

Do Not Worry

- ☞ Check out creation. (vv.22-28)
- ☞ Bank on Kingdom economics. (vv.29-34)

In the name of Jesus, God's calming Agent for worried hearts, dearly redeemed:

It almost seemed as if they were following us around. The group would set up on a street corner in some small town with their political signs and calls to action. Then last week in another small town they were calling out to passersby, "Will you come over and put a pin in our sign?" This time I glanced at their poster for pins. Great big letters: *Climate Change*. On one end of the continuum was *Serious...* on the other end *Dismissive*. I didn't stop to see all the steps in between *Serious...Dismissive*. And maybe I'm a coward to just smile and walk on by. Should I be more like the Apostle Paul who was always debating with Greeks in the market place? Many folks are sincerely worried about "climate change." Maybe they need some encouragement. But some openly denying God, worried about their theory decades or centuries away that humans cannot control and none of us will experience.

Times of prosperity leave people *dismissive* or terribly worried about things beyond our control. Most everyone just laughed when that first preacher warned the world about the worst climate change ever – 40 days of worldwide rain that covered the mountains by over 20 feet. 120 years Noah preached to a dead audience. And the same God who promised with the rainbow never to flood the earth like that again, has promised to destroy the earth with global burning on Judgment Day. But the critics are still laughing as if they'll never die. Meanwhile, are you worried? Maybe about a bunch of other things closer to home? Loss of stock values on your fixed income? Family? Friends? Try this:

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Sometime I'd love to stop by their booth with a blueberry, set it on the counter and ask, "Make one, please, just one." "You picked that from a field!" "Sure I did, but if you are sure we can control the climate, then show me your human power and skill." "We can make that in a lab!" "Maybe in looks, but taste? Nutrients? And there's millions of these free to the birds in the fields!"

So why don't your best arguments convince the scoffers to believe in Creation which makes far more sense to thinking people? The answer is in our Second Reading today from the Great Faith Chapter: ***"By faith we know that the universe was created by God's word, so that what is seen did not come from visible things."*** (Hebrews 11:3 EHV) You can't prove evolution or creation in a lab. It's a matter of faith. Personally, I'd rather listen to the One who is so merciful and kind that He volunteered to rescue everyone from guilt and shame by His own shed blood and laid down life. The fact that He rose again from the dead and now rules all things from God's right hand, convinces me too. All the critics, like all of us, are only one breath, only one heartbeat away from facing the Almighty Judge for an eternity of heaven or hell.

What's the Almighty Judge like? Notice how this Word of God's Son saying, **Do Not Worry**, calls for faith in a loving Creator, with the whole Bible – Genesis through Revelation. ***Jesus said to his disciples, "For that reason I tell you, stop worrying about your life, about what you will eat, or about your body, what you will wear. Certainly life is more than food, and the body is more than clothing."***

Jesus loves to point to Creation to illustrate God's love. Their ultra rich and super wise King Solomon could not compete in his royal splendor with God's wild flowers emblazoned on the hillsides of Galilee. And those black ravens in your yard, cawing like **κόραξ** *crows* in Greek? God not only feeds them, He also used some of those ravenous flying food thieves to feed His prophet Elijah in a drought.

Something else you might not have noticed. All summer long it seems like the best predictions of rain don't come true and the "0 inches until Sunday," keep ending up with welcome rain in our neighborhood. And some think they can control "Climate Change"? The problem is that the wind keeps proving Jesus right. It blows wherever it pleases much like the Holy Spirit breathing faith into human hearts by Word and sacrament. (John 3) Rain falls on homes of those who deny God's very existence. Everyone gets God's sunshine and rain because God is perfect in love – as He commands His children to be. Not *become perfect*, but, ***“Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect.”*** (Matthew 5:45-48)

Are you? I'm not either. Now there's a problem we need to deal with before we die. But what can we do? Trying harder cannot erase our past failings. God's infinite holiness demands perfection like Him from you and me. But we're infinitely unkind, stuck on ourselves and wrapped up in the sin of worry. The same God who says, ***“You shall not murder”*** to murderers, abortionists and church people hating their brother, says, ***“Stop worrying about your life.”*** Since I can't, I'd have no hope either. On my own I'd be just as damned for all eternity. ***“There is no one who is righteous, not even one. There is no one who understands. There is no one who searches for God. They all turned away; together they became useless. There is no one who does what is good; there is not even one.”*** (Romans 3:10-12 EHV)

Aren't you glad God's Son volunteered to save us from all this worry? ***“Who of you by worrying can add a single moment to his lifespan?...If this is how God clothes the grass in the field which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, how much more will he clothe you, you of little faith?”*** Ah, there it is again! ***Faith!*** I'm so grateful for God's gift of faith by grace (Ephesians 2:8-10) that washed our sins away. This Good News Gospel empowers us to...

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If you have in ground sprinklers, you may not care much about this. But some of us grew up in a desert. All these years later without inground, you're also moving sprinklers. So when God sends His rain, do you realize what a huge economic gift that is? One of our Bible Class participants was kind enough to run the numbers for me. Just one inch of rain on a square mile, roughly from here to Highway 96 between Hodgson Road and Rice Street, comes to 17.3 million gallons of water. You can do the math for dollars with your own water bill. But you can't figure how many nutrients God supplemented and how much pollution He washed out of the air – as the forecast said, “No rain!” Behold, **Kingdom economics.**

Do you know why some folks never worry about the Stock Market? Because they don't have a portfolio. However, if you're living on a fixed income that depends on the Stock Market, you're income is not really ever “fixed,” is it? Breaking through your bad dreams and all that anxiety is the gentle voice of Jesus: ***“Do not constantly chase after what you will eat or what you will drink. Do not be worried about it. To be sure, the nations of the world chase after all of these things, but your Father knows that you need them. Instead, continue to seek the kingdom of God, and all these things will be added to you. Do not be afraid, little flock, because your Father is pleased to give you the kingdom.”*** In God's **Kingdom** the birds don't need to *sow or reap*, nor the flowers *labor or spin*. Try to imagine how much more God cares for you than strutting crows and burning grass.

Jesus says to **Bank on Kingdom economics.** ***“Sell your possessions and give to the needy. Provide money bags for yourselves that do not become old, a treasure in the heavens that will not fail, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”*** Your heart will follow your treasure. And since hearses do not have trailers, you know you can't take any of this with you. Gratitude wants to give God the first and best of our offerings, to care for our families, vacation, pay our taxes as God commands. But does anyone else have bulging closets or too much stuff to park both cars and your boat in the garage? We have a Thrift Store and New Beginnings center for needy babies and their families right down the road. Who knew you could clean out your surplus and glorify God at the same time? **Bank on Kingdom economics.** Heavenly treasures capture your heart and relieve your worry. Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! Amen.

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