

still waters

home church studies

psalm 71 .1-6

[Worship]

1 In you, O LORD, I take refuge; let me never be put to shame. 2 In your righteousness deliver me and rescue me; incline your ear to me and save me. 3 Be to me a rock of refuge, a strong fortress, to save me, for you are my rock and my fortress. 4 Rescue me, O my God, from the hand of the wicked, from the grasp of the unjust and cruel. 5 For you, O Lord, are my hope, my trust, O LORD, from my youth. 6 Upon you I have leaned from my birth; it was you who took me from my mother's womb. My praise is continually of you.

Consider:

[Think & Pray...]

As we look at this woman, bound in sickness—"crippled for eighteen years," the religious authority may well have marked her as undeserving of kindness, through an embellished purity code system. First, she was a woman—property, and of little more worth, and a long sickness might have been believed to be God's just judgment on her in their eyes. So, Jesus affirms her as a "daughter of Abraham" and exposes their hypocrisy—they would rather take care of cattle, instead of a child of God.

Jesus points them to the Sabbath—the true meaning, and spirit of Sabbath. Remember him speaking on another occasion, "I ask you, is it lawful to do good or to do harm on the Sabbath, to save life or to destroy it?" (Luke 6.9). The words he uses after freeing her, connotes the idea of obligation under the law. They surely understood his rebuke to be lawfully endorsed.

Prophets "pluck up" and "pull down." They "destroy" and "overthrow" (Jeremiah 1.10). His prophetic words and actions, reprimand the religious leaders of the day, for placing legalistic, and oppressive regulations—business as usual—ahead of the weightier matters of the law—like justice and mercy. Ultimately,

prophecy is "to build and to plant," redirecting and renewing a vision with true compassion, as a worshipful reflection of God and his merciful order.

Today, the church seems to have things organized in such a way that this worshipful reflection finds its place in the margins of "normal" church life. The "business" of church, seems to have superseded the true "work" of the church. I wonder what will remain when our shaking begins.

Lord, let the shaking begin...

[The Scripture]



luke 13 .10-17

10 Now he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. 11 And just then there appeared a woman with a spirit that had crippled her for eighteen years.

She was bent over and was quite unable to stand up straight. 12 When Jesus saw her, he called her over and said, "Woman, you are set free from your ailment." 13 When he laid his hands on her, immediately she stood up straight and began praising God. 14 But the leader of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had cured on the Sabbath, kept saying to the crowd, "There are six days on which work ought to be done; come on those days and be cured, and not on the Sabbath day." 15 But the Lord answered him and said, "You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger, and lead it away to give it water? 16 And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen long years, be set free from this bondage on the Sabbath day?" 17 When he said this, all his opponents were put to shame; and the entire crowd was rejoicing at all the wonderful things that he was doing.