

still waters

home church studies

psalm 119.97-104

[Worship]

97 Oh, how I love your law! It is my meditation all day long. 98 Your commandment makes me wiser than my enemies, for it is always with me. 99 I have more understanding than all my teachers, for your decrees are my meditation. 100 I understand more than the aged, for I keep your precepts. 101 I hold back my feet from every evil way, in order to keep your word. 102 I do not turn away from your ordinances, for you have taught me. 103 How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth! 104 Through your precepts I get understanding; therefore I hate every false way.

Consider:

[Think & Pray...]

In this week's scriptures, I think the lectionaries' point is to point us in the direction of praying really, really hard—persistently working toward God's ends with great determination. However, that's not how these pan out for me...

Psalm 119 has always been a bit of a paradox for me. I mean that we are not given the author's identity (many believe that it is a psalm of David), but without knowing his specific difficulties with authority, those in power, the elderly, etc., we are simply guessing at what his problem really is. There is one point of view represented, and we never really get the other side.

Much of this psalm sounds like an arrogant youngster, complaining (as we do) about how the power structures' and such "don't get it." And then there is the point of view that he really has been disserved by know-it-all leaders, bent on keeping him in his place. It's probably accurate, that the truth of his circumstances lies somewhere in between.

Scripture is full of folks believing that God is on their side because they are right. Fortunately, God has wonderfully preserved their stories as "earthen vessels" that captures their most base character flaws for our benefit.

When we get to Jesus' parable about the unjust judge, we are tempted to believe that he is giving us a pattern for prayer. The trouble is that this picture looks nothing like the "Our Father," and leaves his question, about finding faith on the earth at his return, hanging in mid-air.

We are great at bugging God to give us everything we want, ensuring that we never suffer inconvenience or discomfort, calling it prayer, but if prayer is "communing with God," surrendered listening to the master, perhaps we would find ourselves in the position of fulfilling God's Kingdom here on earth, just as in heaven.

Unjust judges are slow to hear the cries of the least important. I suggest that if we were to spend less time burdening God with how right we are, deferring to listening to him in our weakness, I am sure that he will find faith on the earth, his will being done...

Just a thought.

[The Scripture]

2 timothy 4 .1-5



1 In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I solemnly urge you: 2 proclaim the message; be persistent whether the time is favorable or unfavorable; convince, rebuke, and encourage, with the utmost patience in teaching. 3 For the time is coming when people will not put up with sound doctrine, but having itching ears, they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own desires, 4 and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander away to myths. 5 As for you, always be sober, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, carry out your ministry fully.