



# still waters

home church studies

## Psalm 91.1-6, 14-16 [Worship]

1 You who live in the shelter of the Most High, who abide in the shadow of the Almighty, 2 will say to the LORD, "My refuge and my fortress; my God, in whom I trust." 3 For he will deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the deadly pestilence; 4 he will cover you with his pinions, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness is a shield and buckler. 5 You will not fear the terror of the night, or the arrow that flies by day, 6 or the pestilence that stalks in darkness, or the destruction that wastes at noonday. 14 Those who love me, I will deliver; I will protect those who know my name. 15 When they call to me, I will answer them; I will be with them in trouble, I will rescue them and honor them. 16 With long life I will satisfy them, and show them my salvation.

### Consider:

### [Words]

There are two ways in the world: the way of trustful obedience or the way of self-reliant ambition. The epistle reading makes the case with urgency "to be rich in good works, generous, and ready to share" as a way to well-being (1 Timothy 6:18), while those who "want to be rich" (verse 9; see verse 17) are on their way to self-destruction. The focus is on money as a tool for self-securing, whereas the gospel is about being secure with the God who "richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment" (verse 17).

The parable maps out the crisis of self-serving wealth. The epistle speaks of those who "plunge people into ruin and destruction" (1 Timothy 6:9), and the rich man in the parable lives out the destiny of ruin. The either/or nature of the choice is clear: The deep threat concerns a society that is "hell-bent" on self-security through wealth and power.

The text from Jeremiah concerns the purchase of his family farm while the land is occupied by a foreign invader. Jeremiah relies on the deep promises of God that God's intent for the future will outlast present devastation (Jeremiah 32:15). Thus the "other way" is to believe that the

future is governed by God. It is a way that evokes concrete, risky action. Jeremiah quite literally "buys in" on a future yet to be given.

Psalm 91 is the serene attestation of one who has walked the walk, trusted God, and found God to be utterly reliable. Verses 1-6 testify to God's reliable goodness; verses 14-16 are a first-person declaration by God of God's resolve to rescue, honor, and satisfy.

The claim of this other way is indeed counter-intuitive. It is the truth that the faithful have long found to be a life-producing reality. The parable, like the world, is filled with those of us who learn too late.

– Walter Brueggemann

### [Scripture]

## 1 Timothy 6.6-19

6 Of course, there is great gain in godliness combined with contentment; 7 for we brought nothing into the world, so that we can take nothing out of it; 8 but if we have food and clothing, we will be content with these. 9 But those who want to be rich fall into temptation and are trapped by many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. 10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, and in their eagerness to be rich some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pains. 11 But as for you, man of God, shun all this; pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, gentleness. 12 Fight the good fight of the faith; take hold of the eternal life, to which you were called and for which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. 13 In the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, I charge you 14 to keep the commandment without spot or blame until the manifestation of our Lord Jesus Christ, 15 which he will bring about at the right time--he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords. 16 It is he alone who has immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see; to him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen. 17 As for those who in the present age are rich, command them not to be haughty, or to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but rather on God who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. 18 They are to do good, to be rich in good works, generous, and ready to share, 19 thus storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of the life that really is life.