

Your Father Knows What You Need
Matthew 6:24-34

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

First off, this is a revision of a sermon I preached only on the Wednesday preceding the 15th Sunday of Trinity in 2016. So, if you remember it, I am sorry.

You cannot serve God and money. So says our text.

You have heard all the jokes about church and money. First there is the one about how big a \$20 bill looks in the wallet, and how hard it is to pull out when the offering plate is passed at church. BUT, that same person won't bat an eye to grab the first twenty and a twin at the ball field to spring for him and a buddy to get a couple of brats and German soda waters.

Another one tells of a twenty dollar bill and a one dollar bill having a conversation about all the place they have seen in their travels. The twenty brags about how he has been all over; Lambeau Field, Miller Park, Great America, O'Hare International Airport, the Casino in Keshena, and last week at the fair. After hearing all this, the single develops a sad face and says, "All I have ever been to is Walmart and different churches."

I could go on and talk about how much money people spent last weekend at the fair and compare that to their giving to the work of the Lord. How many spent more at the fair than they give to the work of the Lord in a month? How about in a quarter? How about in half a year? In fact, there might be some who spent more at the fair than they give in a whole year to the work of the Lord.

But I do not want this to be a sermon about your offerings, although we really should consider our stewardship of God's gifts to us. It is true, no one can serve two masters, for 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 God and money.

But in our text, I would like you to consider one word in the original text, mammonah. I think that is a word you have heard used in this text in the past. Translated better, that phrase would say, you cannot serve God and mammon. Mammon does not simply mean money? There is more to "mammon" than just money. Mammon refers to any of the earthly "things" which attract our attention and hold it.. In our text, mammon is further described by Jesus as any earthly things in which we place our trust, or about which we are overly concerned. Or, to put it quite simply – anything else we place in our lives before our fear, love, and trust of God.

Dear friends, mammon can take many forms in our lives: wealth, property, belongings, popularity, power, favorite sports team, or even our spouse or children. We are often guilty of removing the true God, and bowing before this god, "mammon." This becomes plain to see, as our worrying and complaining illustrate our misplaced trust.

We worry about many things in this life, and this god mammon, increasingly demands more of

us. Mammon never quite delivers the things that it promises. We never seem to find security, contentment, or even peace of mind in the things of this world and present life.

What is more, this false god can never bring eternal happiness and security. The Brewers are on the road to disappoint us, seems like they do it every season. Even the Packers will lose a game, or someone will get injured. While that special treat we ate at the fair tasted very good as it lingered on our palate, how many had regrets about how much they had to eat and drink at the fair. Our property always demands more of our time and attention, and then we complain about the work it requires to maintain. Even the best children will move us to anger at times. And no matter what we do, there are some people who will never appreciate us.

When the cares of this life consume us, Jesus says we are to consider how our heavenly Father feeds the birds of the air. Are you not of more value than they? Can your anxiousness add a single hour to your span of life? And the lilies of the field, though they neither toil nor spin, are more gloriously arrayed than any king. Consider the painting God does in the fall with the glorious colors of the leaves which will soon cover the woodland floor.

This is the same God who you may, and indeed *should*, trust - the Triune God who is revealed to you in Jesus Christ.

Consider what God thinks of you? How He gave His only begotten Son to be born of human flesh. No quiet hospital room with sanitized sheets and freshly scrubbed medical staff, His roommates were the domesticated animals whose feeding trough He used as His crib. Christ, the very Son of God, humbled Himself, denying His wealth and heritage as ruler over all the universe to live obediently under the governing creatures to which He gave life. All this He did out of His great love for you, for me, and for all mankind.

Out of love for you, and in the most incredible obedience to His Father, He allowed Himself to be crucified, to be put to death as the lowest form of criminal. He served His Father, submitting to His authority, in order to free you from all those things which would like to hold you enthralled to their reign, including the mammon of this life. He gave His life to release you from the passions of your life and give to you true freedom.

What will you wear? You have already been clothed by God. You have been given the white robe of righteousness, the wedding garment of the Lamb. It is the clothing given to you at baptism. It is continually cleansed by the blood of the Lamb in Word and Sacrament. Trust the grace of God which clothes you with heavenly eternal garments.

What will you eat? A meal has been set before you of holy and heavenly food. It feeds your greatest need, it gives you comfort, strength and peace. The very body of Jesus Christ is placed into your mouth and removes fear and worry from your heart and mind.

What will you drink? The very blood of Christ is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. That which leads all men to their greatest fear, death, has been replaced by the lifeblood of Him who died, but now lives and reigns for all eternity.

Dearly beloved of God, your heavenly Father knows all the things that you need – for now and for eternity.

If you desire security, contentment, or even peace of mind, the things of this life can never satisfy. When you seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, all these things will be added to you. They are here for you! They are here in His Word to us, and in the blessed meal Christ provides of His own flesh and blood

In these gifts of God, you receive exactly those things; security, contentment, and even peace of mind. In fact, you have peace that passes all understanding, a peace which you receive from God's gracious goodness to us.

Christ is your only Savior from sin. Christ alone has overcome the cares of this life and your eternal concerns. In His Word to us and His blessed meal, He alone gives us the strength of faith which opens our eyes to walk by faith and not by sight – a tunnel vision focused on mammon.

Let us seek first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness, even as you are doing here in this place on this day. And as you do so, leave your problems and cares to God's divine providence. The Father knows what you need and promises to provide it for you. He has given you His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, and He cares for all your needs, now and forevermore. In the name of Jesus. Amen.