

Dear Friends,

Matthew 6: 25-34

God calls you to have good eyes, so that you see those in need; turn towards them and work alongside them for justice. God however only asks you to do what God first does and to be what God first is. You are after all made in the image and likeness of God. So, if God asks you to be the good of eye, you can be sure that God is the good of eye, seeing those in need, turning towards them and taking care of them.

Jesus knew this and it gave him confidence, freedom and a lightness of spirit. He knew that he did not need to worry, because God's good eye was upon him and God was taking care of him. What he knew for himself he wanted everyone else to know too.

So, he sat down in front of whoever would listen and said "Do not worry about your life, what you will eat or about what you will drink, or about your body what you will wear... Your Heavenly Father knows that you need these things". He gave examples of God's care for everything in the creation. He talked about the birds. "They don't worry. They fly, they sing their songs, they gather their food, but they do not worry". He talked about the grass of the field. "It does not worry. It stands tall and beautiful, but it does not worry". Jesus summed up his thought. "If God feeds the birds and clothes the grass so splendidly how much more will God feed and clothe you".

God has a good eye. God sees you; turns towards you and takes care of you.

God's care is meant to come in two ways. First, it comes directly in the gifts of the creation. At harvest we thank God for all the good gifts with which God continues to surround us. Secondly, God's care is meant to come indirectly through people. God's will is that we share our bread and take care of those in need. We have not done this well. We have not ensured that all have their fair share. We are therefore called to put systems and policies in place so that justice is done and no one dies of hunger. We bring our gifts at Harvest time to say thank you and to remind ourselves of the importance of sharing.

So, Jesus says "Do not worry about your life or about your body". But he also says something else. He says, "Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?" The good, healthy eye of God sees you completely and sees all that you need.

In the beginning God planted a garden which was filled with trees. The trees were a delight to the eye and good for food. They were good for food because God wants you to have the nourishment that will keep your body strong and healthy. They were a delight to the eye because God wants you to experience beauty and all those things which lift your spirit and thrill your soul. God takes care of your physical needs but God also takes care of more. Here are some examples of the more:

God sees where you need to mend. Many of us carry in our bodies the stress and tension of the past, the pain of experiences which are actually long ago and far away. These experiences may have battered us and left us feeling a little broken. God comes with healing so that we may mend.

God sees where you need forgiveness. Maybe you know that you have missed the mark and taken ways which were not God's ways, most of us feel like that. God assures you that you are forgiven and accepted just as you are.

God sees where you need to come back to God and draws you close again in an intimate relationship in which you belong both now and in eternity.

So, God calls you to have a good eye, that sees those in need, turns towards them and acts with them to make a difference. And, God has a good eye. God sees you, turns towards you and takes care of you in body, mind and spirit.

God bless you,

Tony

PS I'm taking some holiday next week so you will have a break from these letters. I'll be back. We can't leave it too long because Moses and his people although they now have bread and water are about to face another dangerous threat. The Amalekites are poised to attack.