

SERMON FOR AUGUST 9, 2020

TEXT: LUKE 12: 22-34

THEME: GOD'S PROMISE FOR YOU

And he said to his disciples, "Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat, nor about your body, what you will put on. **23** For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing. **24** Consider the ravens: they neither sow nor reap, they have neither storehouse nor barn, and yet God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds! **25** And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? **26** If then you are not able to do as small a thing as that, why are you anxious about the rest? **27** Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. **28** But if God so clothes the grass, which is alive in the field today, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you, O you of little faith! **29** And do not seek what you are to eat and what you are to drink, nor be worried. **30** For all the nations of the world seek after these things, and your Father knows that you need them. **31** Instead, seek his kingdom, and these things will be added to you. **32** "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

In the name of Jesus:

Several years ago I attended the National Youth Gathering in New Orleans with our youth. At the beginning of the Gathering, a video was shown featuring LCMS member Jeff Williams. Jeff Williams greeted the youth and shared with them his faith in Jesus. If you don't know Jeff Williams, you should. He is a member of a LCMS congregation in the Houston Texas area. He wrote a book which was published by Concordia Publishing House back in 2010 titled: The Work Of God's Hands. Jeff Williams took pictures of earth when he was orbiting the earth in the International Space Station. You see, Jeff Williams is an astronaut, and he presently is orbiting the earth on the Space Station. He is a man of great faith.

Jeff believes in Jesus, he believes that God so loved the world that He sent His only Son to ransom the world from sin, Satan, and death. Jeff also trusts in God to

provide for him what he needs on the Space Station. Actually, Jeff believes God will provide for him all of his needs through NASA. NASA will send a supply ship up to the Space Station every so often, so that everyone on the Space Station will be taken care of. They will have all they need, in food, water, and other provisions. These astronauts don't worry, they trust that NASA will send the ship and deliver what they need.

Jesus, in our text for today, tells you and me not to worry. For if NASA cares about its astronauts, and if other companies are spending billions of dollars to provide for a handful of people orbiting the earth, don't you think that the God of all creation will make certain that He will provide for all that you need as well? Listen to what Jesus says as He talks about God's promise to you: "**24** Consider the ravens: they neither sow nor reap, they have neither storehouse nor barn, and yet God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds! **25** And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? **26** If then you are not able to do as small a thing as that, why are you anxious about the rest? **27** Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. **28** But if God so clothes the grass, which is alive in the field today, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you, O you of little faith!"

God's promise to you is to care for you, to provide for your every need. Why? Because He loves you with an everlasting love! But Houston, we have a problem!

The problem is not that God will fail to provide, rather our problem is that we fail to trust in God to provide for our every need.

If you don't believe me, just consider how much you worry in your life, and over what things you are anxious about. You worry and are anxious because you don't have any control over the things you worry and are anxious about! As a mom you worry about the health of your kids, as a parent you worry about your children's future, you worry about your future, your retirement, you worry about a lot of things. But how much does your worry really change things? Jesus says this about worry and the value of worry: "25 And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life?" You see, worry doesn't change things, in fact, worry adds stress to your life and is hard on your health, for when you worry you feel as if you are tossing and turning on the inside. Will this happen? What about that? I know this but what about the unknown? Talk about a stressor! But the worst thing about worry is this: You are failing to trust in God!

Remember the first commandment? God says: You shall have no other gods! And what does this mean, but you are to fear, love, and trust in God above all things. When you worry, you certainly aren't trusting God, and when you worry you are creating fears and are anxious over things that you have no control over. Oh, you wish you had control over them, that is why you worry, for in your worry you are trying to take control over a situation or an issue that you have no control over. But God does!

That is why Jesus reminds you and me: “**27** Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. **28** But if God so clothes the grass, which is alive in the field today, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you, O you of little faith! **29** And do not seek what you are to eat and what you are to drink, nor be worried. **30** For all the nations of the world seek after these things, and your Father knows that you need them.” God loves you with an everlasting love. He knows what you need, and if He is able to provide for the flowers in the field, and if he is able to provide for the Birds of the air, why won’t He provide for you? The Good News is that God will provide for you and He does provide for you!

How do we know that for certain? The Bible says this: “God shows His love for us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” (Rom 5:8). “See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are.” (1 John 3: 1). For at the right time in history God sent His Son Jesus Christ, to redeem sinners cursed by the Law. You know for certain that God loves you because He sent Jesus to be your Savior. And if God gave you Jesus, He has given to you all that you need. This is why Jesus says: “Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.”

Have no fear, for you belong to God! Have no fear for God has made you His child in Holy Baptism. Have no fear, for in Christ your sins are forgiven. Have no fear, for your sins are cast away as far as the east is from the west. Have no fear, for nothing will separate you from the love of God which is yours in Christ Jesus. Have

no fear, God is for you, not against you. Have no fear, for God's promise to you is that He loves you, will always love you, and He will work all things out to your good and His glory for He has called you to be His child in Jesus. And so if God has done all this for you, will He not also give you everything you need? It is a rhetorical question. The answer is a resounding YES!

So what are we to do in our times of need? God invites you to pray. Pray, trusting in the goodness and mercy of God in Christ, for God to help you in your time of need. The Psalmist exclaims in Psalm 46: "God is our refuge and strength, an ever present Help in our time of need." He is the one to turn to, He is the One to trust in, for He will help and answer your requests. "do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God." (Phil 4: 6).

But what do we pray for? Certainly, we pray for all things, but note what Jesus says: "seek his kingdom, and these things will be added to you." Seek first God's Kingdom and righteousness. Why? Because God's Kingdom lasts forever. And you are a member of His Kingdom. So doesn't it make sense to make God's Kingdom a priority?

I recently came across a story about a man by the name of Jake Booth. Jake is thirty five years old and he was going through a difficult stretch. An Army vet, Booth had contracted a nasty case of double pneumonia and then he had a heart attack. Between the pneumonia and the heart attack, he went into a coma. Booth stayed in that coma at a Tampa, Florida, hospital for 48 days.

But on day 48, almost "miraculously," according to the United Press International, Booth awoke. Unlike many in his situation, he had no difficulty recognizing family or knowing where he was or any of the other details of his life. Almost immediately Booth began to speak. Speaking was a difficult thing for him to do since, while he had been in his coma, it had been necessary to fit him with a tracheostomy tube. Even so, as soon as Booth could communicate, he put in a request for ... well, you will never guess what he asked for!

You would think that he would ask for something life changing, something meaningful, or say something important. But no, Booth asked for.... Taco Bell! He couldn't get everything out that he wanted to say in one sentence, but the request he made, after being at death's door, was for an order from Taco Bell! Now let me ask you, when you stand at the gate of heaven, and are about to address your Maker, are you going to be thinking about Taco Bell? Where will your priorities lie?

The Bible says: "You do not have, because you do not ask. **3** You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions." (James 4: 2-3). May God teach you to seek and pray rightly, not making your earthly desires your goal, but to pursue the gifts that God gives freely in Jesus. For this is what it means to seek first the Kingdom and His righteousness, and trust in God to take care of all that you need. Because that is God's promise, to take care of you.

To the glory of God and in Jesus' name.

Amen

