

AUGUST 10, 2025

... speaking to you from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, amen. Fear, not little flock, for it is your father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. God has promised us the kingdom of God. He has made us heirs of that promise. He has marked us not with the mark that it sounds so familiar, but with the mark of baptism in which we are as his very own children. And because we are his children, we can walk in faith as our forefathers have walked in faith.

And so we get to the Old Testament reading from Genesis. Now, this is a few chapters before what we've been currently reading about God coming and announcing to Sarah that she would have a child a year from now. This is well before that. And Abraham is struggling a little bit. He's struggling with the promises. It's been a couple of decades since God said he would bring him to the Promised land. He would give him a child and his descendants would be as numerous as the stars above. It's been a couple of decades and still he doesn't have a kid with Sarah. So he's beginning to have some questions and doubts.

And this is what we need to understand. The book of Hebrews makes it very clear, do not be anxious about anything, right? Trust in the Lord and he will give it to you. If you are anxious, you're not trusting him to follow through on his word. Now, to trust God does not mean that you don't have questions. Abraham obviously had questions. Sarah, when she heard from God that she's going to give birth a year from now when she was 89 years old, she laughed. Understandably so. You know, 89 years old and you're going to be a first-time mom? That's a little bit of a stretch as far as the human imagination goes. Yet nothing is impossible with God.

So when we say, "Trust in God and do not be anxious," we do not mean that To trust in God means not to have the emotions that we have. We have questions, we have doubts, we have concerns. Those are normal. Abraham had them, Sarah had them, Noah had them. Everybody has these thoughts. It's what we do with these thoughts that make a difference.

As God says, as it says, "How can you be anxious? Can being anxious add an hour to your life?" Well, let's face it, if you're anxious, you can add high blood pressure, you can add sleepless nights, you can add a shortened life, but you can't extend your life by being anxious. At best you can shorten it. And God says, "If you can't even extend your life," which is a little thing... A little thing. I mean for God, it's a little thing, but for us it's pretty major. But if you can't even extend your life by being anxious, why be anxious?

Trust God. Has he not been faithful for all generations from Adam all the way through to us? He has been. In fact, that's what the book of Hebrews is all about. Also how God describes himself to Abraham. He says, "Look at the stars. Look at

AUGUST 10, 2025

the stars." Now admittedly, with all the light pollution that we have here around today, we look at the stars, we don't see very many stars. But if you go out in the middle of the wilderness or some place where there's not very much light pollution, you go up on top of a high mountain, suddenly the sky just explodes.

And then, of course, we've got the images from the telescopes that we put out into space and we see galaxies, galaxies of stars that we never knew even existed. And God says, "Look, I created all this. And if I created this, you really think I can't handle what you're going through? You really think I cannot deal with and give you what you need?" I mean, think about this. By faith we understand that God created everything out of nothing. God doesn't need the raw materials. He created the raw materials.

We understand this, that God created the world in seven days through his word. When God said, "Let there be light," light came about because God's word is that powerful to do exactly what he says. Now, there's a lot of people who are still struggling to shove evolution and Genesis together and try and explain how they all work, but there's no way that that fits. The question is not how did God do this creation in so short a time? The question is why did it take him so long?

Seven days. You think God needed seven days to create? If he creates by his word something from nothing, then all he has to do is say, "Let it be and it would exist." Why did he take so long? Why did he take seven days? So that we might have a structure for our own life, that we might work for six days and rest on the seventh, trusting him that he will provide for all that we need so that we can rest an entire day and not be worried about how we're going to make it through the week because he gives us his gifts.

Says they believed not seeing the fulfillment of the promise. See, the nation of Israel, the land mass that we look at that is Israel was not the promise of God. It was a sign of the promise, but here we see that Abraham was looking forward to a city whose foundations were designed and built by God. When Christ left and ascended to heaven, what did he tell us? "I am going to prepare a place for you." That's Abraham's hope. Not the landmass that is here in this world, but the new heavens and the new earth that Jesus is preparing for us to dwell for all eternity.

He didn't see it, but he had hope in it, as do we. And he was brought into that promise by God's word, as are we. So we look forward to this. We look forward to the opportunity to be with God for all eternity. And if that's our goal, if that's the promise, if we know that that is the land that he has promised to us, why do we need to be anxious about the things of this world? I mean, think about it. The ravens, do they work for their food? But God feeds them. Are you not more valuable to God than the birds? I hope you answer, "Yes," you are.

AUGUST 10, 2025

And then the grass of the field, the lilies that grow up for a day and then they die. If God puts so much detail to make it so glorious and beautiful for such a temporary thing, do you need to worry about your own clothing? Do you need to worry about everything that you need to take care of this body in life? No, God has given it to you. He has promised to provide for you. Focus upon the things above because that's where your home is.

