

“The Care of God”

In the Name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen. Our text is from the Gospel lesson just read, with focus on the words, *Are you not of more value than they?*

When Elijah went to see the widow of Zarephath, things looked bleak. Very bleak. Elijah asked her for a sip of water and a mouthful of bread, and instead he got a confession of despair. She said:

“As the LORD your God lives, I have nothing baked, only a handful of flour in a jar and a little oil in a jug. And now I am gathering a couple of sticks that I may go in and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it and die.” (1 Kings 17:12 ESV)

Don't bother me, she is saying., I am preparing my last meal for my son and I. She could not look up and see the God of mercy gazing down upon her in love. She could only look down. She could only see the problems right in front of her, and so did not know what was coming.

Have you ever been there? Has there been a time in your life when it seemed as though God had abandoned you, you were left to yourself, and you might as well lie down and die? It is all together too easy to go there. The more we look down at the world, the more we forget to lift up our eyes and behold God at work, taking care of us day in and day out.

We live in a time of great anxiety. In the summertime we work hard to forget responsibilities and to just live in the moment. But when the fall comes, and it is around the corner, dear friends, when the fall comes, we are reminded again of everything that must be done. Work. Family. Children. Our

health. Jobs. It seems as though everything comes crashing down in September. Like that widow in our text, when you look down at all of this stuff that is coming around the corner, it is easy to despair. It is easy to believe that they are insurmountable, impossible to overcome and just never ending.

So how does God answer your fears? Many of your fears, if we're honest, are quite real. Maybe you don't know how to make ends meet. Maybe your health is poor, and the prospects don't look good. Maybe your marriage is a lot shakier than you wish it was. *So how does God answer your fears?*

First of all, we need to understand and recognize that God does answer your fears. He doesn't belittle them or treat them as insignificant or meaningless. God knows your trials. He knows your fears. He sees your sorrows and your pains. He knows what aches inside you. Perhaps this is obvious to you, but perhaps not. God knows your troubles. God knows your troubles, and He answers them.

Consider how God has answered the fears of His people in times past. When Joseph's brothers feared for their lives, He sent Joseph to them to comfort them and provide for them. When the children of Israel feared that the Egyptians would crush them alongside the Red Sea, God sent Moses to them to deliver them from their fear. When Joshua looked over the land of Canaan and all of the peoples who stood between him and God's promises, God said to him, **"Do not fear them, for I have given them into your hands. Not a man of them shall stand before you."** ([Joshua 10:8 ESV](#)) When Ruth feared for her life at the hand of the Israelites, God sent Boaz to her to be her redeemer, and to protect her from all harm. We can confess and rejoice with the Psalmist who prays, **"The LORD is on my side; I will not fear. What can man do to me?"** ([Psalms 118:6 ESV](#))

But all of this is but a shadow compared to what our Lord does for you. Jesus points us to the birds of the air and the flowers of the field. God takes care of them in due season,

provides for them, and gives them life. Then Jesus asks this wonderful question: Are you not of more value than they?

The answer is yes! Yes you are. God created you in His image. He sent His only begotten Son to redeem you from sin, death and the power of the devil. God has set eternity in your heart, so that you may live and commune with Him forever. If God is going to do all of these wondrous things for you, don't you think God will take care of you in this life as well?

Of course He will. After all, He clothes you with Himself in Holy Baptism, feeds you with Himself in His Holy Sacrament, and draws you to Himself here in the Divine Service. He is not satisfied to simply give you food and drink for the body, although He does that as well. He gives you food and drink that will last forever.

Don't be anxious about your life, our text says. Jesus says this to you this day, not because your trials and problems don't matter. He says this to you because He has taken care of them. Sin is paid for, death is but the door to eternal life, and the devil is cast into hell forever. You need not worry about the troubles of tomorrow. God has been there. He's seen the end of the show, and it is only good for you, His beloved children.

St. Peter reminds us to **"...cast all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you."** (1 Peter 5:7 ESV) Lift up your eyes and see the salvation of our Lord. It is now. It is for you. And it lasts forever. Don't be afraid. Amen.