

“UNBREAKABLE PROMISES, UNSHAKABLE CONFIDENCE.”

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First Christian Reformed Church, Lynden, WA

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Texts for the Sermon: Psalm 62

Prayer: Holy Father, let the words of my mouth and the meditation of all our hearts be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, our rock and our redeemer. In Jesus name, Amen.

Introduction.

I am detecting a conspiracy going on, someone is in cahoots. Last summer's Serve theme was the unshakable kingdom. The Cadets theme was "be strong and courageous," in other words unshakable. And now the Gems theme is unshakable. You get the feeling someone in Grand Rapids is trying get our attention and tells us something.

Maybe the shaking world we live in is motivating them. The GEMS litany starts out acknowledging that by quoting Jesus, "In the world you will have tribulation" (John 6:33).

So what are we to do in this troubled and troubling world? Especially what are we to do when we are afraid? You GEMS girls, what do you do when you are afraid? Do you turn to mom and dad, or to a friend, or your dog or horse?

Where do we turn when some part of our world is being shaken? I know you have been talking about that this year.

Your GEMS theme verse for this year comes from Psalm 62. This Psalm has written by David at a time he was feeling some shaking, something that was causing fear, anxiety, stress. He was being shaken.

What should we do when we are being shaken? Let's notice three things from this Psalm.

First, find a rock, a strong solid place.

In other words, start with the foundation.

Are you the rock, the strong foundation, do you trust in yourself? No.

Do you trust in your own courage or strength? No.

How about someone else like your parents or friends? No.

If you know anything about David, you know that he spent a lot of time on the run being chased by enemies. He spent a lot of time hiding in caves and among huge boulders and in rocky

cliffs. He found secure refuge among rocks. They become for him a high place, a castle, a fortress.

It is a great metaphor, picture that we can grasp.

Some people call Psalm 62 the “*Only Psalm*” because of all the times it says only or alone. David said God alone is the rock and salvation and fortress. David didn’t look to himself or anyone else, he looked only to God.

Notice something else about how David did that. He doesn’t say the rock, the fortress, but my rock, my fortress, my refuge, my salvation. David lays claim to God as his God.

God who is the rock of ages, is also my rock.

God who is the God of salvation, is also my salvation.

God who is God Most High, is also my high place.

Remember when doubting Thomas saw Jesus alive for the first time, he declared, “My Lord and My God.”

Is your faith that personal? Do you make that declaration?

If I were to ask who is Jesus to you, how would you answer? Would you use first person personal pronouns? Do you know from experience that Jesus is your rock, your fortress, your sure defense, your strength and salvation?

The first thing you need to do to be unshakeable is to find a solid rock and make it yours, and that rock is Jesus.

Second, build a fortress on the rock.

Once you have the foundation, then build on the foundation, a strong and sure defense.

What is this fortress or a castle? It is a strong, secure, impenetrable place. I am sure many of you have built forts, maybe in your family room or bedroom, out of blankets or sheets. Or maybe you have a fort in your backyard made out of wood.

If you were going to build a strong fortress what would you build it out of? Legos, wood, steel, bricks, concrete, lots of concrete? The strongest fort in America is Fort Knox where they keep America’s gold supply. It is built out of tons of concrete and steel.

Would you ever think of building a fortress out of *words*? Do you think it would be very strong? Well what if the words were God’s Word, God’s Promises, that would make a strong fortress.

David builds his fortress on the promises of God, God's promise to be his salvation, his hope, his refuge. That's what your litany says, God's promises are unbreakable, nobody can break them down or take them away.

How many of God's unbreakable promises do you know and trust in?

Psalm 23:4 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

Psalm 27:1 The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

Psalm 34:4 I sought the Lord, and he answered me and delivered me from all my fears.

Hebrews 13:5 I will never leave you nor forsake you.

John 14:27 Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.

Romans 8:28 We know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.

Philippians 4:19 My God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

Matthew 28:20 Behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.

I keep this little booklet of over 50 unbreakable promises of God in my Bible to help me be unshakable when things in my life get shaky. I give these away to anyone who asks me for it. But I encourage you to write down your own list and keep adding to it.

The unbreakable promises of God give you unshakable confidence in Jesus who is your rock, so you don't have to be afraid.

Third, trust in your rock and refuge at all times.

After you find your rock and build your fortress on it, David asks us to do one thing. Live on that rock and in that fortress in humility, humbly trusting everything to God.

62:8 Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your heart before him; God is a refuge for us.

This is David's exhortation to all of us. When we find Jesus to be our rock and sure foundation, then trust Him, and show that trust by pouring out your heart.

At all times. Do you know what that means? It means more than we do. It means not just when things are going bad, when something hard is happening. It means when things are going well, when God is being gracious and giving good things. Today, next week, next year, always.

Pour out your heart before Him. The word pour implies a heart that is full to the brim of trouble or grief or heartache. Take your heart and turn it upside down before Him and empty it out. Your inmost thought, your inner desires, your secret sins, your fears, doubts and longings. Hide nothing, hold nothing back.

