

# The Lord's Day

March 29, 2020

## God's Call to Us to Worship Him

### **"Be Still and know that I Am God"**

Great is the LORD and greatly to be praised in the city of our God! His holy mountain, beautiful in elevation, is the joy of all the earth, Mount Zion, in the far north, the city of the great King. Within her citadels God has made himself known as a fortress. ~ Psalm 48:1-3

### **\*His Call to Us to Worship Him** based on Psalm 34:1-3

Elder: Brothers and sisters, will you bless the Lord at all times?

**People: His praise shall continually be in our mouths.**

Elder: Will your souls make its boast in the Lord?

**People: The humble do hear and are glad.**

Elder: Oh, Magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together!

**People: We come to worship our God.**

### **\*Prayer of Invocation**

### **\*Hymns of Our Procession Into the Presence of God**

Great Is Thy Faithfulness

Hymn #32

Holy, Holy, Holy!

Hymn #100

## The Father Reaffirms His Covenant with Us

### **Scripture Reading**

Responsive Reading of Psalm 46

### **Prayer of Adoration and Confession**

Elder-led Prayer

### **Assurance of His Pardon**

Isaiah 50:7-9

### **\*Hymn of Thanksgiving**

Psalm 103: Praise to the Lord, the Almighty

Hymn #53

### **Intercessory Prayer**

Dismissal of children Grade 1 and under to Junior Church

**Christ is Made Known to Us**

**Hymn of Prayer**

O Jesus, I Have Promised

Hymn #654

**His Word is Opened to Us**

Dr. David G. Barker

**Scripture:** Psalm 121 (Pew Bible pg. 516)

*“The grass withers, the flower fades ...  
But the Word of our God will stand forever.”*

**Message: Fearing What We Cannot See**

**Prayer for Response and Obedience**

**We Depart with His Blessing  
And Sending of His Spirit**

**Offering of His Tithes and Our Offerings**

Offertory

\*Doxology

**\*Prayer of Commitment to Service**

**\*Hymn of our Procession into the World**

Who Trusts in God, a Strong Abode

Hymn #668

**\*Charge and Benediction**

(Hymn 431, vs. 3)

*We're purchased by your blood, by sin no longer led;  
The path our dear Redeemer trod may we rejoicing tread.*

**Postlude**

\*Congregation Standing

# Responsive Reading

## *Psalm 46*

God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.

**Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea,**

though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging.

**There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy place where the Most High dwells.**

God is within her, she will not fall; God will help her at break of day.

**Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall; he lifts his voice, the earth melts.**

The LORD Almighty is with us;

**the God of Jacob is our fortress.**

Come and see the works of the LORD, the desolations he has brought on the earth.

**He makes wars cease to the ends of the earth; he breaks the bow and shatters the spear, he burns the shields with fire.**

“Be still, and know that I am God;

**I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.”**

The LORD Almighty is with us;

**the God of Jacob is our fortress.**

# Fearing What We Cannot See The Life of the Christian Pilgrim

*Psalm 121*

(see also Ex. 14:13-14; Ps. 68:1-3; 125:2; Is. 30:29; Lk. 10:25-37; Rom. 8:28; Eph. 1:11-12; 1 Pet. 1:6-7)

Worshipping online and in our homes

- a) is no way to run a church!
- b) is necessary to follow our government's instruction.
- c) is getting really old.
- d) all of the above.

What does "Psalm of Ascent" mean?

The pilgrim worshipper

travels \_\_\_\_\_ the Lord  
as well as \_\_\_\_\_ to the Lord.

**I. This psalm is one of \_\_\_\_\_  
and \_\_\_\_\_.**

What do I do with these promises?

What will the Lord do?

He will not let your foot be \_\_\_\_\_,

He will \_\_\_\_\_ you,

He will keep you from all \_\_\_\_\_.

What are you to do?

**II. This psalm is also one of \_\_\_\_\_.**

Who/what must guide my steps?

Who/what must I depend?

Who/what must I trust?

# *My Own Thoughts*

## *Holy Week Schedule*

**Thursday, April 9** – Maundy Thursday

**Friday, April 10** – Good Friday

**Sunday, April 12** – Resurrection Day

# Studies on Christian Contentment

## *Gaining the Upper Hand*

*Romans 12:1-8*

(see also: Mt. 5:3-12; 11:29; Eph. 4:20-32)

Christian contentment if to be found

- a) in doing a small list of necessities.
- b) in learning how to pretend to be content.
- c) in obeying the positive directions given in Scripture.

How would you write your own beatitudes?

Why does Jesus gives us his?

#1)

#2)

#3)

Is it enough just to put off the world in order to find contentment?

The roadmap of Romans 12:

#1)

put off:

put on:

#2)

a)

b)

In what is your identity truly found?

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### PRAYER REQUESTS

*Email all new or updated prayer requests to: [ncpc@ncpres.org](mailto:ncpc@ncpres.org)*

**Expectant Mothers:** Kayla G.

**Eleanor R.**, Paul F.'s mother, went home to be with the Lords early Wednesday morning. Since she is in upstate NY, plans for a service are being held off – perhaps even until her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday, which is August 15<sup>th</sup>.

