

The Bandit of Joy

By - Max Lucado



The bandit of joy is *Fear*. Fear of death, fear of failure, fear of God, and fear of tomorrow. His arsenal is vast. His goal? To create cowardly, joyless souls.

We try unsuccessfully to face our fears with power, possessions, or popularity. Only inward character creates courage. And it is those inward convictions Jesus is building in the Beatitudes. The result of this process is courage—“they shall inherit the earth” (Matthew 5:5). No longer shall the earth and its fears dominate us, for we follow the one who dominates the earth.

If you are in Christ, you are guaranteed that your sins will be filtered through, hidden in, and screened out by the sacrifice of Jesus. That means failure is not a concern for you. Your victory is secure. How could you not be courageous?

Responsive Reading: Psalm 8:1-7, 17-19

All: Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, you who lead Joseph like a flock!

North: You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh.

South: *Stir up your might and come to save us! Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved.*

All: O LORD God of hosts, how long will you be angry with your people's prayers?

North: You have fed them with the bread of tears and given them tears to drink in full measure.

South: *You make us the scorn of our neighbors; our enemies laugh among themselves.*

All: Restore us, O God of hosts; let your face shine, that we may be saved.

North: But let your hand be upon the one at your right hand, the one whom you made strong for yourself.

South: *Then we will never turn back from you; give us life, and we will call on your name.*

All: Restore us, O LORD God of hosts; let your face shine, that we may be saved.

Lesson: 1 Corinthians 1:3-9

May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace. I always thank my God for you and for the gracious gifts he has given you, now that you belong to Christ Jesus. Through him, God has enriched your church in every way—with all of your eloquent words and all of your knowledge. This confirms that what I told you about Christ is true. Now you have every spiritual gift you need as you eagerly wait for the return of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will keep you strong to the end so that you will be free from all blame on the day when our Lord Jesus Christ returns. God will do this, for he is faithful to do what he says, and he has invited you into partnership with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Gospel: Mark 13:24-37

“But in those days, following that distress, “‘the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.’ “At that time people will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. And he will send his angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of the heavens.”

“Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. Even so, when you...

Gospel – (cont'd)

see these things happening, you know that it is near, right at the door. Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.”

“But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come. It’s like a man going away: He leaves his house and puts his servants in charge, each with their assigned task, and tells the one at the door to keep watch.”

“Therefore, keep watch because you do not know when the owner of the house will come back—whether in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or at dawn. If he comes suddenly, do not let him find you sleeping. What I say to you, I say to everyone: ‘Watch!’”

SALEM FAMILY EVENTS

Family Pathways

*Is having its annual
Holiday Food Drive
A person can stop by
any of the food shelves
w/ donations of either
foodstuffs or money*



Last Week



Salem YouTube channel (where the videos from Sundays will be posted)

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCxF4qMkRspB-vDDafLJSodQ/>



SUNDAY SCHOOL

We could have Sunday School if we have teachers - anyone interested?



- Q: What kind of Christmas music do elves like? A: “Wrap” music.
- Q: How can Santa deliver presents during a thunderstorm? A: His sleigh is flown by raindeer..
- Q: What do you call a snowman with a six pack? A: An abdominal snowman
- Q. How do Christmas angels greet each other? A. "Halo!"
- Q. What's red and white and falls down chimneys? A. Santa Klutz!
- People act like the North Pole and the South Pole are exactly the same, but really, there's a whole world of difference between them.
- Q. What did the peanut butter say to the grape on Christmas? A. "Tis the season to be jelly!"
- Q. What's a sheep's favorite Christmas song? A. "Fleece Navidad"!
- Q. What do sheep say to shepherds at Christmastime? A. "Season's bleatings!"
- Q. Why do Dasher and Dancer love coffee? A. Because they're Santa's star bucks!
- Q. What does the Gingerbread Man use to make his bed? A. Cookie sheets!

