

Wednesday Encouragement

11/25/20

Most of us drive too fast. I'm just being honest. We tend to push as far over the limit as we think we can get away with, especially on the interstate. But I want to make this point to you today: the faster you drive, the harder it is to notice the scenery. That's why when people want to go on a drive to look at the fall leaves changing, they don't stay on the interstate. They go on smaller country roads where they are more likely to get caught behind a tractor than to be run over by someone going 90 miles per hour. They call it the "scenic route" for a reason—because the goal is to take your time and enjoy the view.

I would suggest that many of us "drive" our lives too fast, too. We're so busy. We're going, going, going. And we justify it because we convince ourselves that the busyness, and all the going, have given us the life we have. Some call it "hustle." We convince ourselves that we have to keep it up to keep the life we have. But it's God who has given us the life we have. Don't get me wrong, hard work matters, but God is the giver of all good things and our provider. At some point, we have to slow down or we'll miss so much. Much like slowing down to see the leaves, to see the scenery, I think it's really hard to truly see all of God's blessings, and to be truly thankful for them, if we never slow down.

Instead we'll simply worry about what's next on our to-do list, whether we'll have the money we need, whether we could take on another part-time job, whether the car will pass inspection, or whether the roof can be fixed or needs replaced. We're busy for a purpose, but in that we end up spending an awful lot of time worrying. But Jesus had something to say about that:

Luke 12:22-31 (NLT)

22 Then, turning to his disciples, Jesus said, "That is why I tell you not to worry about everyday life—whether you have enough food to eat or enough clothes to wear. 23 For life is more than food, and your body more than clothing. 24 Look at the ravens. They don't plant or harvest or store food in barns, for God feeds them. And you are far more valuable to him than any birds! 25 Can all your worries add a single moment to your life? 26 And if worry can't accomplish a little thing like that, what's the use of worrying over bigger things?

27 "Look at the lilies and how they grow. They don't work or make their clothing, yet Solomon in all his glory was not dressed as beautifully as they are. 28 And if God cares so wonderfully for flowers that are here today and thrown into the fire tomorrow, he will certainly care for you. Why do you have so little faith?

29 "And don't be concerned about what to eat and what to drink. Don't worry about such things. 30 These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers all over the world, but your Father already knows your needs. 31 Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and he will give you everything you need.

I wish I could tell you to live every day like the ravens and the lilies, because that would be for the best. But let's start small and build up to that. Tomorrow is Thanksgiving, and that means down-time for most people. I know that some will have to work, but I hope that even if that's the case, you'll get a little bit of down-time in the next few days.

And my challenge to you is to actually allow yourself to step on the brakes, to slow down. To look around at all you have to be thankful for and take a rest from your busyness and your worries. Your life may not be perfect from a human perspective, but it is absolutely, undeniably, blessed by God. Your life is a gift from God. Give Him thanks and rest in Him. Don't let the day we call "Thanksgiving" be just another pedal-to-the-metal, 90 miles per hour day that we're driving too fast through to stop and enjoy the scenery. Drive through tomorrow slowly enough to give thanks for the scenic blessings in your life.