

still waters

home church studies

Psalm 13

[Worship]

1 How long, O LORD? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me? 2 How long must I bear pain in my soul, and have sorrow in my heart all day long? How long shall my enemy be exalted over me? 3 Consider and answer me, O LORD my God! Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep the sleep of death, 4 and my enemy will say, "I have prevailed"; my foes will rejoice because I am shaken. 5 But I trusted in your steadfast love; my heart shall rejoice in your salvation. 6 I will sing to the LORD, because he has dealt bountifully with me.

Consider:

[Think & Pray...]

If I cannot find the face of Jesus in the face of those who are my enemies, if I cannot find him in the unbeautiful, if I cannot find him in those who have the "wrong ideas," if I cannot find him in the poor and the defeated, how will I find him in bread and wine, or in the life after death? If I do not reach out in this world to those with whom he has identified himself, why do I imagine that I will want to be with him, and them, forever after? Why would I want to be, for all eternity, in the company of those whom I avoided every day of my life?

The peaceable kingdom would be hell for those who avoided peace and devoted their lives to division.

Jesus' kingdom opens itself to us not because we deserve it or belong to the right church (or any church), or have remarkable intelligence, or are theologically astute, or write religious books, or achieve recognition, or because we know bishops, or even know saints.

The kingdom receives us, Jesus says, because we are willing to care for the hungry, the thirsty, the homeless, the naked, the sick, and the imprisoned. We are saved because we care for unattractive strangers, annoying relatives, even those who threaten us. We are saved because we allow the mercy of God not just to enter our lives, as if one's life were private property and God a personal acquisition, but because we let God's mercy pass through our lives.

We are saved because we respond to others as if they were Jesus.



[The Scripture]

Romans 6.16-18

16 Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? 17 But thanks be to God that you, having once been slaves of sin, have become obedient from the heart to the form of teaching to which you were entrusted, 18 and that you, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness.