

Do Not Worry, Part 2

Matthew 6:31-33

Halifax: 1 August 2004

Introduction

Last week we began looking at what our Lord Jesus says about worry in Matt. 6:25-34.

- I pointed out to you that no less than three times Jesus says, “Do not worry.”
- Worry is not just a little problem, it is a sin before a holy God.
 - When you worry about what you have and don’t have in this world,
 - it shows that you have made the things of the world (Mammon) your master.
- You are worried because you think blessing comes from Mammon rather than from God.
 - And because Mammon is not reliable,
 - You are always uneasy about it—afraid you might lose it.
 - You worry about it.
- Realise that this is nothing else but covetous idolatry...
 - Worry shows that you are worshipping and serving the creature rather than the Creator...
 - You deserve to go to Hell for such behaviour...
 - God’s law utterly condemns it.

But Christian, I urged you to always remember that Jesus is gracious!

- This is not to say that He thinks lightly of idolatry—not that at all!
 - But it is to say that He has come in His great love to pay the penalty of idolatry (as well as all our other sins) by His death on the cross.
- And so we find Him here (in Matthew 6), not thundering out words of condemnation...
 - but speaking gracious words of counsel, telling us how to deal with worry...
 - If He were coming as a judge,
 - He would not tell us how to change because it would be too late to change...
 - On the day of judgement, He will not come with counsel like this...
 - But because He is Saviour,

- coming to give Himself for our sins,
 - and armed with the Holy Spirit and with power,
 - He comes to us to reason with us
 - and to gently lead us away from idols into a fuller trust in our heavenly Father.
- Do not run away from Him when you find worry in your soul...as to say:
 - “Oh no! I’m an idol worshipper, How can I hide?”
 - No, no-- Run **to** Him for grace and say:
 - “Lord, here I am, an idol worshipper,
 - Show me the way back to the Father.”

In Matthew 6:25-34, that is exactly what Jesus does—

- He shows us the way to move from idolatrous worry to trust in our heavenly Father.

Last week, we looked at three of the six things that Jesus teaches us to do in these verses when worry appears:

- 1) **First**, consider that your life is more than food and your body more than clothing.
 - You have a much higher purpose than eating and drinking and making yourself comfortable with clothes and shelter.
 - You are here to glorify and enjoy God...
 - If that is your chief end, you have nothing to worry about because nothing can keep you from that purpose!
 - You can do it with or without food, with beautiful clothes or with rags, in perfect health or on a sick bed.
 - Worry about your situation in this world indicates that you have forgotten what your purpose is.
- 2) **Second**, when worry comes, take a fresh look at God’s care for all His creatures.
 - Jesus points us to the birds—
 - Just look at how God cares for them...
 - feeding them each day even though they neither plant nor store their food.
 - The message is not that we are stop planting and storing up food,
 - God commanded us to provide for ourselves by planting and harvesting from the very beginning, even before the fall...

- But the message is that if God cares for inferior creatures who don't plant and store their food,
 - how much more will He care for those who do—
 - for those who were made in His image!
- 3) **Third**, when worry comes, remember that you are only a creature.
- No matter what you do, you cannot change the final outcome by your worrying.
 - You can't even do something that would very simple for God—
 - add 18 inches to your height (or as some would translate it—to your life span).
 - Nor can you make clothing as beautiful as the flowers of the field that neither toil nor spin.
 - When you worry, you act as if you are in the place of God...
 - as if the responsibility for blessing rested upon your shoulders
 - as if you are the one who has to make everything work out.
 - You take too much upon yourself!
 - You are only a creature—God's creature—
 - Leave the outcome with God.
 - If you have planted and taken all reasonable precautions to protect what is yours, then leave the matter in God's hands.
 - Worrying will not help.

TRANS> Those were the three things we looked at last week.

- To put them more concisely:
 - When worry comes:
 - 1) Remember that your life is about much more than food and clothing...
 - 2) Consider how God cares for all His creatures...
 - 3) Remember that you are only a creature.
- This week, I want to look at two more things that Jesus shows you to do when worry comes:
 - When worry comes...
 - 4) Stop acting like a pagan—you have a Father in heaven.
 - 5) Return to the service of God—He will take care of you

Next week we will take up the sixth thing.

