

Luke 12:32-40

Pentecost 15; September 18 & 19, 2022

What is your idea of a “great vacation?” For some, it might be traveling to Disney World. For others, they might not like the crowds that come along with Disney. For some, sitting in a boat on a quiet lake, holding on to a fishing pole, in front of a cabin is your ideal vacation. For some, that might just be too boring for you. For some, it might be camping, for others that might just be a little too rustic for you. Regardless of your definition of a “great vacation,” one thing is for certain. It will probably mean that you need to travel somewhere to get to your destination. We like traveling. I like the challenge of finding some really good deal to travel whether that is by plane or car. (And often I can find a good deal. And I have been known to look for hours trying to find a way to save a few dollars.) There are times that we like sitting on a lake. There are times that we like to see all the great national parks in our country. If you travel, you will need to pack for that vacation. What you pack to go on vacation all depends on where and when you are going there. Going to the mountains in winter will be much different than going to Florida in the summer.

However, we are all travelers in this world and this thing that we call life. As we travel, there are some things that are common to all of us. We have the problem of not always trusting God to take care of us. We think that we are the one who provide clothing and food. We think that we are the ones who will make sure that we reach a ripe old age secure and healthy. We are all tempted to think that our lives depend on us. When we focus on what we need to do to survive in this journey of life, panic and anxiety will follow. As we do that, we tend to focus on the things that we don’t have instead of focusing on what we already have.

Jesus speaks about what we have already packed on this journey of life in him. **“Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom.”** Jesus doesn’t say that he *might* give you the kingdom, but **“has been pleased to give you the kingdom.”** Our heavenly Father has already given us the kingdom of heaven. Through faith in Jesus, we have something better than the GPS on our cell phone in our back pocket. We have the promises of the Almighty God who will never fail us. When He suffered, died and rose again, He washed us clean of our sins. When He sent the Holy Spirit to create faith in our hearts, we believed and had Christ’s perfect life covering our sinful, stained life. We have an inheritance from the King of Heaven that no one can snatch out of our hands. That means that we have the full inheritance that belongs to the King. We have the full attention of the royal family. We have the privilege to be with the King. Every need is fulfilled by the King. We have full pardon of sins. None of us deserve that to happen.

On top of all that, think of how much stuff that God has given each of us. He has packed into our suitcases on this journey full with his spiritual promises and blessings. Then he packs into our lives clothing and shoes, food and drink, house and home – that list could go on and on. He packs us with family and friends, laughter and joy, contentment and peace into our lives. We get to enjoy all of this stuff as we travel through life. We get to enjoy the homes that we live in, the friends that we have, the food that we eat. As we think about all those things that are packed into our lives, Jesus says: **“And do not set your heart on what you will eat or drink; do not worry about it.”**

We all know that. We know that the stuff we have in this world will not last. We all know that somewhere down the road no one’s going to care how much stuff you have here on earth. We all know that there are no trailer hitches on hearses. Why then do we keep on worrying? Why do we have the problem of not always trusting God to take care of us? We have this sinful nature in us that does not like to fully trust God. It started in the Garden of Eden and continues today.

If you think that you are not affected, think about how hard it is to listen to these words of Jesus. **“Sell your possessions and give to the poor.”** Does God want us to empty our life’s suitcase of every material

possession? No. But he is wanting to show us just hard it is to not be greedy and to think that the stuff we have will give us complete security. So, he tells us that we have **“a treasure in heaven that will never fail, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”** Don't fall into the trap thinking that everything that we have in life depends on me.

Now that our bags are packed, we need to be ready to go. Jesus says that we don't know when the final destination of life will appear. It could come today, tomorrow or next year or years. But one thing is certain – It will come. **“Be dressed ready for service and keep your lamps burning, like servants waiting for their master to return from a wedding banquet, so that when he comes and knocks, they can immediately open the door for him. It will be good for those servants whose master finds them watching when he comes. Truly I tell you, he will dress himself to serve, will have them recline at the table and will come and wait on them. It will be good for those servants whose master finds them ready, even if he comes in the middle of the night or toward daybreak. But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. You also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.”**

We don't know when our master Jesus Christ will return to this world. That shouldn't matter to us, because we are to be ready to move to heaven anytime. Look at Abraham in our first reading today. God gave him a promise. He promised that he would have a son and from that son a great nation would come. **“Look up at the sky and count the stars—if indeed you can count them.” Then he said to him, “So shall your offspring be.”** We are not told that Abraham questioned, doubted, or mistrusted what God had said. Just the opposite, in fact: **“Abram believed the Lord, and he credited it to him as righteousness.”**

May God give us that kind of faith as we travel in life; Faith to trust our God with all our heart. There is no reason to be afraid in this journey. Remember all that he has given us in Jesus. If he has given us the kingdom, then he certainly knows how best to care for. So, let's go. In Jesus' name, we ask it. Amen.