*DAILY DEVOTIONS*

October 19 - 24

Do Not Worry

**Monday, October 19 Matthew 6:25-30**

*“Why Worry?”*

The passage begins with “that is why,” tying this section to the one just preceding. As servants, we look to our Master for his care and trust him for our well-being. This call to trust God is an answer to the human tendency to worry. We find it easier to feel secure with things that we can control and, when something is beyond our control, we worry. But, when we have found the greater security in God, we can trust him for our needs. Christ calls us to give up our limited securities for the greater security in his grace.

Jesus presents evidence that worry is *irreverent*, for it fails to recognize the God who gave us life and is sustaining it. Worry is *irrelevant*; it does not change things, nor does it help us in coping with problems. And worry is *irresponsible*; it burns up psychic energy without using it to apply constructive action to the problem. Jesus uses the birds of the air to illustrate freedom from anxiety, and the lilies of the field to illustrate freedom from status-seeking. Indeed, worry is unable to add a single thing to our life.

*I trust you to meet my needs, Lord, finding my security in you. Amen.*

**Tuesday, October 20 Proverbs 30:7-9**

*“Give me enough to satisfy my needs”*

How much is enough? While some may answer, “Just a little bit more,” the wisdom of Proverbs tells us to pray for enough to meet our needs. How do we know how much is enough for our needs? One way to come at that question is to distinguish between our needs and our wants. God has promised to meet our real needs, but he is not a magic genie in a bottle who gives us wishes so we can have everything we want regardless of how it will affect our relationship with him or with others.

Proverbs goes on to tell us why we should pray for enough to satisfy our needs. On the one hand, if we get more than we need we may become proud of our riches and convince ourselves that we don’t need God anymore but can take care of ourselves. On the other hand, if we don’t have what we need, we will be compelled to behave in ways that oppose God’s will in order to meet those needs. When we trust God to give us what we need, we will be content not to wrongly seek what we really don’t need.

*Help me, Lord, to know what “enough” is for me. Amen.*

**Wednesday, October 21 Luke 10:38-42**

*“There is really only one thing worth being concerned about”*

What are you concerned about today? What has your attention? Politics, COVID-19, finances, family? There are so many things that can flood our minds and fill our days with anxiety and worry. Martha is focused on her own concerns. She is so busy being gracious and polite and a good hostess that she has no time to be with the Lord.

John Bunyan, author of *Pilgrim’s Progress,* said: “He who runs from God in the morning will scarcely find him the rest of the day.” Most people don’t spend time with God when they wake up in the morning because they have started their day so concerned about the many things they feel they have to get done. They wake up and enter their day with anxious hearts, troubled minds, stress in their bodies, and pain on their faces. Instead, like Mary, we need to spend time with the Lord. Make the time and take the time every morning to read God’s Word and pray. The Lord promises to give us the strength, guidance, and wisdom we need to handle the challenges we face each day.

*Help me, Lord, to turn to you and learn from you every day. Amen.*

*DAILY DEVOTIONS*

October 19 - 24

Do Not Worry

**Thursday, October 22 2 Chronicles 31:11-15**

*“They distributed the gifts made to the Lord”*

King Ahaz ruled Judah for sixteen years, from about 731 to 715BC. He was a king who “did evil in the eyes of the Lord” including idolatry, child sacrifice, and participation in the false worship associated with the Canaanite high places. King Hezekiah followed Ahaz, reigning from about 715 to 687BC. He was a king who “did what was right in the eyes of the Lord” by restoring proper worship of God in the Jerusalem temple. This included reinstating the system of tithes and offerings designed to both worship God and financially support the ministry of the priests and Levites, a system that had been abolished when Ahaz closed God’s temple.

The response to the king’s command to bring the tithes and offerings into God’s temple is overwhelming. It not only allows for the restoration of the work of the priests and Levites, but is a sign of the people’s repentance. In our passage, the Chronicler carefully reports that the bounty of goods received is inventoried, properly stored and maintained, and distributed with fairness.

*May the gifts we give you, Lord, be well cared for and used for your glory. Amen.*

**Friday, October 23 Matthew 22:15-22**

*“Give to God what belongs to God”*

“Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar or not?” While the question itself may be innocent, the intent behind it is not. If Jesus answers that it is indeed right to pay taxes to Caesar, it will put him in disfavor with the people, who will think that he is in league with the Roman oppression. If Jesus answers that it is not right to pay taxes to Caesar, it can be used against him with the Roman authorities to support their case that he is an insurrectionist.

Jesus’ reply, “Give to Caesar what is Caesar’s, and to God what is God’s,” is not merely an attempt to wiggle out of a tricky, logical riddle by offering another. Rather, behind his answer is a statement of his role as Messiah, as well as the way his followers will operate in this world. (1) He has not come as a military or political threat to the established rulers of the world. (2) Those who follow him will continue to have obligations to governing authorities of this world. (3) God as Creator has sovereign right over all creation and everything in it. This implies that even what belongs to Caesar is only his in a secondary way.

*May we be good stewards, Lord, of all that you have given us. Amen.*

**Saturday, October 24 Luke 16:10-15**

*“No one can serve two masters”*

Those who can be trusted with little can also be trusted with much, just as those who are dishonest with little will be dishonest with much. How can God entrust people with significant things of real value if they cannot handle worldly wealth? Are our resources, which God has blessed us with, put to selfish or generous use? Jesus drives for a character in his disciples that reflects God’s integrity, generosity, and grace.

A person in this world is faced with a fundamental choice of allegiance. No servant can serve two masters. The moment will come when the servant must choose which one gets the service. At that time one will be loved, the other hated; devotion will be offered to one, while the other will be despised. One cannot serve both God and Money. The day is coming when God will evaluate our use of resources, whether we have handled them in a way that anticipates his desires and values; if we have, his commendation will follow.

*You are my Master, Lord, and I commit to using the resources you entrust to me according to your will. Amen.*