

The Life Of Trust.

Text: Matt 6:24-34

Suggested Hymns:

389, 132, 416, 402, 392

1) Its obligations

2) Its difficulties

3) Its joys

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. Amen.

The text for our sermon today is Matthew 6:24–34, ²⁴ *“No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.*

²⁵ *“Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?*

²⁶ *Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?* ²⁷ *Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?* ²⁸ *“So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; ²⁹ and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.*

³⁰ *Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?* ³¹ *“Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’* ³² *For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.*

³³ *But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.* ³⁴ *Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble. (NKJV)*

Lord God, heavenly Father, sanctify us through Your truth. Your Word is truth. Amen.

Dear friends in Christ,

Some people are foolish enough to live a life of worry. Sometimes Christians, too, are guilty of making that mistake. A life of worry can never be a happy life. Anxious cares and troublesome worries do injury to a person's physical, mental, and spiritual life.

Moreover, with all his cares and worries no one has ever succeeded in remedying a bad situation. Worry only aggravates matters and makes his life all the more bitter. Has that been your experience? In the Gospel for this Sunday Jesus suggests that you live *The Life of Trust*. May the Lord bless our meditation.

1. The Life Of Trust Its Obligations.

The life of trust, which Jesus recommends so highly, imposes upon us, in the first place, a number of obligations. The Lord reminds us of one obligation in the opening statement, ²⁴ *"No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.*

To recognise and to act upon the claims of God upon our life is a fundamental requirement for a happy, carefree life of trust.

Let us look at God's claim upon man. The Scriptures tell us that man belongs to God. He belongs to God by reason of creation. We read in Genesis 1:27, ²⁷ *So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.* And in Genesis 2:7, ⁷ *And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.* Man has an immortal soul. A beginning but no end.

Man also belongs to God by reason of preservation. We read in Genesis 8:22, ²² *"While the earth remains, Seedtime and harvest, Cold and heat, Winter and summer, And day and night Shall not cease."* In Hebrews 1:3 we are told that the Lord is *upholding all things by the word of His power*. We read in Acts 17:28, ²⁸ *for in Him we live and move and have our being.*

Man also belongs to God by reason of redemption. We read in 1 Peter 1:18-19, ¹⁸ *knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or*

gold, ... ¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.

These three points are summarised in 2 Corinthians 5:15, ¹⁵ **and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.**

God's claim upon man is expressly asserted in the divine Law, the Ten Commandments. We read in Exodus 20:2-3, ² **"I am the LORD your God, ... ³ "You shall have no other gods before Me.** Jesus insisted upon God's supreme right to everything that man is and has. We read in Matthew 22:37, ³⁷ **Jesus said to him, 'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.'**

Hence, no Christian will question the statement that he belongs to God and that God's claim upon his life is superior to, and takes precedence over, anyone and anything else.

Therefore there is an obligation that follows. The obligation is to fear, love, and trust in God above all things. This is the First Commandment. Our text says, ²⁴ **"No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon**

We know, of course, that we dare not serve sin or mammon, love the world, etc., but Jesus makes it plain that there can be no satisfactory division of our service between God and anything else. God will tolerate no rival in our hearts. God says in Exodus 20:5, **For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God.**

Jesus also emphasised this in Matthew 4:10, ¹⁰ **Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.'" However some people still attempt to effect a compromise, no matter what God has said about it. Unfortunately, God's accusation is still true only too often, as it is written in Isaiah 1:3, ³ **The ox knows its owner And the donkey its master's crib; But Israel does not know, My people do not consider."** Are we guilty?**

This fundamental requirement for a happy life of trust, to have, love, and serve God only, is expressed by Jesus also in this statement of our text, ³³ **But**

seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

Our chief consideration in life must be the kingdom of God and His righteousness.

Jesus is telling us to make His kingdom and His righteousness the number-one priority in our lives. We are to remember that God rules the whole world in the interest of His church, His believers. He is all-powerful and infinitely merciful and gracious, and His wisdom knows no bounds.

So we want to serve Him in everything we do. We want to live righteous lives because we know that we are righteous in God's sight by virtue of Christ's perfect life and His innocent suffering and death. God has received us as His dear children, and we want to remain His children in time and in eternity. So we want to make faithful use of the means He has provided to preserve and strengthen us in the faith, His gospel in Word and sacrament. They are the only means we need.

The Gospel tells us of God's love, but it is more than just a message. God's saving power attends it. We who are heirs of salvation have the joyful privilege of serving as God's messengers to make that powerful saving truth known to lost sinners all over the earth. That is the main purpose for which God sustains and extends our earthly lives, and we can be involved in this blessed work one way or another as long as we live.

However, it is sad, that many people make the tragic mistake of giving first place to the things of this life on earth. This world's goods, and a big portion of it must be accumulated, no matter what the cost. The cost is always high. Sometimes it is far too high. It may even result in the loss of man's soul, which means spending eternity in hell.

