

CHAPEL ON THE HILL
 Shrewsbury, Massachusetts
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Date:	March-30-2008	Pastor:	Jeff Gauvin
Message Title:	Luke 12:32 "Fear Not Little Flock"		

Week's Message

Message	Bible Reference Passage
<p>1. What is there to fear? Plenty. We are little and we are sheep—flock.</p> <p>Jesus is talking to His disciples here, but nothing has changed. Biblical Christianity is typically 'little' in the midst of many. Most people do not rely on Jesus Alone for salvation from their sins. Sin is typically not a big deal to many, and therefore salvation is of little or no interest; so we are little in the midst of a land of giants. Jesus didn't have a mega church, he had a little flock. The word in the Greek language for little is where we get the word micro, (micros).</p> <p>And even if there was a large flock, we must also consider that this is indeed a flock—Sheep. And the place where we roam, our feeding pastures, Jesus already said in Luke 10:3. (Romans 8:35-36.) Even if there were a hundred sheep, what will they do against one wolf? How much more desperate is the sheep in the midst of wolves? A sheep in the midst of wolves is not very promising; not very hopeful.</p> <p>Even without the wolves surrounding, sheep need constant care. We can easily wander away, we can over-eat a pasture, we can't run very well, we can easily fall over, we can easily get sick, we can become scared easily; sheep are not very brave; they have no defensive or offensive provisions. There are hidden lions and false shepherds; then there is the prowling lion, seeking someone to devour. So there is much for the little flock of God to be fearful of. We must take seriously this mark that continually falls on us in the scripture — we are sheep. There is much to fear. And in the midst of this context our Good Shepherd says, 'FEAR NOT little flock'.</p>	
<p>2. Reasons not to fear</p> <p>A. Real treasure is not found here in this world. Let's read – Luke 12:16-21.</p> <p>Do you see that the rich man had a terrible problem; his problem was that his soul was at rest. The problem was not his riches, but that he was resting in his Riches. All his wealth became his Treasure, his Delight, his Hiding Place, his Safety, his Refuge, and his God. But he was resting in volatile treasures. The slightest spark can ignite gunpowder. It is so volatile — one little spark and the whole thing goes up. So it is with worldly riches, it is a flash in the darkness . . . that night this man dies. Our lives are a vapor; only in a moment will we stand before our Maker. We are too easily satisfied in treasures that are volatile.</p> <p>And I believe this is a reason not to fear, little flock. What</p>	<p><i>James 4:1-4</i></p>

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<p>that ‘God is love’ know where in the bible it says that. And that the same John who wrote it also wrote Revelation 19:15). What the mind of man cannot get his brain around is that he deserves every bit of God’s just punishment for sin. We are not good by nature, we have wrapped God’s good creation by choosing to reject Him in the garden, we’ve been doing it ever since, and God hates the evil that we are and that we do.</p> <p>Simply put, God is good, and we are not, and His anger burns against evil, but not arbitrarily. And the fear that should be invoked towards God is one of reverence. Look carefully, vs. 5 – He not only kills, He has authority to cast into hell; look carefully, it does NOT say, “cast <i>you</i> into hell.” In other words I do not think this is a threat—Watch out, God will get you if you slip. So if this view of His terrible authority to cast into hell is not meant to threaten in Mafia fashion, what is this meant to do? Jesus calls it a ‘warning’. But that is not the best translation; the word means “show”.</p> <p>I believe Jesus is ‘showing’ His friends something here that is meant to help us appreciate God’s gift — “let me show you what God has the authority to do. And tremble that He has decided not to do this to you.” Tremble at all the goodness God has towards you that you don’t deserve. The joy of our great inheritance only can be understood in contrast to the wrath of hell.</p> <p>This is the only way I can make sense of vs. 5 in light of vs. 32. Our only reason to fear is laid out in verse 5, and it is also our greatest reason to not fear. Don’t fear (vs. 32), because the only One you should fear (vs. 5) is actually for you! And He has chosen gladly to give you to Kingdom. He isn’t some Mafia kingpin, His is your Father. And LOOK, here we also see He is a Shepherd, since He is caring for a little flock, AND He is the King! He has authority to do whatever He pleases. And He is pleased to GIVE us the Kingdom!</p>	<p><i>Psalms 130:3-4; 103:10-17</i></p>
<p>Notice, this is by the Father’s choice. You may have decided to follow Jesus in faith, but God chose you before you chose Him. This was the Father’s choice, and He doesn’t shift like some shadow and change His mind. He is immutable. We see in James 1:17-18 how He is the Father, and He doesn’t change.</p>	
<p>4. There is gladness in the heart of God for this choice. And this is what turns everything. So this is what we hold onto as we tremble at what was said in verse 5. God didn’t just choose, but has chosen gladly with great joy. And realize it is this same God who has the authority to cast into hell. OH behold the kindness and the severity of God; behold the Lion and the Lamb; Behold the unfathomable riches of Christ.</p> <p>A. Ps. 32:5-7 – There is a hiding place in the wounds of Jesus. There is preservation from the wrath of God. It is safe and</p>	<p><i>Romans 11:20-22</i></p>