Psalm 55:22 Cast your burden on the Lord, and he will sustain you; he will never permit the righteous to be moved.

I Peter 5:6-7 Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, 7 casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.

When David was shaken, he turned to his rock, his God. Sometimes God shakes our world, and He does that because He knows that is the most sure-fire way to get us to turn to Him and pray and trust Him. God knows that most people don't run into a fortress unless they're faced with some real danger coming their way. The Apostle Paul learned this:

II Corinthians 1:8-9 For we do not want you to be unaware, brothers, of the affliction we experienced in Asia. For we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself. 9 Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death. But that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead.

God shakes our world so we will trust in Him and rest on Him and not on ourselves.

It's true for me, its true for your parents, its true for you. As hard as those times can be, it is actually the mercy of God to turn us closer to Him. That's when God becomes real and personal to us. That's when He becomes my rock, my fortress, my salvation, my hope, my help.

The ESV has an adverb in verse 2 that qualifies shaken, "I will not be greatly shaken." But in verse 6 the adverb disappears. Now it's absolute, "I shall not be shaken." What's going on? What changed?

As David poured out his heart and prayed he grew in confidence and courage. Faith is like a spiritual muscle that grows stronger when it is exercised and tested.

When the Psalmist says "I will not be shaken" he isn't saying he is superman, that he is fearless, that he is big and tough and strong in the face of danger. He is saying what he trusts in is unshakable, and because that is unshakable, he can have unshakable confidence.

Conclusion and application.

Let me conclude with three illustrations I hope you will remember and that will help you to be unshakable, not by yourself, but by trusting Jesus.

If you are in a ship in a raging storm, huge waves being driven by strong winds. Black clouds showing no sign of letting up. Should you be nervous, anxious, afraid? Here is a good way to tell. Go look at the captain of the ship as he is at the helm, at the wheel. If he isn't nervous or worried or afraid, then you don't have to be.

The disciples didn't know this. They were in a boat in a storm with Jesus. During the storm what was Jesus doing? He was sleeping in the bow of the boat. If the disciples had been men of faith they would have taken one look at Jesus and decided everything must be OK. Jesus isn't nervous or worried or anxious, so no need for them to be.

Don't be like the disciples whom Jesus rebuked, "O you of little faith."

Keep your eyes fixed on Jesus, as He is at the helm of our lives navigating the storms of our lives. If He isn't sweating, nervous, anxious, then we don't have to be. He knows our storms, in fact He is the one who sends the storms and is with us in the midst of the storms, He knows the way through the storms, and He knows how to calm the storms.

Being unshakable isn't about us having a stiff upper lip and never being anxious, worried, afraid, stressed. Being unshaken is about trusting in and believing in the One who is unshaken and unshakable, our rock, Jesus.

There is a famous line in the movie Bridge of Spies that made a real impression on me. In a couple of very tense moments in the movie one man asks another man if he is worried. By all accounts he should have been very worried, his life was at stake. But when he was asked if he was worried, the man simply replies, "Would it help?"

"Are you worried?" "Would it help?"

Jesus says that in a different way in His Sermon on the Mount.

Matthew 6:27-33 Which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? ...O you of little faith... your heavenly Father knows [what] you need.

What is you don't like something about yourself? Are you worried? Would it help?

What if something at school is hard? Are you worried? Would it help?

What if your best friend is mean to you? Are you worried? Would it help?

What if you don't get married? Are you worried? Would it help?

What if you lose your job? Are you worried? Would it help?

What if prices keep going up? Are you worried? Would it help?

What if the stock market crashes? Are you worried? Would it help?

Are you worried? Would it help?

Worry is like a rocking chair. It gives you something to do but it doesn't get you anywhere.

But if we have the unbreakable promises of God then we can have unshakeable confidence in Jesus no matter what it is that worries us or keeps us awake at night.

Two artists were commissioned to paint pictures depicting “peace.” One artist paints a tranquil, serene scene—a calm lake with rolling green hills, still pine trees reflected in the water’s mirror, a cloudless blue sky. Think a Bob Ross painting or a Thomas Kinkade painting.

The other painter brushes on his canvas a steep rocky ravine, with rocks jutting out. Over the top of the rock face rushed a powerful waterfall, splashing and roaring, spray and foam everywhere. On one of the rocky cliffs, near the bottom of the gorge, stands a slender birch tree. And there, on a slim branch, glistening with the fall’s spray, is a nest with a bird resting in it.

That second picture is what we have been talking about. For Jesus, peace in this world is not the absence of trouble. It is not the tranquil lakes and blue skies. Jesus’ peace means even while the waters foam and surge about us, even in the storms of change and trouble, we have a rock. A firm, unshakeable place to nest.

In this world, Jesus said we’ll have trouble. Jesus has the scars to prove it. And Jesus’ scars mean He will go to any length to take care of us, to never leave us or forsake us and cause all things to work for His glory and our salvation. So we can be like that bird resting in the nest by the roaring waterfall.

He only is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; ***I shall not be shaken.***