The obligations involved in a life of trust are, recognising the claims of God upon our life, therefore to fear, love, and trust in Him above things, and to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.

2. The Life Of Trust Its Difficulties.

There are, however, some difficulties involved in this life of trust; difficulties with which most Christians, who are, of course, still in the world, even though not of it, must contend.

The Old Adam in us gives us much trouble at times as we attempt to live the life of trust. Christian people do not want it to be that way; but it is so, only too often. Here, too, applies what St. Paul said of overcoming the difficulties caused by sin in general. We read in Romans 7:19–20, ¹⁹ *For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice.* ²⁰ *Now if I do what I will not to do, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.*

Jesus also knows our difficulties. Jesus recognised these difficulties. He knows that the questions of where and how to secure for ourselves and those dependent upon us, the necessities of life, are likely to give us trouble. Jesus knows that we will sometimes be perplexed by the questions, as our text says, *what you will eat or what you will drink; or ... what you will put on.* These difficulties are real. And Jesus knows it.

There are difficulties today. The problem of food and clothing, and a little of the comforts and pleasures of life, has become aggravated by the complex structure of society of which we are a part today.

If there were difficulties in the days of Jesus and His disciples, when life was simple and the needs few and relatively easily supplied, they have been multiplied by the centuries which have passed.

It has become increasingly difficult to find a place in our complicated economic order and mechanised industrial system where one could provide for his wants and those of his dependants.

Difficulties arise in periods of depression and high unemployment and when the bottom of the savings account has been reached and no job can be found. Difficulties arise when the small businessman is forced to the wall by the methods of big business with which he cannot compete and against which the laws of society offer little relief. Difficulties arise in times of drought.

At such times even to Christian people there appear difficulties in the way of the life of trust, and often they, too, are depressed and troubled by cares and worries, and the words of the Psalmist are upon their lips: *“How long, O Lord, how long?”*¹

These are real difficulties. They are difficulties which can keep us from the happy life of trust in God. It is a comforting thought to know that Jesus Himself realised what troubles may beset us. But, thank God, it is even more comforting to know that He has demonstrated how to overcome these difficulties and to enjoy the life of trust in God.

3. The Life Of Trust Its Joys.

In commending to His disciples the life of trust, the Saviour directed their attention to the care of God which is apparent in nature all around them.

Jesus and His disciples were somewhere in God's great out-doors (this passage is taken from the Sermon on the Mount), and He pointed them to the birds flying overhead or flitting from branch to branch, carefree and happy, singing with joy to the praise of their Creator.

He said, ²⁶ *Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?* And here were the flowers, the lilies, at their feet, unable to do anything for themselves, and yet so beautiful in their dress, that no man, not even with the fabulous wealth of Solomon at his command, can produce anything to rival their glory. ²⁸ *“So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; ²⁹ and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.*

What was Jesus' rationale? The Lord wanted the disciples, and us no less, to think this thing through. If the heavenly Father feeds the birds and clothes the lilies, the lesser things of creation, *is it reasonable to suppose that He would neglect to care for that one creature which He made in His own image, His personal handiwork, “fearfully and wonderfully made,”³² and which He loved with such everlasting love that He gave His own Son for his redemption?* Certainly not!

The Apostle Paul made exactly that argument. We read in Romans 8:32, ³² *He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?* There is joy in the Apostle's assurance, as we read in Philippians 4:19, ¹⁹ *And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*

Next follows this argument of Jesus, *Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?* If God gives life, He will surely also give whatever is necessary to sustain it. If God so cared for us that He endowed us with such remarkable capacities and powers, then He will surely also give us the lesser gifts needed to sustain us.

God knows our needs. There is joy in the blessed assurance which Jesus gives that God knows our needs. He said in our text, *For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.* What a blessed thought: God knows!

In His omniscience God knows even better than we do what we really need. We are sometimes mistaken in what we think we need; but God knows exactly what is best. And in His loving and providential way He will provide what will be for our good both here and hereafter.

Then there is Christ's positive promise that God will take care of our temporal wants if we will earnestly care for our spiritual needs, ³³ *But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.* God's promises are sure. A Christian may with joy and confidence say, *"The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want."*³

So in conclusion, faith in God's definite plan to care for His creatures is apparent in all nature around us. It is confirmed by His many positive promises found in His Word, and already experienced by many of us in our own lives. Such faith makes for a joyous, happy, carefree life of trust.

There is joy and blessing in a life lived in and for God, seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, loving and serving God and Christ, casting all our cares upon Him, firmly believing that God *"cares for [us]"*⁴ and will *"freely give us all things."*⁵

Let us banish that *"little faith"* of which Jesus speaks and which is at the bottom of our cares and worries, and with a large faith in God find the joy and happiness of a life of trust in God! Amen.

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep our hearts and minds, in Christ Jesus. Amen.

¹ Psalm 6:5

² Psalm 139:14

³ Psa 23

⁴ 1 Peter 5:7

⁵ Romans 8:32