

## Thoughts on the Readings of August 7, 2022

**The Common Thread** Your faith, as Abraham's, is reckoned to you as righteousness. The Lord God is our sure defense, for we cannot be saved from ruin by military or political might, but by the strong right arm of the Lord. It is our unwavering conviction that God both created and sustains by his word. How can we not trust him with fear and faith, and hope in his steadfast love? We do not concern ourselves over each day's bread, as God has given us the whole kingdom, the heavenly city, the glorious homeland that we both seek and find in Christ.

**First Reading - [Genesis 15:1-6](#)** God's covenant with Abraham was not the mere promise of a multitude of offspring, but the promise of one descendent in particular. "Offspring" in verse five is singular, pointing toward the one in whom all his offspring (plural) would be blessed (re: [Gal 3:16](#)). We are all made righteous through faith in this promised Christ, just as Abraham was accounted righteous by believing the word of the Lord.

**Psalm - [Psalm 33:12-22](#)** The hearts and mind, the desires and secrets, of all people are an open book to the Lord God. He sees many who put their confidence in their own strength or the might of their country's military. Yet, his eye is most keenly upon those who fear him, who place their whole hope and trust in him. They are the ones who are happy to wait on his promise, for their confidence is not so much in the promise—let alone their own deeds or the might of nations—as his steadfast love.

**Second Reading - [Hebrews 11:1-16](#)** Faith is not founded in intellectual knowledge or in empirical research. Indeed, faith is a certainty in that which is not rationally knowable or able to be discovered. Nor is faith an opinion; rather, it is a conviction. In this hall of faith that is the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, we see this conviction at work in the lives of many who preceded us. They all died in faith, not receiving the outcome of their faith, but seeing it in the distance and still believing. Like them, we too are exiles in faith, awaiting a better place, an inheritance, a homeland. God has prepared this heavenly city; it is as good as lived in already.

**Gospel - [Luke 12:22-34, 35-40](#)** What are we to do here, we who long for a “a new heaven and a new earth,” ([Isa 65:17](#); [Rev 21:1](#)) ones in which righteousness dwell ([2 Pet 3:13](#))? We are to build houses and settle in them, plant gardens and enjoy their produce, marry and have children. We are to increase without anxiety or fear, except a healthy fear of the Lord, for it is the Father’s delight to give us treasure on earth and in heaven.

**OTHER THOUGHTS:** “Look toward heaven.” When we look to ourselves, we tend to get in trouble. Initially, Abram believed God’s promise of a son. But after a while, he took his eyes off of God and his promise. Goaded by Sarai, his wife, Abram took the matter of having a son into his own hands, contributing to the biggest dysfunctional family since Adam and Eve ([Gen 16:1-5](#)). Nearly 15 years later, the Lord reminded Abram of his covenant ([Gen 17:1-2](#)). Making him wait was also a reminder of who is in control. “Look toward heaven.” God promises us in our baptism to make us heirs of the covenant ([Gal 3:29](#)). Though we may wait a long time, longer perhaps than Abram waited, we too are blessed. We have received the Spirit of promise by faith, by believing the word of God ([Gal 3:2](#)). Let us not turn back to the flesh, taking matters into our own hands through works of the law ([Gal 3:3](#)). “Look toward heaven.” God is still in control; he keeps his promise.