

SM 200712 Yet I Will See God

Opening Prayer

Gracious God... Our Master... Our Redeemer and friend... As we praise your name in this sacred space now... refresh our faith and increase our trust in you... so that... during these difficult days... we might keep our minds focused on the glory that you are ready to reveal with us... be strengthened for the challenges that lie ahead... and prepared to claim the joys of eternity. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Announcements

- New Members: Seven will be joining the Aura Church on 7/19/20
- Reception in Social Hall following the Membership Reception Service
 - Provided: Coffee, Tea, OJ, Apple Juice
 - Brunch item to share, if able
- Flowers: The flowers on the communion table are in celebration of Mike and Ann Nicely's 23 wedding anniversary.
- Practice Social Distancing: Reminder
 - Masks
 - Wear upon entering exiting (high traffic/ close areas)
 - Wear outside when fellowshipping, unless social distancing
 - Social Hall: Will space chairs 6' apart
 - You could be an unwitting carrier...
 - Important to stay home if...
 - You are showing any symptoms...
 - You have been exposed to someone with Covid-19
 - Good Hygiene: Wash Hands/ Don't touch face or eyes
- *Make it our goal... that no one will get the coronavirus because of me
- Offering Plate: Is located in the front of the chancel if you would like to make an offering

Scripture Reading: Job 42:1-5

Then Job replied to the Lord: "I know that you can do all things; no plan of yours can be thwarted. You asked, 'Who is this that obscures my counsel without knowledge?' Surely I spoke of things I did not understand, things too wonderful for me to know. "You said, 'Listen now, and I will speak; I will question you, and you shall answer me.' My ears had heard of you but now my eyes have seen you. Therefore I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes."

Introduction

- ***Charmaine Turner's 8-year old daughter died in her arms on the 4th of July**
 - Charmain was driving her car
 - Her daughter **Secoriea** was in the back seat
 - Charmain had just exited the interstate that runs through Atlanta
 - She was attempting to turn into a parking garage across from the Wendy's
 - That was burned down by rioters two weeks ago

- She navigated around some illegal barriers placed there by anarchist protesters
- When she passed through the blockade two armed Anarchists opened fired on the car
- Charmain heard her daughter cry out...
 - She called 911 but there was no response
 - She held her daughter in her arms...
 - As her friend tried to rush them to the hospital for help
- But it was too late...
 - Charmain said...

"I felt her trying to hold on, but she couldn't."

- I can't even begin to imagine the hopelessness...
 - That this mother felt...
 - As the life-breath of her beautiful precious child slipped away before her very eyes
- Later... through her tears... Charmaine said...**

*"Nobody helped me!
I prayed to God and he didn't help me!!
My baby died in my arms!!"*

-I don't know if Charmaine is a Christian...

- But I do know that there are times... even for Christians...
 - When it feels like God is not there...
 - Some of us have been there...
 - Times of unexpected loss...
 - During the time of a major health crisis...
 - Times it feels like the world has just caved in

-Yet... our faith is like a tree planted by streams of living water (Psalm 1)

- It is ultimately our faith that helps us...
 - To face the pain of loss...
 - To get in touch with and to express our grief...
 - To reach for the silver lining on the edge of the dark cloud

- Saint John of the Cross expressed...
 - The reality of the pain we experience in a fallen world...
 - And our hope...
 - When he wrote...

"In the dark night of the soul, bright flows the river of God."

-Romans 8:28...

- Was specifically addressed to Christians...
 - Many of you will recognize the Apostle Paul's inspired words...
 - "And we know that in all things God works for the good
of those who love him, who have called according to his purpose."*
 - (Romans 8:28)*

-The context of Romans 8 suggests that God has a special message to Christians...

-Christian like us who never thought we would see...

- Statues toppled down
- The breakdown of law and order...
- The prospect of empty classrooms...

-A special message to Christians...

- Like those who are being repressed in Hong Kong
- Like those who have been targeted by the cancel culture
- Those who struggle to cope with...
 - Anxiety or depression caused by childhood or other traumas
- Those who are trying to manage daily chronic pain...
- Christians... who love God... but are feeling alone and hopeless...

***God has a message to those who love him...**

-And are suffering

- Despite the many manifestations of human sin and brokenness...
- That affect us in our fallen world

1. Suffering is not part of God's plan...

-It's the result of sin and rebellion

2. And that God's character is such that...

- God has the power
- God has the ability
- And God has the will...

***To take the tragedies our lives**

-And to turn them around for good!

-These are two truths that Job came to realize...

-The victory that Job discovered...

-Can be a great source of encouragement to us in these difficult days...

-But before we go there...

-Let's prepare our hearts to receive God's Word...

-Gracious God, you are the Potter and we are the clay!

-Mold us and shape us...

-With wisdom... to understand your message.

-With strength... to build our lives on your Word.

-And with courage... to live what we have learned.

-In light of the evil we're seeing in the world today

-Our faith... in the goodness of God

-Brings a message of hope to us and to the world

Bible Teaching

-Now I want to focus for a few minutes on Job because...

***I believe Job knew**

-That God would turn his suffering around for good

-In fact, it appears as though...

-One of the reasons Job came out on top

-After suffering horrifically

-Was because... to the core of his being

***He trusted in the goodness of God**

-Despite his circumstances...

