

This Precious Moment

Matthew 6: 25-34

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Introduction:

Who is here today? I don't mean are you physically here, or reading this, I'm asking, "are you here, or are you thinking about something else?" Or worrying about those bills on your table, or stressing about your children's future? I have to be honest, every now and then, I will try to multitask. While I am on the phone with someone, I might try and send off an email, or read something. But then a few moments later, I have no idea what the person said or asked and I just cannot. Why? Because I wasn't there when they said it. To truly be somewhere, you will have to wholly be there. And just because we are in a geographical location does not mean we are present.

They were worried:

In the passage we read, Jesus is speaking about devotion. Just before this passage Jesus challenges His listeners that they cannot serve both God and money, then He speaks on the importance of trusting God for their needs. And this is important, because we ultimately worship that which we believe will supply. And that is why whenever there is an economic downturn, we see people getting depressed and making horrible life choices. Why? Because their god has let them down, the god of mammon. Their hope has failed them, their deliverance has fallen away. The only reason Jesus would have to tell them to stop worrying is because they were worrying. So, Jesus refocused the conversation. Rather than ending on specific needs, He redirects our focus.

The word anxious:

It could also be translated and understood as distracted. I say that because in the Greek, it could be explained as "to spend your thoughts on". Jesus tells them to focus on His Kingdom, live righteously and don't be distracted by worries or unknowns, because worrying is a waste of time and has no effect on what you are distracted about. Are we present in every precious moment so we can pursue His Kingdom and the righteous life that God requires as the sermon on the mount emphasizes? We all have something we are worried about, we all have something that can consume us, we all have something in our past that constantly distracts us and yet we are all called to live in the only moment we are truly given, NOW. Jesus wasn't questioning needs, he was questioning focus. The most exciting part of this is that if Jesus said it, it must be possible. It must be possible to live free of worry.

Taking back the present:

Unfortunately, many of us live under the heavy burden of all our yesterdays and fearful tomorrows. It robs us of the opportunity of truly living in the present and steals away from us both the blessing of the moment and the very purpose of our present. The very fact that we are alive, with breath in our lungs, given as a free gift from God means that we have a reason for being! I am not suggesting that we must focus our lives on the temporary or that it outweighs the eternal, but rather that the vast reality of the eternal must inspire and fuel the temporary.

William Barclay, a respected professor, minister and author wrote:

“Nearly all great men have been haunted by the sense of the shortness and the uncertainty of time. As we grow older, and time grows ever shorter, there are certain things that we should remember: We should never leave things half-finished – in case they are never finished. We should carefully choose what we are going to do – or there is no longer time to do everything, and we should do the things that really matter. We should never come to the end of a day with a quarrel or a breach between us and any fellow-man – for it may be that the quarrel will never be mended and the breach will never be closed. We only get so much time, and when it is finished we cannot get any more. None of us knows how much we are going to get. If there is something to be learned, we must learn it now; for the longer we put it off, the harder it will be to learn it.”

What is time?

To describe time as the moment we are in is just not that accurate. Time is an opportunity – any moment can be your greatest or your last. Time is precious – “you cannot kill time without injuring eternity”. Time is short and passing quickly. Time is uncertain – we cannot control how much we have. Time is irrevocable when gone – all our prayers cannot reverse a single minute. Time is to be accounted for. Time is not just one of the greatest gifts we have each received, but probably the most precious thing often wasted.

There is something to do:

Jesus doesn't just say go and sit and don't worry, No, He says focus your life on what is important. **Colossians 3:23-24** – *“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.”* So whether we eat or drink, or work or sleep, we give it our full attention, because what we do matters to God.

How can we manage our time well?

1. How you start matters: **Psalm 118:24** – **“This is the day the Lord has made; let's rejoice and be glad in it.”** Start with praise by thanking God: For another day, For the gift of faith, For your family, For your work and that

you are able to, For your friends, For what He is going to do in your life that day.

2. Prioritize: Don't mistake the urgent for the important. Not all urgent things are important. Make sure you prioritize what is most important in your life. Some interruptions are time killers, and others are divine appointments and our greatest opportunities. So we need to be sensitive to God's leading for wisdom and discernment.

3. Your daily to do list:

Do something to enrich your life Spiritually - Spending time in the Bible, in prayer and in worship is vital. It is an incredible use of time that will uplift you, encourage you and help you keep your eyes focused on the kingdom of God. The best way of not being tossed around by the tides and waves of this world is to keep our focus above it.

Be present with your Family - Courting your spouse doesn't end when you get married. Court your spouse daily. Talk to her, she wants to be heard. Encourage him, believe me he wants to hear you are proud of him and all he is doing for your family, be wholly there for one another. Be a present parent. Don't allow a day to pass where you have not hugged, kissed, chatted with, prayed for or ministered to your children. Be a present child. Honoring your father and mother doesn't end when you leave the house. Make time to send a message or make a call.

Be a helper to your immediate circle - Do the best you can for your employer, help your colleagues, your friends and neighbors, make a difference. When we as the salt and light are truly present in a room, it should be different because we are there. Light should always be shining. Every day is an opportunity to make a difference.

How will you spend your moments?

Every moment we have is a gift we get to spend on something and it is up to us what we will do with it. You could worry about what is out of your control or have your moments stolen by your past. But we are called to keep our focus on God, to live a life that honors Him, and not be distracted away from those precious moments we have been blessed with.

This poem is a beautiful challenge, yet I unfortunately don't know who wrote it:

Now, if you have work to do, Do it now. Today the skies are clear and blue,
Tomorrow clouds may come in view, yesterday is not for you; Do it now

If you have a song to sing, Sing it now. Let the notes of gladness ring, Clear
as song of bird in spring, let every day some music bring; sing it now

If you have kind words to say, Say them now. Tomorrow might not come your way, Do a kindness while you may, Loved ones will not always stay; say them now

If you have a smile to show, Show it now. Make hearts happy, roses grow, Let the friends around you know the love you have before you go; Show it now.

The gift of the moment:

How would our lives and maybe even the world around us look different if we made the most of every moment. If we spend them well so that our race of life is marked by intentionality? I wonder if our relationships will change? I wonder if our marriages might thrive? I wonder if we might notice those in need, or share our faith with those around us? I wonder if we might become more aware of the little bit of time we really have, and recognize that those who don't know Christ will also run out at some point. If you remember nothing else, remember this; being present in every moment and trusting God is not just how we overcome the worries of tomorrow, but it is how we find joy in today.

**** Reverend Hein and his family are recent immigrants from South Africa with family connections right here in Bedford.**