

Wake Union Baptist Church Sunday School Devotion



Opening Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father,

We thank you for watching over us, and for your great love and mercy. Forgive us where we've done wrong and prepare our hearts to worship you. We ask for your healing and comfort for all of our sick, sad, or grieving. May your Holy Spirit impress the truths of our scripture for today upon our hearts and minds that we might grow in our faith. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Welcome and Announcements

It is good to be back in church for our 11:00 am worship service, which restarted last week. The health safety guidelines that we're following are posted on the church website (under the "Guidelines for Modified Worship Service" link), and could perhaps be updated as we go along. If you feel uncomfortable with attending at this time, our services will continue to be available online or on DVD.

Memory Verses

¹²*Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you. Hosea 10:12*

³*For thus saith the LORD to the men of Judah and Jerusalem, Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns. Jeremiah 4:3*

It seems our world is constantly bombarding us with things to worry about. Just turn on the TV and a constant stream of political ads and the news can generally paint a pretty bleak picture. Satan can use this to discourage and immobilize the church, if we let him. Related to our current theme of planting and harvesting, today we'll consider a familiar passage where the fowls or ravens, who do not sow or reap, are used to teach us a valuable lesson about worry.

Instead of Worry, Have Unshaken Confidence and Trust in God

²⁵*Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for (Don't worry about, or be anxiously careful for) your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat (food), and the body than raiment (clothing)?* ²⁶*Behold the fowls (ravens, per Luke 12:24) of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better (worth much more) than they? Matthew 6:25-26*

A week or two back I watched the animated movie "The Croods" with Warren. The father in the movie kept his family locked in their cave out of fear, until his daughter gets them started on an adventure that teaches him that not dying is not really living. God has given us a "*sound mind*" (2 Timothy 1:7) to think things through and make wise decisions; but sometimes in our own stubborn self-sufficiency we can over-think things and allow our fears and worries to hinder us. When we honestly reflect on such times, how strong does our faith and trust in our Heavenly Father appear, particularly to those outside of the church? Jesus, in the verses above, uses a lesser (fowls, see Psalm 147:9) to greater (his children, see Galatians 3:26) argument to remind us that we were crowned with glory and honor by our Creator (Psalm 8:5) and will

receive appropriate attention from God. We are to trust “*in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy*” (1 Timothy 6:17).

²⁷*Which of you by taking thought (worrying) can add one cubit unto his stature (many translations = add one hour to his life)?* ²⁸*And why take ye thought (worry) for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:* ²⁹*And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed (clothed) like one of these.* ³⁰*Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven (furnace), shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?*

Matthew 6:27-30

Just a few verses earlier Jesus said, “*where your treasure is, there will your heart be also*” (Matthew 6:21). Worry about things of this earth, or the “*cares of this world*” as the Parable of the Sower put it, could be an indicator that that is where our heart is, “*O ye of little faith.*” May our concerns of this life/world be secondary to those of the life to come.

³¹*Therefore take no thought (Do not worry), saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?* ³²*(For after all these things do the Gentiles (pagans, nations of the world per Luke 12:30) seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.* ³³*But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.* **Matthew 6:31-33**

Our “*heavenly Father knoweth*” our needs. When compared to our earthly parents, Jesus said “*how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?*” (Matthew 7:11). What a comforting assurance of our Heavenly Father’s love for us. The condition, “*seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness*” means we are to turn to God first for help, attempt to the best of our ability to emulate Jesus’ teaching and example, and serve, trust and obey Him in everything (letting Jesus be Lord of our life). “*And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee: for thou, LORD, hast not forsaken them that seek thee*” (Psalm 9:10).

³²*Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.*

Luke 12:32

Jesus, the Good Shepherd, protects His flock and delivers us from fear.

³⁴*Take therefore no thought for the morrow (do not worry about tomorrow): for the morrow shall take thought (care) for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil (trouble) thereof (Each day has enough trouble of its own).* **Matthew 6:34**

Making plans for tomorrow and including them in your prayers is time well spent, but worrying about tomorrow and how our plans might go wrong is time wasted and indicates that we’re not trusting God as we should. We should focus on things that have eternal value and hold fast to our faith. “*For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, the just shall live by faith*” (Romans 1:17). Each day we face trials, may we meet them with complete confidence and trust in Jesus our Lord as “*his compassions fail not, they are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness*” (Lamentations 3:22-23).

Conclusion

*⁶Be careful (anxious) for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. ⁷And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding (which is beyond our comprehension), shall keep (guard) your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. **Philippians 4:6-7***

Whenever we start to worry about something, we'd do well to stop and pray about it, give thanks to our Lord, and experience the peace of God. Jesus in John 14:27 said, "*my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.*"

*⁷Casting all your care (worries/anxiety) upon him; for he careth for you. **1 Peter 5:7***

We should remember that God loves and cares for each of us. May we trust Him in faith, and turn the burden of our worries over to Him.

Closing Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father,

Forgive us when we let our fears and worries hinder our relationship with you and our witness to others. Keep us strong in our faith and remind us of the truths from today's scripture. May we ever love and trust you. Please keep everyone safe and well until we meet again. In Jesus' name, Amen.