

The Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity Sunday  
St. Matthew 6:24-34  
September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2021  
Sts. Peter and Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, UAC  
Simpsonville, SC  
St. Michael and All Angels Evangelical Lutheran Mission, UAC  
Augusta, GA  
Pastor Jerald Dulas

## Do Not Worry

*In Nomine Iesu!*

In the Name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

### **Prayer in Pulpit before Sermon:**

O God, our Father in Heaven, in whose presence there is fulness of joy, and at whose right hand there are pleasures forevermore, mercifully fix our hearts on things above, and free them from all undue care and thought for the things of the present transitory world, that, whilst we are here in the body, we may sow, not to the flesh, but to the Spirit, and in the end reap life everlasting; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever One God, world without end. Amen.

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior + Jesus Christ. Amen.

Mankind is very adept at choosing for themselves a god—any god—other than the One True Triune Lord God. Christians are very adept at thinking that this does not apply to them. We say we believe in the One True Triune God; that we trust in Him; that we look to Him in times of trouble, but how often do we cling to the things of this world instead of our only source of help and comfort? This sermon of our Lord + Jesus today from the Gospel of the Apostle and Evangelist St. Matthew, which was given upon the mountain, addresses two sins that we all too easily commit, and one that we all too easily omit. The world is full of greed and anxiety, and we are too often pulled along by the world. On account of this greed and anxiety that is inherent in us, we also often fail to acknowledge the good things that our Lord God does for us. We do not thank and praise Him for all of the gifts of body and soul, help and protection that He gives to us, and all of mankind, even without our prayer.

We have a heavenly Father. We confess this daily in the Apostles' Creed when we rise in the morning, and when we lay down at night to go to sleep. We confess that we believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth. We also confessed this in the Nicene Creed just a few moments ago. The Nicene Creed expands upon the Apostles' Creed and in it we confess that the Lord God is Creator of all things visible and invisible. There is nothing in this life that He has not created. There is nothing in this life which He has not given to us. Everything thing we possess is a gift of the Lord God—a gift of our heavenly Father. We acknowledge these gifts when we pray in the Lord's Prayer, "Give us this day our daily bread." What is daily bread? It is everything that we have need of both for our physical body and our spiritual body.

Our physical body requires clothes, shoes, house, home, wife, children, land, animals, and all we possess. Our spiritual body requires faith, hope, love, forgiveness, life and salvation. Our heavenly Father in His kindness toward us gives us all of these things without our asking. He gives these things to every created thing as our Lord + Jesus preached in His Sermon on the Mount from today's Gospel reading. "Look at the birds of the air," our Lord says. They do not sow nor reap, but they are still fed by

our heavenly Father. After a rain the birds are fed with an abundance of worms that come up from the ground. When it is not raining, they are provided with bugs and rodents, and the seeds and grasses of the earth for them to feast upon. The Lord God provides for them abundantly so that they do not starve, even though they do not plant crops, or harvest grains and put them in a barn. This is the same way that our Lord God feeds us. He provides us with everything that our physical body needs.

But that is not enough for us. It certainly is not enough for the rest of mankind. Greed and avarice abound in our world—especially in our society. We are inundated with commercials and ads which only serve to increase our greed and desire for more and better material goods. This attitude is actually praised by our society. We cannot even have a simple conversation with someone without the product showing up in our news feed on social media. The world is constantly telling us, “Buy this thing!” In essence it is telling us constantly to be something we are not; to seek after things that our Lord God would already graciously supply us. Just think about all the possessions that we own which go unused; packed away in a box some place, stored in a storage unit. We are very adept at being hoarders. Acquiring and hoarding possessions we will rarely, if ever use.

Such things should teach us how little we trust in the Lord God, how much we trust in our worldly goods. We diligently seek after these things. We should be acting differently than the greedy and avaricious world, but we are just like them, if we truly are honest with ourselves. What does all the greed and avarice in the world, and in us, produce? Well, it produces two things: it causes us great stress, anxiety and worry. And, it draws us away from our trust in the Lord God, especially when we are unable to obtain some possession we desire. We blame the Lord God for not “giving us what we need.” If we do not have it, do we really need it? Does not our Lord + Jesus, and many places in our Lord’s Word—the Holy Scriptures—declare that our Lord God heavenly Father gives us everything that we need? Does not our One True Triune God provide for all of our physical needs? Are we lacking clothes and shoes, house and home, land and animals, food and drink? No, we do not! We have all that we need to support this body and life. Our heavenly Father knows our need and well supplies us.

