

Trusting God with My Life

Thomas Robinson, January 6, 2013

Matthew 6:24-34

²⁴ “No one can serve **two lords**, 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 Mammon.**

²⁵ **Because of this I say to you, do not be anxious about your life** (*psyche*, soul), what you will eat or what you will drink, nor **about your body**, what you will put on. Is not life (*psyche*, soul) something more than food, and the body more than clothing?

²⁶ **Look at the birds of the air:** they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and **your heavenly Father** is feeding them. Don't you matter more than they?

²⁷ And which of you by being anxious can add a single cubit to the length of your life?

²⁸ And why are you **anxious about clothing?** Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, ²⁹ yet I tell you, even **Solomon in all his glory** was not arrayed like one of these. ³⁰ But if **God** so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, **will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?**

³¹ Therefore do not be anxious, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ ³² For the **Gentiles** (nations) seek after all these things, and **your heavenly Father knows that you need them all.**

³³ But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

³⁴ “Therefore do not be **anxious about tomorrow**, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.”

Mark 12:28-34

²⁸ And one of the scribes came up and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, asked him, “Which **commandment** is the **most important** (first) of all?”

²⁹ Jesus answered, “**The most important** (first) is,

‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.

³⁰ **And you shall love the Lord your God**

with all your **heart** and with all your **soul**

and with all your **mind** and with all your **strength.**’ [Deut 6:4-5]

³¹ The **second** is this: ‘**You shall love your neighbor as yourself.**’ [Lev. 19:18]

There is no other commandment greater than these.”

³² And the scribe said to him, “**You are right, Teacher.** You have truly said that he is one, and there is no other besides him. ³³ And to love him with all the heart and with all the understanding and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbor as oneself, is much more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.”

³⁴ And when Jesus saw that he answered wisely, he said to him, “**You are not far from the kingdom of God.**”

Facing Life with Little Faith

“O you of little faith!” – little trust. Jesus is talking to his disciples and the crowds (to us). It’s a recognition of our human condition, a congenital blindness/myopia. It is not said in anger or condemnation but like a parent urging a toddler to take one more step. We are our own worst enemies, limiting our vision to the stuff around us, blind to the great story, the vast reality of which we are a part. Blind to God. Jesus helps us open our eyes. Each new year focuses our attention on how our lives get off track and need reorienting. Jesus challenges our worries and desires and calls us to *seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness*. But our worries and desires are much closer to us than some “kingdom of God.” It’s hard for us to even think what that could mean. We need to take care of business at hand. So we muddle on through life as dim-sighted, little-faith people.

Making God Big and Small

One of the main things Jesus wants is for us to see God in a deeply new way. His whole life, ministry, teaching, death, and resurrection are that revelation. He shows us God’s face. Popular faith has various tendencies in thinking about God. Many traditions say that God is everything and everything is God – pantheism (stoicism, new age, etc.) These traditions stand in contrast to traditions that affirm one God distinct from creation. In the West, one of the most powerful tendencies has been to exalt God higher and higher till he is disengaged from the world of humans. Pure Spirit, sheer, immutable perfection. We need mediating saints. God becomes so big and far off that he is small in our lives. In the wake of the “enlightenment,” God is often removed from rational discourse and reality into private opinion, personal therapy, something useful for me, but not real. Science, economics, politics, psychology, health; these are my saviors, my security.

Seeing God through the Eyes of Jesus

Jesus points us to the God who is real, whose reality transforms life. He leads us ordinary people into thinking about our everyday concerns, our worries, our lives. Those worries make us vulnerable to a desire for gods that we can make, control, like Mammon. We welcome the deception that we can be secure with more money or antibiotic soap.

Jesus points to God who is creator (far more than his creation) and thus knows our highest and greatest fulfillment. God’s greatness is not in his distance and inaccessibility, but in his pervasive, loving presence from the vast to the tiny, even us. God’s realm of heaven and his realm of earth/creation are not far apart but close and destined to be united.

“Thin places” are not rare but present to be experienced in every flower and bird.

God shows his universal nature in the concrete, specific, in incarnation, in Jesus. He calls us into a history outside ourselves, as vast as human history, as specific as today’s choices.

Everything will be Added

Seek God’s Kingdom. God’s rule. Search. This is not a call for renouncing anything except self-deception and self-absorption, our sin. You are something far more than your worries. You are created to receive God’s own life, God’s immortality and glory. Begin now.

Trust the God who created you, knows your needs, desires your joy. Open your eyes. Look!