

Sermon Series: Songs for the Seasons of Life – Lord of Life Lutheran, Westfield, IN— 4/6/08

Title: “A Song for Times of Crisis”

Text: Psalm 13

Intro.: *Ills.: Paul and Silas in Jail (Acts 16) – Seeing God in Times of Trouble*

Theme: Letting God place his song in my heart during the prison cell of the moment of life’s crisis, often brings about a deliverance bigger than we could have ever imagined.

My life’s lament often becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy (Print Psalm 13: 1-4)

- Often, our lament during time of trouble speaks volumes about our spiritual condition
 1. *Lament* = a song or hymn of mourning composed as a memorial to the loss
 2. We all have bad days in which the weight of the onslaught of life knocks the spiritual wind out of us
 - a. **Ills.: Having the wind knocked out of you – the solution is to relax and breath**
 - b. When all we see is the trouble and not the Savior who came to redeem our trouble, we are overwhelmed by life
 3. We **“sigh”** — *“how long, O Lord!”* (4 x’s in two verses David says, **“I sigh”** (Hebrew for *“How long”*)
 - a. So David felt forgotten, shunned, self-counseled, and defeated (don’t know if early life with Saul/Absalom, etc.)
 - b. Every troublesome event, disappointment, challenge becomes a grand conspiracy for which we blame God
 - c. Dwelling in discouragement without taking it to God leads to despair/hopelessness where unbelief takes root
- Answer your complaint with God’s response
 1. Have you been forgotten?
 - a. *“Can a woman forget her nursing child and have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, but I will not forget you. Isaiah 49:15*
 2. Has God turned his back on you
 - a. *God has said, “Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.” So we say with confidence, “The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?” Hebrews 13:5-6*
 - b. God will never forsake you because he “forsook His Son, Jesus” on the cross so that you and I would never be
 3. Are you left alone to wrestle with thoughts that seem unanswerable?
 - a. *Then God’s peace, which goes beyond anything we can imagine, will guard your thoughts and emotions through Christ Jesus. Philip. 4:7*
 4. Have you been so defeated by the trial or enemy that you never shall rise?
 - a. *In fact, we still feel as if we’re under a death sentence. But we suffered so that we would stop trusting ourselves and learn to trust God, who brings the dead back to life. 2 Cor. 1:9*
 - b. **Ills.: Jesus discomforts us to comfort others**
 - c. *“For the eyes of the Lord move to and fro throughout the earth that He may strongly support those whose heart is completely His. 2 Chron. 16:9*

The believer’s song lyrics in times of trouble (Print Psalm 13: 3-6)

- A prayer/song of *“Look on me”*
 1. In humble confession and justifying faith we can ask for and expect God’s favorable look for Jesus’ sake
 2. *Do not cast me away from Your presence and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. Psalm 51: 11*
 3. Acting as if you are always under the watchful eye of your Heavenly Father.
- A prayer/song of *“Answer me”*
 1. Expecting God to hear, listen, and answer in your dilemma
 2. *It will also come to pass that before they call, I will answer; and while they are still speaking, I will hear. Is. 65:24*
- A prayer/song of *“Open the eyes of my heart, Lord.”*
 1. *I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His*

calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. Ephes. 1:18-19

2. It takes courage and faith to say to God, help me to see your glory and your purpose in my trial?

· A prayer/song of “*I trust enough in You to rejoice*”

1. In the overwhelming hurt are we seeing with the eyes of faith a merciful and loving God who still upholds us

2. **Illus.:** The story behind “*It Is Well with My Soul*” (Horatio Spafford–1873)

Seeing God in Times of Trouble

What we do in the crisis always depends on whether we see the difficulties in the light of God, or God in the shadow of the difficulties. **G. Campbell Morgan, Leadership, Vol. 9, no. 3.**

Jesus Discomforts Us to Comfort Others

Sarah, a woman who attends our church, had never prayed aloud in her life. She grew up moderately connected to the church, but when a relational crisis hit with her fiancé, she realized she needed more. She began attending church for comfort. Little did she expect that Jesus would also make her uncomfortable. Sarah was on call for her job as an ultrasound technician for a local emergency room. One Friday night, she was called into work at 2 a.m. The doctor told her he thought the lady in Exam Room 2 was crazy, but that, for legal reasons, they had to run some tests. Sarah entered the room to find a highly agitated woman in her forties who could barely sit still for the ultrasound. The woman was bouncing off the walls and complaining of intense discomfort. At one point she even lay down on the floor. As Sarah struggled to conduct the requisite test, the woman blurted, "Do you believe in Jesus Christ?" "Well," Sarah responded hesitantly, "I do." With hope in her eyes for the first time, the woman pleaded, "Would you pray for me? I just need to calm down." Sarah was dismayed—these things never happened to her before she started following Jesus. But now she was stuck. She fumbled with the machine, looking for a way out. Trying to avoid the inevitable she mustered up enough strength to say, "Maybe you could pray—or at least get us started." "No! It hurts too much. You do it!" the woman begged. With no recourse—right there in the ER—Sarah stretched out her hand and laid it on the woman. She prayed, "God, please be with this woman in her time of need. Please give the doctors wisdom to know what is wrong with her and how to fix it; and, God, please put your hands on her and take away her pain." It was short and sweet, but it was just what the Great Physician ordered. The woman calmed down. And as she did, Sarah had a sudden inclination to recheck her gall bladder. There, wedged in the neck of the woman's gall bladder, was a 4-millimeter stone. Sarah immediately told the doctor, who overcame his disbelief quickly enough to order emergency surgery. **Bill White**

It is well with my soul

In the autumn of 1873, Horatio Spafford, a wealthy Chicago businessman, placed his wife, Anna, and their four children on the *Ville du Havre* sailing from New York to France. He was forced to stay in the United States for several more weeks to settle some business matters before he could journey to join the family in Europe. The evening of November 21 found the *Ville du Havre* prow-east toward France on a calm Atlantic. The journey was progressing beautifully. A few hours later, about two o'clock in the morning on November 22, the *Ville du Havre* was carrying its sleeping passengers over a quiet sea when two terrific claps like thunder were followed by frightening screams. The engine stopped, the ship stood still. Passageways were filled with terrified, half-dressed people shouting questions that no one could answer. The *Ville du Havre* had been rammed by the English vessel, the *Lochearn*. Mrs. Spafford saw her four children swept away by the sea. She became unconscious. She awoke later, finding that she had been rescued by sailors from the *Lochearn*. But her four children were gone. In the meantime, Horatio Spafford was back in the United States, desperate to receive news of his family. Finally, the blow fell. A cable arrived from Wales stating that the four daughters were lost at sea, but his wife was still alive. He was crushed with what had happened. All night he walked the floor in anguish. Toward the morning he turned to his friend, Major Whittle, and said, "I am glad to trust the Lord when it will cost me something." On the way across the Atlantic to join his wife, the captain announced that they were now passing the place where the *Ville du Havre* was wrecked. For Horatio Spafford, this was passing through the valley of the shadow of death. He sat down in his cabin on the high seas, near the place where his children perished, and wrote the hymn that would give comfort to so many, titled "It Is Well with My Soul." **John Huffman, "The Fruit of the Spirit Is Peace," PreachingToday.com**

Psalm 13:1-6

¹How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me?

²How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and every day have sorrow in my heart? How long will my enemy triumph over me?

³Look on me and answer, O Lord my God. Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep in death;

⁴my enemy will say, "I have overcome him," and my foes will rejoice when I fall.

⁵But I trust in your mercy; my heart rejoices in your salvation.

⁶I will sing to the Lord, for he has been good to me.[NIV]