

Friday, January 18, 2019

Help

Psalms 121-122

I lift my eyes up to the hills—where does my help come from? My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth. Psalm 121:1-2

Psalm 121 is a psalm of worship and hope. Where does my help come from? So many times I am tempted to look for help in many places other than the Lord. That takes me down some winding trails that can lead me away from God. The psalmist reminds us to consider where unfailing help comes from—the LORD. The LORD is a sure foundation that never moves. I can look to all different sources for help, but sure help can be found only in the LORD. The One who made me is the One who watches over me. The One who made me is the One who loves me. He is the One who is constantly watching over me. He is the One who will not let my foot slip as I trust in Him. He will watch over me now and forevermore. I will worship the One who is the Maker of heaven and earth. I will lift my voice to praise the One in whom I have placed my trust. When I feel as though I am sinking in the circumstance I am in, I must remember that the Maker of heaven and earth is the one who watches over me and keeps me from all harm. I need to spend great time today pondering that.

Dear Father, seriously? You seriously are watching over my coming and my going? Who am I to deserve that kind of attention from You? It humbles me to consider the depth of Your love for me. May I be Your willing servant. Amen.

Saturday, January 19, 2019

Look

Psalms 123-124

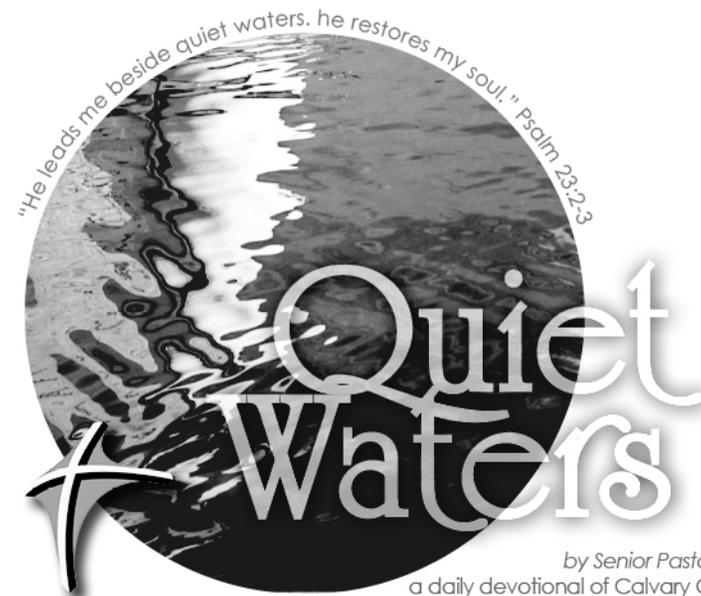
I lift up my eyes to you, to you whose throne is in heaven. As the eyes of slaves look to the hand of their master, as the eyes of a maid look to the hand of her mistress, so our eyes look to the LORD our God, till he shows us his mercy. Psalm 123:1-2

The psalmist calls us to remember that God is sovereign. He is the One who is reigning over all there is and in Him alone is mercy found. The mercy of God is worth waiting for. God is not an evil tyrant withholding His mercy for maniacal purposes. God is a loving Ruler who knows what is best for those in His service. That is every person. Truthfully, most do not realize this. Those who do are not always the best at serving. Yet in this psalm a glimpse is given of how to wait for the mercy of God. Lift my eyes to the King on His throne. At the time of this writing, there would have been servants who waited for their master's command. It may come as just a movement of the hand. A faithful servant would watch the hand of the master and as soon as the hand moved, they would move to obey. This would require a constant gaze.

Is that how I lift my eyes to the Lord? Do I have a constant gaze upon Him, ready to move with Him as He leads? Am I waiting patiently, as His willing servant, for Him to reveal His mercy to me? I desperately need the mercy only He can give. If He were to give me what I deserve, I would be completely undone. I am grateful for my King. I look to His hand alone for mercy.

O LORD, keep my eyes fixed on You. You are the Author and Perfector of my faith. I watch for You in every moment of the day. Let me not get distracted and help me keep from looking away. Amen.

January 14 - 19, 2019



Monday, January 14, 2019

Exalted

Psalms 113-114

The LORD is exalted over all the nations, his glory above the heavens. Who is like the LORD our God, the One who sits enthroned on high, who stoops down to look on the heavens and the earth?

Psalm 113:4

Eternal praise belongs to the LORD most high. There is none like Him. I pause and consider all that this sentence means to me. There is none like God. He alone is worthy of the praise that the psalmist offers and He alone is worthy of my praise. There is no other who is worthy of praise, yet so many times, I reach out to worship other things. Perhaps it is because I miss the fullness of one word in the first verse of Psalm 113. "Praise the LORD. Praise, O **servants** of the LORD. Praise the name of the LORD." The ones who truly understand how to praise the LORD are those who bask in the joy of being His servants. It is through my service that I worship. It is from a place of submission that I exalt the LORD.

