

Saint Thomas and Saint Thomas of the Air Church  
Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity  
September 28, 2025

Be not anxious for your life . . .  
Seek ye first His Kingdom and His righteousness

Today we resume the Summer Survey of Essential Christian  
Doctrine

With the final visit to Jesus' Sermon on the Mount.  
And the last installment of St Paul's Epistle to the Galatians.

Jesus challenges us with a choice:

We can serve Mammon, or  
We can serve God.  
But we cannot serve both God and Mammon.

His audience of 2000 years ago knew exactly what Jesus meant by  
Mammon.

But we may be a little fuzzy on the concept.

In ancient times, some of the pagan peoples made-up a god they  
called; Mammon.

He was the god of wealth,  
But in the exaggerated sense bordering on avarice, greed.  
They even made a statue of Mammon  
That they could bow down to and worship  
Seeking to easily gain wealth and plenty.

In modern times, can the same be said of us?

We may lack the statue  
But do we worship Mammon in our lives to the exclusion  
Of our Lord?

We are the world's biggest consumers.

Researchers have said that we, as parents spend more time  
Shopping than we do with our children.

Certainly social media bears it out among our teens.  
The mindless pictures of their purchases flood the airwaves  
Searching for attention, recognition  
Status.  
Their clothing,  
Torn jeans, purses, jewelry, even shoes  
Shout the names of expensive designers  
As if the very things they wear symbolize the money  
They paid for them.  
Symbols of Mammon?  
Or the overpowering desire for wealth?  
Symbols that somehow testify of the value  
Of the person who wears them.

You know, our Maker knows us so well.  
Jesus speaks to His concern for our nature.  
We are so easily disquieted,  
distracted  
and develop distrustful cares about our lives  
that interrupt the life God intended for us.

It reminds me of a time when I was a boy and was downtown in  
Walnut Creek  
It was this time of year  
In the days when we actually still had walnut trees  
And we actually celebrated their harvest  
With a Walnut Festival.

I was watching the Walnut Festival Parade down Main Street  
And had arranged that my Mother would pick me up  
after the parade at a designated time and place.

My Mother was late and  
 I waited there beyond the time that a boy will wait  
     And gave up and walked home,  
     which was not too far away.

In the meanwhile, Mom was frantically looking for me  
     And when we both arrived home  
     Among the comments  
     Which were rich,  
     but not entirely appropriate for this discussion,  
     there was the clear message that she was so terribly hurt  
     that I could think she would not come for me, ever.

Knowing how much she loved me,  
     How could I believe that she could not come for me as she  
     said she would?

In a way, that's what Jesus is concerned about in today's lesson.

The Sermon on the Mount was revolutionary.  
     With it, Jesus introduced radical doctrine  
     That was off putting for many  
     who gathered to hear it.

It outlined a new life  
     A new pathway to God.  
     That is why we go to it time and again during the Trinity  
     Season Survey of Essential Christian Doctrine

The Sermon contradicted some ancient religious thinking of the  
 Jews

    but advanced ancient Jewish Law.  
     Without contradicting it, He brought it forward.  
 The people who heard it must have been awestruck.  
 Matthew devotes three full chapters of his book to the Sermon.  
 It is wide ranging, discussing a myriad of topics.

Some abandoned Jesus after they heard his Sermon on the Mount.  
Some gathered to hear more.

In the portion of the Sermon that is the Gospel for today,  
Jesus offers His advice,  
    His consolation  
    For those times in our lives when we become  
    Disquieted,  
    Distracted,  
    And Distrustful  
    Of God's loving Hand in our lives.

Sometimes we do it to ourselves  
And sometimes it seems that satan himself  
    Gets us off the page.  
Our minds become clouded and overcome.  
    We blot out the joy that we have in God  
    And become hurried and worried.  
    Anxious.  
We loose sleep and dampen the joy that God intends us to feel  
    As we focus ourselves on the mundane  
    And material aspects of our lives.  
It is not that such things as hunger, shelter and nakedness  
    Are not important.  
    Or should be irrationally or blissfully ignored.

The part of our nature to which Jesus points us  
    Is the obsession with those things,  
    To the exclusion of any consideration of how God  
    Has already prepared us for those times.  
    How He will restore us and guide us through them.

Jesus tells us four times in this short snippet from the Sermon on the Mount  
    "Be not anxious for your life".

He offers an analogy to the birds of the air,  
To the lilies of the field  
And to the grass of the field.

He scolds us  
“O ye of little faith”.

If God cares for them,  
How could he not care for you?  
How could I think my Mother would not care for me  
As I waited for her on the Streets of Walnut Creek?

As my Mother almost tearfully explained to me after the Parade,  
How could we ever think that God’s love  
Would ever be insufficient for us?

But isn’t that just what we do sometimes?  
Sometimes over insignificant things but sometimes over things of  
greater significance.  
In today’s Epistle St Paul speaks of the distraction  
That had the Galatians off the page.

Jesus knows us well  
And the way we become anxious,  
turn away from our faith,  
turn away from God  
and worry about secular things to His exclusion in our lives.

But God does not treat us the way He does the birds and the  
flowers.

He provides for us in a more permanent and fundamental way.  
Instead of feeding us, and sheltering us directly,  
God provides us with our opportunity to labor  
Which He has made our duty  
And then blesses that labor for the means of our lives.

Some say we got work, not worms.

So it is our God Given talents,  
 intellect,  
 conscience  
 and liberties,  
 That sustain us.

Unlike the lower animals of God's creation  
 We are self-reliant.  
 creations of God  
 that still rely on His Grace and His Love.

So do not expect God to send Door Dash with your next meal  
 From Narsai David,  
 And do not expect that Wilks-Bashford or Saks  
 Will be delivering your Fall Wardrobe any time soon.

But do expect this:  
 As Jesus said in the Sermon:  
 "...your Heavenly Father knoweth  
 that ye have need of all these things.  
 But seek ye first, His Kingdom  
 And His righteousness  
 And all these things shall be added unto you".

In those moments when all seems lost  
 And you can not take the next step  
 Seek His Kingdom  
 And His Righteousness.

Turn to God  
 In prayer  
 In the sacraments

And here is some 2000 year old advice:

“And which of you by being anxious  
can add one cubit  
unto the measure of you life”.

In these times when our lives are pressured  
And we seem almost infected with the “stress”  
Of our lives,  
Here is the Son of God  
With advice:

Our lives, by any measure:  
Its length  
Breadth  
Substance  
Or quality  
Cannot be increased one cubit  
One day  
One dollar  
Or one smile  
By worrying for being anxious.

So enjoy the Parade  
And know that if you can keep your heart and mind  
In knowledge and love of God  
When it's over  
He'll be there to pick you up  
And take you home.