



Lutheran Women's Missionary League Rio Grande Valley Zone



Devotional by Rev. Chad Bresson

Almost 10 years ago there was a fire in a London apartment, destroying a bedroom. It didn't seem to be an unusual housefire, until a few days later, London fire officials took to social media to warn people about leaving crystal balls in windows. Apparently, the crystal ball had been left on the window sill and the sunlight moving through the crystal ball lit the curtains on fire. They warned other glass objects left in windows had been blamed for quite a few fires in recent years, but this was a first... a crystal ball. One fire official said "you can't predict the future, but you can prevent lighting your curtains on fire".

That comment alludes to the practice of using crystal balls to predict the future, something I would advise against. But as we read the One Story about Jesus in the Bible, as it unfolds from Genesis to Revelation, we find that the story is unfolding in a rhythm of promise and fulfillment. This is super important to understand, especially as we exist in a Christian and evangelical culture that doesn't think too much about this and in fact takes the promise another direction. When was the last time you heard some pastor or Bible teacher say this: "We can trust the Bible because of all the predictions in the Old Testament that came true during Jesus' lifetime"? I heard that often as a kid. And while these teachers and pastors mean well, they are training us to think that God spent a lot of time predicting stuff about the future, helping others gaze into what's going on as if it were crystal ball, and then making sure that whatever was predicted came true so that he could prove that he is the real God.



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When we start looking at the Bible that way, it's as if the Old Testament was just one big crystal ball. People gazing into the future (with God's help) and predicting stuff because God knew the future. And while it's true that God does know the future and made many statements about what would happen in the future... that is not a correct way of thinking about all those quote unquote "predictions". You treat the Bible like that, as if what's happening is a magic crystal ball that tells us the future, and pretty soon Jesus is no longer the center of the Bible.

The New Testament foundation is built on the Old Testament. In Acts 3, Peter is preaching a sermon and says this: "What God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ would suffer, he thus fulfilled." And quotes from Genesis and Exodus, showing that Abraham and Moses were looking forward in anticipation of Jesus. "There will be a prophet better than me," Moses says. God tells Abraham "all the nations of the world will be blessed through your offspring.

I was taught all my life to look at verses like what Peter is quoting and think of the crystal ball. Those are predictions, and wouldn't you know it, God knew the future and so God was able to help Moses and Abraham look through their crystal balls. No. It goes much deeper than that, it goes way beyond that... those are Promises. That's Gospel. That is God promising through Moses. That is God making a promise to Abraham. That is God say this WILL happen.

Predictions are accidental occurrences, and the way we talk about it, we make God out to be some arbitrarily contrived god who has to prove himself by making sure that the predictions come true, like this is a fairy tale. Our God is a God of Promise. All his promises in the Old Testament were fulfilled in Jesus. Jesus was and is the true meaning of those promises. Jesus not only made good on the Promises, but He fulfilled or became the actualization of those promises in real time and space. Jesus is himself both the Living Promise and the fulfillment of all of God's Promises.

Promises are guaranteed as if they were fact. And our salvation, our lives, our very existence is grounded, not in God's predictions but God's promises that we can take to the bank. Over and over and over again throughout the Bible, God is saying "I will" and "you will". God stakes his very own existence and personhood and integrity on those promises and all of those promises are ours in Jesus. Every time we gather around Word and Sacrament, God is making good on His Promise in Jesus and fulfilling those Promises FOR YOU and in you.

Zone Treasure Report

October 2023

Balance			2305.93
Income			
check 2006	Linda Morehead	90.00	
check 1643	Myrna Huebner	90.00	
check 5405	Marcy Hegland	90.00	
cash	Rosa Dominguez	90.00	
5637	Paula Granger	90.00	
5026	Mary Bilderback	90.00	
	Total Income		540.00
Expenses			
			0
Ending Balance			2845.93

Elections!!

We will have elections at the
Fall Rally!

Secretary

Treasure

Vice President

Fall Rally

11 November 2023

Fishers of Men

603 S Tarnava St

Port Isabel, Tx

registration 1030 Begins 11:00



Zone Board Meeting

10 am, 11 Nov. 2023

Fishers of Men

Port Isabel, Tx

Open meeting

All are welcome to attend

LWML Texas District Conventions

LWML Texas District 43rd Biennial Convention

June 13-15, 2024

Corpus Christi, Texas

Omni Hotel

Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works (Hebrews 10:23-24).

LWML Texas District

Mite Report through September 2023

2022–2024 Mite Goal	\$390,000.00
Mites Received	\$266,759.43
Total Mites Still Needed	\$123,240.57

2022–2024 Mission Grants

Mission Grant	Amount	Disbursed	Balance
Scholarships for Seminarians — Texas District LCMS	\$50,000	\$37,500	\$12,500
Offering Women Hope — Blue Blossom Pregnancy Centers, Houston	\$10,000	\$7,500	\$2,500
ACTS of Love Early Childhood Education Center — Leander	\$25,000	\$18,750	\$6,250
Orphan Grain Train — Houston	\$25,000	\$12,500	\$12,500
Let Your Light Shine — Bethany, Austin, Lutheran Special Education Ministries	\$10,000	\$7,500	\$2,500
Homeless to Housed — LINC Austin Outreach, Austin	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$0
The Garden Young Adult Ministry — North Texas	\$10,000	\$7,500	\$2,500
Gospel Driven Education — Faith Lutheran High School, Warda	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$0
Bible Brigade — Lutheran Disaster Care	\$16,000	\$12,000	\$4,000
The Table of Los Fresnos Mission Outreach — Los Fresnos	\$25,000	\$18,750	\$6,250
Each Child Complete in Christ, Faith Lutheran School, Plano (partial funding)	\$14,129	\$10,596	\$3,533
Total (includes \$15,129 abundance from last biennium)	\$215,129	\$162,596	\$52,533



The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness (Lamentations 3:22-23).