

# First Baptist Church Smiths Falls

## Thanksgiving Sunday 2017

Scripture Reading: Matthew 6:25-33

25 ¶ "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? 26 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? 27 And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? 28 And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, 29 yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. 30 But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you--you of little faith? 31 Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear?' 32 For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. 33 But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

### **Prayer:**

**Message:** "Giving Thanks With a Thankful Heart"

### **INTRODUCTION:**

- Last week, when we talked about stewardship, I told you about a Church in Brantford that was short on cash. I told you that they took on the challenge of using their one week's worth of grocery money for the Church, and to live on faith for the entire week - and it worked: the Church remained open and the faith in the Church grew. Now I want you think back to last year. Last Thanksgiving I encouraged you to write

a list of things for which you are grateful. We pulled out that same list on Christmas Eve last year, and we asked God to remind us of the things for which we need to give thanks. Those who did a list found that there was not enough paper nor ink.

- This Thanksgiving, think about this - how much do you really have? Just think now - think of all the furniture you will walk around when you go home - think of the nice clothing you have to change into as you change out of your Sunday-go-to-Church clothing - many of us can think of your vehicle in the driveway as you fill your lunch table with food - think of all those things around you as you sit - and before you say thanks to God for the food, think about those around you who are bowing their heads to God in thanksgiving with you, and what they mean to you - especially since there is no guarantee that any will be with you next Thanksgiving.
- This Sunday, let's be thankful.

### Part 1: Worry: The Thanksgiving Killer

- When Jesus talked about worry in the Sermon on the Mount, as recorded in Matthew 6, he showed the destructive nature of this common plight - the gnawing, the uncomfortable feeling of unease that worry brings.

- Worry and it's neighbour, stress, can be a killer. Poor stress, called distress, is stress which is not handled well. Distress can consume you, it eats at your body, and it scatters your thoughts.
- Yet stress itself is not all bad. Good stress is just that - good. Good stress, unlike distress, motivates us. Good stress gets us out of bed in the morning, sets our agenda, and moves us through life. We need the stress of life to survive. I have raised fish most of my life. Once I felt bad that I had too much movement in the water, so I turned down the pumps and let the water still. My fish turned grey. My fish became sluggish. My fish almost died. When I returned the flow to the water, the fish had something to fight against and thrived.
- You are the only controller of stress - you control whether stress is good or bad. The main element in determining good from bad stress is worry.
- How do we kill worry? "*O you of little faith.*" says Jesus in verse 30 - faith, says Jesus is what one really needs - faith. God knows what you need, all you need is faith.

#### Part 2: Faith

- What is faith? Hebrews 11:1, "*Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things unseen.* (KJV)" "*Now faith is being*

*sure of what we hope for, and certain of what we do not see.* (NIV)"

- Faith is having the confidence that everything which you need will be provided for you. Think again of your neighbourhood - How much has God provided for you? Think again of your community - How much has God provided for you? Think again of your work or school - How much has God provided for you? Think again of everything in your life - How much has God provided for you?
- Faith in God is knowing that God has and will continue to provide for you, even when we feel the stress of life pressing upon you.

#### Part 3: Worry verses Thanksgiving.

- What would happen if this nation gave thanks for what we have, instead of lamenting that which we do not have? What would happen if your family started living in thanksgiving, praising God for the smallest of things in our lives, and thanking God continually for everything? Would you be different if you lived a life of thanksgiving, praising God for the hope and the joy you have in Christ Jesus the Lord? What would happen if the Church started seeing the lovely faces of the people in the pews, enjoying the blessings of those who are here, right now, today, as given to us by the Lord God Almighty? Look around this Church. Look at

the great talent, the love and ability in this room. And let's give thanks!

- The Church of Jesus Christ in this world today is growing faster than ever before, but in particular in nations that are under persecution. In nations where the water flow in the tank is turned up, and the current is tough to navigate, like my fish tank, the Church of Jesus Christ is growing. Churches that are under fire are living for Jesus Christ.
- Let's return to Matthew 6. Jesus says in verse 33, "*Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things will be added unto you.*" Jesus makes a promise - concentrate on him with thankfulness, and you will be provided for in your life.

#### CONCLUSION:

- Matthew 6:27 of the NKJV says: "*Which of you by worrying can add on cubit to his stature:*" How tall could you be if worry did add to your height? The NIV has this verse is in terms of time: about adding an hour to your life by worry - how long would your day be if worry could add extra time as Matthew 6:27 says? Think about the worn face of a 20 foot giant worry-wart, whose days are 40-50 hours long.
- Worry will not help you - faith in God's righteousness, and seeking after God's kingdom is the way to make you a Thanksgiving Christian

that will propel you through your day with Jesus.

- This weekend as you give thanks around the table with someone you love, pause and give thanks for all that you have. Seek first God's kingdom, and His righteousness - and give thanks with a thankful heart.