

Sermon for Trinity XV - Matthew 6:24-34

In the Name of the Father and of the Son ✠ and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

“Yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.” Though he had greater wisdom than all, though he had greater wealth than most, in the end he could not enjoy them. It was Solomon who had asked of the Lord for an understanding mind to discern good and evil for the benefit of the people of Israel. This pleased the Lord and He not only granted the king’s request, but also gave him riches and honor to which no king could compare. The extent of Solomon’s wealth cannot be denied. Holy Scripture says that he received some 25 tons of gold per year from other nations. As time went by and he grew old, Solomon viewed life and its pleasures as a trap that brings deadly silence. The king lamented, “He who loves money will not be satisfied with money, nor he who loves wealth with his income; this also is vanity.” Wealth never satisfies. There is no contentment in earthly riches. It seems the more money you get the more you want and it never ends. Where are true riches to be found?

It is a powerful lie that money will bring happiness. The desire for more money is powerful. But the idea that happiness will come from it remains a lie. You can plot and plan and pursue every dollar as though your life depended on it. You can chase after mammon so that your belly is bloated, your cupboards full, your retirement funded, and your future secure. You can search for new diversions and a new mate to fill the diminishing interval between now and eternity.

That money or success brings happiness is the devil's manna, and you've eaten it without complaint or contempt. Greed is Satan's bird, and you've swallowed it whole. Instead of full and satisfied, you're empty and defiled. Repent, O Man, for you cannot serve two masters. You cannot serve God and mammon. God is not mocked; he who sows to his flesh will reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will reap everlasting life. Repent for the time wasted in worry instead of spent in prayer and confession. Repent of your endless chasing after earthly treasures, which moth and rust will soon destroy.

God especially despises greed. There is no other offense which more defies the Gospel. There is no other transgression which more harms the faithful than greed. Yet, the world is literally engulfed by it. Day and night everyone’s concern is how to get more dollars. No one is content in what the Lord provides. Everyone wants more and craves moving up the ladder. Whomever God has blessed with a beautiful house covets owning a mansion. Whomever God has blessed with a mansion covets a villa surrounded with acres of land. No one is ever satisfied. Everyone wants to get along better and have more. But if there was no pride and greed, there would be no need in

the world. Everyone would have enough, and people would not be so concerned about scraping and scratching for things. Dearly beloved, life is more than things.

Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and you'll have more than you have ever dreamed or imagined or wanted. Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them.

Christ provides for all creation (including the birds and the flowers), will He not all the more provide for you- even you for which He died? Has not the Lord already given you the best and the greatest gift? Shouldn't you also trust Him to give you the less significant things? Imagine that there was rich man that was going to give you his favorite precious jewel – something that would be painful for him to do. Wouldn't you also trust him to give you an old pair of shoes? This is precisely how you treat your Lord God in Heaven when you are anxious about clothing and shoes, food and drink, house and home, wife and children, land, animals and all you have which God richly and daily provides to support your body and life. He has already given you His greatest and best treasure: the Body and Blood of His Only Begotten Son, why wouldn't He provide you with everything else?

God richly feeds the world without its fretting or efforts. He decks out the flowers beautifully. He gives crumbs of bread to the birds of the air so that they don't die of hunger. Still you ask, "What will we eat?" Be fed with His Body, born of the Virgin Mary and sacrificed on the cross which He gives you. "What will we drink?" Be quenched with the Blood of the Lamb shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. "What will we wear?" Be clothed with the pure white garment of Baptism placed on you by water and Word. Christ provides for you.

Might I add but another question to the worrying and anxious hearts: "Where do I go?" Where should you go when your world is falling apart? Where can you turn? Come to meet your Savior in the Lord's house. Come to this place to hear His Word proclaimed for your forgiveness. This week during Lutheran Open House Week, beginning tonight at 7pm and every night through Thursday, learn of Christ's great love for you through gifted preachers of that Word. "Where do I go?" Bring a friend and come to the Lord's house this week.

Dearly beloved, be greedy. Be greedy for God's Word. Be greedy for Christ's forgiveness. Raid the storehouse that will never be empty. Take the gift of forgiveness that will never tarnish or fade away. Not even Solomon in all his glory can boast of riches like yours. Amen.

The Peace of God which passes all understanding keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen. ✠BJF✠