

In the Name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

The Divinely Inspired Author of the Epistle to the Hebrews first extends a Promise: “We are receiving and Kingdom that cannot be shaken...” Indeed, it is a Kingdom, the Kingdom of God, that endures for eternity. And that we receive by grace. The Author of the Epistle to the Hebrews begins with Gospel.

Faith, the faith necessary to receive the grace that places us in the Kingdom of God, saving faith responds to God’s grace. Good works are necessary to salvation, but can’t save. So the Apostle admonishes that you who have received God’s grace “serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear.” And that service the Apostle delineates.

Continue in brotherly love. Show hospitality to strangers. Remember the prisoners as if chained with them. Avoid fornication, keep the marriage bed undefiled. And all this he sums up with a simple truth: “God will judge.”

Finally, let your conduct be without covetousness, be content with what you have. While this includes the things of this body and life, the Apostle has already asserted that the Gifts you have received transcend this life.

God’s Gifts are eternal. They are the Gifts of forgiveness, salvation, and life. With these Gifts so freely given, how could we not be content? What more could we ask for than comfort, consolation, hope, and heaven? And that you find complete satisfaction in these Gifts, that you not lust after things that

perish, rust and fade, the Apostle makes you another Promise: God Himself has said “I will never leave you nor forsake you.” God is for you. God is with you. He will not abandon you.

To be abandoned is no small matter. To be forsaken in time of need can be fatal. But yet we see in our fallen society fathers that abandon their families; children that abandon their parents when they need them most; men and women that abandon their spouses; teachers that abandon their students; Pastors that abandon their congregations.

This abandonment may not be fully removing oneself from the company of another. It may be to continue as parents, children, spouse, teacher or Pastor, to remain in the relationship for selfish gain, and to withhold the attention, care, concern, love, nurture, teaching and service that is necessary. To willfully abandon someone that needs you is a selfish act. It is an offense that puts self before others.

Perhaps you have known what it is to be forsaken by someone you need or love. Perhaps you have endured loneliness or faced need or sickness or hardship alone. Undoubtedly you have fallen short too. Perhaps when others needed you, you weren’t there for them, or you helped them grudgingly, complaining all the while.

Perhaps you have put your needs and desires ahead of others who truly needed you, selfishly loving yourself more than you love your neighbor. To be unwilling to love neighbor as self can quickly lead your neighbor, your spouse, your child, your

friend into hopelessness and to utter despair. So it is with fallen man. Sinful from birth, he cannot even help himself.

But to such men, to fallen men, to you who have known hopelessness and despair, our Lord speaks Words of comfort and hope to you. For He Himself has said “I will never leave you nor forsake you.”

When you were dead in your transgressions and unable to help yourself, He did not abandon you. He died to save you. He was abandoned that you never be. And He that died and rose for you is with you today and always. His love for you never fails. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

He is with you now and forever. He hears your prayers. His grace and forgiveness come to you in His Word preached and read by the power of His Spirit. He makes salvation and life yours in the font. He gives you His Body and Blood to eat even this day, as Immanuel, God with us, is placed upon your tongue and poured across your lips.

So rejoice, dear Christian. God is with you. God is for you. Because Jesus was forsaken of the Father, you have a Father in heaven that will never forsake you. He provides for you. He protects you. He Who is truly Good has made you an heir of eternal life. He has prepared for you treasure in heaven. Believing in Him, you may confess with the Holy catholic Church, you may confess with the boundless joy that faith brings, “The Lord is my helper, I will not fear.”
In the Name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Ghost.