**Good Shepherd Lutheran Church**

**Watertown, WI**

**“Your Father Knows”**

Pastor Aaron Reseburg

August 10th, 2025

*Luke 12:22-34*

“Do not be anxious” is the command that Jesus gives in our text for today. If you have someone in your life who struggles with anxiety and you would like to help them, I wouldn’t recommend telling them that. I tell my children, “Don’t give your food to the dog,” because that is what they would like to do. We have laws that stop people from doing things that they want to do. No one wants to be anxious, so telling them to stop doesn’t seem very helpful.

But there are times when it makes sense, right? For example, when you are helping someone do something scary when you know there is nothing to be afraid of. But then, typically, something follows “don’t be afraid.” Don’t be nervous, your harness will catch you. Don’t be nervous, there is no way anything can go wrong. Don’t be nervous, I am right here to catch you.

The disciples certainly had plenty to be nervous about. They were travelers wandering around Israel behind Jesus. They lived off of the generosity of others. They left behind their old lives and lived lives of poverty with Jesus. We find them eating the gleanings of the harvest, the leftovers that fell to the ground and were left to the poor.

They were also constantly in danger. Time and time again the disciples were run out of town because of Jesus. Jesus will say something, and the Pharisees and townspeople will chase them out of town. Jesus had already made quite a list of enemies, but it seems like their list was growing. Jesus also kept hinting to them, or rather telling them plainly, that His time was coming and soon He would have to leave them.

The disciples had plenty to be anxious about.

I don’t know about you, but it seems like my life is full of things to be anxious about. My children, my house, work, family, friends, savings, retirement, the general state of our country, and more. It seems like there is a lot to be anxious about. It sure would be helpful if Jesus could give us a little bit more than just telling us not to be anxious! Maybe some sort of a program we could take like 12 steps to being less anxious, or maybe just some phrase to repeat to ourselves to help us when we feel anxious.

But He doesn’t. In fact, the words that He says don’t do a lot for us today, do they? Life is more than food, the body more than clothing? Those are certainly pious words and nice in theory, but how do you tell a starving person life is more than food? How do you tell a homeless person whose backpack has all their possessions in it that the body is more than clothing? Jesus’ advice just doesn’t seem realistic, helpful, or practical.

Now we are at the heart of it. Jesus is not a moral teacher. He is not trying to help you live a better life, and His purpose isn’t to make you feel better about your life. Jesus’ purpose is to show you how bad your life is. Jesus wants you to understand how much you need Him.

In an anxious world, it’s hard for us to accept the truth about anxiety. Yet, Jesus makes it clear in our reading for today that when we are being anxious, we are doubting God; it’s sin. We are asking ourselves the question Satan asked Adam and Eve in the Garden, “Did God really say?” Did God really say that He was your Father? Did He really say that He would care for you?

So often, we get so anxious about things that are out of our control when God makes it clear that those are the things we should be least anxious about. If something is out of your control, then it is fully in God’s control. When you look at your life honestly and seriously, you will find out pretty quickly that most things in this life are out of your control. When you think about it even more, you will come to the realization that it is a good thing.

We put so much pressure and weight on ourselves, thinking that we have to come up with all the answers and solutions to our problems. We spend so much time and energy being anxious about things that we have no control over. You can’t make your life and longer just by being anxious, but you have a God who has control over all things and who has not only made your life longer but has made your life never-ending.

Don’t be anxious, God is in control. God is in control of your life when it is easy and when it is difficult. He is in control of your life when the future is bright and when it is bleak. I know that’s not practical advice. God has always been in control, and many bad things have happened to many good people, even when His Son died on a cross.

It’s easy to not be anxious when you are sure that everything will be fine; that is not why Christians are not anxious. We are not anxious because even if things are not fine, we know that God works all things for the good of those who love Him. We know that even if we become homeless, even if we are hungry, even if we die, God’s care for us will never end.

Through Jesus’ death on the cross, He has overcome death and has given us the gift of eternal life. Worrying cannot add any time to your life, but putting your trust in God will make you live forever. That’s the opposite of anxiety; it is trust in your heavenly Father. It’s why the world around us will struggle with anxiety forever.

I’m not saying it’s easy to trust, I know it’s not, but it is what we have been called to do. To trust our heavenly Father who loves us and cares for us, who values us above all the plants and the animals, who loves us more than he loves the angels. Put your faith in your heavenly Father who knows all that you need and loves to give it to you. Who has given you life on this earth and will give you new life on the earth to come.

In the name of Jesus, Amen.