

“FEAR NOT, LITTLE FLOCK”

Before we open God’s word this morning, I’d like to take a few minutes to talk to you about what’s on everyone’s mind all around the world, and I think you know what that is. I was going to speak about something totally different today, but the fear that is being caused by the Coronavirus has changed my mind, because I think fear and panic and hysteria are becoming more contagious than the virus itself.

If you’re a news junkie it’s really easy to get to feeling overwhelmed with all the reports these days. Seems like every other word you hear is Coronavirus or Covid-19, or social distancing, and unfortunately I’m going to be adding to it a little bit today, but hopefully on a more positive note, because friends, we have a God in heaven who cares. He knows all about it, and He knows all about you. He even knows how many hairs you have on your head, which means He knows you better than you know yourself, and He knows just what you need to hear and act upon today.

From what I’m hearing, there’s all kinds of speculation and conspiracies floating around about this virus, but I’m not into conspiracies or speculative thinking, and so I refuse to get involved with it. But I would like to say that I know many people are very concerned and even afraid of what this could mean to them personally and to their families, their jobs, and the world economy, but still, there’s much we can be thankful for, even in the face of this world crisis. By the way, this could be one of the reasons we’ve been told not to live in the large cities, but have a retired place in the country, because the fewer people we come in contact with right now, the less likely we are to come in contact with this virus as well as the sinful conduct of the world at large.

There are ways to witness, however, without coming in physical contact with people, like doing mass mailings, or spreading the truth on the Internet, or leaving literature here and there as you have to get out from time to time, and if you can’t do any of the above, maybe you can support someone who can. We should all be doing something, because the devil would like nothing more than for us to stop proclaiming the truth that this world needs to hear while there’s still opportunity for people to make an intelligent decision for Christ. The devil would much rather spread fear and mayhem than for the saving truth go out that will bring peace to troubled hearts, don’t you think? And it’s our job to disappoint him any way we can.

But what is it that we can be thankful for this morning? Well, how about the health message we’ve been given, especially now, as we need to be as healthy as possible to keep from getting deathly sick from this virus. You may be surprised to know that nearly all viruses have been originally transmitted to humans through contact with what the Bible classifies as unclean animals. For instance, Aids started with contact between

humans and monkeys and then chimpanzees, the Ebola and SARS viruses came from bats and more than likely the Coronavirus began with something similar as well. Do you remember the swine flu about ten years ago that infected over 60 million people and killed over 200,000 worldwide? It's called the swine flu for a reason, because it came from pigs. The problem is, even though these viruses originate with human beings coming in contact with unclean animals, once people become infected it can then spread between human and human contact. So it takes just one person doing the wrong thing to affect the whole population as we see today.

People who have a strong immune system will generate a strong immune response to the virus, but people who don't, will have a weak response, it's just that simple. That's why it's so important to have a diet that will build a strong immune system. Does that make sense? We have antibodies in our blood placed there by our Creator, that attack foreign substances, but this particular Coronavirus is evidently tricky enough to avoid being destroyed if there's only a weak response. Now I'm not a doctor, but it seems to me that much of the death caused by this virus in recent days is the result of people who have a poor diet and are not generally physically fit or have underlying health issues. That's one of the reasons older people are more susceptible to this virus than other age groups, and I'm sure there are those who just inherited health issues through no fault of their own that has left them more vulnerable. But we as a people have been given information about health that is not known to the population at large, and if we don't follow it, who is to blame?

Evidence indicates that the Coronavirus began in China, even though China has a propaganda campaign on right now to blame the United States for this outbreak. You see, that's what sin does, it tries to justify self and pass the blame. Most people understand that for the most part China is a godless communist country, and the people of China eat just about every abominable and detestable thing that our Creator never intended should be eaten, and their hygiene leaves much to be desired. By the way, here in America we aren't doing such a good job on that front either in some of our larger cities, but in China it's much worse. Have you ever gone into an Asian meat market to see what's for sale? If you haven't, you'd be amazed, or maybe I should say sickened.

Now, whether you believe this virus was purposely cooked up in a laboratory in Wuhan China as a bioweapon that got out of hand or that it's the result of people eating, or in some way coming in contact with an unclean animal, or some mutation of some other virus that's been here for a while, is irrelevant right now, because how it got started isn't going to make it go away. What we need to be doing is following the health message, because that alone will go a long way in creating a strong immune system that will possibly keep us from getting sick, or at least lessen its effects upon our bodies should we become infected, and I can't stress this enough!