- So without further introduction, let's consider the fourth:

I. When worry comes, stop acting like a pagan—you have a Father in heaven!

A. No matter how bad things get,

1. as soon as you start saying:

- “What are we going to eat?”
- “How are we going to pay the bills?”
- “What if I lose my job?”

- You are acting like an unbeliever.

a. The problem with these questions is that you have taken it upon yourself to determine what you must have.

- God is not in the equation.
- When you are asking these questions, you are saying that things **have** to work out in a certain way or its all wrong.
 - “I **have** to be able to live in this house or eat this food or wear these clothes.”
 - “And if I don't have these certain things, then I am ruined.”
 - “I must have them or all is lost.”

b. We are like an undisciplined child that demands a certain toy that his friend has...

- Never mind what his parents think...
 - He must have that toy or his life is spoiled...
 - We set the standard for what we think we must have and we demand that it be so...

c. Remember King Ahaz?

- He **had** to have Naboth's vineyard.
- Life could not go on unless he had that vineyard.
 - He was setting the terms instead of trusting in God to apportion to each one according to His will.

TRANS> When you ask these questions (what shall I eat? and drink? and wear?) instead of asking what God wants,

- you are acting like an unbeliever.

2. Jesus says: “These are the things the Gentiles seek.”

- a. By Gentiles, He means people that are outside of God's covenant.
 - People who don't have God as their God,
 - who don't have Jesus as their Saviour,
 - Or the Holy Spirit to sanctify them.

- b. They are the people who have no certain knowledge about God because they have not received His word...
 - They are strangers to His promises and commandments...
 - Paul describes them in Ephesians as being without God, without hope in this world.
 - No wonder they are worried about these things!

- 3. What a terrible condition!
 - a. There you are (if you are without God), in a world that is headed you know not where...
 - 1) Either it is running according to some predetermined fate...
 - Or else it is all just random—spinning out of control by chance...
 - Either way there is no basis for trust.
 - 2) There is no One you can rely on to do what is best.
 - It is only a cold impersonal world and you have to grit and bear it.

 - b. For all you know, the world may be blown to smithereens tomorrow...
 - Perhaps there is a conspiracy, or some alien force...
 - Anything can happen.
 - There is no certainly,
 - no sure hope about anything.

 - c. And so (if you think like this) all you have is whatever you can get today.
 - 1) Your only concern is to make the best of what you have now.
 - And you do that by finding ways to cope...
 - by avoiding trouble and trying to protect yourself...
 - by pursuing after the good things around you—
 - whether you do that in a moral way or an immoral way—
 - you do whatever seems best to you.
 - 2) And as far as any future life...

- It is all just shadows...
- Nothing is certain, nothing is secure,
 - all you can do is hope for the best...
 - and in the meantime try to make yourself as comfortable and secure as you can.

3) But as soon as something starts to threaten what you have...

- You become filled with concern!
 - What will I eat? What will I drink? What will I wear?
 - That is the world of the Gentile!

TRANS> Christian, as soon as you start to worry and ask those same questions, you are acting like a Gentile.

- You are acting like an unbeliever instead of a child of God.
- You have forgotten that you have a Father in heaven!

B. It makes all the difference to know God as your Father!

1. He is a Father who has revealed His love and purpose for you.

a. If you know Him as Father,

1) You know Him because He has called you to be reconciled to Himself through Jesus Christ His Son.

- He has revealed to you that He sent His Son into the world to pay the penalty of your sin so that you might be forgiven through faith in Him.

2) And through Jesus, He has baptised you with the Holy Spirit so that you might no longer live in this world without God,

- but that you might begin to live with God as your Father—
 - as a child who is taught by Him and given eternal life by Him.

3) He has said to you,

- Jer 29:11: For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.
- Surely, He who gave His only Son to save you has wonderful, gracious plans for you.
 - It is not a cold impersonal world, but a world that is run by your Father in Heaven.
 - Your destiny is safe in His hands, not in the hands a blind chance or impersonal fate.

