

Friday, November 30, 2018

Too Heavy

Psalms 37-38

O LORD, do not rebuke me in your anger or discipline me in your wrath. For your arrows have pierced me, and your hand has come down upon me. Because of your wrath there is no health in my body; my bones have no soundness because of my sin. My guilt has overwhelmed me like a burden too heavy to bear.
Psalm 38:1-4

As I read this psalm, I cannot help but consider that this is the way I should feel about all my sins. My sins are numerous—many of them I am not aware of. Yet very few of my sins cause me to have the type of anguish the psalmist has. It is true that for many people—and perhaps for the psalmist—sickness is equated with sin. For me, as I read, I contemplate the depth of my sin and the darkness that sin brings into my life. It is a vile diet that contaminates me. It is a disease of epic proportions and it should sicken me to have it in my life. Personally, I am aware of the pain that comes from cancer as it attacks my body. I know the depth of that pain and it causes me to cry out when it flares up, but does the pain of the cancer of sin in my body cause the same reaction? I fear that too many times I overlook the sin in my life and do not realize that it is causing me the type of pain this psalm describes. If I were able to see my sin as God sees it, I would find it to be too heavy for me to bear and I would cry out as David did, “Come quickly to help me, O Lord my Savior” (38:22).

O LORD, show me where my sin is weighing me down. Help me to see the sin in my life as You see it. Help me to understand the righteous wrath that must come against my sin and help me to repent and cry out to You. Thank You that You are my glorious Savior. Amen.

Saturday, December 1, 2018

New Song

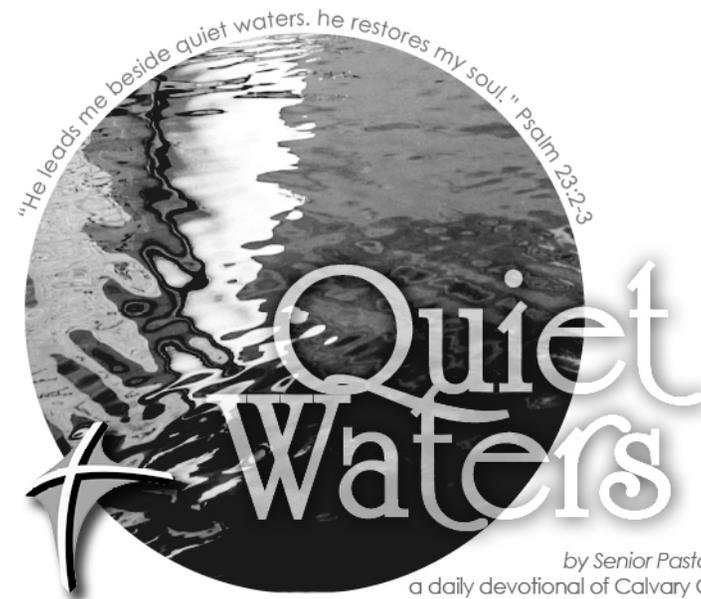
Psalms 39-40

I waited patiently for the LORD; he turned to me and heard my cry. He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand. He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God. Many will see and fear and put their trust in the LORD.
Psalm 40:1-3

I love the new song that the LORD has put in my mouth. It truly is a hymn of praise. The melody seems to change along with the words depending on the circumstance in which I find myself. The tempo changes, the style changes. It seems to go from classical to (dare I say it?) rock and roll! It moves from somber tunes to celebrative tunes. The words change as well. They can be words of questioning or words of assurance. They can be poetic or guttural; eloquent or colloquial. Yet, it is a new song. Like David, I am able to sing a new song because my LORD has lifted me from the slimy pit. He heard my cry and turned His ear toward me. He set my feet on a rock. My song is a song of praise because my God rescued me. The amazing thing about a new song is that it longs to be sung out loud—in public. The rest of the psalm makes that clear. I must sing my new song for all to hear so that each person who hears may have the chance to see and fear and put their trust in the LORD and then begin to sing the new song He places in their hearts.

O LORD, thank You for the new song that You have placed in my mouth. Thank You for the various forms that the song takes, each in its season. Thank You for the times that You have made me bold enough to sing Your song in me out loud and thank You for all those who have put their trust in You because of the song You have given me to sing. Amen.

November 26 - December 1, 2018



Monday, November 26, 2018

Healed

Psalms 29-30

I will exalt you, O LORD, for you lifted me out of the depths and did not let my enemies gloat over me. O LORD my God, I called to you for help and you healed me. O LORD, you brought me up from the grave; you spared me from going down into the pit. Sing to the LORD, you saints of his; praise his holy name. For his anger lasts only a moment, but his favor lasts a lifetime; weeping may remain for a night, but rejoicing comes in the morning.
Psalm 30:1-5

I exalt the LORD because He healed me. To exalt the LORD means to declare His praise—to glorify Him. I think of this as putting the spotlight on Him. I have been healed by the LORD. He has reached down and rescued me from death and spared my life from the judgment I earned by my sin. It was my sin that earned His wrath, and yet his anger lasts but a moment—His favor for a lifetime. I remember well what it was like to be under the wrath of God. I remember the oppression and the depth of darkness. I remember when He lifted me out of the pit of my despair and healed me. My enemy no longer gloats over me. I am now free and it causes me to rejoice. Like David, I call out to others who have experienced this same healing, “Sing to the LORD!! Praise His name!!” Together let us declare His love and His goodness. Let’s proclaim His truth and tell everyone we meet how He has healed us.

