

Rev. Paul A. Hottinger

Let Go of Need to Control Eleventh Week in Ordinary Time Saturday, June 23, 2018
8:15 AM 2 Chr 24:17-25; **Mt 6:24-34** BVM (We should free ourselves of undue anxieties

“No one can serve two masters.”

Implicit in this entire gospel reading is an **internal conflict**. It has to do with: **Whom shall we trust, or maybe you could say: What shall we trust?**

Now the world is full of all kinds of advertisements calling us to trust in this or that that will make us happy, fulfilled. The needs of life are real; we can't wish them away. Jesus says that: **“Your Father knows you need all these things,”** there's no doubt about it. But the point is: **What really comes first?** Jesus' point here is: **what really comes first is the kingdom of God and God's righteousness.**

Now that seeking the righteousness of God involves, includes, honest work—honest work, **honest attempts to support oneself and one's family and to contribute to the common good.** That's involved in seeking the righteousness of God. So it's not encouraging some sort of passivity or some kind of lackadaisical attitude toward life, but it is saying that once you seek the righteousness of God, that **once you realize the most important reality is God's presence among us and his will for us, and once we cooperate with that, we should free ourselves of undue anxieties,** which frankly keep popping up: anxieties about life because we can't control life. That's not part of the deal. **We don't get to control life.** Faith doesn't give us a lever to control. Faith is about surrendering. Yes, we do our part. **We labor as long as the light lasts, but we have to surrender control to God. And that itself is healing,** to give up our need to control and our need to know the future and to determine every little aspect of our physical existence. **To let go of that is part of the healing that comes from faith.**

Now in a way, this same conflict existed in the Old Testament too. The Lord in the Old Testament is speaking the same thing Jesus spoke. The gods, the other gods, were saying something different. **The other gods in the Old Testament are more or less equivalent to the world in the New Testament. And which we follow is a choice. “You cannot serve God and mammon.” You cannot serve God and the world.**