

XV TRINITY 2018

SERMON – SAINT JOSEPH PARISH

FATHER CRAIG LOONEY

GALATIANS 6.11 St. MATTHEW 6.24



“Don’t worry...be happy!” is an international hit song by musician Bobby McFerran. First released in 1988...the song remains popular today...because of its simple refrain...“Don’t worry...be happy!”

Conversely...if we spend too much time in the worry department...we can’t be happy. So it’s better not to worry at all...just be happy! Sometimes that’s easier said than done.

A March 2018 *Psychology Today* article points out unlike all other animals...we human beings have the capacity to think about ourselves far into the future. Planning for the future is one thing...obsessing about the future causes us unnecessary worry and anxiety. Maybe they were inspired by what Jesus says in this morning’s Gospel.

The Sermon on the Mount...from which today’s Gospel is taken...begins with Jesus’ teaching about True Happiness...even when people insult us and persecute us and tell all kinds of lies about us...Jesus tells us to be happy and glad...because the Kingdom of God belongs to us.

Jesus tells us we shouldn’t spend so much time worrying about things, especially about what will happen tomorrow, or next week, or next month, or next year...things over which we have little control. The only point in time over which we have any control is this very moment...if we spend too much time worrying about the future...we never give ourselves the chance to enjoy right now.

What about planning for future events? Shouldn’t we just leave everything in God’s hands? There is a difference between planning and worrying. Setting some money aside for a vacation is OK. Putting money away into 401K or IRA retirement accounts doesn’t mean we don’t trust God to take care of us. It means we are using his gift of money wisely.

Jesus never teaches us our money and material possessions are bad...they are gifts from God too and we should thank him for them.

The word *Mammon* in today’s Gospel comes from a Greek word that means *wealth* or *money* or **that in which we place our trust**. What exactly does it mean to place our trust in God...to trust him to take care of our material, physical and spiritual needs?

Jesus tells us we can’t serve two masters...we can’t serve God and money. Money means our material possessions and anything else that distracts us and keeps us from loving God the way we should? Have things become our idols? Do we trust them more than God? If we do...we need to re-prioritize our lives and place our trust in God first.

In the Gospel, Jesus talks about King Solomon. Solomon was the son of the great King David and ruled the United Kingdom of Israel in the 10th Century BC. He was known to be a wise ruler. During his reign he amassed a huge fortune...he was the wealthiest man in the world. In spite of his wealth...he never found true peace or happiness. He once said people who become ridiculously rich worry about keeping or losing their wealth.

Trusting God to take care of our all of our needs means acting in a responsible manner with the gifts he has given us...that means using money we earn to pay the mortgage, make car payments, buy food, and plan for future retirement. God does not want us to worry about things...he does want us to enjoy life with what he has given us.

We need to pay attention to what Jesus asks us...can spending so much time worrying about things get us anywhere...does worry extend our lives even for a few days...probably not! Worry might actually shorten our lives.

God knows what we need and what’s best for us...trusting him gets us where we need to be at this very moment...knowing we are his children and he is taking care of us now and he will take care of us tomorrow and next week and forever.

Jesus tells us tomorrow will bring its own set of challenges...we have enough challenges to keep us busy today...let’s not add any more.

Instead...let’s not worry...let’s be happy!