- b. But understand what I am saying here!
 - 1) Not everyone has this hope!
 - Not every one is God's child!
 - 2) You only have this hope if you have trusted in Jesus Christ for eternal life.
 - If you are not trusting Him,
 - you are one of the Gentiles who does not have God as your Father.
 - He is only Father to those that have believed on His Son.
- 2. But of course Jesus is addressing you who **do** know Him...
 - The point is that if you **do** know Him as Father...
 - Why are you acting like a Gentile about food and clothing?
 - Why are you setting the limits on what you must have instead of putting all that into the hands of your Father?
 - Why are you **not** trusting Him like Job did when he lost everything...
 - You remember what Job said:
 - "The Lord gives and the Lord takes away. Blessed be the name of the Lord."
 - He said that instead of saying:
 - "What shall I do?"
- 3. Realise, dear child of God, what kind of Father He is!
 - a. Realise that He is a Father who sees everything!
 - Jesus says,
 - v. 32: "Your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things."
 - He made you, and He knows that you can't live without food and clothing.
 - He is not limited in His knowledge so that He has forgotten your situation.
 - He knows exactly what you are suffering,
 - He knows what you have and what you don't have,
 - He knows what you need and what you don't need.
 - Do you remember what the Bible says about God's attitude toward His people when they were suffering oppression in Egypt?
 - The Bible says that God heard His people's groanings...

- These are wonderful words!
 - He knew all about what His people were going through!
- b. But not only does He know what you are going through...
 - He also **cares** about you.
 - He not only heard His people's groanings in Egypt,
 - He also had compassion on them in their groanings...
 - If He did not spare His only Son for you,
 - surely you cannot question His great love and care for you?
 - Surely you cannot think that He is withholding something from you in a selfish way, can you?
 - Surely you can cast all your care upon Him because He cares for you!
 - Not only can you trust Him,
 - but you can **comfortably** trust Him because He cares for you as a perfect Father for his children!

TRANS> But there is more!

- c. Not only does He care for you; He also has unlimited resources to draw upon in exercising that care...
 - He is a loving Father with infinite power who can call into being whatever He wants.
 - Jesus calls Him your **heavenly** Father to remind you of His power.
 - When He heard His people's groanings under Egyptian bondage,
 - He came down from Heaven with power to deliver them!
 - He broke the power of the mightiest nation on earth and brought His people forth.
 - Can He not put bread on your table?
 - O you of little faith!
 - Did you not learn from the manna in the wilderness?
 - Did you not learn from the feeding of the 5000?
 - He is the One who sent bread down from Heaven (even His Son) to meet our greatest need!
 - He heard our groaning in sin and remembered His covenant—
- d. So don't act like a pagan if you are a child of God!

- You are under the Father's care!
- Your Father is wise and you must trust Him to give you what is best.
 - It is not for you to dictate as to what you must have or to despair...
 - That is for Him to decide.
 - It is for you to trust.

TRANS> Surely you can see how inconsistent it is to say that you have trusted Him for your eternal destiny if you cannot trust Him for today's provision.

- You are not a pagan in an impersonal uncertain world.
 - You know the Father, and Jesus Christ whom He has sent.
 - You have every reason to quietly, trustingly, wait on Him.
 - "Surely in silence my soul waits on God. My expectation comes from Him."
- When worry comes, stop acting like a pagan. You have a Father in Heaven.
 - That is the fourth thing Jesus teaches you to do when worry comes...
 - Now lets examine the fifth:

II. When worry comes, return to the service of God.

- Jesus says, "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness..."
- A. Whenever you start to worry about what you are going to eat and drink,
- it is a sure sign that you have lost your focus.
1. You are trying to force something...
- As we saw a moment ago, you have decided that there is something you have to have...
 - some certain standard of living...
 - some certain provision...
 - and if not, then everything is wrong!
 - You are pursuing this certain standard you have set and that is where your focus is...
 - What I will eat? or what I will drink? or what I will wear?
 - I've got to have this thing.
 - You are like Rachael when she said to Jacob...
 - "Give me children or I die."

2. When that happens, it is clear that you are not seeking God's kingdom first.
 - a. You have lost your focus.
 - You are serving mammon.
 - You need to turn back to serving your God.
 - That is why Jesus says, "But seek first the kingdom of God."
 - When worry is there, you are not seeking His kingdom first.
 - b. You know how easy it is to put something else in that first place...
 - 1) I remember when I did this while I was in seminary.
 - I had moved my family in order that I might study for the ministry.
 - I found employment that I could do around my studies—
 - I was only able to work about 30 hours a week—
 - It was a challenge to meet all the demands that were on me as I had a wife and two—then three—then four children to support.
 - 2) I think it was between the third and fourth year that I was there,
 - I built some very custom cabinets for a family.
 - All the drawers were constructed with dovetails and everything was of solid wood (no plywood at all).
 - As I was installing them, it occurred to me that I had possibly made a mistake in not allowing enough room for their refrigerator.
 - If that had been so, a whole wall of cabinets including a very large pantry cabinet would have to be redone.
 - It was time for the fall semester to begin and there was no way I would have had time to redo these cabinets plus do my seminary work plus do something else to provide for my family.
 - What's more, some of the courses I was required to take would not be offered again for two years—
 - That would mean instead of finishing in four years, it would take six!
 - I started saying "What will I do?"
 - 3) Now I want you to understand that at that very moment I was not seeking first the kingdom of God.
 - I thought I was—
 - but in fact I was seeking first to finish my seminary studies in a certain amount of time.

