

SERMON: To Whom Shall You Go this New Year?

GOOD MORNING, HAPPY NEW YEAR AND WELCOME TO FATHER'S HOUSE

In this Message I will bring on meanings of Jesus' teaching in Capernaum, Galilee, AD 29.

He was speaking to the crowd whom He had fed miraculously on the other side of the lake; and to His Disciples. This message moves us all to ask ourselves “What may tempt us to turn away from Jesus in 2026.” Most people turn away from the LORD by not trusting the LORD beyond their understanding, or by fear of the unknown. I have listed here a few fears we might have. But, remember that where fear comes in to our heart, faith goes out!

EARTHQUAKES- A DISASTER IN NATURE

New Year's Day, last Thursday, was the 2nd Anniversary of the Noto Earthquake with 691 deaths!

Also, A recent Japan News flash.....

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Japan and adjacent waters found themselves at the epicenter of powerful seismic activity, with tremors up to magnitude 5.4 recorded. Scientists warn of the possibility of a strong "mega-earthquake" within a year.

You may ask me: “Pastor, why bring up the sad days of death and destruction for the Japanese people?” Because as Christians, we must never let Death and Destruction remove Jesus from His Throne in Heaven. He is the Lord of Heaven and Earth!

PSALM 97.1 BOLDLY DECLARES GOD REIGNING OVER ALL EVENTS ON PLANET EARTH: *The LORD reigns; let the earth rejoice; let the many coastlands be glad!*”

I feel the coastlands here are our beloved Japan, but might be many places on Earth. Quoting Charles H. Spurgeon (M&E) “**Majesty gleams in flashes of fire amid the tempest's horrors, and the glory of the Lord is seen in grandeur in the fall of empires, and the crash of thrones.**”

God Requires Christians to trust Him, and by faith, to see all History in light of Eternity! God does feel with great compassion the pain when disaster hits men, especially our loved ones.

C.H. Spurgeon added a 19th Century poem to show this:

*God is God; He sees and hears
All our troubles, all our tears.
Soul, forget not, 'mid thy pains,
God o'er all for ever reigns*

There are NO NATURAL DISASTERS! All are truly supernatural for God rules over nature. As **(Psalm 97.1)** says, *The LORD reigns.*

The Word of God also tells us in **(Romans 1.18)** *The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth through unrighteousness.* To remain good and holy He must continue to execute Judgments on Mankind which continues to sin against Him. But we must know that Earthquakes and all Disasters in Nature are warnings of a more everlasting Judgment. This is everyone's judgment after death. As we read in the book of John Chapter 6, we will see that Jesus taught God's eternal righteous judgment is ONLY to those who refuse to believe in His Son, Jesus. Disasters are designed to lead the sinner to repentance and seek this God of Almighty power. Disasters also test the faith of God's beloved Children, Christians.

THE WHOLE WORLD RECIEVES GOD'S WARNING OF FINAL JUDGEMENT FOR SIN

The Japanese people are not alone in suffering from Earthquakes. During 2025 these are the countries that had earthquakes of magnitude near 7.0 or greater: Philippines, Russia, Macquarie Islands, Alaska, Papa New Guinea, Tonga, Myanmar, Cayman Islands and Japan. Japan and many of these nations are situated close to the Pacific Rim or Ring of Fire. This is the geology of planet Earth.

God acts through nature, but He does not deny how He created the Earth. People who build houses in California in the areas near Forests can either lose their property or their lives during the forest fire season.

Of course, none of us chose where to be born. But everywhere on Earth has dangers. Fear of these dangers might tempt a Christian to turn from following Jesus.

Also, I know that earnest prayer by Christians sometimes moves God to change His plans for disasters in nature. Jesus is still the Master of the Winds and Waves and Nature. But, we cannot demand that God stop expressing His wrath at the sin of Mankind around the whole Earth!

IMMINENT WAR IN ASIA?

Another reason for fear to replace faith in 2026 is China! It is now clear that the current Beijing government has been building up their weapon stockpile for decades. They have also been

teaching children to “play with guns” while learning Communist Party war- inspiring songs. The question is, will China use these weapons and really invade Taiwan in 2026? and if so, why not Japan?

War is an evil coming from Mankind's sinful nature. It will continue until Jesus returns. Jesus' Disciples asked Him to tell them what would be the signs happening just before He would return. In **(Matthew 24.4-7)** they asked: “*Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of Your coming and of the end of the age?*” Jesus answered: **5** *For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will deceive many.* **6** *You will hear of wars and rumors of wars. **See that you are not troubled.** For all these things must happen, but the end is not yet.* **7** *For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines, epidemics, and earthquakes in various places.*

Here Jesus included the two main questions of *fear against faith* here today for 2026 that I spoke of:

- *wars and rumors of wars*

The threats by China

- *and earthquakes in various places*

The mega-earthquake in Japan. Also, scientists agree that earthquakes around the Earth are more frequent.

