

ke 12:32-40

10th Sunday after Pentecost

August 9, 1998

Jesus was able to turn a few pieces of food into a feast. But for those he loves he wants something more.

When Jesus encountered illness and pain, even death Jesus was able to speak a word and these were overcome. But for those he loves Jesus wants something more.

When the wind blew and the waves were crashing and disciples were crying out in fear, Jesus spoke and the storm was stilled. But for those Jesus loves Jesus wants more than calm seas.

That something more is faith in God.

Jesus wants faith in God for you.

Do not be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. The kingdom is everywhere God rules. Where God is Lord and King. Jesus says to the whole flock, The kingdom of God is yours, God rules over you. Do not be afraid, God is pleased to give his ruling over you to you. God ruling and you being blessed. Like Abram, an old man who wanted a son more than anything else who would be blessed with that son. While he was waiting for that son to be born God wanted Abram to believe.

so Jesus wants that same believing, that same faith for you.

Sell your possessions and give alms. Make purses for yourselves that do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in haven where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is there will your heart be also.

You say, "I thought Jesus wanted my faith, but now he's telling me he wants me to give up my possessions. It is really about money, isn't it. If the preacher can get me to let go of my money than he will have the money for himself.

Sell your possessions and give alms. I don't think Jesus wants your money, but he knows that if your arms are full of possessions there will be no room in your embrace for your neighbor. No room in your embrace for God. Let go of the stuff, God has a life of blessing planned for you.

Remember that man we heard about last week, the one with the big harvest whose energy was put onto building bigger barns. And he died. And all he had to show for his life was barns full of grain.

But God has more than that planned for you.

God has eternal life with God planned for you. A place in God's kingdom of love and joy and peace God has planned for you. Jesus said he has already gone to prepare a place just for you there in God's kingdom. But your know what? You and I could spend our whole life on making money to buy stuff. Especially in this day and age we could spend our whole life on stuff.

But listen to Jesus: Luke 12:22-32.

Food and clothing. It might seem that they are important enough for us to spend our life on them, on food and clothing. But Jesus says God will take care of the food and clothing. Don't worry about that.

What if this flock of Jesus sheep were to have faith in God? You and I, what if we were to do all our planning and dreaming and giving and living out of faith in God? Through God's spirit God would show us ways to save children from empty hearts. Eyes that are hollow and empty might suddenly sparkle. Lives that are being lost, thrown away like so much garbage might be reclaimed and become precious jewels.

And no more would the best thing in our day be what we saw in a movie, the love we would share with one another and with so many in need would be a far greater drama. Life and laughter and love would be ours in abundance.

And if we have no faith? Then God who is pure joy, will seem to us pure demand and command and tester and punisher and a great possibility of life will be lost.

Have no fear little flock, for it is your father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

What will that mean? As we believe we will find out.

Be dressed for action, Jesus said. Have your lamps lit. be like those who are waiting for thier master to return from the wedding banquet so that they may open the door for him as soon as he comes and knocks.

I find it interesting that these words from Jesus were spoken to the group. To the flock.

The church is to be ready, dressed for action.

Not in building up many possessions but in giving alms for the poor.

Not in having flawless plans for the future but in having faith in God.