- My worry was there because I thought I had to finish these courses in four years or everything was all wrong in the world...
 - I was like a little baby that gets so terribly upset because he can't reach a toy—
 - It is as if the whole world is falling apart because he is seeking first to get that toy and he can't!
- After several days of fretting, I finally came to face my problem!
 - Why was I going to study for the ministry in the first place?
 - It was to honour God.
 - If He wanted me to honour Him by making these cabinets right, what was that to me?
 - If I am His servant,
 - Why am I trying to dictate when I must finish seminary or even that I must finish?
 - Once I put the matter in His hands, the worry vanished.
 - I received Jesus words:
 - “Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.”
 - And His truth set me free.

TRANS> So you see that when worry comes it shows that you have got your priorities out of line...

- That is why Jesus says, “But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness...

B. But just what does it mean to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness?

1. Well first let us consider what it is meant by “God’s kingdom and righteousness.”
 - a. In studying the gospel of Matthew, we have found that Matthew is very interested in the Kingdom of God.
 - From the very beginning of his gospel, Matthew presents Jesus as the king that God promised that would come to save His people from their sin.
 - The Kingdom of God is the kingdom that Jesus came to establish in this fallen world.
 - It is a kingdom of righteousness in a world that was ruined by sin.
 - Jesus came into all this sin and darkness with righteousness.
 - b. A kingdom of righteousness is a kingdom where what is right is done.

- Everything in this world went wrong when the human race rebelled against God.
 - Not when I supposed that I would not be able to finish my studies when I had planned...
 - Not when Ahaz couldn't get Naboth's vineyard...
 - Not when the baby couldn't get his toy...
 - Things went wrong when Adam ate the forbidden fruit as the representative of us all.
- Before that, man lived for the glory of God alone.
 - He praised God and gave thanks to God and perfectly obeyed God.
 - He loved God with all his heart, soul, mind and strength and loved his neighbour as himself.
 - Everything was right and nothing was wrong.
 - But because of the fall, everything is wrong now...
 - Man has lost his way and is under the wrath and curse of God.
- c. But Jesus, the Son of God, came to establish in this world a people for God, a kingdom of righteousness.
 - He came to set things right.
 - 1) First of all, He introduced righteousness again by His own perfectly righteous life and by His righteous teaching.
 - There was nothing wrong with Him at all.
 - As man, He was everything that man ought to be.
 - 2) Secondly, Jesus came to gather a people to Himself in order that He might make them righteous also...
 - And in order to do that, He had to pay for their sins by His death on the cross.
 - He had to meet all the demands of God's law not only for Himself as an individual,
 - but for all of His people that He came to make righteous.
 - And that meant that He Himself had to bear the curse for us because not one of us was capable of meeting those demands because of our weakness.
 - He had to do that to make us right.

- And further, He gives us the Holy Spirit and begins to teach us so that we might be transformed by His grace and power.
 - As subjects of His kingdom, He transforms us and restores us to what is right.
2. Everyone who belongs to this kingdom has come to Jesus for righteousness.
- a. We are the people whose eyes God has opened to see this kingdom and whose heart He has changed to desire this kingdom...
 - And so we come to Jesus, the One who saves from sin, the One who establishes this righteous kingdom and we say,
 - “Lord, make me righteous!”
 - “Lord, establish your kingdom in this world and make me a part of it!”
 - “Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.”
 - b. To seek **first** this kingdom is to seek to be right with God in every way and to do whatever you can to help others to be right with God.
 - It is all about the restoration of human beings to what God created us to be!
 - It is a kingdom of righteousness in the midst of a sinful world—
 - Like an oasis in a barren desert.
3. When Jesus is saying “Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness,”
- a. He is calling you to make this kingdom your ultimate priority in life—your whole reason for living.
 - That means that everything else has to get out of the way!
 - Everything else is subservient to the progress of this kingdom.
 - The only thing that is needful is this kingdom of righteousness!
 - We could say...
 - Your goal is to be righteous instead of to be successful.
 - Your goal is to be righteous instead of to be honoured.
 - Your goal is to be righteous instead of to have a husband or to have a certain job or to be popular or whatever!
 - b. The word “seek” here is a strong word—it denotes earnestness.
 - 1) We looked at this concept in Psalm 63 where you are taught to say,
 - “My soul follows close behind you”
 - Or, “My soul follows hard after you.”

