

Jesus is Better

“By Faith”

June 11, 2023

As We Gather

Today we resume our series “Jesus is Better,” a study of the letter to the Hebrews. This letter is actually a written sermon to believers who were struggling with their faith. They were being tempted to go back to a life without Jesus, a life rooted in the unfulfilled promises and pictures of the Old Testament. The writer of this letter seeks to show them in many ways that Jesus is better, not only better than what they had before, but better than everything.

We resume the series in Chapter 11, the great “Hall of Fame of Faith” chapter. Faith is seen in the lives of many heroes of old, who trusted in God in the face of adversity, eyes fixed on His promises. But even when our faith fails, we rejoice in our faithful God.

Welcome

+ Gathering +

“All Depends on Our Possessing” LSB 732

1 All depends on our possessing
God's abundant grace and blessing,
Though all earthly wealth depart.
They who trust with faith unshaken
By their God are not forsaken
And will keep a dauntless heart.

2 He who to this day has fed me
And to many joys has led me
Is and ever shall be mine.
He who ever gently schools me,
He who daily guides and rules me
Will remain my help divine.

3 Many spend their lives in fretting
Over trifles and in getting
Things that have no solid ground.
I shall strive to win a treasure
That will bring me lasting pleasure
And that now is seldom found.

4 When with sorrow I am stricken,
Hope anew my heart will quicken;
All my longing shall be stilled.
To His loving-kindness tender
Soul and body I surrender,
For on God alone I build.

5 Well He knows what best to grant me;
All the longing hopes that haunt me,
Joy and sorrow, have their day.
I shall doubt His wisdom never;
As God wills, so be it ever;
I commit to Him my way.

6 If my days on earth He lengthen,
God my weary soul will strengthen;
All my trust in Him I place.
Earthly wealth is not abiding,
Like a stream away is gliding;
Safe I anchor in His grace.

Invocation

Baptism of Everly Bresee

“Let the Little Children Come”

The little children came for the blessing
of Your touch
The disciples tried to stop them
They thought this welcome was too much
For such a high and holy teacher
had no time for ones so small
But you just turned to the children
and called to them all

Chorus

O Come to me, Come, Let the little children
come
For the Kingdom of God belongs to such as
these
O Come to me, Come, Let the little children
come
Come and receive the Kingdom of God

Today we have come for the blessing of Your
touch
By water and Spirit

Prayer

Children’s Church

You freely give so much
To this child that we bring you in answer to Your
call
For you love the children and You call to them
all

We praise you, O Father, for you have revealed
The kingdom of Your one and only Son
Not just to the high and the mighty of this world
But to the little ones
Oh let the little children come!

Chorus

O Come to me, Come, Let the little children
come
For the Kingdom of God belongs to such as
these
O Come to me, Come, Let the little children
come
Come and receive the Kingdom of God
Come and receive the Kingdom of God

+ Service of the Word +

First Reading: Genesis 12:1-8

12 The LORD had said to Abram, “Go from your country, your people and your father’s household to the land I will show you.

² “I will make you into a great nation,
and I will bless you;
I will make your name great,
and you will be a blessing.

³ I will bless those who bless you,
and whoever curses you I will curse;
and all peoples on earth
will be blessed through you.”

⁴ So Abram went, as the LORD had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Harran. ⁵ He took his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, all the

possessions they had accumulated and the people they had acquired in Harran, and they set out for the land of Canaan, and they arrived there.

⁶ Abram traveled through the land as far as the site of the great tree of Moreh at Shechem. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. ⁷ The LORD appeared to Abram and said, "To your offspring I will give this land." So he built an altar there to the LORD, who had appeared to him.

⁸ From there he went on toward the hills east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. There he built an altar to the LORD and called on the name of the LORD.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

Second Reading: Hebrews 11:1-40

Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. ² This is what the ancients were commended for.

³ By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.

⁴ By faith Abel brought God a better offering than Cain did. By faith he was commended as righteous, when God spoke well of his offerings. And by faith Abel still speaks, even though he is dead.

⁵ By faith Enoch was taken from this life, so that he did not experience death: "He could not be found, because God had taken him away." For before he was taken, he was commended as one who pleased God. ⁶ And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

⁷ By faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, in holy fear built an ark to save his family. By his faith he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness that is in keeping with faith.

⁸ By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going. ⁹ By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. ¹⁰ For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God. ¹¹ And by faith even Sarah, who was past childbearing age, was enabled to bear children because she considered him faithful who had made the promise. ¹² And so from this one man, and he as good as dead, came descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sand on the seashore.

¹³ All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance, admitting that they were foreigners and strangers on earth. ¹⁴ People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own. ¹⁵ If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return. ¹⁶ Instead, they were longing for a better country—a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.

