

Matthew 6:25-26
Message #1 (8:30) in the series "Whose Verse Is It Anyway?"

Pastor David Wolverton

Good morning officially, it's good to be with you all. For those who are joining us online or in person for the first time, my name is David Wolverton, I am one of the pastors here and it's my joy to share with you the word of God. Actually, you put the verse before us and so we are grateful for that. It's a very powerful passage of Scripture. I want to remind us of what it is as we gather around the Word of God today comes from Matthew Chapter 6, verses 25 and 26. This is what Jesus says. These are his words for us, his church. He says,

"Therefore, I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink or about your body. What you will wear is not life more than food and the body more than clothes? Look at the birds of the air. They do not so or reap or store away in barns. And yet your Heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?" [Matthew 6:25-26]

Once again, would you join with me in prayer? Oh, Lord, God, open us up to your word. And open your word up to us. Teach us, Lord, what you would have us learn as you conform our lives into the disciples that you have called us to be. All of this, Lord, we pray in Jesus mighty name. And all God's people said, Amen. Amen.

So, we are launching this new sermon series. It's called Whose Verse Is It Anyway? It's based on that old TV show, and I guess it's still on the air. Whose line is it, anyway? It talks about doing improv. Improv and the improvisational element to our sermons for all of the summer is you get to tell us what you want us to preach, and we're just ratcheting it up and kind of putting us as preachers on our toes and on our game by pulling it literally out of the hat and giving ourselves just a few minutes to prep. Now, you might think, how is this all not degrading the word of God? Well, as I as I taught yet again, our preaching team about doing improv. Improv is not simply winging it. Improv is pulling from several sources. Number one, and most important, it's pulling from the resource and source of God himself through the Holy Spirit. Why do I say that? The number one principle of improv, whether it's acting or in this case preaching, is that we are looking for the **'yes.'** For the **'yes.'** The number one improv principle is: **'yes; and'** rather than **'no; but.'** Many of us begin our journey in scriptures going, what **'yes; and'** am I going to read? And what kind of impact is this going to have on us? When you do improv, I'm doing the same thing. We're asking, what is it that God wants to say? And there is a clear picture throughout Scripture that God wants to reveal Himself to us. God is telling us a story, and I believe that the entire Bible is a love letter. Sometimes hard to read, sometimes hard to discern. But it is a love letter that God is writing to us, his people, his children, and he wants to reveal himself. And so, we're looking for the connections. We are looking for the ways that God is revealing himself. We're looking for the 'yes and'. Yes Lord, I hear you, and this is what

I'm thinking we need to do about it. Rather than approaching Scripture and life from a 'but no' perspective. I don't know about you, but that's who I was for many years. I would read something from the Bible, or I would see something or something in life would happen to me, and I'd go, 'but no.' But no! What happens if we just reverse that? And instead of trying to live defensively, even from our faith perspective, we got on board with what God was trying to teach us. We started to say 'yes; and.' Yes, Lord, I hear what you're saying, and I don't know what it means or. Yes, Lord, I hear what you're telling me, I hear what you're teaching me, and give me the grace to be able to live it. That's the challenge connecting our lives with the God who wants us to know Him. To the God who is revealing himself.

The other principle about improv, for those of you who were here last summer, when we when we tried this out for four weeks, you heard me share this, those of you who have been in Bible studies with me, you've heard me teach this. It's the principle of **observation, interpretation and application**. Whenever you study the Bible, those three words come to my mind and hopefully they come to yours. **Observation** is what's happening in the passage and part of what's happening in the passages in this case. I have two verses here, what's the bigger context? What does this mean in terms of the paragraph, the chapter, the book, the whole canon of the New Testament and Old Testament? What is God trying to reveal of himself and how does it connect with me? What do I observe? **Interpret**. Interpretation is what could it have meant back then and what could it mean for me? And then **application**. What am I going to do with what I've learned? So, observation, interpretation, application, that's what we're going to be doing throughout the summer for each of these passages. So, let's launch into this particular passage.

Matthew, Chapter 6. What do I know? What part of what I know is this is embedded; this passage of Scripture is embedded in what we know as the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus is teaching a number of different sayings to a crowd of individuals, probably several crowds of individuals. And what do we know about them? They are people who have been oppressed by both politics and religion. Does that sound familiar? Does that sound like anything we can relate to today? So, politics, you know, politics of The Roman government was oppressing them. You know that the laws that they had to abide by, by being the conquered nation, you know, the political sphere in which these people had to figure out who they were, the taxes that were layered on them, many of them couldn't even afford what was demanded. And so, they were enslaved until they could pay off their taxes. That's what the crowd represented. They were also oppressed, whether they realized it or not, by their religion. And so, Jesus comes on the scene, and he presents the heart and the good news about a God who actually loves them and does not want to oppress them, does not want them to be oppressed. And so, the entire challenge of the Sermon on the Mount is to look at the contrasts, the contrast between what the world has said and what God is defining, what religion has, has decried, and what Jesus is talking about when he says, I want to be in a relationship with you. The Sermon on the Mount is the pivotal core teaching of who Jesus is and who He is calling his disciples to be. Why is that important? These verses, remind us of that contrast. Many of us have heard these verses

