

Sermon #75¹ — *Isaiah Series*

Title: “**TRUST YE IN THE LORD FOREVER**”

Text: Isaiah 26:1-21

Subject: *A Call for Confident Faith in our God*

Introduction:

You will find my message in the Gospel of Isaiah, chapter 26. — We will begin at verse 1.

(Isaiah 26:1-3) “In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah; **We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks.** (2) **Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in.** (3) **Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.**”

THAT DAY

Isaiah was a faithful prophet. He played a one-string banjo. He constantly harped on one thing — The Lord Jesus Christ and God’s salvation in, by, and with him. Here the prophet once more points us to “*that day*,” that glorious day, this blessed Gospel

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Day, in which we now live. Isaiah uses that little phrase, “*in that day,*” 53 times. In doing so, he particularly, he calls our attention to the mercies of God that are ours in Christ by redemption and grace, and calls for us to relentlessly sing his praise because of those mercies. And he promises peace to all who are stayed upon him in faith.

Now, look at verse 4. Here’s my message — **“TRUST YE IN THE LORD FOREVER.”** Some of you carry heavy burdens. Some of you are going through great trials. Some of you, no doubt, will be called to pass through deep waters of trouble, the fiery furnace of affliction, and the dark valley of bereavement before long.

When such times come, my heart hurts for you, I try to pray for you and bear your burdens with you. I try to show my love and care for you in every way I can. But I know that the best thing I can do for you at such times, and in anticipation of such times, is to preach the gospel to you, point you to Christ, and urge you to believe God. That is my aim this hour.

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Your pastor can give you no better counsel than this.
— **“Trust ye in the LORD forever.”**

Some of you are yet without Christ. You are yet under the wrath of God. I pray for you. I weep for you. How I pray that the Lord God will graciously speak to you this very hour and grant you life and faith in my Savior. I can be of no greater service to your soul than I am when I say to you, — **“Trust ye in the LORD forever.”**

OUR ROCK

Now, watch this. — The prophet of God tells us why we can and should trust in the Lord our God forever.
— **“For in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength!”**

“Trust ye in the LORD forever.” — Trust him at all times, in every state and condition, in times of affliction, temptation, and darkness, as well as in times of happiness, peace, and light. He will support you in every circumstance and will, in his own time,

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deliver you out of every trouble. He will cause all things to work together for your good.

Trust in him always, for everything, for all temporal blessings, for all spiritual ones, and for eternal life and happiness. These are his gifts of grace. He has them in his hand for you. He has promised them. And he will give them at the appointed time.

“For in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength!”
— Christ is the LORD JEHOVAH, which is, and was, and is to come, self-existent, eternal, and immutable. In him is strength, as well as wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. In him is strength for you, his people, — strength for everything you need, — strength to bear you up under the weight of temptation, trouble, and affliction, — strength to withstand and conquer every enemy, — strength to work his grace in you, — and strength discharge every duty.

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His strength is everlasting strength. It is always in him. It is always to be had from him. He is the eternal God, who is our refuge. His arms of power and might are underneath you. And they are long arms of omnipotence. They are everlasting arms.

These words could just as well be read, **“In the LORD JEHOVAH is the Rock of Ages.”** Christ is the Rock on which the church and every believer is built, against which the gates of hell cannot prevail. He has been the Rock of his people in ages past, and will be in ages to come. He that trusts in the Lord has a mighty Rock of refuge in this world and in the world to come. — And he who is our Rock is Jehovah our God, God the Son, one with God the Father and God the Holy Ghost (1 John 5:7).

Isaiah 26 is a song of praise to God the triune for all that he has done for his elect, his church, his Israel. It looks beyond the physical nation of Israel, her physical troubles, and her physical deliverances. **This is a song that Isaiah said would be sung in this Gospel Day.** — *“In that day shall this song be*

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sung” (v. 1). **Everything in this chapter, while historically applicable to the Old Testament nation of Israel, finds its fullest meaning in the experience of God’s church today.** This, too, was “*written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope*” (Romans 15:4).

- **The first part of this song is a declaration of security and peace** (vv. 1-4).

(Isaiah 26:1-4) “In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah; **We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks.**

(2) **Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in.**

(3) **Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee:** because he trusteth in thee.