¹⁷ By faith Abraham, when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice. He who had embraced the promises was about to sacrifice his one and only son, ¹⁸ even though God had said to him, “It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned.” ¹⁹ Abraham reasoned that God could even raise the dead, and so in a manner of speaking he did receive Isaac back from death.

²⁰ By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau in regard to their future.

²¹ By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of Joseph’s sons, and worshiped as he leaned on the top of his staff.

²² By faith Joseph, when his end was near, spoke about the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt and gave instructions concerning the burial of his bones.

²³ By faith Moses’ parents hid him for three months after he was born, because they saw he was no ordinary child, and they were not afraid of the king’s edict.

²⁴ By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh’s daughter. ²⁵ He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. ²⁶ He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward. ²⁷ By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the king’s anger; he persevered because he saw him who is invisible. ²⁸ By faith he kept the Passover and the application of blood, so that the destroyer of the firstborn would not touch the firstborn of Israel.

²⁹ By faith the people passed through the Red Sea as on dry land; but when the Egyptians tried to do so, they were drowned.

³⁰ By faith the walls of Jericho fell, after the army had marched around them for seven days.

³¹ By faith the prostitute Rahab, because she welcomed the spies, was not killed with those who were disobedient.

³² And what more shall I say? I do not have time to tell about Gideon, Barak, Samson and Jephthah, about David and Samuel and the prophets, ³³ who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, and gained what was promised; who shut the mouths of lions, ³⁴ quenched the fury of the flames, and escaped the edge of the sword; whose weakness was turned to strength; and who became powerful in battle and routed foreign armies. ³⁵ Women received back their dead, raised to life again. There were others who were tortured, refusing to be released so that they might gain an even better resurrection. ³⁶ Some faced jeers and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. ³⁷ They were put to death by stoning; they were sawed in two; they were killed by the sword. They went about in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, persecuted and mistreated— ³⁸ the world was not worthy of them. They wandered in deserts and mountains, living in caves and in holes in the ground.

³⁹ These were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised, ⁴⁰ since God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

Holy Gospel: Matthew 8:23-27

Then he got into the boat and his disciples followed him. ²⁴ Suddenly a furious storm came up on the lake, so that the waves swept over the boat. But Jesus was sleeping. ²⁵ The disciples went and woke him, saying, "Lord, save us! We're going to drown!"

²⁶ He replied, "You of little faith, why are you so afraid?" Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the waves, and it was completely calm.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to You O Christ!

Sermon

"By Faith"

Offering

Musical Offering

"How Can I Keep From Singing"

Sanctuary Choir

By Taylor Davis

Oboe: Celesté Truong

Violin: Alitza Truong

My life flows on in endless song
Above earth's lamentations
I hear the real, though far off hymn
That hails a new creation.
Through all the tumult and the strife
I hear it's music ringing.
It sounds an echo in my soul;
How can I keep from singing?

While though the tempest loudly roars,
I hear the truth, it liveth.
And though the darkness round me close,
Songs in the night it giveth.

No storm can shake my inmost calm
While to that rock I'm clinging.
Sing love is lord of heaven and earth,
How can I keep from singing.

When tyrants tremble sick with fear,
And hear their death knell ringing,
When friends rejoice both far and near,
How can I keep from singing?
In prison cells and dungeon vile,
Our thoughts to them are winging,
When friends by shame are undefiled,
How can I keep from singing?

Prayers

Please add your prayer requests to the chat.

Thanksgivings

Pastor: O Lord, we praise You.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Petitions

Pastor: Lord, in Your mercy,

People: **Hear our prayer.**

St. John's People and Families

Andrew, Erika, & Orion Boudreaux & Elora Stepp
Zachary, Kerrie, Nicholas, Ashley, & Stephanie Diviak
Hoag & Lois Husted
Sal Pagano
Gerry & Midge Schneider
Mark, Laura, & Henry Budz
Clark, Molly, & Beau Good
Brandon, Erica, & Elise Imhoff
James, Karen, & Schuyler Oterreau
Ryan, Megan, & Jack Stewart

Benediction

The Lord bless you
And keep you
Make His face shine upon you
And be gracious to you
The Lord turn His
Face toward you
And give you peace

Amen

Amen

Amen

May His favor
Be upon you
And a thousand generations
And your family
And your children
And their children
And their children

“The Blessing”

May His presence
Go before you
And behind you
And beside you
All around you
And within you
He is with you
He is with you

In the morning
In the evening
In your coming
And your going
In your weeping
And rejoicing
He is for you
He is for you

Offering

<http://stjohnslutheran.net/give/>

You may also mail your offering to St. John's (3521 Linda Vista, Napa, CA 94558)

Memory Verse for This Week

Now faith is confidence in what we hope for
and assurance about what we do not see.

Hebrews 11:1

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