

(Matthew 6:24-33, NIV84)

"No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money. 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 important than food, and the body more important 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? Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life? And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. 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, O 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."

In a time when we are told to avoid contact with others and stay at home to stay safe, we may be missing freedom more than anything -- freedom to move about as we would like, freedom to be with those we love, freedom to live without fear of becoming infected by a virus.

Take a moment to reflect on God's greatest blessings to us. Jesus came as our Savior to restore our freedom -- freedom to go to God in prayer with the confidence that He will hear us for Jesus' sake, freedom to live joyful lives with the full assurance that even though we may be separated by death from those we love, in Jesus we will be reunited for a glorious eternal future. In Jesus we also have freedom to live without fear, fear that God will stop loving us, fear that we need to do something to earn our salvation, fear that our sins will not be forgiven and that we will have to "pay" for them in the end.

How blessed we are in Jesus!

Safe with you in Christ,  
Pastor Golm

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May 9

A Bad Bargain

For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Matthew 16:26

Unfortunately we frequently don't recognize a bad bargain until it is too late. We usually learn from such experiences, however, and become more wary in the future.

But wouldn't it be tragic beyond words to stand at the very portals of eternity and to learn, at that crisis moment, that our whole life had been a "bad bargain"-that we had made all of our investments in the wrong things? Jesus was referring to this ultimate "bad bargain" when he asked: "What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

Perhaps at no time in previous history has the world been so full of potentially "bad bargains". Ours is an age of materialism. Our lives are being cluttered with more and more "things": cars, televisions, radios, stereos, electrical gadgets, luxurious homes and furnishings, expensive and superfluous wardrobes, jewelry, and so many more items that once were considered luxuries, but now have become "necessities". What a daily challenge to keep our sense of values straight!

How about you and me? What do we consider our highest gain in life? Material Possessions? Status? Popularity? Financial investments? There is nothing wrong with these things in themselves. But ultimately they will all prove to be bad bargains if we have not (above all else) invested in the highest good. Jesus tells us: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God [that is, our spiritual welfare] and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you." There is no higher good in all the world than to have Jesus Christ in our hearts as personal Savior and Lord. How eloquently the poet puts it:

What is the world to me With all its vaunted pleasure  
When Thou and Thou alone, Lord Jesus, art my Treasure;  
Thou only, dearest Lord, My soul's delight shall be;  
Thou art my Peace, my Rest-What is the world to me!