Are you following the 8 laws of health, and if not, why not? Are you getting good nutrition every day that God approves of? Are you getting some kind of exercise every day, and walking is the best kind, by the way, and most of us can do that, at least to some degree. Are you drinking enough water every day? This is a simple thing we can all do, but many of us don't do it, especially those of us who are older. Dehydration is a huge problem with older folks, because they forget. Water helps flush the system of impurities, and if you wait until you're thirsty before you drink, you're already dehydrated to some degree and don't realize it. So make sure you get enough water inside and out by bathing regularly. Do you spend a little time in the sunlight when it's available? Vitamin D is also necessary for a strong immune system and it's free from the sun. The Corona virus doesn't do well in sunlight, so take advantage of it when you can. And here's a little tidbit of information if you're afraid of skin cancer. A person that's on a flesh food diet is much more likely to develop skin cancer than is a vegetarian or a vegan. Because of the animal fats that are secreted through the pores of those who eat it, the rays of the sun react more negatively with animal fats than it does with vegetable fats. So just something for you to think about. Are you being temperate, even when it comes to good things? In ***Patriarchs and Prophets, page 562*** we're told that "true temperance teaches us to dispense entirely with everything hurtful and to use judiciously that which is healthful", and in ***Manuscript Releases, Vol. 20, page 374*** it says, the flesh of dead animals creates nine-tenths of the disease in our world, and a virus is a disease by the way. Are you getting fresh air every day, or do you stay indoors and breath the same air over and over again? Autotoxicity can make you more susceptible to disease. Are you getting the rest you need every day? And most importantly, do you trust in divine power to do for you what you cannot do for yourself?

Friends, if we do these 8 simple things it will help us stay well, that's why we've been given this counsel. Now I know when I say these things that we are all the product of inherited and cultivated weaknesses and health issues, and no matter how careful we are we can still succumb to a virus like the Coronavirus, after all, we're all going to die of something if the Lord doesn't come first. But it is our duty in the meantime to keep the living machinery in the best condition possible, because our bodies are to be temples for the Holy Spirit to dwell in, and here's another point: the main reason for eating a balanced vegan diet is not so we can live longer than the average person, and I know that may be a shock to many of us, but the main reason is so we can have a clear mind that can make intelligent decisions for eternal life, and if we happen to live a little longer in the process than the average person as a result, it's a fringe benefit.

Those of us that are older and already have underlying health issues, like Cindy and I have, are the most susceptible to disease of any kind, so if you fit into this category like we do, you need to be even more vigilant than someone who is younger and healthier, but regardless of these things, we all need to have a character like Jesus whenever our

time here on earth comes to a close. If our connection with the Lord is what it ought to be, we don't need to be fearful about anything, and I know that's easy to say, but God's plan is for us to have the mind of Christ, and He wasn't fearful about anything, was He? No! He was able to sleep in the midst of a very bad storm on the sea, and when He was met by demoniacs who lived among the tombs and were strong enough to break the chains they were bound with, He didn't run away like the disciples, did He? As Christians we are to be Christ like! In **Revelation 21:8** the apostle John says the fearful are lumped in with unbelievers and murderers and idolaters and liars and so forth. So this is more serious than we might think. Did you know that it takes more courage to live for Christ than it does to die for Him? It's true. Why? Because to die for Christ takes the courage of a moment, but to live for Him requires the daily sacrifice of self, and that's why the world outnumbers Christians.

My sister called the other day and wanted to know how I was doing since Washington State has had the most deaths from the Coronavirus than any other of the 50 states, and I told her so far so good, but I said, "regardless of what happens, I'm good with it, because I belong to God, and if my work here is done, I'd just as well rest in the grave till the Lord comes as anywhere else, but if He isn't done with me yet," now listen, "if He isn't done with me yet, and I'm doing His will the best I know how, there's nothing the devil can do to shorten my life, period!" Can you say amen? It's true!

