

FAITH OVER FEAR // Psalm 13

Morning message from Pastor Neal

In difficult times, fear can cloud our thinking and appear to paralyze our lives. It can feel like walking in the dark. But, in order to walk in the dark, we must learn to walk by faith and not by fear.

THREE TRUTHS FOR WALKING BY FAITH**1. God holds my future. My times are in his hands. (v.1-2)**

The first two verses of the psalm demonstrate a variety of emotions: feelings of frustration, feeling forgotten, alone and abandoned, feeling tired and defeated. The psalmist doesn't appeal to his family, friends, or government because only God holds the future. In these moments, we can ask God to:

- a. humble us to the point of weakness in the face of an almighty God
- b. bring us to a point of trust that is uncomfortable to the flesh
- c. lead us to a posture of positivity about tomorrow

2. God hears my prayer. He knows my place and my pain. (v.3-4)

The psalmist cries to the only one he can cry to. God strips us of our fleshly crutches. David prays and assumes that God hears and will answer. Prayer is the distinguishing mark of a Christian. In this time, God may be calling his people to return to a posture of prayer.

Beatitudes for the Season:

- a. Blessed are those who learn spiritual dependence early in life.
- b. Blessed are those who learn the power of prayer in times of peace.
- c. Blessed are those who learn to see the favor of God with eyes wide open.

3. God has been good to me. Memories are a wonderful medicine. (v.5-6)

This is not the first time we, our families, or the church has gone through difficult times--we have been here before and God has been faithful. He has walked with us before and we can trust that he will walk with us now. The psalmist's perspective changes over the course of the psalm--he has learned to pray. We will not get to the point of verses 5-6, "*I have trusted in your steadfast love; my heart shall rejoice in your salvation. I will sing to the Lord, because he has dealt bountifully with me*" until we learn to pray.

We should bring our feelings under the jurisdiction of God's character--we rejoice not only in what he has done, but in who he is. He is the I AM--he will continue to be that which he has always been. With this confidence, we can sing "a new song" (Psalm 149), assured of "the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God" (Romans 11:33).

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. To whom do we appeal when we feel frightened, defeated, or alone? Why is God the only one who can truly answer our cries?
2. What steps can we take, as individuals or families, to adopt a posture of prayer?
3. What memories of God's faithfulness help to give us confidence in difficult times? How can we be intentional about sharing these stories?