

Are you tired of watching the news? Are you tired of being afraid? Are you tired of worrying? I am too.

It is hard to escape the fear, because it is all around us. But I hear it. I hear it in your voices as you talk with me about work, about church, about health, about children.

Over the last couple of weeks, we have been talking about how to deal with our fears over the economy, and over our jobs. I have heard you worry about and wonder about your future and the future of your families. In this sermon series I have been attempting to get us to pause for a moment, to set our fears aside and remember some basic stuff of faith, as we deal with the challenges of living in our present economy.

In some ways, this has been a return to basic concepts of faith type of sermon series. It is kind of like, when I was in High School and I would leave the house and my dad would say to me, "Scott, remember who you are."

I hated the reminders. But it helped me to remember and to forge an identity as I was learning to live with more independence.

One of the questions I have heard so many of you ask is this question for today. Will my children have a future? It is a natural question. Especially because we have been so shocked by what has happened to our world and economy.

We know changes are happening, but how will they affect the people we love and care about? We know that changes are happening, but how will they reshape us and our children? That is what change does. It reshapes us and our landscape. It causes us to pause, to wonder, to ask questions. That is all a part of the shaking out process of change.

In our scripture for today, Noah's family has just lived through a dramatic time of change, when they were utterly dependent upon God for their survival. Now that the flood is over, they are getting ready to set out and embark on living off of the land again. God is giving them a sign, the rainbow, to remind them that God will continue to be there for them as they move into the future. The rainbow is there to help God and to help us remember when we feel threatened that God remains with us.

Now, you and I might just say, "So what? I know that I can depend upon God. Why do I have to be reminded so much?"

It is important to be reminded, because we can so easily get caught up in life that we forget. It is important to be reminded because we can get so caught up in living and in activity, that we forget who we are. It is so easy to forget, especially when we are fearful or overwhelmed.

A Lady once observed an incident with a little girl who had been shopping with her Mom in Target. She must have been 6 years old, this beautiful red haired, freckle faced image of innocence. It was pouring outside. The kind of rain that gushes over the top of rain gutters, so much in a hurry to hit the earth it has no time to flow down the spout. We all stood there under the awning and just inside the door of the Target.

We waited, some patiently, others irritated because nature messed up their hurried day. I am always mesmerized by rainfall. I got lost in the sound and sight of the heavens washing away the dirt and dust of the world. Memories of running, splashing so carefree as a child came pouring in as a welcome reprieve from the worries of my day.

The little voice was so sweet as it broke the hypnotic trance we were all caught in "Mom let's run through the rain," she said. "What?" Mom asked.

"Let's run through the rain!" She repeated.

"No, honey. We'll wait until it slows down a bit," Mom replied.

This young child waited about another minute and repeated:
"Mom, let's run through the rain,"

"We'll get soaked if we do," Mom said.

"No, we won't, Mom. That's not what you said this morning," the young girl said as she tugged at her Mom's arm.

"This morning? When did I say we could run through the rain and not get wet?"

"Don't you remember? When you were talking to Daddy about his cancer, you said, 'If God can get us through this, he can get us through anything!'"

The entire crowd stopped dead silent. I swear you couldn't hear anything but the rain. We all stood silently. No one came or left in the next few minutes. Mom paused and thought for a moment about what she would say. "Honey, you are absolutely right. Let's run through the rain. If GOD let's us get wet, well maybe we just needed washing," Mom said.

Then off they ran. We all stood watching, smiling and laughing as they darted past the cars and yes, through the puddles. They held their shopping bags over their heads just in case. They got soaked. But they were followed by a few who screamed and laughed like children all the way to their cars. And yes, I did. I ran. I got wet. I needed washing.

I love that story. It is a reminder to me that our children are watching us. They are watching how we face the challenges caused by

our economy. They are watching how we face the challenges that life throws at us.

It is important to build into our life what good parents have always done. We need to do things like:

- ✚ Invest time in our children.
- ✚ Teach them values.
- ✚ Help them learn about faith.
- ✚ Teach them how to play and laugh.
- ✚ Teach them how to solve problems.
- ✚ Be honest and talk with them.

These are the things that we can do with our children to help them. Our children will have a future, not because of what happens to them because of the economy, but by how we teach them to be people of faith. Our children will have a future, because we help them understand that God will be there for them, by showing them how we as parents will be there for them. Our children will have a future, because we have taken the time to give them good solid roots for life.

The next time you get caught up in your fears of the present, and you worry and wonder about your children, ask yourself, how would God want me to invest in my children? Ask yourself, how would God want me to invest in the lives of other children?

May we learn to live through these days by trusting God and by remembering who we are. Thanks be to God.

Amen.