

<sup>24</sup>“No one can serve two masters; for a slave will either hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.

<sup>25</sup>“Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? <sup>26</sup>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? <sup>27</sup>And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? <sup>28</sup>And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, <sup>29</sup>yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. <sup>30</sup>But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? <sup>31</sup>Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear?’ <sup>32</sup>For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. <sup>33</sup>But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. <sup>34</sup>“So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today’s trouble is enough for today.

“Love makes the world go round.”

When I Googled it Alice in Wonderland, Charles Dickens, the musical Carnival, Perry Como, Paul Anka, Deon Jackson, Ashlee Simpson, Madonna and the Powderpuff girls all came up. They all wrote or sang, “Love makes the world go round.” But these days it is money.

The radio station I listen to has a love poem contest once a year for Valentine’s day but every hour Monday through Friday they have the Wall Street Journal report. Stocks are up, stocks are down – i is money that makes the world go round.

What kinds of things are on our minds? Credit card debt, mortgages, avoiding taxes, sending a child off to school so that she can make enough money to live on. Will there be enough to afford a home in a good school district, to have a good car, to retire some day? Can I take my kids to Kalahari or Disney World or on a family trip to

Europe? How will I pay for college, pay off my college debts, provide for my medical care? Will my money run out before I die? Some worry how they can keep the government from taking the inheritance when they die.

What can dominate the time at Council meetings and congregational meetings? Prayer and Bible study? No, anxiety about money – is someone getting too much – will there be enough?

I am a new board member of Lutheran Metropolitan Ministry. Raising money to pay for the programs will dominate the time I give to LMM. How can we connect to people in the churches and tell our story so that they will give money? If you have given some money to charities you will be flooded with mail asking you to give more or mail from other non-profits with whom they have shared their mailing list.

Money makes the world go round.

“No one can serve two masters; for a slave will either hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.” Jesus said that.

A person cannot serve God and serve money at the same time.

The key word is serve. Is your life about money or about God? If this church has money in the bank at the end of the year is that a sign that all is well? Or do prayer and learning and love for God and love for the stranger set the agenda?

“Look at birds and flowers,” Jesus said. See how God feeds them – dresses them. Are you not of more value to God than birds and flowers?

Churches do not die because they run out of money - they run out of money because they become a club to serve themselves rather than a people gathered to pray and learn and serve those in need. Jesus promises: “Strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things will be given to you.” Enough to eat, enough to drink, clothing to wear.

Now money has a purpose in this life – money is helpful to humans but money makes a poor substitute for God. Money is useful for buying food and paying bills but you were not created to live for money – you were created to be loved by God and to love God and to love every person God puts in your life.

Jesus said, “Do not worry saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘what shall we drink?’ or ‘what shall we wear?’ For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things and your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But strive first for the kingdom of God and all these things will be given to you as well.”

Maybe a few of us have heaven so much on our minds that we are no earthly good, but speaking for myself I can say I waste too many hours of the day and of the night worrying about money and stuff and not nearly enough hours trusting in God. So many hours have been spent worrying about things that never happened – what a waste that has been. Many times I have talked with God about something that is troubling me and God has helped me through. The way has not always been easy – as some of you face sickness or debt or a lack of work or troubles with your children I realize that prayer is not magic. But you have taught me time and again how even in the most complicated situations God is able to provide hope, a new beginning.

“So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today’s trouble is enough for today.”

What a strange way for Jesus to end this passage. I would like something more hopeful. What Jesus is saying is one day at a time.

And trust in God.