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(4) Trust ye in the LORD forever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH *is* everlasting strength.”

- **The second part of the song is an encouragement to faith and confidence** (vv. 5-11).

(Isaiah 26:5-11) “For he bringeth down them that dwell on high; the lofty city, he layeth it low; he layeth it low, even to the ground; he bringeth it even to the dust.

(6) **The foot shall tread it down, even the feet of the poor, and the steps of the needy.**

(7) **The way of the just is uprightness: thou, most upright, dost weigh** (*observe, consider, and approve of*) **the path of the just.**

(8) Yea, **in the way of thy judgments, O LORD, have we waited for thee; the desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee.**

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(9) With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early: for when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.

(10) Let favour be showed to the wicked, *yet* will he not learn righteousness: in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the LORD.

(11) LORD, *when* thy hand is lifted up, they will not see: *but* they shall see, and be ashamed for their envy at the people; yea, the fire of thine enemies shall devour them.”

- The last part is a celebration of God’s wonderful works (vv. 12-21).

As we read the last verses of this chapter (vv. 12-21), I want us to remind ourselves once more of God’s great goodness to us.

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- Individually
- Domestically
- Nationally
- Ecclesiastically
- Providentially
- Savingly
- Manifestly
- Secretly

In verses 12-18 Isaiah speaks for us about us, and we have verified his words in our experience. **In verses 19-20 the church encourages herself with the promise of Christ**. And **in verse 21 the church again speaks to the praise of God and for the encouragement of faith**.

PEACE

Look at verse 12 — “*LORD, thou wilt ordain peace for us: for thou also hast wrought all our works in us.*”

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“LORD, thou wilt ordain peace for us.” — Whatever trouble we may experience on this earth, believers may comfort themselves with this fact, — **God will ordain peace for us in the end.** Every creature and every event, every experience and everything that comes to pass in the lives of God’s elect he will make to work for our peace. Even those things that seem to be altogether against us, he will cause to work for us, for our everlasting peace.

(Isaiah 26:3-4) “Thou wilt keep *him* in perfect peace, *whose mind is stayed on thee*: because he trusteth in thee. (4) Trust ye in the LORD forever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH *is* everlasting strength.”

DEBTORS

“Thou hast wrought all our works in us.” — **We are all debtors to the grace of God.** We are not what we should be. We are not what we want to be. We are not what we shall be. But, blessed be God, we are not what we once were. And we are what we

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are by the grace of God. **Whatever good work may be wrought by us, it is the result of God’s good work of grace wrought in us.** We are head over heels in debt to Christ; and our debt increases every second of every hour of every day!

“Oh, to grace how great a debtor
Daily I’m constrained to be!”

Only being acted upon, we act. — “*For it is God which worketh in (us) both to will and to do of his good pleasure*” (Philippians 2:13). **Every grace that we exercise is the fruit of his Spirit and the gift of his grace** (Galatians 5:22-24).

(Galatians 5:22-24) “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, (23) Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. (24) And they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.”

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Divisions: The remaining verses of this song are an exposition, or explanation, of verse 12. These remaining verses contain three things.

1. A Review of Our Past (vv. 13-18)
2. A Promise of Grace (v. 19)
3. A Call of Mercy (vv. 20-21)

A REVIEW

1st — **Here is a review of our past** (vv. 13-18).

(Isaiah 26:13-18) “O LORD our God, *other* lords beside thee have had dominion over us: *but* by thee only will we make mention of thy name. (14) *They are* dead, they shall not live; *they are* deceased, they shall not rise: therefore hast thou visited and destroyed them, and made all their memory to perish. (15) Thou hast increased the nation, O LORD, thou hast increased the nation: thou art glorified: thou hadst removed *it* far *unto* all the ends of the earth. (16) LORD, in trouble have they visited thee, they poured out a prayer *when* thy chastening *was* upon them. (17) Like

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as a woman with child, *that* draweth near the time of her delivery, is in pain, *and* crieth out in her pangs; so have we been in thy sight, O LORD. (18) We have been with child, we have been in pain, **we have as it were brought forth wind; we have not wrought any deliverance in the earth**; neither have the inhabitants of the world fallen.”

Whenever we think about the history of God’s church or the history of our individual lives there are some things we should always bear in mind.

Remember where the Lord found you (v. 13).

