

TIME OF REFLECTION

“The Psalter is the prayer book of Jesus Christ in the truest sense of the word. He prayed the Psalter and now it has become his prayer for all time.”

~Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1945), theologian-pastor, executed for his opposition to the Nazis

“As long as you have not yet reached Christ, the divine word has only one piece of advice for you: ‘Come nearer; you are not yet in a place of security.’”

~Augustine (354-430), North African church leader and theologian

“When you are being pursued and certain ones are perpetrating slander....do not succumb to weariness, but being confident in the Lord and hymning him, recite the things in [Psalm 56].”

~Athanasius (c. 296-373), theologian and church leader, in his “Letter to Marcellinus”

“The condition of the Psalmist’s mind was complex—he feared, but that fear did not fill the whole area of his mind.... It is possible, then, for fear and faith to occupy the mind at the same moment. We are strange beings, and our experience in the divine life is stranger still. We are often in a twilight, where light and darkness are both present and it is hard to tell which predominates. It is a blessed fear which drives us to trust. Unregenerate fear drives from God, gracious fear drives to him.”

~Charles Spurgeon (1834-1892), famed London pastor

“God hath so great compassion on his servants in trouble that he reckoneth even the steps of their wanderings and pilgrimage, and numbereth all their tears, and keepeth the count thereof, as it were in a register; and therefore every troubled servant of God, when he looks upon his sufferings, should look upon God also taking as particular notice of his troubles as he himself can do.”

~David Dickson (1583-1662), Scottish pastor and theologian

“...is it fair for a loving God to sit on His throne in Heaven and let us struggle and suffer on our own? ...It makes perfect sense to me that God decided to come among us, live like us, and die a horribly painful death after being tortured. This is a God I can love with all my heart. A God who sets an example. A God who has bled and whose heart has been broken. This is who Jesus is to me. I don’t pretend that I understand the Holy Trinity. But I understand love and sacrifice. I understand faithfulness.”

~Marina Nemat, author of *After Tehran: A Life Reclaimed*, former political prisoner and inaugural recipient of the European Parliament’s Human Dignity Award (2008)

Worship through the Word

SERMON – “When I Am Afraid, I Put My Trust in You” – *Pastor Don Willeman*

SERMON PASSAGE – *Psalm 56 (ESV)*

*To the choirmaster: according to The Dove on Far-off Terebinths.
A Miktam of David, when the Philistines seized him in Gath.*

¹ Be gracious to me, O God, for man tramples on me;
all day long an attacker oppresses me;
² my enemies trample on me all day long,
for many attack me proudly.
³ When I am afraid,
I put my trust in you.
⁴ In God, whose word I praise,
in God I trust; I shall not be afraid.
What can flesh do to me?

⁵ All day long they injure my cause;
all their thoughts are against me for evil.
⁶ They stir up strife, they lurk;
they watch my steps,
as they have waited for my life.
⁷ For their crime will they escape?
In wrath cast down the peoples, O God!

⁸ You have kept count of my tossings;
put my tears in your bottle.
Are they not in your book?

⁹ Then my enemies will turn back
in the day when I call.
This I know, that God is for me.

¹⁰ In God, whose word I praise,
in the Lord, whose word I praise,
¹¹ in God I trust; I shall not be afraid.
What can man do to me?

¹² I must perform my vows to you, O God;
I will render thank offerings to you.

¹³ For you have delivered my soul from death,
yes, my feet from falling,
that I may walk before God
in the light of life.