

From the Pastors' Desk

“No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you 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 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 labour or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendour 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. Matthew 6:24-34

Hymn: Simply trusting every day <https://youtu.be/LzttxQI19LQ>

Greetings in Christ Jesus to all of you. I pray this devotional finds you at peace with Christ and with yourself.

Where do you put your trust? Have you heard the story about the guy who was walking along and fell off a cliff? On the way down he reached out in desperation and managed to grab hold of a branch. As he was hanging there precariously, and trying to figure out how to keep from falling into the canyon below, he shouted out “Is there anybody up there?” to his amazement a voice replied “Let go and I’ll save you. Trust me. Let go and I’ll take care of you.” He said, “Lord is that you?” and the Voice said, “yes, it is I”. The man looked up and hollered: “Is there anybody else up there?”

We are often like the guy hanging on the branch. When asked to put our trust in God, we look for other options, we get nervous and shout out, “Is there anybody else up there?” Is there another source of security? Is there something else in which to trust?

In his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus directs our attention to where we put our trust. He lifts up images and issues that are very familiar to us: food and drink and clothing; birds and flowers and wild grass, and then he says “do not be anxious about your life; do not worry about tomorrow; do not seek to be in control of everything—trust in God”.

I know we all have our struggles from time to time with trusting God “in all things”. I know I do. I know you do. But I also want to say that the Lord knows this about us, he understands us, and he forgives us for the times when we do not trust Him as we know we should. But I also want to say that in Christ we also have the assurance of our faith that many others do not have. We are not on the same level as those who have no faith in God themselves. They are in a worse way, and in many cases they live lives of quiet (and sometimes not so quiet) misery. We have each other.

Our faith in Christ and our church family are a blessing to us at all times. What we have in our church family, what the Lord has given us, is a precious thing. We have those we know will come alongside us if the earth should move from under our feet. We have those who have been through trials and tribulations that we know we can turn to for help, advice, prayer and support. When we find ourselves “hanging from life’s cliff edge” we know that there are those in our church family who will be there with us to help us. So we do trust in God, even in those moments when we struggle.

I want to leave you with a quote from “a few years ago” that sums up what the church has been to many.

“The Christians know and trust God. They placate those who oppose them and make them their friends; they do good to their enemies.

If anyone of them have servants, they persuade them to become Christian, for the love they have toward them; and when they become so, they call them without distinction “brothers”. They love one another. They do not refuse to help the widows. They rescue the orphan. He who has gives ungrudgingly to him who has not. If they see a stranger, they take him to their dwellings and rejoice over him as a real brother. If anyone among them is poor and needy and they do not have food to spare, they fast for two or three days that they may supply them with necessary food.

Every morning and every hour they thank and praise God for his loving kindness toward them. Because of them there flows forth all the beauty that there is in the

world. Truly this is a new people, and there is something divine about them”.
(Aristides, Greek apologist of the second century).

It helps me to know I'm not alone in my Christian journey when I have moments of struggle and problems with trusting God in all things...that I know you are with me in support and in prayer. I hope you know you have my support and prayer when you too are struggling. We are stronger together in our times of trials because we know we have each other.

May the Lord grant us a deeper appreciation for each other, and the church that Christ has given us, and together may we “not worry about tomorrow” and let “tomorrow worry about itself”. The Lord knows us and we know the Lord, and every moment of our lives is in His hands...thanks be to God. Pastor John

Prayer

Lord it is good to come to you in prayer to acknowledge and confess our shortcomings in trusting You in all things. We thank you for your forgiveness that sets us free to live stronger lives of faith for tomorrow. Lord thank you that every time we come to you in prayer, and every time you forgive us, we actually get stronger for the next challenge, or maybe the same challenge, when it comes again. Thank you that we can trust you in all things. Thank you that when we are weak, you are strong. Thank you for our friends in faith, our church family. Thank you for the times when they have come alongside us to pray with us and share our struggles in faith and life. Thank you for the opportunities you have given us to come alongside our sisters and brothers in their times of challenge and to share in their struggles and lift up their faith. Lord thank you for your church. May your gifts of presence and mercy be felt even more among us at this time as we sit and wait for the reopening of our fellowship times when we can once again greet one another in joyful worship and fellowship. In the name of Christ we pray. Amen.