That we fret over these things is exactly what the devil, the world and our sinful flesh want us to do. They want us to worry and fret. They want us filled with anxiety and stress. For a worried person is tempted even more fully to look at what he does not have, and crave and desire more. A worried person looks to any false god which he thinks will give him help and comfort. These false gods will always let us down. We will either never obtain that which we desire, or if we do get it, it will not be enough. It is never enough! There is no end to the obsession to acquire wealth and treasures. Greed and avarice lead to more greed and avarice, and they lead to more worry and stress. Worry leads us away from trust in the Lord God and His promise to us, which we confess daily and weekly in the Creeds that He will provide for us all that we need for this bodily life.

When our Lord + Jesus tells us in today’s Gospel pericope to not worry—when He says, “Do not worry”—He is not telling us to drum up some hidden resolve within us that will resist the temptation to worry. No, He is simply pointing us to the promises of our Lord God. He is directing us to what the Word of God declares about our Lord God heavenly Father’s gracious and abundant gifting us of all that we need for this body and soul. Our Lord God knows all our needs and well provides them. And He does not just provide us with our physical needs, but He also provides us with all of our spiritual needs.

He has placed into our hands and into our hearts His holy Word. He is giving out gifts right now, as we listen to the pastor preach. He is preaching into our ears His promises which never fail. He is preaching into our ears that we do not need to worry, for He gives us all that we need for this life. He gives us our daily bread. He gives us clothes and food, and a home, and friends and loved ones. Moreover, He is gives us daily—even as He is giving it to us now—all of our spiritual needs. Through His holy Word He preaches into our ears that our sins of greed and avarice, of worry and stress, will be forgiven when we stop trusting in all of our false gods, and turn to Him and trust in Him as the Only

True Triune God. He is the only God Who provides us with all that we need. All other false gods continually disappoint and let us down, and keep us spinning in the endless cycle of getting and possessing.

We often commit acts of covetousness on account of the greed and avarice in us. This leads us to worry and stress about these things. This also causes us to omit doing something else. We fail to give thanks to our Lord God that He daily and richly provides us with all that we need for our lives on this earth. When we are chasing after other gods, we fail to give thanks to the One True Lord and God Who gives us abundantly all of His gifts. From Him alone we receive all of our physical needs. And from Him alone we are given all that our souls need: forgiveness of sins, eternal life, and salvation. He gives these to us in His holy, Apostolic, and catholic Church through the pure preaching of the Word of God and the right administration of the Blessed Sacraments according to Christ's institution. Through these means he gives us all that our soul needs to be strengthened in our faith so that we not worry or stress over what we have, or do not have.

When we cling in faith to our Lord God, we see just how much He daily gives to us, and how much He loves us. Even Solomon in all of his glorious worldly possessions was not adorned as beautifully as the lilies of the field, which are there today and gone tomorrow. How much more valued are we by our Lord God than the lilies of the field? We are treasured by the Lord God. We are His beloved creation. He created us in love, and preserves us in love. And that is the final thing that we are to learn from today's text. Not only does our Lord God provide us with all that we need for our physical and spiritual lives, but He also daily guards and protects us from all harm and danger.

Many people in our society, especially Christians, have seemed to have forgotten that. Our Lord God protects us from all harm and danger, until comes to take us from this vale of tears to Himself in Heaven. If we do endure suffering and pain in this life, it is only so that we might repent of our unbelief, repent of our trust in the false gods of this world, and cling solely and completely in our loving heavenly Father. When we are lacking anything in this world—food, clothes, and even our health—it is our Lord God calling us to Himself. He is calling us to trust in Him; to look only to Him for comfort and hope.

My dear friends, do not worry. Our Lord God knows all that need. Did He not bring us into the Church, so that our wounds of sin and shame may be bound and healed? Has He not given us food and clothes, and all of our physical needs, for this life? He has! He has brought us here today to hear about all the good things that He does for us. He is saying to us today, "Do not worry." He is our true Lord God. Let us throw off the darkness in which we have been immured, and give Him thanks and praise for all the good things that He daily and richly does for us. Let us especially give Him thanks that He has forgiven us of our sins through the sacrifice of His Only-Begotten Son on the tree of the holy cross. Let us cling to Him in faith, and rejoice in our salvation through Him alone. In the Name of our Lord + Jesus Christ. Amen.

#### **Prayer in Pulpit after Sermon:**

Lord God, Heavenly Father, we thank Thee that Thou hast given us body and soul, and hitherto bountifully provided for us all the necessaries of life; and we beseech Thee, strengthen, confirm, and uphold our faith, that trusting fully in Thee, and seeking before all things Thy Kingdom, we may avoid all undue anxiety and greed of the Gentiles, and by Thy grace overcome every affliction; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever One God, world without end. Amen.

#### **The Votum:**

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Amen.

*Soli Deo Gloria!*