Now please don't get me wrong, I want to live. Life is precious, but to live longer than what God sees is best will not be of benefit to anyone, in fact, it can possibly be detrimental to ourselves and to others. Let me give you an example. In 1987 my first wife was killed in a car accident at 37 years of age, and at that time in her life she was closer to the Lord than at any previous time. But what if she would have lived longer and somewhere down the road turned her back on the truth? I can't say for sure, but it could be at that point in her life the Lord saw that she was safe to save, but what if the Lord in His wisdom and foreknowledge could see that for her to live on would have cost her salvation? Wouldn't it be the merciful thing for the Lord to say to her guardian angel, "you can't protect her this time, you must allow this accident to take place to save her for eternity." Is this scenario possible? I believe it is, and so we never want to become angry or blame God for what we think are bad things that happen, because it could be the salvation of souls. It was very difficult for me at that time to lose my wife, but if her death could be the means of saving her for eternity, in the end it will all be worth it, don't you think?

And so just to reiterate, if we have no unconfessed sins in our life and we are being obedient to all the truth that has been revealed to us, we can be sure that God will take care of us in the midst of this Coronavirus outbreak. If there's still a work for us to do the devil can't stop us. But and if God sees best that we die while in a saved condition, our

eternal life is secure, and that's the important thing. It's the second death that's the real enemy, not the first. In **Hebrews 9:27** it says, "it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgement." That's the first death and we have no say so about whether or not we will participate in that one. The only way we get out of the first death is to be translated without seeing death, but we do have a choice when it comes to the second death, that's the beauty of the gospel.

Notice what it says in **1 Corinthians 15:26**, "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." That's the second death, because that's the last of the two deaths. It can't be the first death, because it's not the last enemy. In fact, let's read something else to help clarify in **Revelation 20:12-15**, "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. **(Now notice)** And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

I thank God we don't have to partake of the second death if we surrender all to Jesus today and live for Him from now on, but if we choose to go our own way and live for the fleeting pleasures of this life, the second death will be our fate. And so our eternal destiny is totally up to us, and no one else can choose for us, and that's a beautiful thing too, because that means that no one else can determine where you end up. It's between you and Jesus, and I encourage you to yoke up with Him, because His promise is, you'll find rest unto your soul.

Now, I know that if you are a young person, all this talk about death and dying might be the farthest thing from your mind, because you probably haven't give much thought to it, and perhaps that's the way it should be, but I can assure you that if the Lord doesn't come soon, we're all going to die eventually, and we need to prepare now to be among those who will come up in that first resurrection and avoid that second death.

Now let's talk a minute about God's protection during this very uncertain time and about those who will receive that protection. Notice what it says in ***Testimonies to Ministers, page 445***, "Only those who, in their attitude before God, are filling the position of those who are repenting and confessing their sins in the great anti-typical day of atonement, will be recognized and marked as worthy of God's protection." So, the question is, are you worthy of protection? If you have no sins you are cherishing and you can search your own heart and find nothing there that God would disapprove of, then you are worthy of God's protection, and that's a good feeling, and one that will bring peace to your troubled heart.

That reminds me of the blood on the door post when the death angel passed over the dwellings of the first born in Israel in Egypt. If they did what God said, they were safe, if they didn't, there was weeping and wailing in that household the next morning. And what about the serpents in the wilderness? Look and live was the message, and if they didn't follow instructions they were left without protection, weren't they? And no doubt we could think of more, but the point is, obedience was required if they wanted divine protection, and this is a principle that holds true today as the Coronavirus claims new victims every day.

Here's another quote from ***Bible Commentary, volume 3, page 1140***, "Sometimes men do pass the boundary line beyond God's protecting care, and then Satan exercises his power upon them, and God does not interpose." Think about that for a minute. If we go beyond what God says, if we cross the boundary line that He has drawn in the sand, we forfeit divine protection, it's just that simple. How can we expect God to protect us from a deadly disease if we are knowingly doing things that He has said not to do? He cannot protect people like that and still be true to His word. He will not interpose to stop Satan from exercising his power upon us if we knowingly disobey the counsel and principles He has given in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. If we are not violating our Bible educated conscience, we can have confidence in God's promises in a way that will translate into a person who is unafraid of the future no matter what's going on in this world.

Evangelism, page 607 says, "Angels of God will preserve His people while they walk in the path of duty (**notice, there is a condition here just like all of God's promises**), "Angels of God will preserve His people while they walk in the path of duty, but there is no assurance of such protection for those who deliberately venture upon Satan's ground." And wouldn't you agree, dear friend, that to ignore the information we are privileged to have in these last days through the Spirit of Prophecy would be to venture upon Satan's ground? How can it be any other way?