- 2) Seeking God's kingdom is not a passive thing at all!
- The Bible speaks of it as striving and contending and pressing onward and waging war.
 - You don't seek His kingdom by putting it in neutral and letting things just happen!
 - You are called to be like Jacob who wrestled with the Lord and said,
 - "I will not let you go unless you bless me!"
 - When Jesus tells you to seek first the kingdom of God, it means you are to be like Paul when he said of Christ:
 - "Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. To this *end* I also labor, striving according to His working which works in me mightily. (Colossians 1:28-29)
 - Men, is that your attitude concerning those God has placed under your care... even for your own wife and children?
 - Do you labour and strive to see Christ formed in them?
 - Do you all know what it is to labour in prayer?
 - Do you labour to understand and apply God's word?
- 3) Look at the man who is worried about losing his estate...
- What great pains he will take to try to save it!
 - He will give up many things to save it.
 - Jesus is calling you to take such pains for God's kingdom and His righteousness.
- a) Sometimes this is a very direct choice...
- For example,
 - I learned about a layer (we will call him Bob) last week who gave up a very lucrative job for a particular firm because he was continually asked to do things that bothered his conscience.
 - The man he was working with in this firm was also a professing Christian, but he was able to justify all these things.
 - Bob had to give up about half his income because of his conscience.
 - Bob was seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness!

b) Seeking the kingdom first also has to do with the little everyday things...

- For example, if you are seeking first the kingdom of God, you will make the means of grace a priority.
 - You will sooner pray than eat if the choice has to be made!
 - You will sooner gather your children together to instruct them from God's word than play golf or help them with their homework or take them to the their piano lesson.
 - Seeking God will be something that you are really earnest about and something you do with all diligence—
 - not lackadaisically and half-heartedly.
- Your heart is displayed by the little choices you make each day.
 - What is consistent and what is not consistent in your life?
 - The consistent thing is what you are seeking first.
 - Many people will stay at home from church so they will be ready for work on Monday (if they are tired and have a bit of a cold)...
 - But most would not think of missing work or even the ball game on Saturday in order that they might be at their best for worship on Sunday.

c) When you want the kingdom of God, you will press after it with all your strength...

- You will seek it first...
 - You will not be so concerned about eating and drinking and clothing.
 - You understand,
 - This does not mean you don't go to work on Monday because "you are trusting God to take of you..."
 - It means you go to work because He has called you to work, and you seek to do it all for His glory,
 - not simply because you are worried about paying the bills...
 - but because you want to please Him.

C. God's promise to you is that when you seek His kingdom first,

- He will supply you with all you need in this world.

1. Think of your life as a truck that is being driven along life's road.
 - a. If you are driving for Him, He will make sure there is gas in your tank.
 - He will provide you with food and clothing you need in His service.
 - b. Obviously, if you are not driving for Him.
 - You have no reason to expect him to provide for you.
 - You don't put gas in a truck that is being driven for someone else!
 - c. The principle here is that whatever master you serve is responsible to take care of you.
 - If you are serving this present world, then this world is responsible to provide for you whatever it can...
 - Don't go looking for a pay check from Swiss Chalet if you are working at Burger King.
 - If you are serving the world, you have no promise that God will provide for you—look to your own master for that!
 - But if you **are** serving God,
 - then He **will** provide you with whatever you need.
2. It is a wonderful thing to be God's servant.
 - a. A servant doesn't have to worry about where to get his food and clothing because his master takes care of that.
 - b. There were people in ancient Israel that volunteered to become slaves...
 - It meant there would always be work for them to do, always food on their tables, always clothing and shelter.
 - Their master would supply them with these things, and if he was a kind master—someone like Boaz—it would be a great situation.
 - You remember how Boaz came out into the field and blessed his servants.
 - How he gave them rest and refreshment and provided well for them.
 - What a blessing it was for them to be under his care.
 - c. Jesus Christ our Boaz...
 - He always gives His servants everything they need to serve Him.
 - It is His responsibility to do so, and He promises that He will...

