

Sunday 12th Feb 2023

Matthew 6 25 – end

Teach us your ways O Lord and we will walk in your truth

When Jesus spoke this passage, his audience were the educated and well off. This is just after the sermon on the mount and his crowd were law abiding and fairly settled. This statement is provocative and challenging to their way of life, and just like us we need to be provoked otherwise what are we doing? Are we complacent and self-satisfied?

Certainly, when you look at what God has provided you can't help but be inspired. Everything is connected, everything has a purpose for this earth to survive and flourish. We are the wardens of this earth and need to maintain it for future generations. Jesus says isn't there more to life than food and more to the body than clothes. We all recognise the world greed, the rise in materialism and the way society has changed. Whilst we have a responsibility to endeavour to save the planet, the simple truth is we have a responsibility as Christians to look at ourselves first. How can we help those around us, we know only too well that there are hungry children here in our area, that people are going cold because of high energy bills. In our prayers we ask for God's help for those in need. But is God asking us to help in some way?

I have used this passage at funeral services because interpreting it in one way it offers hope that God has our backs that things are ordered and for those grieving it is helpful to know that things are in the hands of loving creator God.

One bit of my research offered this perspective.

In what ways are humans (and specifically believers) more valuable than other parts of creation?

It must be noticed that Christ doesn't say the "bird's Father." He says the disciples' Father feeds them. Christ then says, "Aren't you more valuable than they are?" Birds are not made in the image of God, nor being recreated in his image (2 Cor 3:18). They are not sons and daughters of God—co-heirs with Christ (Rom 8:17). God made man his chief in creation. In the recreation, which happens at the new birth, he makes us one with Christ and indwells us. We are certainly more valuable than birds, flowers, and grass. How much more will God make sure that we have all our needs? He doesn't promise us our wants.

Sometimes we worry because we lack our wants. God promises to provide our needs (Phil 4:19).

To sum up:

Is it going to help us if we worry too much? Well, some of us will agree and others will retort that is no help, when you are worried!

I think we all will agree that we can take those worries to God in our prayers and should do just that.

Our passage today indicates that we shouldn't worry and considering events in Turkey and Syria this week it might mean that this passage doesn't offer us any comfort. I heard from a Syrian friend who has lost extended family members in this earthquake. She was saying that we shouldn't blame God, that he feels our pain and sees the tears. Certainly, we are not going to solve every worry or even get close to sorting out the tragedy like the earthquake by ourselves.

And this is why we come together to worship and pray together because corporately we can pray and then practical things like offer a parish pantry, or donate or help in any other ways to those in need are the things that show love to our neighbours in distress. Amen