

Sermon for the 6<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter May 17, 2020  
Pastor Brad Smith

*Greetings in the name of our Risen Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. And as the Gospel lesson will proclaim today, know that “because He lives, you also will live.” He is Risen, He is Risen Indeed.*

**Let us Pray.** Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable to you, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer. (Psalm 19:14)

### **The 3 Ps’ of Life Insurance**

Alex Trebek, a compensated endorser of a guaranteed acceptance life insurance policy by Colonial Penn - without any medical exams, health questions, or rate increases - persistently bombards us with the 3 Ps’ of Life Insurance “on a fixed budget” ... Price, Price, and Price. 1.) A price you can afford. 2.) A price that can’t increase. 3.) A price that will fit your budget. [*After “googling” the ad this past week, I was flooded with POP UP Ads for more term or whole life insurance which continually reminded me to apply online TODAY – and plan for tomorrow - for peace of mind for you and your family! Up to \$50,000 in coverage!*]

### **The 3 Ps’ of GOD’S WORD**

Now, I am not a compensated endorser of any guaranteed acceptance life insurance policy. Nor am I an insurance salesman. But I am here today to help you remember **the 3 Ps’ of GOD’S WORD** for today ... and encourage you to share them one with another, give hope and build faith! Why? Because the 3 Ps’ of GOD’S WORD [the Holy Scriptures] *moves, directs, guides, and even corrects us.*

The 3 Ps’ I am talking about are ... Promises, Promises, Promises

- 1.) Promises that give hope.
- 2.) Promises that build faith.
- 3.) Promises that witness to the Power of God.

*At the beginning of the stay at home orders in March, during the COVID-19 pandemic - during these unprecedented times as news of the Coronavirus saturated the media and affected our need to shelter at home - I shared with our homebound and shut-in members in my pastoral letter, my need to grow in my trust in God. I did it then, and continue to do it now, by holding on to the promises of God. During this time of national and state emergency, my “GO TO” scriptural promise is 2 Timothy 1:7 which reminds us that “God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind” (2 Timothy 1:7). As I did then, I ask you now, what is your “GO-TO” scripture promise in times like these?*

Exodus 33:14 *My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.*

Psalm 9:9-10 *The Lord is a refuge for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble ... Those who seek the Lord lack no good thing.*

Psalm 18:30 *This God—his way is perfect; the promise of the Lord proves true; he is a shield for all who take refuge in him.*

Psalm 32:7-8 *You are my hiding place; you will protect me from trouble and surround me with songs of deliverance.*

Psalm 46:1-3 *God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging.*

Isaiah 41:10 *So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.*

1 Peter 3:13-22 (Epistle Lesson) *which reminds us of the hope that is within us. The hope of becoming more Christlike ultimately transforms us as we grow into the image of Christ. The hope that is within us is both this – worldly and other-worldly because both are grounded in being transformed into the image of Christ.*

### **God's Promises are "Words of Hope"**

There are God's Promises ... for kids (applicable, of course, to all of us). As I shared with the kids, there is the promise of the rainbow – a promise from the Heart.

*Whenever the rainbow appears in the clouds, "I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and all living Creatures of every kind on the earth."*

...for Mothers (Mother's Day last week) - "Her children rise up and call her happy; her husband too, and he praises her" Proverbs 31:28

...for Graduates [*Congratulations Class of 2020!!*] - when you are concerned about your future - "For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope." Jeremiah 29:11

...for those serving our country and have served our country [Armed Forces Day (3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday in May) / Memorial Day / Veteran's Day] - "For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans 8:38-39

...for our nation (National Day of Prayer 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of May) - If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, pray, seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land. 2 Chronicles 7:14

...for the world - God loves you. John 3:16 which summarizes the Gospel well and emphasizes our eternal responsibility in God's plan.

...and as for the first disciples, for us (you and I) today, there is

## **The Promise of the Holy Spirit**

John 14:15-21 (NRSV)

<sup>15</sup>“If you love me, you will keep my commandments. <sup>16</sup> And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. <sup>17</sup> This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you. <sup>18</sup>“I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you. <sup>19</sup> In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live. <sup>20</sup> On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. <sup>21</sup> They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me; and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them.

Herein lies the promise of the Holy Spirit, the “promise of the Father” – our Waymaker! Our Promise Keeper! Miracle Worker! Light in the Darkness! Our God! For within this scripture, and others parallel to it in the Gospels and the Book of Acts, we are reminded that in this promise and the giving of the Holy Spirit the “old” promises as recorded in the Bible come true at last, especially the promises of David’s unshakeable kingdom and all the promises that all nations will now be blessed through the seed of Abraham ... *so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father* (Philippians 2:10-11)

### **Transitioning from Easter to Ascension (Thursday) to Pentecost (May 31)**

Be reminded, that in the fulfillment of this promise is that which enables us to accept and accomplish the task of being a witness. In fact, one of the evidences of the Holy Spirit’s presence is that we do become witnesses. Jesus promised that with the Holy Spirit would come “power”. Furthermore, he said that when tis occurs, the disciples “shall be” his witnesses. The implication is that a cause-and-effect relationship will take place. The Holy Spirit with his accompanying power is the cause, and the effect is that the recipients of this power would be “witnesses.”

### **3 P’s of Pentecost**

1. Promises fulfilled
2. Priceless Gifts: Presence – Peace - Protection (reference 1 Peter 3:13-22)
3. The “Power” of God - made manifest in ... Jesus’ life, death and resurrection; the coming of the Holy Spirit; and in the proclamation of the gospel and in the spreading of the word.

So my question for you today is what is your “go-to” promise from God’s Word?  
You and I know that GOD’S PROMISES NEVER FAIL!  
So **SHARE IT!**

1. Give hope.
2. Build faith.
3. Witness to the Power of God.

## **& EXPERIENCE THE BLESSING OF GOD'S PROMISES**

I leave you today with words of the Archdiocese of Toledo. "As we near the conclusion of the Easter Season, our minds and hearts turn toward the risen and ascended Lord who sent the Holy Spirit upon his disciples. His promise to be with us always gives us hope and strength to persevere during these unsettling times. May the Holy Spirit empower us to face courageously whatever may come and cause us to rejoice in our blessings and even in our sufferings,"