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Matt 6:31-33  
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So, what's on your mind this morning? What's got your attention? What kept you up last night? What is that concern that you brought in the door with you when you arrived this morning?

In Jesus' day, the answer would be simple. What will we eat? What will we drink? What will we wear? Food. Water. Clothing. These were the concerns of the day.

Not so much anymore. Certainly, we have inequities in society and we have not, by far, solved the issues of basic human needs for all. But we live in a society where there is a fast food restaurant or grocery store on just about every corner, where the grocery store across the streets has 72 different products for bottled water, and when I say "I haven't got a thing to wear" it doesn't mean I need to go shopping. It means I need to do some laundry. You see society, our society, Silicon Valley society, sees questions of what will we eat, what will we drink, what will we wear not as questions of availability but as questions of choice. What will we eat? What will we drink, what will we wear? We have too many choices.

Not that our society doesn't have our own issues and concerns to replace those. Chances are that your concerns this morning aren't food, water and clothing. But chances are that you have other concerns to replace them.

And as well look at Jesus' advice to the people of his day, let's see how we can apply those same principles to the concerns of our time.

[Read Text and pray.] Mt 6:31-33

So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' <sup>32</sup> For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. <sup>33</sup> But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

Let's play Let's Pretend. Let's say you're at the grocery store to buy some cereal. You walk down the cereal aisle and you notice that some of the cereal that you like is on sale and some is not. Which cereal do you buy? The cereal that's on sale. Why? Because money is important to you.

You go to the checkout line with your cereal and you see that three checkout lines are open but they all have long lines. But you also notice that there is no waiting at the self-checkout line. Which line do you get in? The self-checkout line. Why? Because time is important to you.

You buy the cereal and exit the store and you run into an old friend whom you haven't seen in years. You used to be great friends in grade school but you lost touch. And you spend some time getting reacquainted, reminiscing, sharing some old stories. You trade contact info and you promise to get together again soon. Why? Because memories and relationships are important to you.

Money. Time. Memories. Relationships.

In Jesus' day, they were concerned about food, water and clothing. But we live in a different time. We live in a different society. We have different worries and concerns.

But one thing that has not changed as our society changes is the way we approach our concerns. We create jobs to address our concerns.

Look at the jobs in Jesus' day. Farmer, shepherds, fishermen helped provide food. Many stories happened around a well, and vineyards produced wine to drink. And tanners and garment-makers provided for clothing. In fact, Jesus was a carpenter and Paul was a tentmaker, both provide for shelter which is protect from the elements like clothing does.

Well, if you think about it, we do the same thing in our society. We create jobs to help us meet our greatest concerns. Money – We have a whole financial industry, complete with banks, investment companies, stock brokers, and insurance agents to help us with our money concerns.

Time. Sure, we can look to all the time saving devices and apps on our phones and delivery services that we have now to save us time. But don't forget that the health industry and pharmaceutical companies and diet companies and health clubs are around because people die. And we run out of time.

Memories and Relationships. We can point at the various social media apps that our society has created to help us build relationships and cherish the memories. But also the whole entertainment industry – from movies to destination theme parks to vacation travel to cruise lines – all these exist to help us build memories and relationships.

Society tends to push us towards jobs that help us satisfy our worries.

And when Jesus says “But seek first” it means that he has another way to go. Instead of making it our job to satisfy our worries, Jesus says, “But seek first the kingdom of God”. Occupy yourself with what you are concerned with or seek first God’s Kingdom. You might end up with the same profession, but Jesus is saying that there is a big difference if you are most concerned with satisfying your worries or if you are most concerned with God’s Kingdom.

Which would you rather have? An auto mechanic who was trying to satisfy his/her own worries or one who was seeking first the Kingdom of God. Would you rather have a boss who was primarily concerned with satisfying his/her worries or one who was primarily concerned with the Kingdom of God? Would this world be a better place if drivers were less concerned about their worries and more concerned with the Kingdom of God?

You might have the same profession and the same task at hand, but everything changes if your motivation is different.

