

Jesus addresses these words to His disciples, His “*little flock*,” to us who call God our “*Father*.” He does not address these words to the world. Jesus does not tell the world to not worry, to not be anxious, to fear not. In fact, they should. People who are of the world should worry, they should be anxious, and they should be afraid.

The rich fool, from last Sunday’s reading, was of the world. He was not rich toward God it says. He was no disciple of Jesus. He was not part of Jesus’ little flock. So, he did not call God his Father.

This man was not worried, but he should have been. He had ample goods stored up for many years. He had nothing, therefore, to worry about in his mind. But he trusted in his wealth and not in God. And when he died that night, his wealth could not save him.

Anyone who does not trust in God should worry. And many do. They deal with anxiety issues. They endure sleepless nights. Some go to doctors for help. They take medication. Some turn to meditation. They look for peace within to calm their fears. And some build bigger barns. They store up wealth for their future so they can live without worry. And yet, anyone who trusts in things that rot, that grow old, and that can be stolen by thieves has a lot to worry about.

But this is not you. You are Jesus’ disciple, for in Him you are baptized. You belong to His little flock. You, therefore, love to call God your Father. You trust in God. You seek His kingdom, as is evidenced by your desire to be here this morning. You know that your Father in heaven gives you all that you need. And so you, my friend, do not worry.

Oh, if only this was true, right? It is true that you are part of Jesus’ little flock, that you are His disciple. But it is so not true that you never worry, that you do not deal with anxiety, that you never have sleepless nights. I know better because I am just like you, and you are just like me. And even more, why would Jesus tell His disciples not to worry if His disciples never dealt with worry and anxiety? He knows better.

He does say this, “*O you of little faith!*” Who, me? Yes, me and you. Jesus’ disciples who call God Father.

You know who does not have little faith? Birds. Ravens, for example. “*Consider the ravens,*” says Jesus, “*they neither sow nor reap, they have neither storehouse nor barn, and yet God feeds them.*”

Have you ever seen a bird that was worried? They are God’s creatures. And even though they cannot be said to have faith, they exhibit a trust in God even more than we who are God’s children do. So, compared to the ravens, we are those of little faith. We do worry. We do become anxious.

But why? If we trust in God for everything, the only two reasons we could worry would be if God could not give us what we need, or if God refused to give us what we need.

So, which is it? Is our God so small that He is not able to provide for us? Or is our God angry at us because we are sinful children with little faith, and so He refuses to provide for us?

It's neither. Jesus invites us, yes commands us, not to worry. "*Your Father knows (what) you need,*" He tells us. "*Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. And with His kingdom, all these things will be added to you.*"

The days in which we live are very troubling. Food prices, gasoline, everything costs more. How high will it go? We do not know. Yet our retirement investments are dropping. We do not need to build bigger barns but smaller ones. It seems like everything is unstable these days. And we do not know when and if things will stabilize.

Is all of this reason to worry? Just the opposite. In these troubling times, God is giving us the privilege of learning better how to trust in Him. It's easy to trust in God when life is good. But perhaps when life is good, we are really trusting not so much in God, but in everything that we have in life.

So, maybe it's a blessing for us that our barns are shrinking, even as it is becoming more difficult to put food on the table and clothing on our bodies. We are learning, are we not, to trust in God rather than trusting in all the things that rot, shrink, grow old, and fade away.

Your treasure is not here anyway. It's in heaven. And it's yours forever, and no one, and nothing, can take it from you. Jesus died on the cross to purchase this treasure for you. His resurrection confirms it with all certainty. The more you focus on your treasure in Jesus, the less you will worry about tomorrow.

Your God is able to provide for you. And He has promised that He will provide for you. He is not angry with you because you and I worry so much, exhibiting our little faith. He is a forgiving God. He forgives you. Why? Because you are of much more value than the birds. So precious to God that He gave up His beloved Son for you.

The birds trust in God to care for them even though Jesus did not die for them. How much more can you trust in Jesus because for you He gave up everything. Amen.