(Isaiah 26:13) “O LORD our God, *other* lords beside thee have had dominion over us: *but* by thee only will we make mention of thy name.”

This is a confession of sin. As Israel had served other gods and subjected themselves to the superstitions and customs of the heathen, they had been under the dominion of other lords. But now they promise that it

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shall be so no more. The words, “*by thee only will we make mention of thy name,*” means we will worship no god but you.

Let us remember where the Lord found us (Isaiah 51:1).

(Isaiah 51:1) “Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the LORD: look unto the rock *whence* ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit *whence* ye are digged.”

Illustration: *The Remembrance Room*

When God found us, **we were serving other lords**, under the dominion of the world, the flesh, and the devil, walking after the course of this world, under the rule of our hearts’ lusts, and taken captive by Satan at his will. — Remembering where we were when God found us, let us resolve henceforth to praise his name forever and serve him.

Illustration: *Baptism — To Walk in the Newness*

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Of Life

Remember, too, what the Lord has done for you by his grace (v. 14).

(Isaiah 26:14) *“They are dead, they shall not live; they are deceased, they shall not rise: therefore hast thou visited and destroyed them, and made all their memory to perish.”*

As he destroyed Israel’s enemies who held them in bondage for so long, so he has destroyed ours — (Pharaoh and Egypt in the Sea!)

- **Satan has been cast out, and shall never rise again with power to hurt us.**

Illustration: *Pilgrim and the Roaring Lion*

- **Our sins have been punished, slain, removed, and shall never again be remembered against us.**

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- **Always remember that salvation is of the Lord** (v. 15).

(Isaiah 26:15) “Thou hast increased the nation, O LORD, thou hast increased the nation: thou art glorified: thou hadst removed *it* far *unto* all the ends of the earth.”

“Thou hast increased the nation.” — From one man, Abraham, God made a great nation. And from one man, Christ Jesus, God has raised up a far greater nation. It is his work altogether (Matthew 16:18). The Lord adds daily to his church such as should be saved.

As Israel multiplied exceedingly in Egypt, so God’s church increases in the midst of adversity and persecution. — Nothing can hinder the cause of Christ!

Ever remember that the object of God in all his works for us, in us, and with us is the glory of his own great name — “*Thou art glorified*” (v. 15).

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- It is the glory of God to save his people.
- And it is the glory of his people to glorify him.

And remember that though we are often unfaithful to him, the Lord our God is always faithful to his own (vv. 15-18). **As he scattered Israel among the nations that they might be forced to seek him, so he sends trouble, adversity, and affliction upon us to graciously force us to seek him** (15-16).

(Isaiah 26:15-16) “Thou hast increased the nation, O LORD, thou hast increased the nation: thou art glorified: thou hadst removed *it* far *unto* all the ends of the earth. (16) LORD, in trouble have they visited thee, they poured out a prayer *when* thy chastening *was* upon them.”

When trouble, particularly, when spiritual trouble comes upon us, we cannot deliver ourselves (vv. 17-18).

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(Isaiah 26:17-18) “Like as a woman with child, *that* draweth near the time of her delivery, is in pain, *and* crieth out in her pangs; so have we been in thy sight, O LORD. (18) We have been with child, **we have been in pain, we have as it were brought forth wind; we have not wrought any deliverance in the earth;** neither have the inhabitants of the world fallen.”

- We cannot revive ourselves.
- We cannot overcome our enemies.
- We are helpless until God helps us — “*Turn us!*” — “*Call us!*” — “*Draw me!*” — “*Wilt thou not revive thy work?*” — Indeed, he will!

The history of God’s church and the history of our souls is a history of grace, pure, free, sovereign, immutable grace. Let us never forget it (Malachi 3:6).

A PROMISE

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2nd — As we review the past, we see nothing but grace. And as we look to the future our only hope is grace. — **So, here is a promise of grace** (v. 19). It is a promise that fell from the lips of our Savior himself.

(Isaiah 26:19) “Thy dead *men* shall live, *together with* my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew *is as* the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.” — **The promise here is threefold.**

1. **This speaks of the spiritual resurrection of God’s elect in the new birth.**

“**Thy dead men.**” — Though we were dead in trespasses and in sin, we were still his! And though many of his elect are still dead in trespasses and in sin, they too are still his! But it is written, “*Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise.*” — **This passage is clearly explained for us in John 5:25-29.**

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(John 5:25-29) “Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. (26) For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; (27) And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. (28) Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, (29) And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.”