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warm there. There is covering there; what no mountain or bush, what no good works or riches can provide for us. Our only true hiding place is in Christ. And when we are hiding in the blood of the lamb, everywhere we turn there is a song. But as a Christian, hidden in the provision of that rock of ages Who was cleft for us, we have songs to comfort us. Note: songs of deliverance. “You are safe, you are mine, I am for you, I have redeemed you.” So if you were to turn to the left here is a song. To the right, another song.

B. Mat. 25:21, 23. The point I want to show here is that this is a picture of heaven. And how interesting that God says enter into the JOY of your master. The master has JOY for you to enter into. He has not grudgingly, but gladly, given to us.

C. Luke 15:20 - Do I need to remind you of the parable Jesus spoke about **the prodigal** whose father is a picture of our heavenly Father we see; Who doesn't wait for the son to break the threshold of the house, but who runs out with great joy to embrace His son.

D. Rev. 21:2 - Also, the Kingdom is referred to as **a wedding feast**. Is there any more joy than a wedding feast? Not an inaugural ball when a President or King is installed, but a wedding feast. This is because the King has always been the King. Now the King will enjoy His subjects, and we will enjoy Him.

Yes, we go through many ordeals, many trials, and many tribulations. But, go back to that safe place, go back to that cross, and rest assured you will find a song. Because the Father is glad and happy to give us the kingdom.

Conclusion

There is a story of some travelers over the open ocean on a large vessel. There was a tremendous storm and the ship was violently swaying and teetering. One passenger was very worried, and noticed another passenger who was laughing and joyful. The worried passenger asked the joyful one, “Aren't you worried?” “Of course not,” said the joyful one. “I have seen the Captain; he was whistling and gave me a warm smile.”

The Great Captain of our boat is Sovereign over this troubling ocean. If your ship seems tossed violently, take heart, see the mighty Captain, He has chosen to give you the kingdom, He has a warm smile for you, and songs of deliverance to surround you; as you finish your travels, He doesn't wait but runs to embrace you so that you would enter into His Joy.

So Christian, as we close this sermon, say to your soul, “Soul, you may have much or little in this world. But one thing is certain, you have a great treasure in heaven—Jesus Christ. So take your ease, eat, drink, work, rest, and be merry.” But if you are not resting in Christ, then have no rest for your soul; you are really resting in gunpowder. Any moment you might be called to give an account of

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your hope for heaven? If it is not Jesus' work on the cross for your sins, then you are hopeless. Turn to Christ today, call to Him alone for salvation, taste and see how good He is. And treasure in Him.

Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. In other words, whatever you are treasuring in, your heart will find rest. And unless that rest is found in Jesus Christ, it will not be rest. All of the world is after something, like an ant hill that has been kicked—scattering, scurrying, scrambling, after scrapes of dust. We are like that; we are all after something we think will fix our lives, something we think will make us whole, something we think will bring us peace and life; **but are you after Jesus?** He is the only way, truth and life. The only treasure you should be worried about having is Jesus, and our assurance for salvation in this passage is that the Father has chosen gladly to give the Kingdom.

Thank you and have a blessed week.

Join us every Sunday morning at 10:15am | Have a prayer request? Send it to us online.