- v. 33: “Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things (food and clothing) will be added to you.”

TRANS> So now we have seen five things to do when worry comes:

- 1) Remember that your life is about much more than food and clothing...
- 2) Consider how God cares for all His creatures...
- 3) Remember that you are only a creature.
- 4) Stop acting like a pagan—you have a Father in heaven.
- 5) Return to the service of God—He will take care of you

Conclusion:

In closing, I want you to think about how the two things we looked at today tie together.

- Jesus ties them together under His second call in which He says: “Do not worry”

And you see that after showing us that we have a Father in Heaven that knows all about our needs,

- He then urges us to seek first His Kingdom and righteousness!

What kind of child is it that has such a gracious Father that would not be absolutely delighted to serve in His Father’s house?

- Children are often bummed out with their earthly fathers for being detached and selfish.
 - Such children resent their fathers and are bitter toward them...
 - Such fathers tell lies to their children about God because they represent God to their children!
- But you see here that Jesus is telling you that God is not like that!
 - He is a Father who knows just what you need and who promises to provide just what you need.
 - That is a Father to seek and to serve with all your heart!
 - Surely there is nothing better for us than to serve Him!

Let us then join our hearts together to seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness in prayer.

Please stand for prayer.

Most merciful Father,

- We are so thankful that we can call you our Father!
 - You who hold the beginning and the end of the world in your hands...
 - You who have revealed your love and purpose to Your children...
 - You who are mindful of all of our needs and who have gone to such great lengths to provide for them...
 - such lengths that you did not spare you only Son,
 - but subjected Him to grievous torments for us...
 - That we might be restored to you as servants and made sons through Him.
- We are not worthy to be called your sons...
 - We confess that we have not lived as your sons,
 - but have too often sought the will of the Gentiles.
 - Instead of saying,
 - “How can we serve God?”
 - We have said,
 - “What shall we eat and what shall drink, and what shall we wear?”
 - We pray that you would have mercy on us and cleanse us from all our sins.
 - We pray that you remember the blood of the covenant that was shed for us by your Son to atone for our sin.
 - Wash us and make us clean so that we might stand before you as your Sons!
 - Work in us and mould into the likeness of Jesus.
 - Make us as sons to look more and more like you, Our Father.
- Please Lord,
 - Take our eyes off of all the things that we too dearly love in this world.
 - Help us to rejoice in these things not for their own sake,
 - but as gifts from your gracious hand...
 - And teach us to use them in the pursuit of your kingdom and righteousness.

And now we do pray that your kingdom would come...

- We lament that there is so much unrighteousness in the church today...
- We lament that there are so many false teachers and so much false practice.
- We pray that you would establish pure worship from a people that seeks you with their whole heart.

- Cause your word to go forth with power so that the inhabitants of the world might know that you have spoken and be taught of God...
- Have you not promised that you would cause your word to increase?
 - Make it so and we will give you the praise.

We pray for our brothers and sisters around the world who are suffering persecution...

- We also pray for those who are suffering poverty and physical affliction...
- We pray that you would comfort them and give them the grace they need to follow hard after you in all their trials.
 - And help us to show mercy to them that you might be glorified.

We pray for those in authority over us in the civil realm...

- We know that you have called them your ministers of justice...
- We thank you for your wisdom in choosing them to work out your plan in our lives and to sanctify us.
- We pray that you would give them health and wisdom as they govern, and help them have tender consciences before you.
 - Cause them to tremble at your word, O Lord...
 - We know that you will do this because you have promised that in time every knee will bow and every tongue will confess.
 - Help us to always remember this lest we be intimidated.

We ask you to bless the many children that are among us.

- We pray that you would give the parents of this congregation wisdom to serve you faithfully in caring for these little ones that belong to you.
- Help us to set a consistent example for them of kingdom seeking,
 - and we pray that they would go far beyond us in doing the same.

Oh Father, how we thank you that you receive us in prayer as your children...

- How we thank you that Jesus has secured an eternal inheritance for us...
- Continue to bless us now for His sake as we continue in worship,
 - Amen.