

The Future is NOT in Our Hands

Are you worried? According to just about everything we see and hear these days, you should be. Soaring crime rates, mass shootings, lethal heat waves, wars and rumors of wars, famine, illness, cancers, pandemics old and new (you did hear about monkeypox, didn't you?), runaway inflation, possible economic collapse ... the list goes on and on.

It's good for us to care about what's going on in the world, for that shows we are concerned for our neighbors, our fellow human beings on this planet. Our lives are swayed and directed by our care for one another. It's not good when the things we care about distract our minds, disrupt our sleep, agitate our anxieties, sink us into depression, or plunge us into despair. That's when proper "care" turns into "worry."

Our English word "worry" comes from Old English and Old High German words that mean "to strangle." And that's what worry does to us, isn't it? It chokes the joy and the life out of our lives because we are afraid of what the future might bring.

It doesn't have to be some great headline on the nightly news that sets off worry in our lives. Many times, it's the little things—perhaps a whole lot of them—that crowd and cloud our minds until we see nothing but trouble all around us, trouble we can't control.

Jesus' friend, Martha, had that problem. Luke tells us, *Martha was distracted with much serving* when Jesus came to visit. Her sister, Mary, had stopped helping in the kitchen and was just sitting there, listening to Jesus, when there was so much to be done! Martha's worry quickly turned into a bitter complaint: *Tell her then to help me!*

But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things, but one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her." (Lk. 10:41)

Yes, proper hospitality has its place, but it's not the most important thing in the world. The one thing necessary, the good portion, the thing that is to be at the center of our lives at all times is Jesus. His words ease all our worries, calm all our anxieties, and empower us to care for ourselves and for one another according to God's plan and will.

We seem to think we're the ones who make the plans, that we are in charge of our lives, our destinies, our future. The truth is, we cannot give ourselves any security in this life. The future is not in our hands. Neither is the present. We have very little control over anything.

But that's not a reason to worry. Rather, it's a reminder to trust in the One who does have control, the One who holds all of life—the past, the present, and the future—in His hands.

Remember, therefore, and let your worries be comforted by what Jesus has said to you:

"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? 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? And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you."

"Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble." (Matthew 6:25-34)