

A few days back, scanning over newsfeed headlines, a NYTimes story, "Coffee Drinking Prevents Dying." The day is off to a good start. Great news and oh how we need good news. You ask me "how are things going?" "I drink coffee." Later in the morning the headline was fixed to read "Coffee drinking lowers mortality risk" Which is still pretty good news as I thought the mortality risk is 100%. Oh the wisdom of man.

"How are things going?" What's your response. Jesus says, **if anyone keeps my word**, keeps, holds to, honors, guards, lives by, my word, **will never see death**. What is death to us? What is life to us?

Our Lord, His Church faces the saddest reality of the fallen world. He came unto His own and His own received Him not. Still today. They loved darkness rather than light, rejected forgiveness for the false promise of pleasure, live for the self. Talk of love is cheap. Real love means sacrifice, its self-less, not pleasure. The only true love there is flows from a cross. In response to Jesus' love, they picked up stones to murder Him.

Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM, I AM, the God of Abraham, I AM, name God spoke to Moses at burning bush and brought His people in exodus out of slavery. I am here to rescue you. The implications, only God can ascribe to Himself the name I AM.

For that they pick up stones. They don't want to be rescued and are offended by Him, by His Words. Still today. Do not think current events are strange. The end draws near. Hostility grows in direct proportion to increased talk of His love, freedom is squeezed in the name of safety, and those with the Spirit are accused of having demons, being hateful people.

How are things going? Not well. You see the news, you go to the store, you see the mass confusion over identity, racism, gender, life, marriage, climate. And if that's not enough, your family has its share of unrest. When someone asks you "How are things going?" What do you say? What determines your answer? Do you speak the ache of a heart that is wounded, bleeding or a life that is a shadow of what we hoped it would be, or live by your circumstances, by the news and state of our world?

Do you give answer to life as a people who gather in His house, a communion of saints, where the Word of the Lord is preached, where you take honored place at His Table to receive a medicine of immortality? Do you speak as adults who trust yourselves or children who trust the voice of their fathers?

How are things? Where does your joy lie? Jesus said **Abraham rejoiced that he would see my day. He saw it and was glad**. Immediately the

enemies of Jesus jumped on this. Maybe attack you for His truth. Join the ranks of Abraham, rejoicing of promises fulfilled. Fulfilled on a cross. Promises fulfilled, promises your Lord works everyday in your life.

Abraham saw this by faith. He waited years in prayer, never saw all that was promised. He knew God directed His steps and guided His future. Lived knowing the promises would be fulfilled. Lived in repentance for miserable failures like yours and restored to bask in forgiveness like you.

How can we rejoice with Abraham, find such joy? Earthly joys are fleeting, will not last, memories or new life experiences. But eternal joy our hearts and minds -so desperately seek- is not beyond us. It is ours by faith. Christ is yours. Your life may be like Abraham who will not have all that he wants and live long enough to see it. Rejoice with him.

How's it going? Things may get worse. Things may get better. We live as people of faith who trust what God says and faith sees even more - what our eyes behold.

Do not lose heart, dear people. Do not linger too long in the discontent. Do not lament that things are not better and do not whine that things are not good enough. Live not in misery but by His promises being fulfilled.

How are things going? Here's the answer. As good as God wants. Our Lord, as with Abraham, working His promises in your life. better than you deserve; gifts bestowed despite your unworthiness. Nothing can disrupt His love for you or His plan to bring all things to their consummation. God is even now at work bringing good from your disappointment and heart ache and rescuing you from the dead ends and detours where you have put yourself. You live not on your own but in Christ, by the power of the Spirit, through the means of grace. How are things going? "As good as God wants." And that, is better than you can imagine. We live not by the wisdom of man, or drinking coffee, or the news. You live by His Word and promises being fulfilled. So wait. Wait patiently. Wait as the hopeful who want what is coming, who anticipate even that blessed future right here and right now around His Word and Sacraments. Wait. That is the posture of faith. We are not optimists who see things that are not there, we are realists who see the eternal where the world sees only the moment. How are things going? As good as God wants. **If anyone keeps My Word, you will never see death. Abraham rejoiced to see My day and is glad.** Rejoice each day. He is yours.