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-- Anxiety....worry....these seem to be part and parcel of our modern world. Just to give an example: ER doctors estimate that two thirds of the people who come into the ER have symptoms of excessive anxiety.

-- There's plenty of things we can worry about: our jobs, our children, our income, our homes, even our country. Some things are fairly trivial, like what we will wear today. Others are more substantial, such as whether your job is secure, or if your mother will survive her latest cancer scare.

-- Other things get blown totally out of proportion. Think back to the 1990's when the Air Jordan basketball shoes came out. In some neighborhoods, kids were robbed at gunpoint by thugs who wanted them. Threats of death—all for a pair of shoes.

-- We may think we have worries, but people in Jesus' day had plenty to worry about. Jesus spoke primarily to poor workers in a society where the little they made was taxed at rates we'd consider outrageous.

-- Yet Jesus told them not to worry about food and clothing. No, he didn't have his head stuck in the clouds. He knew families had to put food on the table and clothe their children. As he said, *Your heavenly Father knows you need them all.*

-- Jesus was speaking about priorities, about what is most important. Good parents work to feed and clothe their children. But they don't make work so important that they neglect their children's need for their love and presence at significant times.

-- Back when I was a young boy, my father had an offer from his cousin to go into business with him. He certainly would have made more money doing that, but it would have meant he would be away from his family more. He turned down the offer, and it was probably the best decision he made in his life.

-- This weekend there will be the presentation of the Academy Awards for motion pictures. The media will focus on what the stars are wearing on the red carpet as much or more than on who wins the Oscars.

-- Many of us may snicker at this excessive focus on clothes, but it tends to affect us at one level or another. How a person appears can easily become more important in our minds than their character.

-- Jesus calls us to focus on what is most important. He tells us to seek the kingdom of God first of all. This doesn't mean burying our heads in the sand (or in a prayer book, important as prayer is).

-- It means understanding what is most important: that forming the character of children is more important than giving them things or making them great athletes.

-- It doesn't mean we don't care for those in true need because the world is passing away. In fact, it moves us to care more for those who are truly needy, sharing with them when we have an abundance.

-- We know that the things of this world will pass away, and that we can't take our accumulated wealth with us when we leave this earthly life. This fact alone should help us to have a proper perspective on the things we acquire in life.

-- For, when all is said and done, love is far more important than food or clothing, even though we need all of these. And who is the ultimate source of all love? It is God himself.

-- There's where our primary focus in life should be.