There are lots of stories in the Bible where God wasn't through with various individuals and He made the devil's attempt to destroy them of none effect, and it was because they were walking in the path of duty. I decided to look up the word duty, and the very first definition was, "That which a person owes to another." Do we owe anything to Jesus? We have been bought with a price, have we not? Therefore we are to "glorify God in our body, and in our spirit, which are God's."

When it comes to divine protection I think of Paul when he was bitten by that poisonous snake. The devil would have loved to see him fall over dead after he shook that serpent off into the fire, but God wouldn't allow it, because he still had a work for him to do, and it's no different with us. When the death of one of God's dear saints can be of benefit to His cause, He allows it to happen, just like how the stoning of Stephen was of benefit to

Paul and the thousands and probably millions he witnessed to. I also think of the blood of the martyrs that was like seed for the spreading of the gospel. And so, if God sees that to preserve one's life will be the salvation of souls, the devil can't stop it. But conversely, if He sees that death will be the salvation of souls, he permits it. I guarantee that if we could see our lives from beginning to end as God sees it, we would not want to be led in any other way than He has led us, and knowing that will go a long way in alleviating whatever fear we may have.

I'll tell you, the kind of fear we need is a fear to offend God. Why fear to offend? Because God is offended by disobedience, and disobedience means the loss of salvation, plain and simple. Salvation is not complicated. God means what He says, and He says what He means. Fear to offend God is healthy, but a fear that He will not take care of His children is a lack of faith. If we really trust in divine power, stress and fear will be to a large degree eliminated in our lives, and that too will strengthen our immune system to fight off things that would harm us, but let's be careful that we do not presume upon God's mercy. We should not have the attitude that we can sin and repent and sin and repent and continue to violate His moral law, and the health laws, and think that He will overlook that and still protect us. That is very dangerous thinking, and most people that think that way will eventually commit the unpardonable sin.

Now, when I say there are those who forfeit God's protection, I'm talking about those of us who know what we should be doing, but are not doing it. I'm not talking about the ignorant, unless they are purposely ignorant. Of course, God's protection is extended to everyone, or we would all be dead by now. When I shared about my first wife being killed in the car accident, there's also the flip side to that coin. If a person is not a Christian and God sees that in the future they will accept the sacrifice of Jesus in their behalf, He will protect, but we have no guarantee that that same protection extends to those who are willfully violating their conscience. Only God knows where that line is with each individual, but it's like playing Russian Roulette to continue in sin thinking that you will change someday, because for many individuals, and I would say most, someday will never come. In ***Steps to Christ, page 48*** it says, "many will be lost while hoping and desiring to be Christians", because they never "come to the point of yielding the will to God", and of course our will is our power of choice.

Now as far as the 8 laws of health are concerned, these are practical things we can do that cost us nothing except for the food we eat, and we all have to spend money for that anyway, and when I say food, I mean the original diet that was provided for us by our Creator in the beginning. Pastor David Berwick had an excellent study on this in his January sermon and I suggest you contact him at His Marvelous Light Ministries [570-746-6280] and ask for it, because I think you'll be blessed.

And let me say just one more thing that may be connected to the Coronavirus before we move on. As you probably know, President Trump recently declared a national emergency because of the Coronavirus pandemic and he has also called for a national day of prayer on March 15th, which is just past, and of course it was on a Sunday, which pleases the papacy and her harlot daughters, and one has to wonder if a national Sunday law will be the next shoe to drop. We'll have to wait and see. It's going to happen eventually, and who would have ever guessed that a lowly virus could possibly be the stimulus to bring it about. I'm not saying that it will, but it's interesting to think about and consider.

If this crisis doesn't bring it about this time, it could be that this is just a test run, or a trial run that the devil will use to become better educated about the best way to bring it about in some other way in the very near future, and I don't think we'll have to wait decades to find out. What the world is experiencing right now with this Coronavirus pandemic could very well be the beginning of the time of trouble just before human probation closes. Most Adventists call it "the little time of trouble", but the Spirit of Prophecy never uses the phrase, but nevertheless it's basically true. And you might be thinking, "oh Pastor Jones, don't be silly, the beginning of the little time of trouble?" But I'll tell you something, that's the way the antediluvians thought just before the flood came and took them all away, and if you recall, that's the way Jesus said it would be just before He comes. This thing may pass after a little while, and I hope it does, because there are so many who would be caught off guard, but I guess that will be true whenever it happens. Regardless of when it comes, let's take the advice of our Lord when He said, "therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as you think not, the Son of man cometh."

