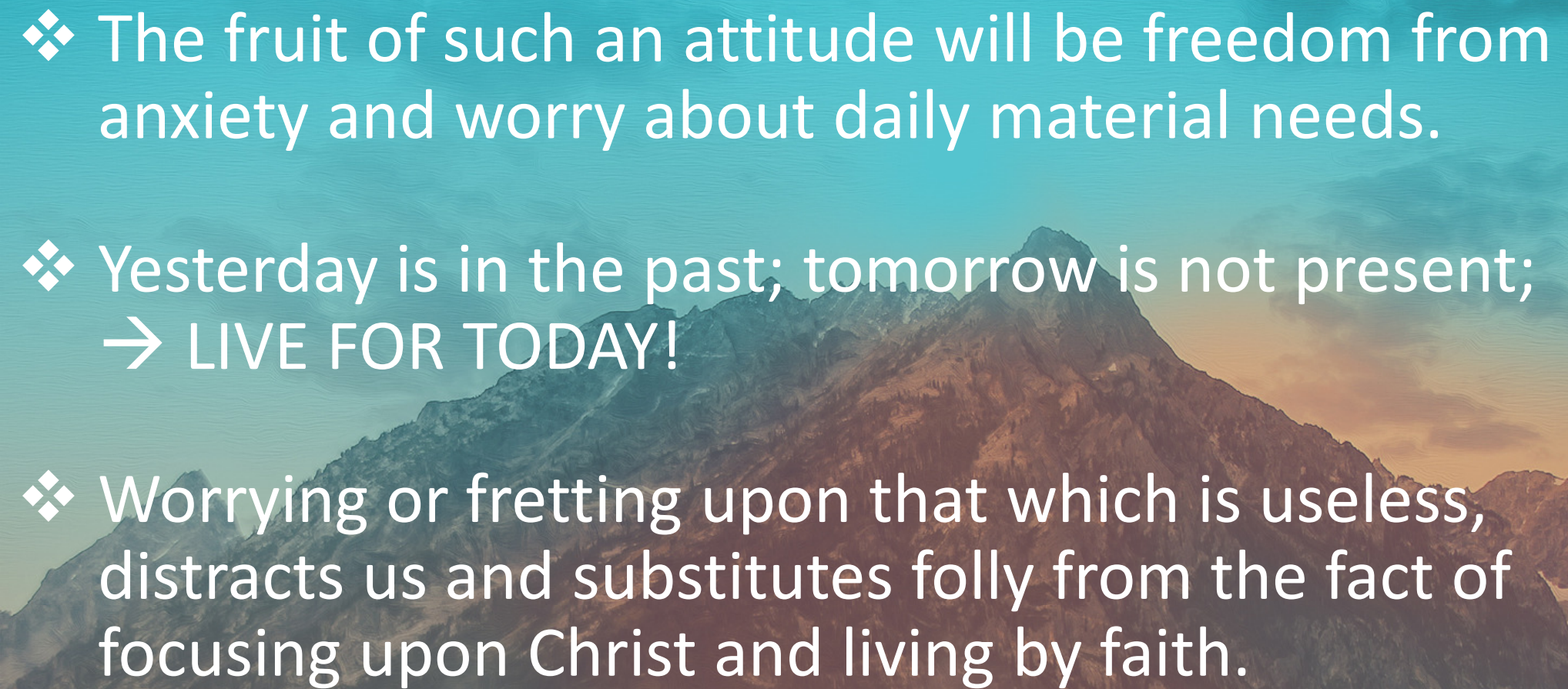
(2) Today’s Wickedness, 6:34b

“...Sufficient unto the day *is* the evil thereof.”

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- ❖ There are enough burdens, concerns, and troubles that occur in the present without worrying and fretting about those that may or may not occur in the future.

### Summary

- ❖ The disciple's relationship to wealth should be one of trust in God and to have a single-minded commitment to the affairs of His kingdom and righteousness.
- ❖ God, not Mammon, should be the focus of the believer's life.

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- ❖ The fruit of such an attitude will be freedom from anxiety and worry about daily material needs.
  - ❖ Yesterday is in the past; tomorrow is not present;  
→ LIVE FOR TODAY!
  - ❖ Worrying or fretting upon that which is useless, distracts us and substitutes folly from the fact of focusing upon Christ and living by faith.

It is impossible to be a partially committed or part-time disciple; it is impossible to serve two masters, whether one of them be wealth or anything else, when the other master is meant to be God." Toussaint, Stanley D. *Behold the King: A Study of Matthew*. Portland, Oreg.: Multnomah Press, 1980. p. 107

## Conclusion

Jas 1:5 **If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God,** that giveth to all *men* liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

6 **But let him ask in faith,** nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.

7 For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.

8 **A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.**