

Matthew 10:29-33 Trust in God's Care! Pentecost 5-Outdoor Service July 9, 2017

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Grace and peace are yours from God our Father and from Jesus Christ to make us certain of God's care!

Jesus assures us that God is caring for our needs at all times in Matthew 10:29-33.

These are Your words heavenly Father. Use these words to give us confidence in You. Your Word is truth.

Dear Christian Friends,

Most people make plans for their future. Children's plans are usually short-term, visiting a friend or playing a game. As people get older, they need to make longer-term plans, like when to schedule vacation or how to fit in the family's schedule together. As people age even more, they begin to think about detailed plans as they face health challenges or other changes. God's Word assures us that no matter what our age or our circumstance, God cares for us and has a long-term plan that takes us to eternity! Sometimes He allows temporary setbacks and things that may make us change our plans. But He is preparing us for the best future.

Trust in God's care!

He has providential care for us! We have obstacles that keep us from trusting God. Just before our verses Jesus warned His disciples about fear. He said in verse 28, "*Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul.*" Jesus had warned that when believers follow His ways, there would be opposition, like people not talking to us or not being friendly. In other cases Christians have been slandered, mocked, or harmed. Who knows what lies ahead for Christians in our country as people don't discern the truth from God's Word? Who knows what new ways the devil will use to try to keep us from trusting in God and showing that trust in Him in our lives? May God keep our faith strong so we don't fear people but trust in Him!

Another thing to cause fear is when things seem out of control. We can't stop all accidents that happen at home or on the road. We can't always keep from getting sick. We can't stop tornadoes or floods that can cause damage or loss of life. When storms knock out our power and gale-force winds damage trees and homes, we feel helpless and fearful. I think of the 12 disciples on the boat in the stormy lake waking Jesus asking Him: "*Teacher, don't you care if we drown?*" (Mark 4:38) In the storms, sicknesses or accidents in life, we may ask, "What kind of a heavenly Father are You?"

Another faith-blocker is worry. Worry can prevent us from having a solid trust in our caring God. Yet, some people would say, What else can we do but worry? There is our health or jobs and bills which make it more difficult to live as comfortably as we'd like to. But, Jesus said, "*Do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes?*" (Matthew 6:25-26) Before we wring our hands about what we don't have, let's count our blessings from God. And remember: worry cannot change anything. Rather, the Bible states, "*The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective!*" (James 5:16)

Second, God provides for our future. Despite sin that affects the whole world, God cares about all His creation. Jesus said, "*Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your Father.*" (v.29) God knows every one of the trillions of birds in this world. Some are exotic and prized by people while others like sparrows are common for many of us, but not for God! He has determined the length of each of the bird's life. Every time a bird dives down from a tree to eat, God provided the food for it. If God can provide for billions of common birds that have little value in the world, how much more will He care for us! We are the crown of His creation! Jesus said in an understatement, "*You are worth more than many sparrows.*" (v.31)

Another point about our heavenly Father is how He sees the over-all picture of our lives. We see a moment at a time in our lives and can reflect only on small portions of the past. God sees our whole life from the beginning to eternity. He sees best steps that we need to take that lead to heaven. God wants all of His people to be weaned from a dependence on things that provide temporary glory on earth. He wants us to be like Moses when he gave up the glory of Egypt to suffer with the Israelite slaves knowing He had an eternal reward. So, God takes us through challenging times to keep us heavenly minded.

Jesus made another point about trusting God when He said, *“Even the very hairs of your head are all numbered.”* (v.30) We may know many things about our family, but God knows more. What father can get up in a morning and say to his child, “You I see that you have lost 50 of your 140,000 hairs on your head?” God knows the number of our hairs and He could tell us if one is missing. If He is watching over us in that much detail with His great power and love, He knows about all our needs! God reminds us, *“Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine.”* (Isaiah 43:1)

God’s ultimate goal for us is eternal life. Jesus warned, *“Be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell.”* (v.28) Even as we trust in God to care for us and provide eternal life for us in Jesus, we should never have a careless attitude about spiritual matters. Life here is not more important than heaven. We cannot be like the ground in Jesus’ parable of the sower and the seed where weeds choked a plant so it died. Moses reminded people, *“Man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.”* (Deutero. 8:3) So, live life here with joy but don’t forget the goal of heaven!

Jesus promised, *“Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven.”* (v.32) To acknowledge Christ means to identify yourself with Him. By your words and life you are showing that you trust in God, you pray to Him, and you look forward to being in heaven. John wrote, *“If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in him and he in God.”* (1 John 4:15) Paul wrote, *“If you confess with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.”* (Romans 10:9) So, one day when we die and our souls are waiting at the gate outside of heaven, what will we do when we see the giant sign saying, “No sinners allowed!”? We’ll look to Jesus coming toward us with outstretched arms. He will say, “You are with Me! I have redeemed you with My precious blood so you are forgiven. No sin remains in you! Enter the kingdom prepared for you!” What a wonderful way that Jesus will acknowledge us before His Father on that day!

The Bible gives us these beautiful pictures of God’s love so we know we are safe in God’s care. God had a plan for us before the creation of the world. (Ephesians 1:4) The greatest assurance of His loving plan is Jesus. The Bible states, *“[God] did not spare his own Son, but gave Him up for us all...”* (Romans 8:32) Through faith in Jesus we have been made the children of our heavenly Father. Many things in life are beyond our control, but everything is under God’s control. So, trust in God even when we cannot explain all that we experience in life. The Bible invites us to: *“Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you.”* (1 Peter 5:7) Paul wrote, *“Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power... to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations...!”* (Ephesians 3:20-21) Trust in His plan to save us! Amen.