

still waters

home church studies

Psalm 14

[Worship]

1 Fools say in their hearts, "There is no God." They are corrupt, they do abominable deeds; there is no one who does good. 2 The LORD looks down from heaven on humankind to see if there are any who are wise, who seek after God. 3 They have all gone astray, they are all alike perverse; there is no one who does good, no, not one. 4 Have they no knowledge, all the evildoers who eat up my people as they eat bread, and do not call upon the LORD? 5 There they shall be in great terror, for God is with the company of the righteous. 6 You would confound the plans of the poor, but the LORD is their refuge. 7 O that deliverance for Israel would come from Zion! When the LORD restores the fortunes of his people, Jacob will rejoice; Israel will be glad.

Consider:

[Words]

Don't those who do wrong know? Those who devour my people as if eating bread (Psalm 14.4)? These are profound questions for our time, as they were for the increasingly successful King David. A successful military strategist, he could afford to stay home and play both monarch and tyrant, exploiting sexually and politically for his own ends, regardless of the cost to individual lives or national morality. For a while David is the fool who thinks there is no God (Psalm 14.1), joining the ranks of other ruling elites who have exploited, oppressed, and victimized in order to achieve political influence.

Having issued his challenge, "Don't all those who do wrong know?" Jesus realizes that he is in danger of being

misunderstood, for the crowds were about to come by force and make him king. Jesus is forced to flee into the solitude of the hills for safety and reflection. Jesus will be king, but on his own terms, not on the terms of those who have only the tyrant model on which to base their hopes.

We do not know what was in Jesus' prayer, but Paul gives us a prayer that goes to the heart of the spiritual challenge today. We too are to seek the glory of God working in us so that God can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine, from generation to generation in the church and in Christ Jesus forever and ever.



Reflection and Action

Where do you find yourself asking the question, Don't all those who do wrong know? In what ways can you demonstrate a critique of the systems that oppress the poor? Where do you look for solitude and safety when things are difficult?

[Scripture]

Ephesians 3.14-21

14 For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, 15 from whom every family in heaven and on earth takes its name. 16 I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit, 17 and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. 18 I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, 19 and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. 20 Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, 21 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.