



Surviving An Economic Earthquake
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The Crossing Church
Las Vegas, Nevada

OPENING

This week we are beginning a new 3-week study called **AfterShock**. Anyone who has experienced an earthquake may know that the aftershocks often cause more emotional trauma and as much damage as the actual earthquake. It's the same with our current shaking experience, the Covid-19 quake, that hit us in this year. We will be talking about how to respond to our emotions as our world has been shaken apart by this virus.

QUESTION: If you have ever experienced an earthquake what damage did it do to your life and emotions?

SCRIPTURE¹

Matthew 6:25-34 Therefore, I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life? And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you – you of little faith? So do not worry, saying, “What shall we eat?” or “What shall we drink?” or “What shall we wear?” For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore, do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

OBSERVATION

Jesus tells us in Matthew's Gospel that the pagans ran after worldly things. Pagans were anyone who was not a Jew -- who didn't follow God. He is telling us that, if we worry all of the time, we are acting like those who don't believe in God -- the faithless. The people of that time had imminent needs every day – clothes, food, water, shelter. They didn't have refrigeration to preserve food from day to day; they didn't have a change of clothes and some, like Jesus, didn't have a permanent shelter. You would think they were major “worry warts,” wouldn't you? But Jesus encouraged them saying, “I've got this! Your very lives are in My hands and I will not fail you!” Do we hear Him saying this to us today?

QUESTION: When you reflect on the difficulties of life in year 33 A. D. and visualize what was worrying the people then, how does that change your perspective on worrying today?

¹ All scripture translation is NIV unless otherwise indicated.

APPLICATION

The context of our scriptures this week is money worries. Three out of four of us say that money is the #1 worry in their lives. Jesus knows that life is hard. Each day has its trouble. Being out of a job is real – not having enough money is real – trying to figure out what to do with your kids every day is real – caring for a loved one who is ill is real. Jesus knows that we need a home, a car to get to work, groceries, and more than one set of clothes. He knows we have to pay utilities, mortgages, student loans, car payments, tuition, and to set aside savings for retirement. What Jesus says about them can be a gamechanger when we are worried about tomorrow.

QUESTION: What future needs are you worrying about today?

Jesus isn't saying that it's not a big deal if we lose our jobs or don't know what to do with our kids every day. But He is offering His followers an alternative to worrying about money. We have something the birds of the air don't have: the ability to sow and reap – the ability to work hard and enjoy the benefits – the ability to actually shape our futures. He says we are much more valuable to Him than the birds are. So, the real question is "Do we trust that God can and will take care of us?" When we reach out and grab tomorrow's concerns and drag them into today, we get our emotions all worked up, don't we? Jesus assures us that He has got this. He will give us what we need today and promises to give us what we will need tomorrow, but when we merge these two things together – today and tomorrow – it ruins both of them. We need to separate them and stop acting like those who don't believe in God and start living out our faith!

QUESTION: What are you doing today that says you are a "little faither?"

A lot of Christians live like **Economic Atheists**. These are people who believe in God, have surrendered their lives to Jesus, pray regularly, read their Bibles, and go to church, but when it comes to their finances they live as if God does not exist! They trust God with their salvation and where they will be in eternity, but they don't trust Him with their money.

QUESTION: What about that last paragraph describes you? How do you feel about that?

QUESTION: Tell us about a time when you acted like an Economic Atheist.

So, 1) Seek God first. We are to run after His Kingdom and put Him before ALL ELSE in our lives. We are to chase after Him with passion, and joy and optimism, and, if we do, we will get all of that other stuff as well!

QUESTION: How passionate, joyful and optimistic are you about your faith in God? How would your life change if you concentrated on those emotions/attitudes instead of your troubles?

"But seek first his Kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you." This promise is not for everyone. It is only for those who chase after God and put Him first above everything else in their lives -- not just their spiritual lives, or their family lives, but in their financial lives as well. When we do that He promises to take care of all those other things we are tempted to chase after. **2) Declare our trust in Him.** Let's say out loud: "**My heavenly Father knows what I need.**" Which is more dependable – our worry or our heavenly Father?

3) Look for ways to participate in what God is doing today. If we start to join God in what He is doing today, rather than thinking about ourselves and our situation, we can take our eyes off of ourselves and put them on someone who needs us. This is where God does some of His best work. We are His disciples, after all, aren't we? So, who around us is struggling? Who needs our prayers? Who is dealing with the same things we are?

QUESTION: Who are you serving today even while you are struggling? Who is your ONE?

QUESTION: How does serving others help you to get beyond your own difficulties?

The Crossing Church isn't just teaching us today – our Church is offering us a free tool to help us get control of our finances. It is Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace University which is available three times a year right here on campus. We also have an on-line program called **Ramsey +** that includes the **Every Dollar Budgeting** app to help with documenting every dollar we spend. We can't get on top of this area of our lives if we don't know where our money is going. It can be very illuminating to find out! There are no strings attached. The



Church has paid for every person at The Crossing to have this tool. We can register today for January's classes and the on-line adventure!

QUESTION: What would keep you from enrolling in Ramsey+ if debt is an issue for you today?

God says if we will run after Him today, He will take care of our tomorrows. Peace is available to us if we will be obedient.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we want to lay our worries at Your feet. Help us to think outside of our concerns and to invest in Your Kingdom. We trust that You are waiting for us in our tomorrows and are ever faithful. In Jesus' name. Amen.

QUESTIONS

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QUESTION: What future needs are you worrying about today?

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QUESTION: What about that last paragraph describes you? How do you feel about that?

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