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Substance of ^{Two} ~~Three~~ Sermons preached by our Pastor
on Sunday, July 6. 1980.

Morning Lesson. Mark 8.

But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. Matthew 6. vv. 33-34.

For the people of God in tribulation this is a most interesting Scripture and one they seek entrance into, Christ being the Door. For surely in all the anxieties and tribulation and distress of this troubled world and the journey of life this is a remarkable exhortation. "Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself." This was the means of bringing me to this portion, and I seek grace to expound and dispense the sovereign favour of ~~xxxx~~ the Lord to you for your profit, peace and deliverance as you pass through tribulation. It is a remarkable word, "Take therefore no thought for the morrow." You will ^{see} what is the foundation for the whole,- the divine, sovereign, immutable, eternal, glorious, unmoveable foundation, and it will not take long for the godly and spiritual to discern the nature of the foundation. Let me refer to it, and in wonder and adoration praise, gratitude and divine worship. The foundation is the wonderful relationship with the Trinity through the Person of Christ; namely, filial relationship is named in the context; "Your heavenly Father," That is the foundation. O the bliss divine of the assurance of faith concerning the wondrous, cardinal truth, to realise He has given you double for all your sins! You have brought to Him your sin and He dispensed to you double. He has given you a status and standing infinitely superior to that enjoyed by Adam and Eve in their pristine innocency as His creatures,- a new, wondrous standing, taking erstwhile enemies, rebels, foes, full of malice and enmity and hatred, and by an act of redeeming grace making them His beloved sons and daughters so precious to Him, and giving them joy by His revealing grace. Though doubts and fears, infidelity and the devil try to rob you of joy it is impossible: you can never be robbed of the reality of it. You are His dear children and He your heavenly Father. There is no

terror there.

I will give you an indication of it. When you pray by the help of God there is no terror: there is sweet liberty, holy freedom, divine unction. O this Father! I am to say to you therefore, you who are His dear children, you have no need to fear or be dismayed, perplexed. "Take therefore no thought for the morrow." It is in Father's hands,- better hands than yours. What do we observe to the glory of God? The Lord manages all perfectly. I am not to say much, but you know how troubled and anxious dear Edgar was concerning his end and I can understand it. He had hardly any relatives to rely on, and he had said to me he wondered what he should do. I tried to impress on him that the dear Lord would see to it. It is a matter of faith: the Lord give you this faith! Did this Father manage all for him? does He for all of us? Indeed He does. "Take therefore no thought for the morrow." With great perseverance and courage he was in the House of God on earth one Thursday, and by the next he was in the House of God above. "Your Father knoweth." This sacred truth is to strengthen your faith in Him so you know Him, and it is to relieve you. You need relief. Especially now and down through the ages one of the great burdens of God's people is a feeling of stress and strain. Often it is mental: pressures build up and can do enormous damage to the vital organs of the body. It is only the mercy of God preserves us. The build-up of stress and strain increases: this word is to evaporate, dissipate it; to cheer, refresh, revive you; to give you to understand that you are never alone. Your time and all concerning you are in His hands, and you are in His blessed hands. This is a word for relieving the people of God, taking a load off your minds so you cast all your care on Him because He careth for you. You are His care and charge: the Father gave you to His Son. It is to strengthen you, provide for you, do all for you. Relief is a wonderful thing. You have such a load on your heart as though it will sink you, and the Lord takes it away, and delivers and relieves you. There is another aspect you never appreciate relief unless you know pain or distress. Most of you at various seasons have known excruciating pain, impossible to bear,- we have known this a few times. Wonderful relief is, when the pain subsides and you have ease. There is a good, right, proper ease in the mind. When you know the burden of sin and are troubled and defiled, wonderful is the

balm of Gilead, the precious blood of Christ that takes away guilt and defilement! "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you." What a relief to be a pardoned soul on the way to Glory! And when you have been in a mysterious, perplexing path and evaporated your natural powers, patience and so on, and now you are in such joy. You have been in a dilemma, and the dear Lord relieves you. This is the subject for today

It is a blessed exhortation in the first verse, and we have already ministerially laid the foundation,- the Fatherhood of Jesus in the Covenant of Grace; "your heavenly Father," According to His wisdom and goodness and method divine the Lord saw fit to populate this planet when He had changed it from chaos to cosmos and clothed it with grass and beautiful trees which are unique to this planet. It was His purpose to populate it in its beauty and fertility, so on the stage of Time He would enact and fulfil all His purposes of grace, and His Son came to it and was of a virgin born. I was thinking of His method and how we have seen in this beloved Sanctuary over the many years of our pastoral ministry, how we have united men and women to build up families. Many of you were children when I commenced and the Lord has gone on building families. What does it spell out? Interrelationship, and it is beautiful, precious, comforting, relieving. You may have dear partners in life; dear children, beloved parents, sisters, brothers. It is the divine method that you should have the comfort of one another; if not in one way, in another. It is a great comfort and relief to know you have a loving father and mother. What it means to the family! and in a certain sense they never grow up. They are always the dear children and home is open to them, so they feel perfectly free to bring their sorrows, joys, problems. It is so relieving and comforting to be under the umbrella of paternal love, and they do us great honour in this matter: in all normal cases it obtains.

