

Do you like my polo shirt? It is a Cool-Dri polo, Dri – D R I. Misspelling words make it better you know. Anyway, I like it. It is made of the new modern fabric that uses “Cool DRI technology to wick away sweat”. It also has a 50+ UV protection rating. Since I sweat quite a bit on the golf course I like it a lot. Or in other words it is a comfortable polyester shirt. (I wonder if I can get paid by Haines for this promo?)

You may be wondering at this point, uh, what’s the point? Why is he talking about his shirt? Well, today we are dealing with my favorite gospel passage; well, it is the shorter version of it, Luke 6 has the unabridged edition of what I’ve have called “The No Sweat Theology” since I was 19 years old. It is a great passage that I believe gives us great insight on the things we worry about and puts them in a divine perspective.

Perhaps I had read a good deal of MAD magazine at the time and had embraced its Alfred E. Neuman mantra, “Who, me worry?”

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Or perhaps I had a encounter with as Aussie (Australian) who said, “No worries mate!” That phrase had become Australia’s “national motto.” It reflects the relaxed attitude, amiability, jocular toughness, good humor and casual optimism of the Australian demeanor.

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Though American and Australians have often been cast as similar folk, I think there is a major difference at this point. I don’t think we reflect the “no worries mate” attitude but instead are or have become a nation of worriers.

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There is a lot to worry about today: mass shootings, an extremely divisive political stances, global climate change that threatens our very existence. Then there is my personal biggy worry, anomie. My sociology background comes out occasionally; anomie is defined as a state of normlessness. As our society has increased in size and people live in close proximity to each other we are increasingly more isolated and lack the community norms and pressure to conform to them that existed in previous generations. You can’t get away with much in a small town; everybody knows you and what your up to. But in big cities you can get by with a lot of stuff because nobody really knows you outside of your smaller group of friends. We do things in mobs we would not think of doing in small groups. Thus we have road rage, demeaning language of others unlike ourselves and things of that nature. Anomie is a biggy, one of the things I worry about.

I do believe in multicultural, pluralistic attitudes but no at the expense of a lack of accountability in our isolated worlds.

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So, is Jesus telling us to adopt the attitude of Crocodile Dundee, and become more Australian in our attitude toward life? Australians seem to be quite casual about life but then get jobs done effectively with good humor when faced with real problems as Crocodile Dundee played by Paul Hogan, seemed to do in his movies?

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Perhaps. But I think it depends on what we worry about.

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We have a lot of secular worries: material wealth, bigger houses, bigger cars, higher social standing, keeping up with the Joneses, being in the “in crowd”, being popular. Does size really matter? I think Jesus is telling us

that these secular worries just are not that important in the whole scheme of things, and worrying about them just doesn't do anything. If I worry about being shorter than most folk it won't make me any taller. Silly.

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One of the saddest examples of real worry I've seen recently was posted on Facebook. As I recall it, it was that time of buying things to get back to school including shoes. The little girl said she didn't want shoes with those flashing lights. Asked why she said she didn't want to stand out if a shooter came to their school. Oh my!

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Then there is the news. Daily the news tells us about one bad thing happening in the community, country or world after another. I think they should be called "The Bad News Hour". Think of the popularity of shows like 20/20, dateline, 60 Minutes, Dateline and the like. Very popular and we watch several of them. But they are all mostly about bad news. It's enough to make you depressed.

Why all the bad news? Because we like it. For some weird reason we seem to be hardwired to liking to hear about bad stuff ~ we are natural gossips. I've said this before but it got worse when Roone Arledge became the chief news executive at ABC I think in 1977. He was the whiz bang creator of ABC's Wide World of Sports, and said, "I'm proud of the fact that in both sports and news, I took over divisions that were moribund or worse and turned them into the best there was." What he did was turn news into a profit making department rather than just the money losing responsibility to the public it had been in all the major news programs. Bad news sells!

I think there is a sharp contrast between the profit driven Bad News of print and multimedia markets and the good news of

Gen 1. 1-5, Matt 6. 30-34 Aug 18 2019 Cambridge

the gospels. The first looks closely at the human driven ego and the sins we commit which become perverse entertainment for the masses. The second, the good news, looks towards God's intent for God's creation and tells us God has a plan for us and that plan is good. We should trust it and work for its implementation.

In other words, we should take the world seriously and not take the World Series so seriously. Keep watch the news as we watch sports, but keep them in perspective. The really big picture and the eternal, the Godly intent is far more important than the transitory, temporal events we get so caught up in.

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Since I was 19 years old and came to grasp God's plan and work in this world, I have adopted what I have called providential understanding. The older name for that is predestination, but that carries too much baggage and is not well understood.

It is enough to say, that ultimately we are not in charge of the world and that is a good thing. God is in charge and has a plan for the world. The mechanics of that plan were revealed in the incarnation of God in Jesus the Christ. His teachings tell us how to live in harmony with God's world and how to live with each other and all creation.

*Then God said, "let there be light" and there was light. And God saw the light was good. May we walk in the light of God reflecting the beauty and design of God's creation in what we do and say without undue worry. No worries mates.*