



# St. Stephen's Anglican Church

11856 Mays Chapel Rd., Timonium, MD 21093

Thanksgiving Day November 24<sup>th</sup>, 2011

## **In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.**

*Jesus said, Be not anxious for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than food, and the body than raiment?*

**In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost Amen**

“Be not anxious.” Is Jesus telling us to give up responsibility for ourselves and our families, empty out our pantries and closets and wait for God miraculously to take of us? Do we really believe that God will have Emeril move in on one side of us and Ralph Lauren on the other, both eager for us to serve as quality control for

their best efforts, if we only kick back, chill out, and relax? I really don't think that's what Jesus had in mind.

Jesus is really trying to teach us that we need to realign our priorities. Our first priority is to allow God to be the center of our lives so that we can live as we were created to live. If we become overly involved with all the effort it takes to earn a living, to clothe ourselves, to feed ourselves, and so forth, we are liable to forget our primary duty is to worship and serve God.

“Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these

things will be added unto you.” Are we supposed to stand around and wait for all we need or want to be handed to us? We are not lilies of the field or fowls of the air. They perform their creaturely functions and God cares for them. We need to perform our creaturely functions also and God will take care of us. “Somewhere over the rainbow bluebirds fly; if happy little bluebirds fly over the rainbow, why then, oh why, can’t I?” Well Dorothy, for one thing, we aren’t happy little bluebirds. We are human beings made in the image of God and after his likeness. We have been given dominion over all the earth as stewards of the Lord. Today’s Gospel reminds us that the things of the world, however good, are not ends, but means: means toward an end which is spiritual and eternal – the knowledge and love of God, God’s kingdom, and God’s righteousness.

The point is not that we should escape from the toils and the satisfactions

and the trials of life the world, but that we should see all things in their contingency, in their limitations, in the perspective of the spiritual end they serve. Life is more than reaping and gathering into barns. We need to see our life and our labors in the context of God’s Providence; that Providence which is moving all things with firmness and loving kindness inexorably toward their divinely appointed end. And in that perspective, how foolish is our anxiety over our limited earthly concerns.

*Let us pray,*

O Heavenly Father, who hast filled the world with beauty; Open, we beseech thee, our eyes to behold thy gracious hand in all thy works; that rejoicing in thy whole creation, we may learn to serve thee with gladness; for the sake of him by whom all things were made, thy Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*