



Sermon Discussion Questions

For small group leaders or for a whole small group to use

Trusting God in a World of Fear (Isaiah 7:1–9:7)

October 18, 2026

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Sermon Overview

Main Idea

In yesterday's message, "Trusting God in a World of Fear," Pastor Drew walked through Isaiah 7–9, where King Ahaz and the people of Judah are shaking "as the trees of the forest shake before the wind" at the threat of invasion. The passage is built around four sons whose names serve as signs from God, calling God's people to faith in a fearful world. Each name carries a promise: God will preserve a remnant (Shear-jashub), God will be with his people (Immanuel), God is to be trusted even when almost no one else trusts him (Maher-shalal-hash-baz), and God will deliver his people through a promised King. These signs ultimately lead us to Jesus, the true Son. The heart of the message was this: our problems are real, but when they look bigger than God's promises, we tremble; when we see that God is bigger than what we fear, fear is replaced with faith. The source of faith-filled courage is not the strength of our faith, but the God we trust.

Sermon Outline

Trusting God in a World of Fear:

1. Trusting God to Preserve Us: Shear-jashub, "A Remnant Will Return" (7:1–9)
2. Trusting God to Be With Us: Immanuel, "God With Us" (7:10–25)
3. Trusting God When No One Else Does: Maher-shalal-hash-baz, "Quick to the Spoil" (8:1–22)
4. Trusting God to Deliver Us: The Promised King (9:1–7)

Quotation(s)

"Be of good comfort, Master Ridley, and play the man; we shall this day, by God's grace, light such a candle in England as I trust shall never be put out." — Hugh Latimer, at the stake in 1555 (quoted in J. C. Ryle, *Five English Reformers*)

Discussion Questions

Read the Scripture Text (Isaiah 7:1–17 and 9:1–7 were read during the service; if time allows, consider reading the full passage through 9:7 together).

Initial Engagement

- What is the main idea of the text, or what did the sermon focus on? (See above to review the main point)
- What insight from the text or sermon stood out to you most, and why? (Encourage several people to share)

Deeper Reflection on the Meaning and Implications

- **Shear-jashub — "A Remnant Will Return" (7:1–9)**
 - When Ahaz heard that Syria and Israel had joined forces, his heart "shook as the trees of the forest shake before the wind" (7:2) — and he went out to fortify the city's water supply. When fear hits you, what is your instinctive "fortify the water supply" response (e.g., planning, controlling, worrying, withdrawing)?



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- Pastor Drew pointed to Ed Welch's book *When People Are Big and God Is Small*. What feels "big" to you right now? Without minimizing the problem, what would it look like to also consider how big God and his promises are?
- "If you are not firm in faith, you will not be firm at all" (7:9). How does God's promise to preserve a remnant give a stability that our circumstances never can?
- **Immanuel — "God With Us" (7:10–25)**
 - God offered Ahaz any sign he wanted to strengthen his faith, and Ahaz answered, "I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test" (7:12). Why was this pious sounding answer actually a rejection of God? Are there ways we use spiritual sounding language to cover the fact that we've already settled on our own plan?
 - The sermon noted several faithful ways to read 7:14, but the main point is the same either way. It also noted the sign came with an ominous tone: God is with those who trust him, and he judges those who don't. Why is it important that "God with us" is both a comfort and a warning?
 - Jesus told his disciples, "Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me ... I will come again and will take you to myself" (John 14:1–3). How does Christ's presence now by his Spirit, and his promise to be with us forever, speak to a specific fear you are carrying?
- **Maher-shalal-hash-baz — "Quick to the Spoil" (8:1–22)**
 - Isaiah and his disciples were a small remnant called to live as a "contrast community" in a culture headed for judgment. Where do you most feel like you are trusting God when few around you are (e.g., work, school, extended family, the broader culture)?
 - "Do not fear what they fear, nor be in dread. But the LORD of hosts, him you shall honor as holy. Let him be your fear" (8:12–13). What fears do the news headlines and our culture tell us to have? How does fearing the Lord displace those fears rather than simply adding one more?
 - Peter applies this passage to Christians in a hostile culture, adding that we should give a reason for our hope "with gentleness and respect" (1 Peter 3:14–16). How do fearlessness and gentleness belong together? What does it look like when one is present without the other?
 - "Bind up the testimony; seal the teaching among my disciples" (8:16). Isaiah called God's people to cling to God's word rather than fickle and false sources of truth. What sources most shape your mood and outlook during the week? What would it look like to give Scripture a louder voice?
- **The Promised King — "Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace" (9:1–7)**
 - Light dawns first in Zebulun and Naphtali (9:1) — the first region destroyed and carried into exile — and Jesus deliberately began his ministry there (Matthew 4:13–17). What does it tell you about God that he begins his restoration right where judgment began? How might that encourage you about the darkest areas of your own life?
 - Of the four names given to this Son in 9:6, which one do you most need to trust right now, and why?
 - The sermon said Christ is already bringing his peace by creating churches that are to be places of peace in a chaotic world at war. What would it look like for our group to be that kind of place for one another?
- Pastor Drew observed that Latimer and Ridley's "strength was not their faith; but the God they trusted in." Why is that distinction important? How does shifting our focus from the strength of our faith to the One we trust change the way we face fear?

Final Response

- What is one specific fear you are facing right now? Which of the four promises — that God will preserve you, be with you, sustain you when no one else trusts him, and deliver you — will you cling to this week, and what is one practical way you will remind yourself of it?
- Close by praying for one another by name, bringing the fears that were shared to the God who is bigger than what we fear.



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