before. You know, if you've been in church for any length of time, you've heard preachers preach on the Sermon on the Mount. You've heard even preachers talk about, don't worry. Jesus says, don't worry. So why are we worrying? Right? What struck me more today in these two verses when I just read them a few moments ago was a different phrase. I'd like to share that phrase with you. What struck me here is the phrase. **'Is not life more?'** Is not life more. And then again, at the end of verse 26, we hear the phrase, **'Are you not much more?'** More than what? Well, in terms of the context of these two verses, more than what we worry about. I don't know about you, but I worry about a number of different things. Most of what I worry about are the people that are important to me. Maybe you're like me. I don't really worry about what I'm going to wear. Probably I should worry about that more. Some individuals might think I should. Fact, when I got married, Kristine, it was funny, I joke with her about this all the time. My wife, Kristine, when we got married, she moved into the parsonage in which I lived, and the parsonage was already furnished. I had to buy furniture. My parents helped me to buy furniture. And there was a common theme to all of the furnishings that I bought. Kristine made it very clear what that common theme was. Do you want to know what the common theme was? Everything was brown. I had brown sofas, brown chairs, brown end tables. Brown spread on my bed, brown bed, brown curtains, brown. Everything was brown. Well, it was neutral. And me being somebody who, you know, was starting out, I just got everything that's neutral. So, it was funny, you know, that as we were married for a full year, by the end of that first year, when you looked at the parsonage, I think there was only one piece of furniture that was left that was original to me. Everything that I had bought, everything that was brown was suddenly transformed. It was all gone. And the only thing that was left was my piano. The piano that I had since I was in seventh grade and started piano lessons. That was the only thing that was left. Everything else disappeared. And it was gradual. It was slow, right? It was that deceptive. Hey, I think we need that... Okay. Hey. Hey. I think we need some... Okay. And then one day I woke up and I went, Where's all my stuff? So, I don't worry about those things. Sometimes I worry about what I'm going to eat because the nature of of the medicines that I've had to be on since my heart attack at age 41 and a variety of diets that I've had to live with, some of you know what that's like. Sometimes I have to figure out what I'm going to eat and what's not going to cause major reactions to my body. But other than that, I'm trusting that God's going to provide. So, what is it that really worries me? Sometimes I worry about the things that I can't control. Sometimes I worry about the things that are happening to the people that I care about. Sometimes I worry about the things that are coming down the pike that most of us may not anticipate but my crazy mind thinks about those things. 'Hey, if we don't change this, this is what's going to happen.' That's the prophetic side of the giftings that the Holy Spirit has given to me. I'm anticipating what's down the pike and I worry about that. And any time I worry in the literal word here in Greek is to be anxious any time I'm anxious about it I hear these words of Jesus saying, don't worry. Why? That's what I want to bring out here in these two verses. Why don't you want to worry? Because Jesus says, 'Isn't your life more?' Isn't your life worth more than what you worry about? Think about that for a second. If we truly believe the good news of the gospel, that just at the right time in all of our brokenness, Jesus died for us and rose to new life. If we truly believe that, that God would sacrifice his one and only son because

he loved us that much, would that same God not care about our individual needs? Would that same God not provide for what we need at any given moment? So why worry? Is your life not worth more? I really think that when you look at it from that vantage point, these verses make a lot of sense. He says, do not worry about your life, what you're going to eat or drink or about your body, what you're going to wear. Because your life is worth more than food and clothes. Everything that you think is important. Gods got this. You may say, well, Pastor David, what about the tests that I just had to go through? What about the medical procedures that are pending? What about those? Should I not worry? Our anxiety is connected to what we cannot control. Our anxiety is connected to the unknowns. But if God truly has called us, if God truly has His thumbprint on your life, then why are we worried? We serve a God who has said, 'is not your life worth more?' Look at the birds of the air, Jesus says, they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your Heavenly Father feeds them.' Notice the word choice here. Jesus says, look at the birds they don't store up, but your heavenly Father feeds them. It's your Heavenly Father. Are you not much more valuable, then they? For me, the word that they use here in Greek for do not worry is in what's called the imperative tense, which means Jesus is issuing it as a command. Do not worry is not just an invitation. It's an order from our commander in chief. Think about that. No matter what's coming down the pike, no matter what is coming down the pike, the phrase that I go to all the time, is **'God's got this.'** Because God's got you. He's got you. That's why we don't worry. Not because we live in denial, but because we trust the one who loves us. Is your life not worth more?

Let's pray together. God, I thank you for this Your word. I thank you for the powerful message that you gave to that crowd over 2000 years ago and its relevance for us today. So, speak it a new to our hearts, into our minds. Speak it into our souls until, Lord, until we own it for ourselves. That you, you indeed see us our lives as being more valuable than anything that we would worry about. So, Lord, today we are choosing to trust you. And to place our lives in the full embrace of your grace. Knowing that no matter what comes our way, you've got it because you've got us in the palm of your hands. Lord, I know that there is somebody who is listening to this message. There is somebody in this room or watching online that today needs to be reminded that their life is more precious to you than anything else. Thank you for that great gift. And thank you for ministering to us. As we pray in Jesus' name. God's people said, Amen.