Jesus answer to the disciples and for every Christian today is in **(Matthew 24.6b)** ***See that you are not troubled.*** The Original Greek New Testament translation for *troubled* is throeō. This means: in New Testament passages, to be **disturbed, disquieted, alarmed, terrified.** **There is no need for disquiet if we have faith in Jesus and God's Word as in (Psalm 97.1) *The LORD reigns.*** **Note that the Lord answered His disciples with this exhortation as an encouragement, although I expect there may have been some sternness *in His voice.* Therefore Disciples must have *faith over fear!* He did not deny the human need for some information. His command to have faith and not fear included His describing events coming to the Earth. But, He was also looking ahead to the disasters of today. He knew that our *faith over fear* must depend on our faith in the LORD, not on the different disasters facing us. We must not let concern be an excuse for fear over faith!**

TO WHOM SHALL YOU GO IN 2026?

Now let us look at the Spiritual Words that challenged Jesus' audience in Capernaum by the Sea of Galilee in 29AD. These were recorded by the Apostle John. Reading **(John 6.24,28-29)** *When the*

people therefore saw that neither Jesus nor His disciples were there, they also got into boats and came to Capernaum, looking for Jesus. **28** Then they asked Him, “What shall we do that we may work the works of God?” **29** Jesus answered them, ***“This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent.”***

Remember all these people were Jewish. Their religion was about the Law as given from God to Moses. Their first thought was ***What shall we do.*** Jesus replies it is what ***you believe*** and not you do, and that God is working on them to create this belief! So Jesus replied ***that you believe in Him whom He has sent.***

Next, Jesus will attempt to convince them that He is the One God has sent. He counters their argument about Moses' supernatural gifts. Actually, they are crediting Moses instead of God who gave the *manna*.

Reading in the Older Testament (**Exodus 16.4 & 31**) **4** Then the Lord said to Moses, “Indeed, I will rain bread from heaven for you **31** The house of Israel named it ***manna***, and it was like coriander seed and was white, and its taste was like wafers made with honey.

We next see how the Jews challenged Jesus against Moses! Reading (**John 6.30-34**) **30** Therefore they said to Him, “What sign do You show then, that we may see and believe You? What work will You perform? **31** Our fathers ate manna in the desert. As it is written, ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat.’” **32** Then Jesus said, “Truly, truly I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you the true bread from heaven. **33** For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.” **34** Then they said to Him, “Lord, give us this bread always.”

Jesus quickly corrected them for giving credit to Moses and not His Father. But He did not debate this but moved the debate from supernatural physical bread towards the supernatural spiritual true bread from heaven, Himself. Reading (**John 6.35**) Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to Me shall never hunger, and whoever believes in Me shall never thirst. And in (**John 6.40**): This is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.

Now Jesus challenges their belief in their *Messiah*. But he also introduces the connection between the Father God and the Son of God: ***everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.*** A Jew watching for the *Messiah* should have noticed the expression ***on the last day*** and a coming judgment of sin by God at the End of Time. Regardless, they were not open to the Spirit's anointing on Jesus to open their hearts to the TRUTH.

Reading (**John 6.41-42**) *41 The Jews then murmured about Him, because He said, "I am the bread which came down from heaven." 42 They said, "Is this not Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it then that He says, 'I have come down from heaven'? " The Jews were now thinking in terms of the Messiah. ***They assumed Jesus coming from Nazareth, not from Bethlehem, meant He could not be Messiah.****

Now Jesus brings His debate back to the spiritual, not physical, in (**John 6.47-51**): *47 Truly, truly I say to you, whoever believes in Me has eternal life. 48 I am the bread of life. 49 Your fathers ate manna in the wilderness, and they died. 50 This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that one may eat of it and not die. 51 I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. The bread which I shall give for the life of the world is My flesh."*

The Jewish crowd and even His Disciples could not make the spiritual connection. The crowd accused Jesus of cannibalism, and many disciples stopped following Him. Jesus' whole debate focused on moving from physical events to the spiritual event of believing Him; where He came from, and who He really is! The cannibalism accusation showed that they had missed the *spirit* of His whole teaching!

52 The Jews therefore quarreled among themselves, saying, "How can this Man give us His flesh to eat?" 53 Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. 54 Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life. And I will raise him up on the last day. 55 For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. 56 Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood remains in Me, and I in him. 57 As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever feeds on Me also will live because of Me.

The Words of Eternal Life

*60 When they heard this, many of His disciples said, "This is a hard saying. Who can listen to it?" 61 Knowing in Himself that His disciples murmured about it, Jesus said to them, "Does this offend you? 62 Then what if you see the Son of Man ascend to where He was before? 63 ***It is the Spirit who gives life. The flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit and are life.****

The Lord is now speaking: ***The flesh profits nothing.*** This sounds like a contradiction of His

statement in **(John 6.54)** *Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life. And I will raise him up on the last day.* As I just said, the debate was Jesus aiming the crowds from the physical to the spiritual truths! And. As we look back or connect back to the beginning of this discourse in **(John 6.29)** *“This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent.”* Jesus is stating that **believing** in the sacrifice of His flesh and spilling of His Blood is spiritually *eating His flesh and drinking His Blood*. He was pointing forward to His sacrifice on the Cross. Believing is a **spiritual event, not a physical one.** **Thus it is spiritual food believing in the physical event of His death on the Cross.**