All God’s elect, once they were redeemed by Christ, were raised together with Christ representatively (Romans 8:29-30; Ephesians 2:4-6; John 5:25). — **We were glorified with the glorified Son of God in eternity.**

(Romans 8:29-30) “For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn

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among many brethren. (30) Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.”

And we were raised up with Christ our Substitute when he arose and took possession of heaven as our Surety.

(Ephesians 2:4-6) “But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, (5) Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) (6) And hath raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus.”

2. **The text also speaks of the sure revival of God’s saints by Christ** (Psalm 138:7; Isaiah 57:15; Hosea 6:2; 14:7).

(Psalm 138:7) “Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me: thou shalt stretch

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forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me.”

(Isaiah 57:15) “For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name *is* Holy; I dwell in the high and holy *place*, with him also *that is* of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.”

(Hosea 6:2) “After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight.”

(Hosea 14:7) “They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive *as* the corn, and grow as the vine: the scent thereof *shall be* as the wine of Lebanon.”

3. **And Isaiah’s promise extends to the glorious resurrection of our bodies when Christ comes again** (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).

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(1 Thessalonians 4:13-18) “But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. (14) For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. (15) For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive *and* remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. (16) For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: (17) Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. (18) Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”

A CALL

3rd — **Here is a call of mercy** (vv. 20-21).

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(Isaiah 26:20-21) “Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, **until the indignation be overpast.** (21) For, behold, the LORD cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.”

As we live in this world, often in the midst of trouble, looking forward to that great day of our resurrection and glory, the Lord calls us to take refuge in him. **He calls us to come into our chambers.**

- **Our Chamber of Distinction** — “*Come out from among them and be ye separate.*”
- **Our Chamber of Defense** — His Name.

(Proverbs 18:10) “The name of the LORD *is* a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.”

Illustrations: *Noah — Israel in Egypt*
Rahab in Jericho

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- **Our Chamber of Devotion** — *“Enter into thy closet and shut the door.”*

The Lord assures us that our trouble will be over soon. — *“Hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast.”*

Illustration: When Athanasius was banished from Alexandria by Julian, and his friends greatly lamented his exile, he urged them to be of good cheer, saying, “It is a little cloud that will soon blow over.”

(2 Corinthians 4:17-5:9) “For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory; (18) While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen *are* temporal; but the things which are not seen *are* eternal. (5:1) For we know that if our earthly house of *this* tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of

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God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. (2) For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: (3) If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. (4) For we that are in *this* tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. (5) Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing *is* God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. (6) Therefore *we are* always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: (7) (For we walk by faith, not by sight:) (8) We are confident, *I say*, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. (9) Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.”

In the end our God will reckon with our enemies
(v. 21).

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(Isaiah 26:21) “For, behold, the LORD cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.”

He will come out of his place upon the mercy-seat to the judgment seat. — He will punish the inhabitants of the earth. — And the Lord God will reveal all things in that day.

- The Righteousness of His People
- The Wickedness of His Enemies

“*In that day,*” in that great day, our great God and Savior, the Righteous Judge, will reveal all things. He will cause all to see and acknowledge both the righteousness of his people and the wickedness of his enemies (Malachi 3:18).

Our Redeemer knows our oppressors. He keeps account of their malice. And he will deal with them in justice to the everlasting glory of his own great name and the everlasting salvation of his chosen. —

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“For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the LORD; I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him” (Psalm 12:5). **I am happy to wait for that day** (1 Corinthians 4:1-5).

(1 Corinthians 4:1-5) “Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. (2) Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful. (3) But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self. (4) For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord. (5) Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.”

Truly, O Lord our God, *“Thou wilt ordain peace for us: for thou hast wrought all our works in us...Thou*

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art glorified.” I ask for nothing more. I want nothing more. — “The LORD liveth; and blessed be my Rock; and let the God of my salvation be exalted” (Psalm 18:46).

Amen.

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Fairmont Grace Church, Sylacauga, AL — (SUN AM – 02/24/19)

Readings: *Lindsay Campbell and Jimmy Bowman*