

May 18, 2020

Good Monday!

All around us we are starting to notice how Ohio and America is “opening back up.” It seems strange, but our “new normal” is starting to become routine. While restaurants will soon be starting to open for inside dining here, some of us have developed our new “going out to dinner” routine. Denise and I have been eating a lot of meals in the front seat of my car. I even commented yesterday that we seem to have this new “eating out” routine figured out. We are even starting to kid about our “special places” where we eat in the car. It’s usually in the parking lot of an empty shopping center. But depending on the parking lot, the view of empty stores creates quite the ambience.

I’m not a fan of routine. But as a creature of habit, routines become the way we do life. Even our “new routine” is becoming habit. Tomorrow is another day and yet another one follows tomorrow. And while the circle seems to never end, we have to remember to pause and turn to our Lord—especially now. I fear that this is oftentimes the last thing we remember to do. I want to encourage you to make it the first thing you do each day as you go through your routine for the day. So how do we get to that point—especially in times like this? Let me suggest that you take a close look at Psalm 46 this week. I think that you might be able to find some real peace as you read the words of the writer of this Psalm.

At the very beginning of the psalm, the writer says:

**<sup>1</sup> God is our refuge and strength,  
an ever-present help in trouble.  
<sup>2</sup> Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way  
and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea,  
<sup>3</sup> though its waters roar and foam  
and the mountains quake with their surging.**

I get the impression that the writer is providing a picture of a life where all kinds of things are happening to him. This is a picture of complete chaos (sound familiar?) and though everything is going on around him he is still able to see God as his refuge and strength. And then he begins to describe real peace in verse 4:

**<sup>4</sup> There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,  
the holy place where the Most High dwells.  
<sup>5</sup> God is within her, she will not fall;  
God will help her at break of day.**

It's the idea here that while all about you is falling apart, God is in heaven and all is really right in the world. It is something that we can certainly count on in hectic times. But then (and this is what I really want to encourage you with today) God speaks and tells us how we can cope. He says in verse 10:

**<sup>10</sup> "Be still, and know that I am God;  
I will be exalted among the nations,  
I will be exalted in the earth."**

Be still. Know that God is God. Exalt Him. I want you to use this verse as a prayer of peace this week as you swim your way through the thick and the thin of this coming week. Know that God is right there for you and that He is only a prayer away. Begin your day by stilling yourself before him and then exalt his Name. Perhaps that is the prescription you need to help you through the week.

Have a wonderful week! God bless you.

Pastor Tim