I cannot exalt God while I am exalting myself.

When I see my position I am ready to understand that for Him to be involved with me He must stoop down. He chooses to do that because He has made me His treasured possession. He inclines His ear toward me because He values me. It is my joy to value and raise Him up.

Dear LORD, I exalt You above myself. You alone are worthy of my praise. Who am I that You would stoop down to acknowledge and love me? I am Your servant. Please help me remain in submission to Your great and loving reign over my life. Amen.

Tuesday, January 15, 2019

Self-talk

Psalms 115-116

Be at rest once more, O my soul, for the LORD has been good to you.

Psalm 116:7

I have a running conversation in my head. It is not constant, but it seems to be ever present. It is self-talk. My self-talk is fed by my circumstances and outside voices. If I allow myself to go down a certain path, I can pretty quickly believe that my only value comes from what I have done instead of who I am. I can start to convince myself that I am not being treated fairly or that the things that are happening in my life are not fair. I can forget the truth. The psalmist teaches me how to have positive self-talk. I must bring the meditations of my heart to the Lord. I must learn, as the psalmist demonstrates, to focus on God and who He is and what He has done in my life. As the psalm starts, it is a declaration of who God is. "When I was in great need, he saved me" (Psalm 116:6b).

Rest my soul. God has been so very good to you. Rest my soul. God is still reigning. Rest my soul. God has rescued you and He holds you forever. Rest my soul. Feel the hand of God. It is real. It is eternal. It is true. Rest my soul. He has delivered you from death. Rest my soul. He has kept you from stumbling. Rest my soul. Focus on the truth of what God has said and done in your life. Rest my soul. Speak thanks to God. Rest my soul. You have been freed from the chains of your sins. They hold you no more. Now your loving Father holds you. Rest my soul and sing. Sing out loud the songs of the Lord for He has done great things and He will never abandon you. He waits to embrace you when you depart this world to be with Him. Rest my soul.

O LORD, help me find this rest for my soul. I long to rest beneath the shadow of Your wing. May I live in the truth of Your word in my self-talk. Amen.

Wednesday, January 16, 2019

Forever

Psalms 117-118

Give thanks to the LORD for he is good; his love endures forever.

Psalm 118:1 & 29

The love of the LORD endures forever. This psalm is one of the Hallel Psalms. It was one of the psalms that was recited verse by verse as the Passover lambs were being slain. Psalms 115-118 are sung after the drinking of the last cup of the Passover meal. It is possible that this is the hymn that Jesus sang with His disciples just before He left with them to go to the Mount of Olives (Matthew 26:30) on the night that He was betrayed.

With that possibility in mind, I must try to read these psalms considering what my Jesus must have felt as he recited these precious, preserved words, knowing what was just ahead. These psalms take on a much different meaning and move me from reading selfishly. Instead, they begin to read me. I read of the love of God and see what it means when adversity comes. The truth of the Word of God holds me. I can be absolutely sure of the truth of Scripture and all that is written within—just as Jesus was. God is my strength and my song. He has become my salvation. The Passover Lamb, who was born in a manger and who would go to the cross for me, is my salvation. He sets me free and keeps me from being afraid. Because of Him, I will live and proclaim His love. I will rejoice in the day that He has made. His love endures forever. Give thanks to Him! He is good. I will not let anyone tell me otherwise.

Father, thank You for the gift of love. Thank You for Jesus, who has become the capstone. Thank You for Your love that endures forever. Thank You for sending Jesus to be born in a manger to go to the cross. May I never tire of praising Your great name. Amen.

Thursday, January 17, 2019

Obey

Psalms 119-120

Preserve my life according to your love, and I will obey the statutes of your mouth.

Psalm 119:88

Today as I read this psalm through the eyes of love, I am captured by the verses that speak of the love relationship between the psalmist and the God who loves him. Because the psalmist knows the love of God, he loves the words that come from God. It is in the words of God that he learns even more of the love of God, which allows him to overflow with praise to God (verse 171). When the laws, precepts, commands, and words of the LORD are seen as words of love, as opposed to rules of a tyrant, obedience is a joyful response. There is a love for the words that are revealed.

So, do I have a love for the word of God? Really? Truly? Do I love His Word? Do I long for His truth to overtake me? Do I seek to obey? Do I stay up during the watches of the night to meditate on His wonderful promises?

Father, help me love Your word the way this psalmist does. O that I may long for You in the depths of my entire being. May my obedience be nothing more than a response of love to the way that You preserve my life according to Your love. Amen.