



THURSDAY 12.09.10

Lamentations 3:19-26

Owning up to our own sin is a powerful experience, but Lamentations reminds us that there is another step to the process. When his soul is “downcast,” the writer says, “This I call to mind and therefore I have hope.” Even in the pit of suffering and sin, we remember that “his compassions never fail.” Grace and not guilt gets the final word.

- We all know how overwhelming it can be to “remember our affliction and our wandering, the bitterness and the gall.” Perhaps for some, our journey of “recovering” from our sin has gotten stuck in the continual remembrance of our shortcoming. Is there a memory from your past that God might be calling you to leave behind?
- Today, commit to memorizing Lamentations 3:26. “It is good to wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord.” Nothing else has the power to save us.

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FRIDAY 12.10.10

Isaiah 35

Today’s reading from Isaiah 35 is designed to be a longer reading. As you prepare for your time of devotion today, find a quiet place where you can be alone and have a few moments to yourself. Begin your time in prayer by reciting the Advent prayer printed in your GPS guide. Follow that prayer time by reading Isaiah 35 out loud in its entirety. Read slowly, considering the words and images that Isaiah uses to describe the hope he has in the day when “your God will come.” After reading today’s text, take a few moments to consider this simple question.

- What might God be saying to me in these ancient words?

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# GROW • PRAY • STUDY

A RESOURCE FOR DISCIPLES SEEKING TO LOVE GOD, LOVE OTHERS & SERVE THE WORLD ...

**Series:** *The Prince of Peace*  
**Message:** *A Different Affection!*  
**Scripture:** *Isaiah 9:6, 1 John 4:14-19*

**“If I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I deliver my body to be burned, but do not love, it profits me nothing . . . but now faith, hope, love, abide these three, but the greatest of these is love.” (1 Cor. 13:3,13)**

**“There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear . . . we love, because God first loved us.” (1 John 4:18a 19)**

**“. . . for Demas, having loved this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica . . .” (2 Timothy 4:10a)**

**“For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many a pang.” (1 Timothy 6:10)**

**“But I have this against you, that you have left your first love.”**  
*(Revelation 2:4)*

1. Failure to find our emotional bearings in God, the one constant in life, exposes us to continual turmoil.
2. Everything that matters comes from a relationship.
3. Everything that counts comes from a relationship.
4. Everything good comes from a relationship.

“We live in a society exhausting itself going nowhere other than broken relationships, destructive addictions and the suffocation of things. We fill every minute with something to do, and if there is a miscue in our day, we find ourselves in a state of panic. Isaiah penetratingly asked, ‘Why do you spend money for what is not bread, and your wages for what does not satisfy?’” (Isaiah 55:2)

— Richard Swenson

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## Introduction

Last week in our GPS readings we looked at the words of the prophets which foretold of the one who was to come as the “Prince of Peace” for all the world. Centuries before the fulfillment of these prophetic words, the hope was planted deeply in the hearts of God’s people. The realization of these promises would occur beyond the span of many lifetimes, and yet, the promise alone was enough to strengthen the resolve of God’s people to face their future unafraid.

Last week we said, “Patience just might be the characteristic of God we find the most difficult to understand.” Not many of us look forward to waiting, and yet, the scriptures continually affirm the truth that God does something in our hearts and lives even in these difficult seasons and experiences. This week we will read the poetry of a people who were committed to waiting on promises yet unfulfilled. Perhaps we, too, may profess this week that the promise alone is enough to strengthen our hope in God.

***Holy God, we wait in hopeful expectation for the coming of our King. We hold firmly to the promise you have made to each of us to come and set us free from the chains which bind our hearts and lives. Lord, in this season which is often dominated by the busyness and chaos of our lives, bring us the true and lasting peace that only you can bring. AMEN.***



## TUESDAY 12.07.10

## Psalm 37:1-9

In Matthew 7, Jesus says, “Wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction,” but, “small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life.” Not only is the road that leads to life more narrow, the writer of Psalm 37 might add that it is often longer as well. “Do not be envious of those who do wrong,” the Psalmist writes. By identifying this source of anxiety, we are reminded that often the toughest challenge is distinguishing between the road to life and the road to destruction.

- Have you ever grown envious of those who do wrong? Why does the Psalmist caution us by saying “refrain from anger and turn from wrath”?
- In verses 3-7, the Psalmist offers several suggested practices for protecting our hearts from growing cold. What are those practices? How might these practices steady your hope today?

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## MONDAY 12.06.10

## Psalm 33:18-22

When a young boy or girl does something that they find remarkable, you will often hear them saying, “Hey, look at me!” They simply cannot wait to share their new discovery, and the attention they desire is fulfilled by the watchful eyes of those they love. Like a parent who watches their children out of their love and affection, “The eyes of the Lord,” writes the Psalmist, “are on those who fear him.” God is watching us.

- Does this thought give you hope? What does God’s attention toward us say about God’s affection for us?
- In verse 20, the Psalmist speaks of the Lord as our “help and our shield.” Have you found that to be true in your life? If so, how has God served as a shield for you in times of trouble? In what ways are you putting your hope in God for today?

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## WEDNESDAY 12.08.10

## Isaiah 40:28-31

A rhetorical question is one that is “asked in order to produce an effect or to make a statement rather than to elicit information.” The power behind these kinds of questions is that we already have the answer, but we sometimes need to be reminded of the truth that is buried in our hearts and minds. Yes, we have heard. Yes, we know. “The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth.”

- Verse 30 reminds us that we all grow tired at times. When you think about “growing weary” in your faith life, are there particular experiences or seasons in your life that come to mind? If you have moved beyond those moments, what gave you the strength to soar again?
- If today you find yourself weary, how might you renew your strength in order to run again?

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