

Friday, November 9, 2018

Delight

Psalm 1-2

Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers. Psalm 1:1-3

There is a blessing that comes to a person who delights in the law of the LORD. This person meditates on that law day and night. This allows him or her to be rooted deeply into the LORD as a tree by streams of water. It is this tree that yields fruit. The Psalms start with this amazing introduction that calls one to read all the psalms through this lens. There is a way to experience the blessing of God. That blessing comes from delighting in His law. Originally this would have meant the Torah. This is a good reminder to delight in those inspired words of the first five books of our modern Bible. It can be tempting to delight in passages that are easy to understand or verses taken out of context that encourage us and cause us to feel good about ourselves. That does not cause us to be rooted deeply. Rooting deeply comes from meditating on the holiness and splendor and majesty of God as revealed in the whole of Scripture, beginning with the Torah.

I find myself drawn to delighting in the words of God, meditating on how He has revealed Himself to His creation for His glory. I must remember that the Bible is not about me—it is about God and how I fit into His story that is written for His glory. I will be blessed as I delight in this meditation.

O, my Father, how I love Your word and Your truth. I long to have it permeate my being as I meditate on Your law and Your statutes. Help them shape me for Your glory. Amen.

Saturday, November 10, 2018

LORD

Psalm 3-4

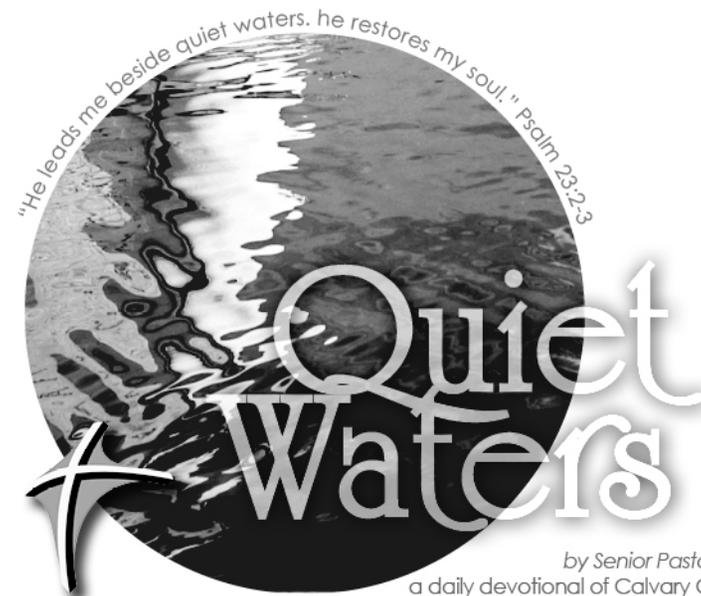
O LORD, how many are my foes! Psalm 3:1

As David cries out to the LORD in this and so many other psalms, it is important to realize he is not crying out to God as a cold and distant Creator. Rather, he is calling out to God by name. This is significant for me to understand. When LORD appears in all caps, it refers to the name of God as given to Moses (Ex 6:2). Jehovah is a misleading English transliteration of this, the only name of God. The name revealed is YHWH. The very pronunciation of this name is hypothetical, because it is uncertain what vowels go with it. So the name revealed is unable to be pronounced. It came to a point where “Adonai” was the word that was used to mention the unpronounceable name of God. And yet, this is a deeply personal cry from David. He is calling out to God by name. David reveals the intimate relationship that can be lived out with God. This is like me crying out, “Abba, Father.” In the midst of his lament, he cries out to his Father, knowing that his Father is listening, is with him and is able to deliver.

Whenever I see “LORD” in my Bible, I need to think of the very name of God, and pause to think of the greatness of that name. I must learn to revere the name—“hallowed be Thy name,” and at the same time, remember the intimacy that is available because of that name.

O LORD, please overwhelm me with the fact that You have revealed Your name to me as a Father and that You are ready to hear my cries. Help me be ever more intimate with You. Amen.

November 5 - 10, 2018



Monday, November 5, 2018

Perfect

Job 35-36

Elihu continued: "Bear with me a little longer and I will show you that there is more to be said in God's behalf. I get my knowledge from afar; I will ascribe justice to my Maker. Be assured that my words are not false; one perfect in knowledge is with you." Job 36:1-3

Elihu is certain that Job is wrong in his understanding and is confident that he is right. After all, Elihu has received his knowledge from afar and it is clearly better than the knowledge Job has received. Again, I am overwhelmed with how these men have missed the lament of Job's heart. Job is not a perfect person—he never claimed to be. Nor did he suggest that his knowledge was perfect. Job knew that he had lived a life as righteously as he could, but he sought to be declared righteous by God. He lamented his situation, but did not accuse God. Elihu is declaring that Job's word has been false, but that his own were true coming from perfect knowledge. I remember that Job is in dire straits. All has been lost. His health is terrible and he is in torment and pain and the counsel of men have determined that this is the time to talk about what they think is true and to accuse the one who is like no other in the eyes of God.