By the way, just to be clear; President Trump isn't the first President to declare a national day of prayer. It started in 1952 with President Truman, so I don't want to give a lot of credence to that being the stepping stone to a Sunday law, but it's something to keep our eye on at this point, and not just keep our eye on, but to do everything we can to warn people of what's coming, and to do it before it comes, because notice this next inspired statement.

Testimonies for the Church, volume 9 page 20 it says, "Are we to wait until the fulfillment of the prophecies of the end before we say anything concerning them? Of what value will our words be then? Shall we wait until God's judgments fall upon the transgressor before we tell him how to avoid them? Where is our faith in the word of God? Must we see things foretold come to pass before we will believe what He has said? In clear, distinct rays light has come to us, showing us that the great day of the Lord is near at hand, 'even at the doors.' Let us read and understand before it is too late."

Friends, there is one thing that we can be absolutely sure of. While the world is distracted with this virus, the devil and his agents aren't distracted from their mission, and neither should we be from ours. God has given us a knowledge of the truth for these last days and it's encapsulated in third angel's message, and we're told not to allow anything else to absorb our attention, and by the way, the fourth angel's message is what gives power to the third, so they both must be proclaimed together. I know of many things people and various ministries seem to be absorbed with these days, but there's only one main point that heaven has told us to take to the world, and we should be careful we don't get all caught up with other things, even if they're seemingly good things and neglect the warning that will decide the destiny of the last generation.

And here's another thing some are confused about. I know there are those who are wondering if this Coronavirus could be one of the seven last plagues, and I can tell you very confidently that it is not. The seven last plagues won't be poured out until human probation is closed, and that won't happen until sometime after a Sunday law is enforced, because again, that will be the great test upon which eternal destiny will be decided.

Now it could be that this virus is a warning to humanity of God's displeasure and His wrath toward sin, I could agree with that, because notice what it says in ***Manuscript Releases, volume 3, page 312***, "God has not restrained the powers of darkness from carrying forward their deadly work of vitiating (**that is, "rendered impure"**) the air, one of the sources of life and nutrition, with a deadly miasma (**or "Infecting substances floating in the air."** **Can anyone say Coronavirus?**). Not only is vegetable life affected, but man suffers from pestilences (**viruses would fit here also, because pestilences are simply diseases**). . . ." (**Then she goes on to say**), "These things are the result of drops from the vials of God's wrath being sprinkled on the earth, and are but faint representations of what will be in the near future."

So, if we think the Coronavirus is bad, as the saying goes, "we ain't seen nothin' yet." And so friends, we've got to make sure where we stand with God today, because there may not be much of a tomorrow for any of us. Life is fragile and fleeting like the grass that is here today, but thrown into the oven tomorrow, so we must know Jesus as it is our privilege to know Him.

So, in the time remaining let's take a look at a few verses of Scripture that will help us to have faith in God, because that's what we need in order to dispel any doubts we may have that would create fear. Doubt and fear always go together, and faith and trust always go together, and faith and trust is what it will take to get us through this, or any other crisis, and they are essential in our everyday battle with the powers of darkness.

Turn with me please to **Luke 1:73-75**. The context of these verses is dealing with the birth

of John the Baptist and the prophecy spoken by Zacharias, his father, for the nation of Israel. "The oath which he swore to our father Abraham, that he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies **(and this virus is an invisible enemy)** might serve him **(how?)** without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life." If we are truly serving the Lord, and we have determined to serve Him in holiness and righteousness for the rest of our days, then our lives can be lived without fear.

One day Jesus was telling His disciple that He would be going away soon and that they could not go with Him, and do you remember what Jesus said to them? In **John 14:27** He said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." What a promise! I need that peace, how about you?

Go also to **Philippians**. There are so many good and comforting Scriptures, but we can't read them all, but these are some of the better ones I think. **Philippians 4:4-7**, Paul says, "Rejoice in the Lord **(just when things are going well. Is that what it says? No)** "Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice. Let your moderation **(that is, your gentle attitude)** be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. Be careful for nothing **(a better translation today would be "Be anxious for nothing)**; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. **(And what will happen if we follow this counsel?)** And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." I like that, don't you? If we keep our hearts and minds stayed upon Christ and His power, we don't have to have anxiety about anything.

