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**Cry Out & Be Changed**

**Psalms:**

Here we are in Psalms. Are you excited? I am sure most of you are not. People do not really like the book of Psalms. They find it challenging. It is written in fragments. The words are flowery, it is poetry, it is written as a song, a piece of music without a cool beat to tap our toes to. In fact, Psalms means a song or hymn. I personally love Psalms. It is actually one of my favorite books of the Bible. To me, it is filled with my three favorite things; God, Prayer & Music. People love music because it speaks to them. It brings out our emotions, it allows us to feel. We turn on the radio and we are taken to another place. It changes our outlook, our mood. Emotion pours out of us as we turn up the volume and belt the lyrics out in the car. Songs tend to say exactly what we are feeling and to me, that is the book of Psalms. It is a perfect playlist by God filled with happiness, sadness, love – everything!

Psalms are not typically preached on or studied, but they are filled with guidance and knowledge. It is important that we do not just pick what we like or makes us feel good in the Bible and only read or preach on those parts. As followers of Christ, we are called to open the Bible, read it, study it, listen to it, follow it and obey it – even when some parts are challenging or make us uncomfortable. So, today we are in Psalms.

**Dark Places:**

This psalm starts off in a dark place and most of us can relate. We just went through this wonderful season with calendars being filled with parties, gatherings, great food, the giving and receiving of gifts. There tends to be joy and excitement everywhere. The stores and streets are decorated with lights all over. The darkness fades away and the lights shine through to put smiles on our faces. People tend to have an extra pep in their step and are extra kind to others. Now, we are in January and that is a different story. The lights are taken down, there is this drastic darkness outside now. Our calendars are not filled with gatherings or parties, many people begin to feel alone or isolated. Kids are back to school. There is a new quarter, schedules and seats might have been changed; they are not with their friends. There is a schedule to follow, homework, and bedtimes. The bills from all of the gifts you purchased, and dinners out have arrived in your mailbox. In fact, January is the time of the year when depression hits hard on a lot of people. We feel stuck in this dark pit. We are overwhelmed. What do we do with all of those emotions… where do we turn for guidance? Let’s Pray!

**Picture Perfect &Instant vs Crying Out & Waiting:**

The Bible tells us the Psalmist cried out and waited. Our world is a keep everything to yourself kind of place. We snap the picture and post on whatever social media site and want to show the world how great our life is and how we have everything put together. We also want instant gratification. We want things immediately. We have instant pots. It cooks your food in minutes and presto you have a delicious home cooked meal. We order our food on mobile apps so we do not have to wait in line. When we show up our food is on a counter waiting for us; thank you Panera, Chipotle & Starbucks. We even want instant groceries. We can order those online and someone shops, puts them in our car and off we go. We want everything to look perfect and to receive it in an instant. We even want instant relationship. Need Friends… get online and there is a group you can chat with thousands of people instantly. Kiddos and grown men, do you need someone to play video games with? You can put your headset on and play with people all over the world. The problem with wanting everything to appear perfect and receiving everything in an instant is many times that leads to “surface level” relationships and not true friendships.

Have you ever had a moment when you call a friend and they do not answer, but you must talk to that one friend. You call back, you text, you email and still nothing. Then you repeat that cycle again until they finally respond. You need to talk to that one friend who understands your head… who understands you. You do not go to your next contact, instead you wait. This is the relationship between the psalmist and God. He cries out and waits for his friend. He waits for God.

**Timing:**

 The psalmist does not state how long he waited… that is not the point. The timing does not matter. I know in our world time does matter; however, it is not about the time it is about the relationship. The relationship is worth waiting on. He needed God and waited on God’s timing. Our world wants instant, demands on everything, but we cannot make demands on God. God is Creator and we are created. God is in control and God always knows the best timing weather we understand or even agree with him.

 What is your relationship with God? Are you willing to wait patiently for God or are you going to follow the “world” and want something instant? The psalmist waited. The Bible recommends waiting… God recommends waiting.

