

One God, One Trust, One Kingdom

Thomas Robinson, *Jesus' Call to the Way* 3, August 27, 2017

Matthew 5:44-45, 48; 6:24b-33

5:⁴⁴ But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵ so that you may be children of **your Father who is in the heavens**. For **he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust**. ... ⁴⁸ You therefore shall be perfect, as **your heavenly Father is perfect**.

6:²⁴ **You cannot serve God and Mammon**. ²⁵ Because of this, I tell you, refuse to be anxious any more about your life, what you'll eat or what you'll drink, or about your body, what you'll wear. Isn't your life something more than food, and your body than clothing?

²⁶ **Look at the birds of the heaven:** they don't sow or reap or gather into barns, and yet **your heavenly Father feeds them**. Aren't **you more important** than they are? ²⁷ And which of you by being anxious can add a single yard to the length of your life?

²⁸ And about clothing, why are you anxious? Examine those **lilies in 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 any one of them**. ³⁰ But if **God is clothing the grass of the field in this way**, which today exists and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not **much more clothe you** – you of little faith!

³¹ Therefore don't be anxious, saying, 'What are we going to eat?' or 'What are we going to drink?' or 'What'll we wear?' ³² For the nations are seeking after all these things, and **your heavenly Father knows that you need them all**. ³³ But first seek **God's kingdom and his justice**, and **all these things will be added to you**.

Matthew 6:6 The God in Secret

⁶ When you pray, go into your inner room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is in the secret place. Then your Father, who sees in secret, will respond to you.

Mark 12:28-31 Loving God

²⁸ And one of the scribes ... asked him, "Which commandment is the most important of all?"

²⁹ Jesus answered, "The most important 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."

John 14:6-9a Show Us the Father

⁶ Jesus says to Thomas, "I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through me. ⁷ If you have known me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him."

⁸ Philip said to him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us."

⁹ Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father."

John 17:20-21 You in Me, I in You, They in Us

²⁰ "I do not ask for these disciples only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, ²¹ that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.

Luke 15:20 The Embracing Father

²⁰ And the younger son arose and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him.

Matthew 10:28-30 Don't Be Afraid

²⁸ And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in Gehenna. ²⁹ Are not two sparrows sold for an dollar? And not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. ³⁰ But even the hairs of your head are all numbered. ³¹ Fear not, therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.

Identity – Shaped by the God I Serve

Jesus' wisdom moves from Blessing (God's kingdom breaking in) to Identity (discovering who I am in God's realm) to Action (living actively from the Identity I learn in Jesus).

Jesus shows us who we are by showing us the nature and character of God, of reality.

Identity is profoundly contested. Who am I? What is my life about? Am I defined by work, class struggle, nation, race, gender, oppression, relationships, wealth, desires, music, subconscious id-ego. Is my 'self' a delusion of chemical reactions in mindless brain cells. Does my life matter, now or ever? Am I loved? How do I find hope – the truth? We feel after God with human-sized gods – variations of power, sex, and money.

Within Israel's long revelation of the One God, creator and sustainer of all, Jesus comes challenging people to know God in a new way, revealing God in life and action. As we see the vision/truth of God in Jesus, we learn ourselves within the reality he shows.

God Everywhere, Inside and Beyond

Jesus lives the scriptures: God is creator and pervades everything, but is never the same as creation, but Jesus pushes us to see differently and more. We're in a world with God visible everywhere, feeding birds, clothing lilies. God's love touches all people in rain, sunshine and eclipse. We learn to be creatures, vulnerable, trusting, loving.

God acts in history: His Kingdom promises are being filled up here, now: "Your kingdom come!" But God is never a distant, outside power – perhaps intervening in miraculous shows of strength (ancient and modern deism). He is our Father in the heavens, but the heavens describe his realm everywhere, in secret, our closed room, even our heart.

A God of Intimacy and Love – Even for Me

We're often anxious and fearful about circumstances. We live defensively and try to secure life with stuff. Jesus says you are creatures, vulnerable in a dangerous world; but created, sustained and loved by God. God is the only one worthy of true fear, and he values/loves you. We are profoundly/eternally valuable as God's creatures.

We interact with God in prayer, but he already knows our needs and cares about us.

God's aim is to woo us into a loving relationship that lets us share his own eternal life.

Nonchalant with the King of the Universe

Who am I? I'm in a strange position. A child adopted by the One God beyond all bounds. My security is only in God. But it is so great that I can let go of the security blankets and defensiveness that embody my fears. I am at home in the universe of my Father. The whole world and beyond is full of wonders and is my home. I am something more.