

(Luke 12:22-31, NIV84)

Then Jesus said to his disciples: "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; or about your body, what you will wear. Life is more than food, and the body more than clothes. Consider the ravens: They do not sow or reap, they have no storeroom or barn; yet God feeds them. And how much more valuable you are than birds! Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life? Since you cannot do this very little thing, why do you worry about the rest? Consider how the lilies grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you, 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, how much more will he clothe you, O you of little faith! And do not set your heart on what you will eat or drink; do not worry about it. For the pagan world runs after all such things, and your Father knows that you need them. But seek his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well."

Let me ask you a personal question. Before this whole COVID-19 pandemic got started, did you live day to day with the constant fear that you might come down with some contagious disease? Probably not, right? When you went out in public and interacted with others, you probably refrained from touching your face or rubbing your eyes with unwashed hands. If you learned from one of your family members or friends that they had come down with the flu, you probably avoided interacting with them as much as possible until they had been over it for a few days. You most likely took regular precautions to keep yourself healthy, and you trusted the Lord to watch over you and guard your health and your life.

So what's changed? Jesus asks, "Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?" Is our Lord less capable of keeping us in good health and preserving our lives now than He was three months ago? "That's a ridiculous question," you say, "of course the Lord is able to watch over us and protect us!" But where does taking personal precautions mutate into distrusting our Lord's ability to protect us?

Jesus says, "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life." This doesn't just pertain to what we will eat or what we will wear; it is true of our entire life and being.

Yes, use common sense. Exercise caution, but do so with the confidence that our times are in God's hands. "Do not worry about your life." Rather than taking constant precautions to wash your hands and sanitize every surface, take special care to cleanse your heart and life. Jesus says, "But seek God's kingdom." The writer to the Hebrews put it this way: "let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water" (Hebrews 10:22). Remember who you are as a

baptized and redeemed child of God and be built up in faith through the power of God's word of promise. In that full assurance, know that God has your life in His loving hands.

Happy with you in Christ,
Pastor Golm

May 2

My Father's World

Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. Matthew 10:29

Can the God who rules the vastness of the universe be concerned about me and my little problems and perplexities? Scientists tell us that the sun which gives us light and warmth, and whose size is many times that of our earth, is separated from us by some 93 million miles-and that the miles which separate the sun from the planet Neptune have been computed at 3,000 million.

Can the God who conceived such an inconceivable vastness, who brought these heavenly bodies into being, and who even today fills every mile between the planets with the power of his presence-can he be interested in me? Can he help, guide, and protect me?

Most assuredly, he can and will! He whose wisdom and omnipotence could create so great a universe to house the sun, the moon, and the stars, surely will be able to raise protecting walls of love around our little lives.

This is our Father's world. No blind force, no blind fate, but our Father's love still guides and shapes the destiny of all his children in things both great and small. Again and again the Christ points us to the hand of his Father in the individual lives of his Christians. "Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of," he says. He who holds the planets in the hollow of his hand also holds the sparrows. And "ye are of more value than many sparrows." what a wondrous assurance! Through Christ, the God of the trackless universe has become our Father. He is not only our Father who has made us and preserves us, but also our Father who has taken us into his family by the redeeming work of his beloved Son. Surely, in a very special sense the believer can say with joyful confidence: this is "my Father's world"!

Lord, may we never forget that this is our Father's world. In days of doubt or anxious fear, may we always remember that all things are in Your hands, and that all things work together for good to those who have committed their lives to You through Jesus Christ our Lord. In His name we ask it. Amen.