This applied in the formation of the Church of God following Pentecost and the gift of pastors, ministers and a flock, and in the diaconate. Beautiful and precious relationship is. It is God's method and purpose in building families on earth and in the Church you have proved as to how lovely it is,- the joy the Lord gives you in an outstanding way. I acknowledge the love you have manifested to the unworthy pastor and his good wife. The Lord is our heavenly Father. There are those who

have lost loved ones,- a dear husband, wife, dear parents. What happens? The Lord Jesus has all the office characters in the Covenant of Grace His dear people need, so when He takes a dear husband He says to the dear widow, "Thy Maker is thine husband." You have still got a Husband. Wonderful this is. When you have lost the physical presence of both parents He is your heavenly Father, and He has proved it to you in your soul and path. So He sustains all the offices for the good, comfort, peace, joy of His dear people. A gracious widow I knew well who was many years a widow, said she felt so much more the presence and wonder of Christ as her Husband than she had done before. There are those things you anticipate and feel you could never bear: when the time comes you find the Lord Jesus in the breach and He makes it up. He is there Himself There are those who feel anxious as to the family when they are gone, especially those who have an afflicted child. There is this heavenly Father. My friends, He says, "Take therefore no thought for the morrow." Dear Mr Covell with his poor afflicted son had his wish granted when the Lord took him, so he saw him safely landed. It is all in the Lord's hands your concerns, exercises, prayers, your lives and all relating to you. "Your heavenly Father knoweth." Again and again I must deliver to you the word Relief. His word can bring sweet relief for every pain and anxiety you feel or pass through. It takes the load off your heart, brings balm to your ~~heart~~^{wounds}; you lose your distress. You get to Marah where the waters are bitter; you do not ~~know~~^{know how} to drink the water. This is much the path of a child of God. He showed Moses a tree which when cast into the waters they were made sweet. Bitter waters stand for all the trials and sorrows of the Lord's people: the sufferings of their Saviour will make them sweet. They left Marah and came to Elim: there was relief. There were 'twelve wells of water and three score and ten palm trees' and they encamped by the waters. Elim stands for gospel rest. This is how the Lord works. This is dispensed for your comfort and joy, and to relieve you of anxious thought and fear by His grace. You will not stay at Marah.

"Why those fears? behold, tis Jesus
Holds the helm and guides the ship,"

The dear Lord comes and says, "Peace, be still," and there is a great calm. Why those fears with a heavenly Father? We waste a tremendous amount of strength and energy with slavish fear. This does not infer that the

Lord's people expect to go on without fear: you have fear because you are in a body of sin and death and you are guilty. The amount of energy we waste! and it is all futile and God-dishonouring.

"Be still, my heart! these anxious cares
To thee are burdens, thorns, and snares;
They cast dishonour on thy Lord,"

There it is, it is dishonouring to the Lord as though you had not a heavenly Father. He said to His disciples, "Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?"

"They cast dishonour on thy Lord,
And contradict His gracious word."

Men of great ability in various industries and projects have been interested in the matter of wastage, and turning a waste of strength to something that is useful. It is like turning on a tap and letting out all your energy, as though you had no heavenly Father. There is a corrective shown to the people of God,- a most blessed way of living, and the Lord would never have written it down if it had been impossible. It is possible relying on grace. "Take therefore no thought for the morrow." "Leave tomorrow, My child; it is to day, and I have told you that, "As thy days so shall thy strength be."

So the word is to relieve you, and it is a corrective: you can see where you go wrong. "Your heavenly Father knoweth," You may ask a question,- "How do I know the dear One as my heavenly Father?" Do you hope you in any measure have the Holy Ghost dwelling in you? If not, you are yet in your sins, dead. Once the Holy Ghost quickens a soul into divine life He indwells that soul. "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?" The Holy Ghost indwells those He quickens, and you will know what it is to feel the activity in you of the Holy Ghost. He is the Spirit of adoption, and once you have been brought into liberty,- "Know ye that our brother Timothy is set at liberty."- you will know of the Holy Ghost as the Spirit of adoption. This is infinitely removed from a glib, religious tongue that presumes. It is a sacred, solemn, holy thing: deep in your soul you realise there is wonderful relationship. You look to His Throne without terror. It is wonderful. He takes us through life; guides, helps, supplies all we need, and He never forsakes us. It is His wish, pleasure and delight, when He has accomplished the work of

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grace in us to have us with Him in Heaven. Christ is waiting to receive us. "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am," Christ is waiting for every one of His dear people,- many are with Him,- until the Holy Ghost has completed the work of divine grace. Think of your Beloved, and His wish and desire that you should be with Him. We shall never be satisfied until we are at Home with our Beloved. We can hardly contemplate 'with what raptures He'll embrace us' when we are borne in the chariot to Heaven. What must it be to the Saviour when He welcomes the purchase of His agony to Glory? Amen.