Also, **Luke 12:4-7**, This is Jesus speaking. He says, "And I say unto you my friends, be not afraid of them that kill the body **(and I think that would include a virus)**, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, fear him. Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God? But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows." And then down in **Verse 32** Jesus says, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Oh, dear friends, let these words sink deep down in your soul. Our heavenly Father is not disinterested in our welfare or our ultimate destination. He wants us to be citizens of His eternal kingdom, and it's something He wants to give us, why? Because there's not enough money to buy it, there's not enough good works in the whole world that can earn it, and there's nothing we can do to deserve it. He offers salvation full and free, because the sacrifice of Jesus already purchased it for us. You see, eternal life did cost something, it cost a great deal, and our ticket has been secured through the life, death, and resurrection of our Lord. All

we have to do is pick it up, and if we pick it up when we understand the love that purchased it. Why wouldn't we want to do what He asks us to do from the heart? "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Jesus is the good Shepherd, is He not? and those who follow Him are the sheep of His pasture. A shepherd is always with his flock to defend them, to keep them from the wolves, to hunt up the lost sheep and carry them back to the fold, to lead them beside green pastures and beside the still waters. Why wouldn't we obey Him when He says, "If you love me, keep My commandments"?

Hebrews 13:5, 6, "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man (**or virus**) shall do unto me." Praise God!

Do you remember reading about the Moravians in *The Great Controversy*? I think it's worth reading rather than me just telling the story. It's found on **pages 254, 255** "John and Charles Wesley, after being ordained to the ministry, were sent on a mission to America. On board the ship was a company of Moravians. Violent storms were encountered on the passage, and John Wesley, brought face to face with death, felt that he had not the assurance of peace with God. But the Germans, on the contrary, manifested a calmness and trust to which he was a stranger.

"I had long before," he says, 'observed the great seriousness of their behavior. Of their humility they had given continual proof, by performing those servile offices for the other passengers which none of the English would undertake; for which they desired and would receive no pay, saying, it was good for their proud hearts, and their loving Saviour had done more for them. And every day had given them occasion of showing a meekness which no injury could move. If they were pushed, struck, or thrown down, they rose again and went away; but no complaint was found in their mouth. There was now an opportunity of trying whether they were delivered from the spirit of fear, as well as from that of pride, anger, and revenge. In the midst of the psalm wherewith their service began, the sea broke over, split the mainsail in pieces, covered the ship, and poured in between the deck as if the great deep had already swallowed us up. A terrible screaming began among the English. The Germans calmly sung on. I asked one of them afterward, 'Were you not afraid?' He answered, 'I thank God, no.' I asked, 'But were not your women and children afraid?' He replied mildly, 'No; our women and children are not afraid to die.'"

Friends, that's the kind of trust and confidence we need to have in our Lord and Saviour, Amen? We can have it, in fact we must! We're never going to find it by simply belonging to some religious organization down here. We need to be members of the church up there!

As you read about the experience of our faithful Advent pioneers, they quoted **Luke 12:32** often, because they understood that they were a part of the little flock Jesus referred to, and I'd like to read something E. J. Waggoner wrote in ***The Present Truth Articles, September 28, 1893.***

“The true church was never the greatest in numbers, or the most wealthy, or influential. To the true church is said, ‘Fear not, little flock; it is My Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom;’ but it was never said, ‘Fear not, big flock.’ The true church is never designated in Scripture by a denominational name. The Scriptures tell us that ‘God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness is accepted with Him.’ There are such persons in every nation and in every church to-day. All those whom God accepts and owns as His are not visible in any denominational form or organization; and they have never constituted more than a little company, looked down upon by the great men of earth, and maintaining in their course through the world the attitude of strangers and pilgrims. God will save His church, the ‘little flock,’ and give them the kingdom as He has promised; but He will save no one merely because of his connection with a church organization.”

Something to think about. We can't be saved by our connection with a church, but we can certainly be lost by belonging to one that is in apostasy.

I'd like to close by reading **Psalm 46**, and I pray you'll take it to heart, “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah. (**Selah simply means “pause”**). There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early. The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice, the earth melted. The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah. Come, behold the works of the LORD, what desolations he hath made in the earth. He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire. Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth. The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.”