So, here’s the deal: this approach will not work if we seek the Kingdom of God and God has nothing for us to do. Implied in the command to “seek first the Kingdom of God” is the assumption that when you do, God will give you something to do. You would be very suspicious of me if I said to you, “I’ve spent the last 30 years of my life seeking first the Kingdom of God and he’s never once asked me to do anything.”

If you are not making it your job to satisfy the worries of this world, if instead you are seeking first the Kingdom of God, then count on him to give you a job to do. It might be the same profession that you are doing now, but it might be a different job. There might be something different that God wants you to accomplish.

Let me give you an example. About once a quarter here at West Valley Pres, we have a Service Worship Sunday where we cancel our normal worship service here in the sanctuary and instead we worship God by serving in the community. At one of the first Service Worship Sundays, I went to CityTeam where we provided a worship service and BBQ lunch to the needy there. And that Sunday, I met a man whom we'll call JD. It's not his real names or his real initials. But there was a time in JD's life where his profession was prison inmate. But JD decided that he was not going to spend his time worrying about the common concerns around him. Instead, he would concern himself with seeking first the Kingdom of God. And so, he created a 15 week, 15 step system on how to reconstruct your life. How to remove the destructive habits in your life, how to replace those with health habits, reconciling relationship, the influence of the Holy Spirit ... A 15 week program.

And he would be working with the inmates one on one as confidentially as they could in the prison system. He would be off to the side working one on one and other inmates would come up to them and ask if they could get in on what was going on. And he would have to tell them that this is confidential and he can set up some time to talk later. And he counted that this happened 95 times.

JD was seeking first the Kingdom of God and the way he fulfilled his time as prison inmate, was completely different.

The great thing about this verse is that it implies that if you seek first the kingdom of God then God will have a job for you. God has a job for everyone. There are no conditions placed on this verse. JD figured that out. Even within the prison system, he found that God had a job for him.

You could be unemployed. God has something he wants you to do. You could be unemployed. God has something he wants you to do. God always has a job for you. You never fall off of God's project plan.

One of the most influential people in my life was someone I rarely ever talked to. We had a family friend named Louise who was home bound. Because of a medical condition, she was not able to leave her house very often. But she still was seeking first the Kingdom of God. And I'm told that every day for the first 29 years of my life and the last 29 years of hers, that she would pray for me every day.

Do you know how awesome that is? Every day for 29 years, Louise went before the awesome, holy, glorious throne of the Almighty, omnipotent, all-knowing creator of the universe and petitioned him on my behalf. I don't know much about Louise. I don't know anything about what was on her resume. But, I do know this: every day for 29 years, she prayed about me. Because of Louise, every day for 29 years, God heard about me. Every day for 20 years, God talked to Louise about me.

No matter what your situation in life, God has a job for you. The eye does not say to the hand, "I have no need of you" and the foot does not say to the feet, "I have no need of you". And God says to no one here, "I have no need of you". There is full employment in the Kingdom of God.

The point of this passage is that as we seek first the kingdom of God with our work, with our jobs, with our tasks, with what we are doing, then all these other things that we usually look to our jobs to fulfill – the food, water, clothing – the money, the time, the memories and relationships – the self worth, the fulfillment, and purpose in life – all these things will be given to you. What was it

that you were concerned with when you came to church this morning. Seek first the Kingdom of God and that concern will be resolved for you as well.

Sometimes, I wonder when it happened. When did it happen? When did I stop believing it was true? When did we stop believing it was true? I mean, sure, we say it's true for our kids. And we nodded approvingly when we heard the words this morning. But when did we stop believing that the same words that we believe are true for our kids are still true for you and for me today ... that God's a great maker, he made you and me, and there's something important he wants you to be, so he created you with something special in mind, he's got big plans for you ... still ... which I pray you will find.

And if we believe that it is true for kids and it is true for you and for me, then isn't it true for us? For West Valley Presbyterian Church? The way I figure it, he either built this house or he didn't. If he didn't then I've heard it said that we have labored in vain. And I don't believe that. But if God did build this house, then I've heard it said that God's a great maker, he made you and me and there's something important he wants us to be, so he created us with something special in mind, he's got big plans for us, which I pray we will find.

Dear Jesus, show us your plan, teach us your way, build us this house. In your name we pray, Amen.