FAITH AGAINST FEAR TO TRUST THE LORD

66 *From that time many of His disciples went back and walked no more with Him.* Those former disciples were giving up their safe place for eternity with Jesus! The Bible in the Older Testament teaches in **(Proverbs 3.5-6)** **5** *Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; 6 in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct your paths.* The TEST OF YOUR FAITH OVER FEAR is when anyone following Jesus runs up against DISASTERS IN LIFE, or, something GOD SAID when Jesus spoke on Earth, or that GOD SAID in the Holy Bible, that they don't understand..... Then the devil tempts them to stop following the Lord Jesus. This is when disciples, then and now, must trust in Jesus' and His Father's character beyond their understanding. Sad to see that these disciples in Capernaum *walked no more with Him*. They became traitors and deserters to their Teacher, the Son of God, Jesus. They never really believed in Him as more than a human being!

But, then, hope and life for Mankind again spring forth from a rough tough fisherman, Peter.

Reading in **(John 6.67-69)** **67** *So Jesus said to the twelve, “Do you also want to go away?”*

68 *Simon Peter answered Him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.*

69 *We have believed and have come to know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”*

At that moment the Apostle Peter became the greatest theologian on planet Earth with the statement that answers all of eternity in the heart of Man: “Lord, to whom shall we go?”

I believe that Peter was saying that he did not understand what Jesus meant by *Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life.* **But Peter new JESUS!** He had never met any Man of God like Him, and Peter knew there cannot be another. So, what the Bible would later show, he had at first a small and wavering faith, but with a heart of love to His Lord. Peter next says: *You have the words of eternal life. 69 We have believed and have come to know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.*” Peter knew that Eternal Everlasting Life is more important than anything else in this world. He confessed Jesus as Lord and the Son of God. Peter's faith would later grow and he would become the First Leader in the Church. The Church was born on Pentecost only weeks after Jesus' Death-Resurrection-and Ascension back to Heaven.

WHAT ABOUT YOU, CHRISTIAN? IF DISASTER STRIKES IN 2026..To Whom Shall You Go?

When you face an impending disaster: in Nature or from Men, do you *Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding;* We have the full testimony of Jesus and His faithful followers in the Bible. We have God's WORD in the Older and Newer Testaments.

But the real test or question is: "What do we have in our hearts towards Jesus!" Peter's heart was full of love for Jesus!

When the building floor rolls like a river, and the telephone poles rock and roll...will your heart sink or will you remember **Jesus, the Lover of My Soul?**

If China begins to invade Asia will you make your physical life more important than Eternal Life? Jesus taught Christians to fear or reverence God, not men in **(Matthew 10.28):** *Do not fear those who kill the body but are not able to kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.* **Think of your Christian brothers and sisters around the world in not only spiritual warfare, as we are, but also in physical war !**

The Bible does tell us how the Apostle Peter's faith later gave way to fear during the trial of Jesus. But God led him to a true repentance. After Jesus' Resurrection He appeared to Peter. God restored his faith and hope for a glorious future. Then Jesus called him back to serve Him as a soldier to spread the Gospel of Christ. This fiery trial for Peter allowed him years later to write with compassion under the Breath of the Holy Spirit in (1 Peter 4.12-13) *Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that is taking place among you to test you, as*

though some strange thing happened to you. 13 But rejoice insofar as you share in Christ's sufferings, so that you may rejoice and be glad also in the revelation of His glory.

As Charles Spurgeon wrote: **"Who barter or trades GOLD for Dross? We will not forswear the SUN until we find a better light, nor leave our LORD until a brighter lover shall appear. And, since that can never be, we will hold Him with a grasp immortal, and bind His Name as a seal upon our arm."**(M&E)

Like Peter, and Spurgeon's words, remember also that we too have the Spirit of God to help us keep following Jesus--- NO MATTER WHAT! Let all Christians here make that commitment for this 2026 year since Jesus came to Earth. This may be the year the Lord may appear!

IF YOU ARE STILL A SINNER, WHAT ABOUT YOU?

Your life is a vapor, soon to be blown away! To Whom Shall You Go in 2026?

All Christians are Forgiven Sinners! As a sinner, in the Bible you have the complete Good News of Jesus that the people in John Chapter 6 did not know. You can imagine Jesus being nailed to a Tree, a Cross, because of God's Love for you. The Bible in **(Romans 5.8)** tells you of God's marvelous love for YOU: *But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*

Believing this and turning around from sinful living towards Jesus will make you a Christian if you Believe Jesus' death on the Cross was for you! His Body of Flesh wounded and blood flowing from His dying Body was for YOU. God raised Him from the dead for YOU!

When you believe Jesus' passion on the Cross for YOU, you are spiritually *eating My flesh and drinking s My blood.* When you believe this, you have *eternal life*, as Jesus Promised!

Why not start *Everlasting Life in 2026?* You can start today to life forever and ever, and never feel the pains of Death. You WILL live forever with Jesus and all of God's Children in Heaven; and then on Earth when we all return with Jesus as He RETURNS to judge this world.

Let Us Pray,

REFERENCES

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