Now, that's not to mean sit around and just wait for God to just bless you and not do anything. He's given you a purpose. But is a purpose that has a goal towards Christ, not just to gain money and to be at ease. You do your job. You interact with your neighbors and your friends in order that they might know the gift that God has given to them as you know the gifts that God has given to you.

It's what we do with our thoughts that make it different. We are anxious sometimes. I mean things happen in the life. You look around this world and it seems a little chaotic right now. Of course, it's always seemed a little chaotic. Every generation sees it and looks and says the same thing. "It looks chaotic. It seems like Satan is winning." But fear not, little flock. God has won the victory. He has captured you in baptism and made you his child and no one can snatch you out of his hands.

So take that anxiety and worry and take it to God and put it at his feet and say, "God, you promised to take care of me. I got no clue how it's going to work out, but you promised. So I trust your word as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Noah, Adam, Seth, Enoch, and the list goes on and on and on, trusted you. I trust you to take care of me." That is what we are called to do.

We've got a little whiteboard and Gwen wrote on that whiteboard some time ago, and I don't even know where it came from. It says, "Every miracle started out as a problem." If you think it, the only reason a miracle happens is because there was a problem that needed to be solved. And every good thing that happens to you is quite frankly a miracle. The question is not why do bad things happen to good people? The question is, why do any good things happen to any of us?

We have no right to expect anything good because we have fallen short of the glory of God and the wages of our sin is death. So we have no right to expect any good thing. And yet God has promised in his word that he will provide for you, that he will give you all good things. In fact, as we get to the end, it says that, "Blessed of the servants whom the master finds awake when he comes. Truly, I say to you, 'The master, he will dress himself for service and have them, the servants, recline at table and he will come and serve them.'"

You realize what Jesus is saying? He's saying, "God is going to come and he's going to serve us." If that sounds familiar, it should remind you of two distinct

AUGUST 10, 2025

things. The first one is Jesus on the Lord's Supper, before he gives them the bread and wine and the body and blood for the forgiveness of sins, he dresses as a servant and literally serves them by washing their feet. But that's only a sign of the service that he gives to us because that's what he really gives to us and how he really serves us is by dying on the cross and paying for our penalty so that he might serve us with salvation, with eternal life, with forgiveness of sins.

This is why we call what we gather together on Sunday morning, the divine service, because the divine, God himself, comes and serves us in our baptism where he claims us as his own, in the confession and absolution where we hear his words of grace, in the body and blood in with and under the bread and wine for the forgiveness of sins and life everlasting for the reading of the word that we might be encouraged by that word, which creates all things. And by the proclamation of that word, which helps us to put our trust in him and to understand how much he loves us in spite of our anxiety, in spite of our sin, in spite of our rebellion, because anxiety is just that rebellion.

If we take our anxiety and we hold it upon ourselves. We basically are saying, "God, I know you created the world with your word. I know you saved Noah. I know you worked through Abraham and Moses, but God, I really don't think you can handle this problem that I'm dealing with today." I mean, I don't know. We probably don't think that's what we're saying, but that is in essence what we are saying.

"God, I don't trust you to handle my problems, so I'm going to take care of them myself by worrying and fretting and staying up at night, raising my blood pressure and shortening my life." Man, that's maybe not quite the best idea. God, I trust you to deal with everything that happens. Even if I die, he's still giving me what I need because then I get to go home. Remember, it's not this world that is the promise. It's the world to come.

Now, we say in Amazing Grace, even though we've been 10,000 years, we'll still think it's barely begun. Well, it's even more radical than that. We won't even realize it's been 10,000 years because we won't track time. It'll always feel new and fresh and alive at all times. We'll just always be in the presence of God. And in the presence of God, there is joy and peace and hope and thanksgiving. There's no time. There's no fear, no anxiety, there's nothing.

God promises that there is going to be challenges in this world. In this world you will have tribulation, but don't worry about it, don't be anxious about it, don't fret about it, but take heart. I have overcome the world and I will bring you to be with me to the land that I'm preparing for you, where you will dwell in peace and security, health for all eternity and never be afraid and never be hurt ever again.

AUGUST 10, 2025

If he's done that, what else is there to worry? Trust him for all things. He's been faithful for 6,000 years. He has fulfilled every single word that he has said he's going to fulfill. He's not going to stop now and he's not going to stop before he gets to yours. He loves you. Be at peace. May his grace and his mercy and his peace be and abide with you always now and forever under life everlasting. Amen.