

## Daily Devotional, June 9, 2021 **Becoming a Peacemaker**

***Though the Lord is exalted, he looks kindly on the lowly; though lofty, he sees them from afar. Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you preserve my life. You stretch out your hand against the anger of my foes; with your right hand you save me. The Lord will vindicate me; your love, Lord, endures forever— do not abandon the works of your hands. Psalm 138:6-8 (NIV)***

“Though I walk in the midst of trouble...” It seems as though we have been living our lives recently walking in the midst of trouble. We think things are starting to look up, and the world might get better; then something else comes out of the blue, and our hopes are dashed once more.

What is unfortunate, is that it seems as though it is the same trouble that has been plaguing us for decades. We could insert comments here about racism, corrupt politics, bad political decisions, economic unrest, civil unrest, or what remains of the global pandemic. The truth is there are many kinds of trouble that we face, and these troubles have faced many in our world for as long as we might try to remember. I wrote yesterday of having humility and understanding as we navigate through trying times, and as we try to interact with others whose view and perception differs from our own.

I really believe that Kindness, humility, and love are key ingredients when we find ourselves in the midst of trouble. It is easy for us to allow our tempers to go unrestrained, easy for us to allow emotions to create a quick, but perhaps not well reasoned response. I also believe that it is God’s Holy Spirit that can bring a sense of calm to what could otherwise become a relationship breaking moment. For we don’t seek to break relationships with God, nor our neighbor, but to mend and strengthen them.

As I ponder this psalm, I see the praise of God for a divine answer to prayer that brought strength to the soul of its writer. In this praise, the psalmist understands that God is the one who is worthy of the praise of all kings and kingdoms, and even as we enter the closing verse shared above, what we know is that when troubles do arise (and inevitably, they will) it is God’s Spirit that preserves us.

I want to draw your attention to one thing, here. The words of the psalm say, “against the anger of my foes.” When we think of anger against us, and especially from those who act as our enemies, who do we envision? For many of us it probably isn’t other nations, or groups of people who are different from us. It is most often, someone who we have had a strong relationship with, but then something went wrong, and that relationship was broken. With this in mind, we should be reminded that the steadfast love of the Lord, working in us, is bent on mending these relationships, to bring peace among all people. Isn’t that the purpose of the Lord for the church, and for us?

God, through Jesus Christ called on all who would be saved to do the work of sharing the gospel, of proclaiming peace, of mending relationships, and creating new ones. In short, we say, make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. The world may seem huge and may seem to have too many troubles to fix, however, in the relationships of our lifetime, we can be those who seek peaceful resolution, knowing that we may not all think alike, but it does not prevent us from loving alike.

***Prayer: Redeeming God, bless your children. Bless your peacemakers. It is not easy work. To be a peacemaker means we are in touch with the pain of others and realize the need for action. It is hard to watch those we love hurting. It is often overwhelming and consuming to act peacefully. And we often forget that being a presence of peace does not always mean fixing the problem. Teach us how to be a presence of peace like You. Inspire creativity within us to handle conflict lovingly. May the love of Christ uplift and bind us to God and to one another, now and always. Amen.***