

Good morning,

I am aware, as we gather here this morning, we do so in the midst of conflict. And so we continue to pray for Gods presence in the world, and that God may lead us all to peace...

No one could blame any of us if the troubles and woes of this life make us anxious or angry or fearful. I think these are very normal responses to the realities that we see and encounter every day. Especially these days...

We are told in Matthew 24 that Jesus' disciples came to him worried, ! how will we know when it is the end times!? Jesus responds, you will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come.

See to it that you are not alarmed; such things must happen.

This morning I want to take inspiration from that beautiful hymn Blessed assurance...When we are unsettled and conflicted when we lack confidence how do we find that deep and blessed assurance.

I don't know about you, but I sure could use some assurance, some of that assurance that comes from God. Assurance that God is looking out for us. That God is going to see us through the woes of life. Sounds pretty nice right about now.

where do you find it? How do you find it?...

Our gospel reading for today from Luke finds Jesus with Peter James and John. There is a fantastic scene that unfolds in front of those disciples that connects a radiant, glowing Jesus to Moses and the prophet Elijah. Jesus is changed in this prayerful moment. But the part of the Gospel that I want to focus on is not the change but the impetus for the change. Its at the beginning of our Gospel.

Our story begins with Jesus who took with him Peter and John and James, and they went up on the mountain to pray... they went up on a mountain to pray... These four left their normal lives, they left business as usual to go to the mountain top.

I wonder...how often do we leave our normal lives and make the time to go up to the mountain. If we are in search of this

blessed assurance from God, this confidence that God has us in the palm of his hand protecting us, keeping us, how do we expect to find it if we don't spend time talking to God.

Listening to God.

How do we expect God to assure us if we don't bring our troubles, our woes to God every chance we get...Give God the opportunity to touch your life! Make the time to go. And not just go, but to go boldly to God. To boldly seek what God has in stored for you.

Paul says in our reading from Corinthians Since, then, we have such a hope, we act with great boldness.

There is a direct connection between our faith-our hope in God's ability to assure-to protect us and- that gives us great boldness.

As I look around the world it seems like the most wrongheaded people are the most bold...**you** need to be bolder...**we all** need to be bolder! Bold in the way we go to God, bold in the way that we follow where god leads us! Bold in our love. Bold in our faith!

Believe that this boldness comes from that blessed assurance!

Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine;

Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine! Heir of salvation, purchase of God, Born of His Spirit, washed in His blood.

This is my story, this is my song, praising my savior all the day long. This is my story, this is my song, praising my savior all the day long...

Is this your story?

Go to that mountain top, praise God, pray to god. Allow god to give you this blessed assurance... It is this prayer, like Jesus and his disciples, it is this prayer up on this mountain top that will change you.

You know lent is upon us, ash Wednesday is three days away.

Lent is about all of this, all that we have been talking about.

Lent is a time where we as a church intentionally, set aside time to go to that mountain top boldly in prayer, to talk to God. Lent

is a time for listening. For seeking. And allowing God to touch our lives.

That assurance comes from knowing without a doubt that You are with God and that God is with you! Always. God with you in times of peace... God is with you in times war. God is with you when you haven't got a place to go or a friend to call your own.

God is with you.

And so this lent, be bold, don't let the time pass you by. Go to that mountain top in prayer...

This is my story, this is my song, praising **my** savior all.. the.. day... long...

Make this your story!

Amen

Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine;

Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine! Heir of salvation, purchase
of God, Born of His Spirit, washed in His blood.

This is my story, this is my song, praising my savior all the day
long. This is my story, this is my song, praising my savior all the
day long...