O LORD, I do exalt You. You have indeed lifted me out of the pit and You have brought to me the joy that comes from knowing that I am now under Your favor. I declare Your great love and mercy boldly and I sing to Your holy name. Amen.

Tuesday, November 27, 2018

Forgave

Psalms 31-32

Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man whose sin the LORD does not count against him and in whose spirit is no deceit. When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer. Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the LORD”— and you forgave the guilt of my sin.
Psalm 32:1-5

I celebrate the forgiveness and the release from the guilt of my sin, iniquity, and transgressions. God forgave even me. Many hold that this psalm was written by David following his confession of the sin with Bathsheba. In this psalm, I can see that David understood well the depth of his actions. Sin is an act (many times intentional) that misses God’s expressed and revealed will. Iniquity is a crooked or wrong act, many times this is a conscious and intentional intent to do what is wrong. Transgressions are acts of rebellion and disloyalty. David realized his sin touched all these areas. But then he declares that his sins are *forgiven, covered, and not counted against* him. He sees this as a blessing. *Forgiven* means to carry sins away. *Covered* is to recognize they have been atoned for, and *not counted against* is to be declared not guilty. The blessing of this complete forgiveness comes as the sinner acknowledges, exposes, and confesses. Then the heavy hand of righteous judgment is lifted and God forgives even the guilt of my sin.

O LORD, I acknowledge, expose, and confess my sin. My sin, transgressions, and iniquity are so great and yet Your forgiveness is greater. I am blessed because You forgave me. Amen.

Wednesday, November 28, 2018

Brokenhearted

Psalms 33-34

The LORD is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.

Psalm 34:18

There is a way that I can be certain to have the Lord be near to me. There is a way for me to be certain that I experience His salvation. The key to intimacy with God is brokenness. I must seek to be broken before the Lord and to have my hard heart crushed in humility. I am a proud person. There is absolutely no reason for me to be proud. Yet, I am. So many times, I try to stand against the situations in my life on my own—using my own reasoning or my own solutions. I make my plans and I ask God to bless them. I design solutions to my problems and ask God to make them happen. If I am truthful, in each of these situations, I see that it all revolves around my wishes, wants, and perceived needs. David knew how to be near the LORD. He knew he needed to be contrite and broken. Isaiah reveals the same thing (Isaiah 57:15). There we read that God lives with the one who is contrite and broken before Him. God revives the heart of the broken. He brings real life into the heart of the contrite. This is a moment by moment struggle in my life, as I constantly seek to be humble before my King. I long to have the Lord close to me because I am brokenhearted before Him.

LORD, please help me to be brokenhearted before You. I long to have You constantly reviving me every moment of the day as we walk together in sweet and precious communion. I acknowledge that my spirit needs to be crushed Lord. Many times I am like a wild stallion before You and in Your loving patience, You break me of the will that stands against Your love. Amen.

Thursday, November 29, 2018

Priceless

Psalms 35-36

Your love, O LORD, reaches to the heavens, your faithfulness to the skies. Your righteousness is like the mighty mountains, your justice like the great deep. O LORD, you preserve both man and beast. How priceless is your unfailing love! Both high and low among men find refuge in the shadow of your wings.
Psalm 36:5-7

Love, faithfulness, righteousness, and justice. These are the characteristics of God that David declares in this psalm. He celebrates the vastness of each of these characteristics. The poetry calls me to visualize the expanse of creation. God’s faithfulness, righteousness, and justice are overwhelming. He is a faithful God. He is righteous. He is just. But it is the love of God that David sees as priceless. It is of immeasurable value. John declares that God is love (1 John 4:8). As I consider the love of God, it seems to me that one of the things that makes it priceless is that it is relentless. God’s love never stops—ever. It never had a beginning. It has always been and will always be extended in relentless generosity. This generosity is seen as the Eternal Father extends love to the Eternal Son and Spirit. It is this love that compels creation. The love of God—as seen demonstrated in the Trinity—pours out to mankind.

LORD, who am I that You would love me with this priceless love? Who am I that this love would extend to me? Who am I to be able to bask in this love that You lavish on me? Forgive me for the times I have treated Your love as cheap and undesirable. Forgive me for the times I have cheated on You and sought for other loves to fill the ache in my heart that longs for Your priceless love. Amen.