

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

“In Thee, O LORD, do I put my trust; let me never be ashamed: deliver me in thy righteousness.” That is the prayer of faith. Faith puts trust in Christ alone. Faith prays “In Thee, O Lord, do I put my trust.”

That means that faith trusts in nothing else – faith does not trust in men, nor the wisdom of men, nor the things of this world. Faith, when confronted with tribulation, faith, when facing a threat, faith, when challenged by the twisted goings-on of this fallen world, trusts in Christ.

The mania and over-reaction that has occurred in the face of the current threat before us, this time a virus, is proof sufficient of the foolishness of the fallen world. Nations blame other nations. Political parties blame their opponents, as do political candidates. Every gain that can be leveraged is taken advantage of, prices are raised on necessities, our enemies threaten to disrupt the supply of medication.

Every sneeze or cough brings anxiety and fear. Financial markets plunge, stores run out of the very staples necessary to ward off infection. Fallen men prove themselves unworthy of trust. And the devil is there, never letting a crisis go to waste. He attacks the very center of the life of faith, the Divine Service.

Secularists, who would destroy the church if that were possible, warn against congregating. Heretics counsel the elimination of the Chalice, and even the elimination of Holy Communion from the Divine Service, although in 2000 years, through repeated plague and epidemic, the Lord has blessed His people, and never brought harm to His people, through His Body and Blood. And you can be assured that He never will.

Still fallen men and secular leaders look for ways to harm the Church. It is not new. Consider how they treated our Lord. So we do not put our trust in men. We pray with the Psalmist “Pull me out of the net that they have laid privily for me: for thou art my strength.” That is the prayer of faith. Faith knows that all men are sinful, fallen, and by nature persecute the Church and reject the God who made them.

That sin has been present in your life as well. The mores and morals of this world of debauchery and perversion have seeped into your life, perhaps even causing you to question whether the clear Word of God is true. The doubt and anxiety of the godless has crept into the back of your mind too.

But faith and doubt are opposites. Faith clings to the Lord that proclaimed “Fear not!” Faith hears the Word of God Incarnate, who says “do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.” Faith trusts that God will provide, that God will protect. And faith knows that God works through concrete, wordly things to bring His protection, His healing, and His gracious provision.

That is not a call to live foolishly, to abandon sensible caution, or to say with the rich man “Eat, drink and be merry...” For to Him the Lord replied “Fool! This night your soul will be required of you...” In mercy the Lord has given you common sense and a conscience. The faithful do

not seek persecution or suffering, nor do they disregard sensible safeguards. But they do not put their trust in them. Nor do they trust in men. Saving faith trusts in God alone. Faith prays to God with the Prophet David “Oh how great is Thy goodness, which Thou hast laid up for them that fear Thee; which Thou hast wrought for them that trust in Thee before the sons of men!”

Faith prays “In Thee, O LORD, do I put my trust; let me never be ashamed: deliver me in thy righteousness.” Which is a confession that your righteousness is insufficient. It is a confession that all fallen men fall short, all men miss the mark, all men wander the crooked path. So a better righteousness, a better holiness, a perfect holiness is required to stand before a just and righteous God.

And that perfect holiness the Son of God showed forth to all mankind. He spoke only Truth. He healed. He blessed. He raised the dead. And for it fallen men persecuted Him. He was arrested wrongly, tried falsely, and condemned wrongly. He was mocked and beaten. He was made a public spectacle, scorned and shamed.

He was put to death on a cross. In Him do David’s Words find fulfillment: “I am forgotten as a dead man out of mind: I am like a broken vessel.” And yet, in perfect, unwavering faithfulness, before He rendered His life on your behalf, before He willingly stepped out of horrible suffering and into the dark jaws of death, He prayed the same Words the Prophet David wrote a thousand years before: “Into thine hand I commit my Spirit.”

He was faithful to the end. He proved Himself worthy of your trust. And then, against all human reason, against human science, over against human history, He did what no man could do – He defeated death, taking up His own life again. He is the God of life, the God of love, the God of forgiveness and salvation. To Him faith prays with King David “Make thy face to shine upon thy servant: save me for thy mercies’ sake.”

So do as the Psalmist exhorts: “O love the LORD, all ye his saints: for the LORD preserveth the faithful.” He preserves you in the face of doubt. He comforts you in times of peril. He soothes your soul when anxiety attacks. He provides as He has promised. He graciously gives you the things you need for this body and life. And He does more. He gives you what you need for the life to come.

So be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the LORD. Put your trust in Him, for He is worthy of your trust. Put away the things of the world. Harken to His Holy Commands, which He gave among the thunderings, the lightning flashes, and the sound of the trumpet, from that smoking mountain.

Turn from the ways of sinners. Deny the fallen world’s efforts to conform your thoughts to those of the godless. Repent of your sin, beat your breast, and put your trust in God. For He will never let you be ashamed.

Receive the God that comes to you, that enters your heart, the God that fills you by His Living Spirit, the God that makes Bread His Body and Wine His Blood, giving you to drink from the Cup of Salvation and Life. For He has heard your prayer, and He does the very thing faith asks: He delivers you in His righteousness.

Blessed be the Lord, for He has shown you His marvelous kindness in a strong city, New Jerusalem, the True Israel, His Holy Church, soon to be the Church Victorious. O love the Lord, all ye His saints, for the Lord preserveth the faithful.

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