

## Don't Worry!

Sermon for the 15<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Trinity

Sermon Text: Matthew 6:25-27



*“Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? <sup>26</sup>Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? <sup>27</sup>And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life?”*

At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and when train transportation was booming worldwide, a mayor spread the rumor in a little town in South Africa that his own little South African village would also be connected with the highly modern train transportation and so the mayor said: “we must build a train station as quickly as possible so that we don’t miss this trend!” As a precaution, the town invested in advance and built a fully equipped train station... but in the end, the trains never came. The trains didn’t come because the train tracks never were built because everything was a rumor. Today you can still view this train station without trains or train tracks. A monument to all the planning mistakes that we as humans constantly make. We plan a lot, but without the right networking, and without networking, no matter how good you are, if there’s no connection, it’s all pointless.

In fact, there is a major planning error that we always make. We create, plan, build... we do this our whole lives. And everything we do has absolutely no reference point and no connection with – yes, you guessed it – with God. Therefore, everything is done without a goal which means everything has no lasting meaning or purpose. Despite all my efforts, the long-awaited train never comes. In the end, a universe comes and tells me that everything was pointless and that I am irrelevant and useless.

When Jesus calls to us today and says, “Do not worry!”, He isn’t suggesting that we live a frivolous and thoughtless hippy life without any work or planning and living according to the motto: “Eat, drink for tomorrow you will die anyway.” No, it’s about Jesus wanting to direct our attention to the fact that our Father in heaven is behind everything we do or don’t do. After all, our Father in heaven is the One who doesn’t allow our existence on earth to drift along meaninglessly and without love. He cares about everything, from the smallest to the greatest. We really don’t need to lack for anything, and He connects everything we do and don’t do here on earth with His eternal plan and leads us to our goal. Our Lord Jesus explains this to us with an example of the animals and plants in the field. If our heavenly Father pays so much attention to these little things, how much more is He interested in your life and protects it! How much more does He give meaning and purpose to all the things you do here on earth. It’s like building a train station without taking into account that all the things we do here must be connected in eternity. In this sense, we live in unbelief and without God. The more we connect and get tangled up in this world, the more we worry about things in our world. Very often we become stubborn and obstinate. We work for the sake of work; we earn money for the sake of money. Like a herd of wild bulls, we go our own way and woe to anyone who stands in our way; woe to anyone who doubts or criticizes us in our work. Then we are immediately offended and feel wounded deep down in our souls and defend what is ours to the last drop of blood. In the same way, we guard all the earthly things we have with greed and suspicion. All of this happens because we have

left God out of our lives. That is why we ultimately feel unloved, and we worry senselessly about all the things that can't really help us.

When Jesus says, do not worry! He wants to free us from this senseless vegetating in which we have surrounded ourselves. Through faith, He wants to open up a world for us that goes far beyond our actions and creations here on earth. To use the image of the train station again: Jesus wants to show us that there are tracks and platforms there. Everything we do and create here must ultimately go on the tracks... and our dear heavenly Father stands there. Jesus speaks twice about our loving Father who cares for everything. We would rightly worry if this Father didn't exist. There are millions of examples of how our world is basically corrupt and our lives are leading to death. If God the Father didn't exist, yes, then there would be every reason to worry. Then we would be surrounded by death and have to worry constantly. Jesus doesn't present the Father to us as a merciless fate that wants to show us through death that we are unloved. No! God loves us with His whole heart and therefore, only because of His love, is there no reason to worry! Jesus wants to give us this well-founded carefreeness, because that is the only way we can become truly free. If I had to constantly worry about the future in everything I do, I would quickly become overwhelmed with worry, become lethargic, and be in a bad mood. But if I know that God has a plan for everything I do and wants the best for me and my life in every case, then it frees me from tomorrow. It also frees me so that I can really concentrate on the day and the tasks that God gives me today.

Yes, and this is precisely how the things we do here on earth take on a special character and worth. Jesus doesn't want to call on us to distance ourselves from the world and its tasks because we only dream of life in the world hereafter. He also doesn't want to belittle our work and human achievements or research in general. It is precisely the connection with God that gives these things their true meaning and purpose. **But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness** is His call to us. Since God the Creator of all things is behind everything, He can't disregard worldly things from the outset. That is why man has been given the function of guardian over all these things. This is God's plan and mission for us. God wants us to explore, God wants us to discover new and better ways to live here in this world. He wants us to work and create and to provide for a better life. However, hidden in the worldly things is the temptation to separate all these things from the Giver and to see human achievement independently of God. The comparatives longer, better, richer, further, higher... have not always brought man any further in life. History has also proven time and again that unrestrained science and unrestrained development can harm or destroy people and the entire world. Jesus calls us to be free to deal with these things. "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you." So we can and should go about our daily work with great confidence. If things don't work out the way we wanted, we know that God already has a plan. And how often has it actually turned out to be better that our human plans failed! So it comes to you. God knows each one of us. He knows what we all need together. That is precisely why we can deal with these things calmly.

*Lord Jesus! Thank you for my purpose in this world! Help me to know your path in my life. Give us shining eyes of faith and hope to see the good even in our smallest tasks! Lord, free us from narrow-mindedness! Amen.*