



Saint John United Methodist Church
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Message for November 6, 2022
"Immeasurably More: Why Worry?"
Speaker: Pastor Tom Grieb
Scripture: Matthew 6:25-34

Immeasurably More: Why Worry? Matthew 6:25-34

Don't Worry, Be Joyful

Bobby McFerrin's famous song encourages us by saying, "Don't worry, be happy." Jesus says it even more clearly. "Do not worry," he says in his Sermon on the Mount.

Jesus calls on us to trust in God's provision and assures us that God always takes care of our needs. We are to trust him day by day, and in that we will not only be "happy," but full of joy. Let's hear more about this as we read Matthew 6:25-34.

Matthew 6:25-34

"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 sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?"

"And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. ²⁹ Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."

God Will Take Care of You

Worry is a common thread woven throughout the whole of human existence. Jesus speaking about worry in his Sermon on the Mount all but proves that.

The difference between Christ's day and now is that those who first heard him were worried about things we take for granted. One of those things was whether there would be a next meal.

As we know, there are people around the world who also worry about their next meal. There are people in this country who suffer daily from "food insecurity." We need to do all we can to battle such things.

In talking about worrying about food and drink, Jesus strikes a comparison. He asks us to consider *“the birds of the air.”* *“The birds of the air”* don’t worry because God takes care of them.

In Owensboro where Cheryl and I served some years ago, the birds feasted on the grain left on the ground at the Owensboro Grain Company. Down the hill from our home is a field that’s just been harvested. The birds have been gleaning what’s left.

In considering God’s care for the birds, Jesus offers this question, *“Are you not more valuable than they?”* You better believe it, with the emphasis on believing it.

“God will take care of you, through every day, o’er all the way, he will take care of you, God will take care of you.”

The words Abraham spoke to Isaac are so true, *“The Lord will provide.”*

Beautifully Adorned

Jesus strikes another comparison in talking about worry. He does that in a discussion about what the wear.

In that context, Jesus talks about *“the lilies of the field”* and how beautifully they are adorned. Who of us isn’t uplifted by a new set of clothes? As a kid it was always a big deal to get a new set of clothes. I felt like a million dollars. Just like *“the lilies of the field”* God clothes us even more beautifully than he does them.

God is fast at work to transform our lives to the place where we reflect his glory, which is a beautiful thing indeed, more than any set of new clothes we could wear.

Immeasurably More

In talking about what we eat and what we wear, Jesus asks, *“Is not life more than these?”* He asks that question with the answer already in mind, and that answer is, *“Sure it is.”*

In effect, what Jesus references here is the *“immeasurably more”* we talked about last week. The *“immeasurably more”* God offers fills us to the overflowing and adorns our lives in beautiful ways.

The words of Jesus wash over us in profound ways. They put our focus right where it needs to be, upon God and his love. It is always good to be reminded of that. It’s also good to be reminded about how important faith is in helping us experience that love.

Jesus not only challenged the people who gathered to hear the Sermon on the Mount, but he challenges us. He challenges us about our faith. We are to live faithfully day by day. God is all about providing just what we need—just enough, just in time.

Jesus is quick to remind us that each day has enough trouble of its own, and if not trouble, then plenty to be concerned about. God stands to support us in that, day by day. God doesn’t want us to borrow trouble. He wants us to live in the moment and share in the sustenance he longs to give.

Life then is a journey, a faith journey that is meant to be lived moment by moment, day by day.

Why Worry?

So why worry?

Jesus is quick to point out that worry won't add even an hour to our lives. In fact, if you think about it, worry serves only to rob us of life. If we are not careful, worry will put us on the slippery slope that leads us not only to doubt God's provision, but his very existence. What Jesus teaches about worry puts us on a different trajectory where we find ourselves trusting God above all.

Combatting Worry

How then does Jesus want us to combat worry? He wants us to "*seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness,*" and in that we will realize that everything we need is supplied. Food, drink, and clothing will pale in significance to the great things God longs to bestow.

God offers strength when challenged, peace when unsettled, and just the right focus when tempted to start down the slippery slope of worry we mentioned just a second ago.

Responding Faithfully

When we "*seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness*" we will find ourselves looking to respond faithfully, joyously, and with a generous heart. There are all sorts of ways to respond when we "*seek God first.*" One of the surest ways is by giving a portion of that which God has first given.

When it comes to giving each of us can identify all sorts of headwinds. The economy alone gives us pause. Amid those things that worry us, we can decide to either circle the wagons or keep moving forward. I chose to do the latter. After all, God is with me day by day. I seek to trust him no matter the rate of inflation, the ups and downs of the stock market, or the threats of a recession.

Asserting God's good work is not some empty hope, but a faithful response, which is the very thing God wants us to do. Hear this question: How much of your giving, or the lack thereof, is dictated by a worrisome disposition?

Jesus says, "*Do not worry,*" but rather "*seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you.*"

Food for a Weary Soul

We are all just a bit weary with things these days. There is so much that conspires to get us down. It is all too easy to give into worry. Given that, it is always good to be reminded that there is another way. The meal we are about to partake does just that. This meal involves food and drink, the very things Jesus talks about in the Sermon on the Mount.

This meal reminds us that God seeks to sustain us. He wants to bless us. His every desire is to provide a way for us to live life in the One who "*is able to do immeasurably more than we could ever ask or imagine.*"

Ours is life in Christ, the very One who pointedly tells us not to worry. We remember Christ today and in remembering him we are reminded that Jesus came to offer life and offer it abundantly.