

March 20-24, 2023

"He leads me beside quiet waters. he restores my soul." Psalm 23:2-3



Quiet Waters

by Senior Pastor Chuck Cervenka
a daily devotional of Calvary Community Church

Monday, March 20, 2023

Sing

Psalm 13-14

But I trust in your unfailing love; my heart rejoices in your salvation. I will sing to the LORD, for he has been good to me. Psalm 13:5-6

David was a singer. He made music to the Lord on the harp and with his voice. He loved to dance before the Lord. Here David reveals why he sings to the Lord. He sings because God has been good to him. It is amazing to think about, when the context of the psalm is considered. The psalm begins with the phrase, “How long, O LORD? Will you forget me forever?” I love reading the psalms and I love thinking about David’s heart and his relationship with God. He sought God’s heart. This allowed David to see how the Lord had been good to him, even though, in the moment, it may have felt as if God had hidden His face. David knew that it was God who could bring light to his eyes, it was God who could keep the enemy from overcoming him. David knew the goodness of God. He celebrated that goodness often and sang to the LORD because of it.

I think about singing to the Lord. Singing to the Lord is much different than singing about the Lord. It is also different from singing about me. I need to consider what it means to sing right to the Lord. I want to sing him a song of adoration because of what he has done—even as I seek him for his continued goodness to me.

Father, please help me to worship you and sing to you because you have been good to me. Help me learn this so much better. This requires that I know you as I sing to you. It is my prayer for intimacy with you. Amen.

Tuesday, March 21, 2023

Shaken

Psalms 15-16

I will praise the LORD, who counsels me; even at night my heart instructs me. I have set the LORD always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. Psalm 16:7-8

There were many things happening in David’s life that could cause him to be shaken. In this psalm, he rehearses the truths that hold him. These truths are formed in the foundation of David’s relationship with God. It is the foundation that keeps a building from being shaken and it is the foundation of conviction that keeps a person from being shaken. In these verses, David reveals that he has his eyes fixed on God—so much so that, even in his sleep, the Lord counsels David in his heart. He sees each situation in his life through the Lord because the Lord is before him. He never walks through anything alone because the Lord is at his right hand. The Lord surrounds David (see Psalm 139:5). David knows God and his faith is in the power and the love of God. He will not be shaken. When things come into my life that would cause me to be shaken, to be scared, to feel hopeless, to feel undone, what is it that holds me? I choose to make the Lord my counselor. He is my guide. I will meditate on his Word and his truths. He is my Rock and my Foundation. Throughout all that happens to me in this world I will not be shaken because he surely will fill me with joy in his presence. For all my life and beyond, God will hold me secure.

O LORD, because you are with me, I will not be shaken. I hold fast to you and to your presence in my life. I am confident that you are in the midst of all that is happening in my life and in the world that is and the world that is to come. I trust in you. Amen.

Wednesday, March 22, 2023

Delighted

Psalms 17-18

He brought me out into a spacious place; he rescued me because he delighted in me.

Psalm 18:19

This psalm of David gives a glimpse into how David viewed God answering his prayer. He offered up a prayer and God parted the heavens and came down to answer. Throughout the entire psalm, David is careful to give all the praise and glory to God. It was God who delivered him. He knew that in the midst of the deep waters he was helpless without God reaching down and rescuing him. God rescued David because God delighted in David. David lived in the constant awareness of that truth. He knew that God delighted in him.

I need this truth planted deep into my heart. I know that the Lord delights in me. Oh, it is not because of anything that I have done—it is his choice to delight in me because of who I am. I am his creation, and he is my Creator. He is my Rock and he delights in me. I must remember this truth when all the voices try to convince me otherwise. So many times, I am tempted to feel less than worthy of God's love. So many times, I feel as though I have failed the Lord and given in to temptations that would cause Him to no longer delight in me. In the midst of those times, I must remember that he rescues me and brings me into a spacious place of forgiveness and love.

Father, who am I that you should delight in me? I am so unworthy of your unconditional reach into my heart and life. I love you so very deeply and I am so grateful that you are pleased with me because I am yours. Amen.

Thursday, March 23, 2023

Words

Psalms 19-20

May the words of my mouth and the mediation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer.

Psalm 19:14

What a powerful prayer this is! It is a prayer that I would love to have be true of me and I would imagine that it is a prayer that God longs to answer. What would my life be like if this was truly answered in the depth of my heart? On what do I meditate? What fills the quiet moments of my heart? Through Jesus, God has redeemed me. He is my Redeemer. He has bought me back from the evil taskmaster to whom I had sold myself. I had given that old deceiver control of my life and he tormented me day and night. Jesus redeemed me from the devil's hold. Jesus is my Rock. I will no longer choose to meditate on the things that held me in the grasp of the evil one. I choose to meditate on my Rock and I choose to have my thoughts be grounded in his truth and his word, so that my words become his words spoken through me. I long for my words to be pleasing to God. This means that whatever situation I find myself in, my words are loving and filled with the praises and the truths of God. I choose to speak life—not death. I choose to speak light—not darkness. I choose to speak Christ because I meditate on him.

O LORD, may the words of my mouth and the mediation of my heart be pleasing to you. You are my Rock and my Redeemer. Draw me into your Word of truth often. Give me a passion to read the Bible and to know you more. Give me a passion to be around other people who love you. Let me not be swept away into my old thoughts and words of darkness and death. Let me speak life! Amen.

Friday, March 24, 2023

Why

Psalms 21-22

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, so far from the words of my groaning? Psalm 22:1

As I read this psalm, the very first words carry my thoughts to the cross of Jesus. He cried out these words from the cross. I know that Jesus used Scripture to defeat the tempter in the desert. I believe that was the pattern of his life on earth. At the most crucial moment on the cross, in his anguish and pain, Jesus is reciting Scripture. As God, He knew this psalm in its fullness. He knew the situation in David's life when he penned these words. Jesus knew the countless people who had offered this prayer in the pain of the exile as Israel was taken from her home and the temple was destroyed. Jesus looked forward and heard all the times that these same words would flow from the lips of many who wondered if God really knew what was happening in their lives. Jesus also knew the whole psalm. He knew that although it may feel as if God had abandoned him, the opposite is true. God is on his throne, he is exalted above all, the future is his. His righteousness will reign, and all will worship the one true God, whose name is to be forever praised. It is in this psalm that I can take comfort, knowing that my God has not forsaken me—and he never will.

LORD, thank you for allowing me to see that you never forsake me. Jesus knew this, even as he cried out these words on the cross. Even then, he was sympathizing with those he created. Even then, he was leaving an example so that I can know that even when it feels as though you have left me, it will never happen. Amen.

Saturday, March 25, 2023

Shepherd

Psalms 23-24

The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not be in want. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

Psalm 23

David knew what it meant to be a shepherd. He knew the role quite well and he understood the absolute need that sheep had for a shepherd. I often wonder what David was doing when he wrote this beautiful psalm. Was David sitting and watching the sheep, considering that God was the One who cared for David in the way that David cared for his sheep? Had he just brought his flocks to a place of green grass and quiet waters? Had they eaten their fill and drunk from the coolness of the stream? Were they now just lying peacefully because David had cared for them? Was it in that moment that David wrote these words? Of course, there is no way of knowing, but it causes me to realize that God is in the moments of my days. He is my shepherd, and he is leading me, walking with me, guiding me, comforting me. He takes me to places where I might rest beside quiet waters—so important amidst the chaos of this world. If you haven't yet memorized this psalm, I would encourage you to. It is a great psalm to quote to yourself before you drift off to sleep.