**Cry out:**

 The psalmist is not in a good place. He is filled with sadness, frustration or anger. His head is in a place he is unable to get himself out of, he is stuck. Have you been there? The Bible says, “a desolate pit”. Close your eyes, can you see that deep dark pit? There is no light, no way or hope to get out. What do you do? Maybe you are there now. A lost job, financial uncertainty, sickness of yourself or a loved one, death, depression, or addiction. Kids have you been there. As adults we make light of your concerns, but they are real. Did you not make the sports team? Did your best friend move? Maybe your friends decided to not hang out with you anymore and are not being nice to you. Is school overwhelming? Is home frustration, are parents fighting or talking about divorce? Are you having thoughts that maybe it would be better if you were not around? What do you do when the wight of the world is pushing you down into this desolate pit? The world has ideas. Push it down deep inside and post a picture of yourself being happy. The Bible also tells us exactly what to do – to Cry Out! Cry out to God! Give it all to him! Be in a relationship, a friendship with God. Give all your thoughts and emotions to God and do not hold back. God can handle it. God wants to come along side of you and be with you. The Bible says, “he inclined to me” or turned to me. God comes along side of us, take our hand, walks with us. We are not alone. God comes and sets our feet upon a rock. He is our rock. We will not fall. The cherub choir sings a song, the foolish man built his house upon the sand, “the world”, and it came down. The wiseman built his house upon the rock, “God”, and it stood firm. God is strong. God is with you. God is always with us, but we need to remember to still cry out and wait on God.

**A Change to Praise:**

We have cried out and waited… what is next? The psalmist says, “he put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise”. God puts joy, light, happiness back into this person. It does not say, God has taken away whatever caused him to be in the desolate pit but has changed him. He is changed because God loves him. His friend, God, has come to him and is walking with him through whatever. It does not even say that the walk is easy. It just says that he is changed. God changes his outlook. The circumstances, problems or issues do not change. God changes the head and the heart. The psalmist did not have to do anything to receive God. It says no sacrifice or offerings were required. He just needed to believe, cry out and wait. And now he is changed. His life is now for God, “I delight to do your will, O’ my God, your law is written on my heart. He wants, he desires to follow God. To do as God says, not as the world says, but to live out God’s Word.

 This is a challenge for us. To be joyful when our world is a mess. This is easy to read and a great thought, but so hard to do. To be honest, without God and, our relationship with Him, I am not sure that we can be joyful and sing songs of praise when our world is a mess without God with us. To cry out and then to not change does not have a purpose, that is called complaining. Cry out and be changed! Then keep going and take the change to others.

**Telling:**

The Psalmist is filled with happiness and joy. He is filled with the spirt! He cannot contain the excitement to himself and goes out into the world and tell everyone! Let’s be reminded, his circumstances have not changed, his attitude has changed because of his relationship with God. So, he tells everyone. God’s love, his relationship with God is so important that it trumps everything else in his life. He just wants to share the LORD with everyone. He says, “I have not concealed your steadfast love and your faithfulness from the great congregation.”

 We all have a personal relationship with the Lord, but do others know about that relationship? We must, as disciples of Christ, go out and tell, share it with others. We often invite people to church, events, and studies, but are we willing to share “our story”, “our relationship” with GOD with others? Who have your told why you love and follow the Lord?

 The Bible is the best book ever, we are to read it, listen to it, share it, follow it, live it, obey it, but we must also share why it all matters to us. Share your relationship with God to others. The book of Psalms is filled with people sharing their story about their relationship with God. They filled the pages with their thoughts and emotions about their relationship. The book of Psalms is a gift and an inspiration for us to do the same. I challenge each and every one of you to share with someone this week, why you follow Jesus. Why is your relationship with the Lord important in your life. Maybe you do not have a relationship with God right now, that is okay. Your challenge is to cry out and wait. God is there and he will come to you, just cry out! The Bible tells us, He will keep you safe forever in his steadfast love and faithfulness. God loves you! You are never alone. God is always, always with you!