I must remember to not hold my knowledge as perfect. I am given knowledge and discernment, but that comes only from the Lord. I rest in Him and Him alone.

Dear God, forgive me for any times in my life that I have had arrogance in my presentation. Forgive me for times I have been insensitive to a person's situation. Help me to humbly portray You to those in need. Amen.

Tuesday, November 6, 2018

Answered

Job 37-38

Then the LORD answered Job out of the storm. He said: Job 38:1

God speaks. I love that I serve a God who speaks. He spoke the universe into existence and He has revealed Himself in Scripture. He has revealed Himself in the Person of Jesus. He speaks to Job and it is preserved for me today so that I can know God. Many people view these next chapters as a rebuke against Job. If this is true, then God is joining in with those who have consistently interrupted Job's lament. If this were the case, then Job would be the one rebuked at the end of the book, but he is not. God is entering into conversation with the one He loves. He considers Job to be like no other. His opinion has not changed. I believe this is a loving God's explanation of how He pays attention to every detail in the world that He made and loves. God is showing Job that He is sovereign, powerful, aware, and in the details. He is letting Job see His nature and His character more fully than ever before. Every lament resolves with an understanding of the nature and character of God. These words of Almighty God come not as a rebuke against the one whom He has declared as more upright than any other. These words come to bring resolve to the lament. That is how much God loves Job.

I am so grateful that God has revealed Himself and His power. I love knowing the nature and character of God will resolve any lament in my life.

Dear God, how I love You and Your vast love displayed to Your creation. You are truly amazing and I read these chapters celebrating who You are. Amen.

Wednesday, November 7, 2018

No more

Job 39-40

Then Job answered the LORD, "I am unworthy—how can I reply to you? I put my hand over my mouth. I spoke once, but I have no answer—twice, but I will say no more." Job 40:3-5

Job now has the chance to answer the LORD. It seems this may be the eye in the storm of the barrage of questions that are being brought by God to reveal His nature and character. Soon enough the questions will begin again. Job has held that the theology of retribution as explained by his friends is inaccurate. He has also held that he does not serve the LORD merely because he is blessed with good things. This is what the accuser had declared early in the account of Job. God will ask Job if he is choosing to discredit the justice of God. He will ask him if he would condemn God to justify himself. Job has done neither, nor will he. All along, what Job has wanted is to have himself declared as righteous in his heart and actions, clarifying that he is suffering as a righteous man. He has come to accept that the righteous suffer. His friends have not. Job will say no more. Notice that he does not recant what he has said. He merely does not add to it. He has seen the power of God—and dare I say His love—and has chosen not to speak any more. God's nature and character are silencing his lament and will now draw him closer to the LORD.

I must also learn when to be silent before the LORD. How many times would I be better off to put my hand over my mouth as a reminder of my need to listen.

Dear God, help me learn when to speak and then how to silence myself before You when You are speaking to me. Help me learn to hear what You have to say. Amen.

Thursday, November 8, 2018

Seen You

Job 41-42

"My ears had heard of you but now my eyes have seen you. Therefore I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes." Job 42:5-6

Job has seen the LORD in an amazing way. In the midst of God displaying His sovereignty and power and justice and love as well as His involvement in all the details of creation, Job realizes that he no longer needs to be declared righteous by God. Job no longer needs his righteousness to be defended. Before Job had known about God, now he had come to a place of knowing God—not perfectly—but far more intimately. That knowledge allowed Job to come to the place where God was enough. He needed nothing other than God. He turned from needing God to declare him righteous. He no longer needed personal vindication. Even if there was not any profit to following God, he would still follow. In his declaration of this truth he silences the accuser's claim that a man will not fear God without gain (1:9). Job is a man who is satisfied with God.

I long for this to be true in my life. I long to have God be enough for me. Whatever I feel I need from God fades when I see Him for who He is. If I think I know God but I only know about Him, I will never find myself satisfied with Him. I will always need more. I read His word so that I can know Him. It is the desire of my heart—as it was the desire of Paul (Philippians 3:7-11).

O, my dear Father and God, how I long to know You and to have You be enough for me. So many times I need You to do more and to be more. It is so silly for me to be thinking that way. Settling for knowing about You keeps me from really knowing You. Help me stay satisfied with whatever You choose to bring or allow in my life. Amen.