-Despite every conceivable horror...

-In all 42 chapters of Job we find that Job remained in dialogue with God

-Now... It is no exaggeration to say that Job suffered as few of us ever will...

-And... if we read through the pages of Job carefully, we find out that Job...

-Was a wealthy man who virtually had the world at his fingertips...

-Then the curtain of tragedy lowered upon him...

-He lost all ten of his children...

-When their house collapsed on them in a terrible storm...

-He also lost his means of income... and his physical health

-Some of his own words... reveal the magnitude of his physical suffering

-Job was... *afflicted with painful sores from the soles of his feet to the top of his head (2:7)*

-*My body is clothed with worms and scabs; my skin is broken and festering (7:5)*

-*My gauntness rises up and testifies against me, men open their mouths to jeer at me (16:8, 10)*

-*My face is red with weeping, deep shadows ring my eyes... (16)*

-*My skin grows black and peels, my body burns with fever... (30:30)*

-Make no mistake about it... Job really suffered...

***And There is no doubt that great suffering is taking place...**

-In the world... and in our culture that has been turned upside down by...

-Covid-19

-Anarchists and socialists...

-Who have hijacked legitimate concerns...

-To achieve their own political gains

-Proponents of Black Lives Matter...

-Have no golden casket or white horse-drawn carriage...

-Like George Floyd's...

-For innocent victims like Secoria

-No rioters have come to your door or mine (that I know of...)

-Yet, we are greatly troubled...

- That many of our schools have been infused with radical ideologies
- Our freedom to think and express our thoughts is under assault
- Even conversations with family and fiends have become polarized...
 - No longer based on our common bonds...
 - But on whether or not...
 - We support Black Lives Matter...
 - Will bend a knee or wear a MAGA hat...
- That the very foundations of our culture are being shaken

-Job was greatly troubled by his own personal suffering

***Yet Job still trusted God and found victory!**

***I would like to take a minute to highlight four things about Job's trust in the Lord**

-That may help to make sense of and to get through difficult times...

1. Job never questioned God's existence

- He wasn't happy with God
- He even accused God of wearing him out... but he still knew... God was there

***That kind of faith can only spring forth from a true encounter with the Sovereign God!**

- What else can explain why...
 - Paul didn't deny Jesus when Nero had him unjustly executed?
 - Peter refused to recant his faith even when crucified upside down...
 - Steven forgave his accusers as they stoned him to death.

***Job knew that God was still there... despite his trials**

-And so did Paul... Peter... Steven... and many faithful who have followed

2. Job was honest with God

- Listen to the volcanic eruption that Job spewed toward God...

*"I loathe my very life;
therefore I will give free rein to my complaint
And speak out in the bitterness of my soul."
(Joh 10:1)*

- Most of us would run for cover if someone vented on us like Job did to God
- The Good news is that...
 - We don't have to hide our pain...
 - God wants us to be real with him...
- Like Jesus was when he cried out to the Father on the Cross

*"My God, My God, why have you forsaken me!"
(Matthew 27:46)*

3. Job remained in fellowship despite his misery

- Job didn't turn away his four friends Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar, Elihu

- Their advice was wrong...
- Yet eventually they helped Job to grow

- *How often do we back away from church when things don't go our way?
 - And sadly... we cut ourselves off...
 - From one of the places where God can help us grow the most

4. Job believed God would turn this around for his good (like Paul)

- In chapter 19 verse 26, Job responds to his friend Bildad...

*“After my skin has been destroyed,
Yet, in my flesh I will see God.”
(Job 19:26)*

- The end of the story is...
 - That Job's spiritual eyes were opened in a new way

- And he shouted out the joy of his victory...

*“My ears had heard of you
But now my eyes have seen you.”
(Job 42:5)*

- This was a victory...
 - Not that his pain went away (Job was not healed until later)
 - But a victory within

- *In the end Job's health and wealth were restored...
 - But his true victory was a victory within...
 - Job grew...
 - He still saw God in the midst of his pain...
 - And he found the silver lining at the edge of his pain

Conclusion

- Despite the upheavals and the chaos that we see in the world today
 - Our faith... in the goodness of God
 - Brings a message of hope to us and to the world

- *Job trusted God despite his pain... and he found the silver lining!
 - Job found the silver lining...
 - And so can **Charmain**... beyond the senseless loss of her daughter...
 - And so will you and I...
 - As we live through these difficult times in our nation...

- We believe that disorder, chaos and suffering are...
 - *Not part of God's plan...
 - They are the result of human sin and rebellion

***God will take the trials of those who love him...**

-And turn them around for good

-God is with us...

-God cares!

-Jesus came to this earth... because God cares

-Jesus paid the price for your sins and mine... because God cares

-Now... perhaps more than ever before...

-We trust that our Sovereign and Majestic God cares!!!

-Thought the rains fall and the flood waters rise...

-Like Job...

-We can say...

***Yet... I Will See God!!!**

Let's Pray

Gracious God... Our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that you will reveal in us. And we know that you will take all things... positive and negative... and turn them around for your good. During these difficult days... help us to trust you even more! And strengthen us today as we prepare for the challenges of tomorrow and for the joys of eternity... as we find our life... our hope... and our purpose in you. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.