**Wes P.'s aunt** passed away last week. Please keep Wes and the family in your prayers.

**Bob B.**, as he recovers from surgery this past Friday.

**Mia F.**, granddaughter of Hendrik and Ria v., is doing well, drinking from a bottle, and remaining stable with her heart echo. She may have another surgery soon but she is doing well now.

**Marilyn C.**, mother of Christina S., with multiple myeloma. Please pray for wisdom for the doctors in discerning a treatment going forward and especially pray for Marilyn's salvation.

**Tammy C.**, sister-in-law of Nancy S., has a staph infection in her knee. She still has 4 more weeks of the home IV. With what's going on with this virus, there's no doctors' visits, unless there's a change in the way her wounds look.

**Scott P.**, brother of Kent P., recovering from surgery to remove a tumor from his brain and as he starts radiation treatment.

**Nancy M.**, as she continues to battle cancer.

**Anna C.**, friend of the Stewarts, continues to battle metastatic breast cancer.

**Kathleen M.** as she continues to wrestle with her cancer.

**Dave B.**, Jill K.'s foster brother, as he continues treatment for cancer.

**Karen E.** as she struggles with various health issues.

**Kayla**, granddaughter of Doug and Chris T., as she continues treatment for optic nerve glioma.

**Ria v.:** We pray in thanksgiving for the spiritual strength that Ria continues to display as she rests in hospice care at her home. She and the family appreciate the warm comfort and support she is receiving from members of the congregation.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Evening Worship:** Pastor Barker continues with his series on Christian Contentment by encouraging you to take actions allowing you to gain the upper hand in your spiritual battles. Go to his website, [www.ephesians515.com](http://www.ephesians515.com) for the sermon.

**Spring WIC Retreat** is postponed, date TBD.

**VBS Craft Supplies Needed:** For one of the VBS crafts, we are in need of empty paper towel rolls. A box will be set out for collection in the narthex under the coat rack.

**Box Tops for Education:** Please help our school by bringing in your box tops and placing them in the box on the information table in the narthex. Money raised by the box tops helps our school purchase IT equipment for the classrooms. We can also earn extra box top money doing ShopRite for our school. Go to <https://shopriteformyschool.com/>, register, and put New Covenant as the school.



# Fear of the Future

by Ed Welch

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All fears are prophecies about the future. They start small—a robber might steal your bike, the boogiemer will eat you before the night is over—and they grow from there. These fears need help, however, to go global and apocalyptic.

I grew up during a time that supplied that help. I was in elementary school during the height of the Red Scare. The *Late Great Planet Earth* was a bestseller, and the media reported on the worst of global affairs. Given that fertile soil, no Christian needed imagination to envision the Red Army using demonic devices to detect that you were a Christian, and eager to take you through the worst torture until you renounced Jesus or died. It was, I thought, the worst of times.

Then I grew up and realized that every era is, indeed, the worst of times. The truth is that we always have help to take our fears global. There is always a new threat.

Here are some common fears from a list that can be endless:

- Fear of the utter moral collapse of the surrounding culture
- Fear of economic collapse and chaos
- Fear of Islamic extremists
- Fear of resistant viruses, plagues, hazardous chemicals, and so on.

## **TWO POPULAR LINES OF DEFENSE**

How can we ward off these fears? One line of defense is to be rational, to let data and facts assuage the fears. Consider, for example, Islamic extremists. Since most religions grow by way of parents who pass on the faith to their children, the statistics suggest that there will be no Islamic majority in the foreseeable future

because there are simply more Christians than Muslims right now, and even a sudden surge in the size of an average Islamic family will not make that much difference for the foreseeable future. Fear relieved.

A second defense against these fears is to imagine the worst and get prepared. Warn others, build a bunker, or simply keep imagining the worst as if that will be a talisman when the worst shows up.

These defenses, of course, are but temporary comforts. We cannot trust in data, the odds being in our favor, or our personal preparation. We trust in a Person. Any response to distant fears that emphasizes information and preparation over trust is ungodly to its core. Information and education are not wrong, but they are not our first response. God's people turn to Him first: "We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you" ([2 Chron. 20:12](#)).

## **WE WILL RECEIVE GRACE**

As we turn to the Lord, we first consider the greatest promise of all: "I will never leave you nor forsake you" ([Heb. 13:5](#)). Our sins are what keep us from our God, but now the perfect High Priest has made the perfect sacrifice and, having made atonement for sins, He sat down. Sacrifice for sin is done. We are guaranteed His presence. We will not face our fears alone.

Included in this promise is that He will give us the daily grace we need. The Old Testament image behind this is the gift of manna. It was enough for the day but not to be stockpiled for tomorrow lest we trust in our stockpiles. Tomorrow will find new mercies, fresh manna, and abundant grace.

That grace will empower us to rest in God and stand firm in the face of whatever suffering or temptation the world can muster, in the face of whatever fear that has come true ([1 Cor. 10:13](#)). His presence assures us that we will "receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need" ([Heb. 4:16](#)). All we have to do is ask.

Promised grace renders our fearful forecasts obsolete. Even if we are right in our predictions, which we usually are not, we cannot predict the grace that will be poured out on us on that future day. Instead, we envision the future with the grace we have for today's hardships, and that grace is sufficient only for today, not tomorrow. Tomorrow will show up with a new stockpile of grace.

## **RETELL THE STORY**

With this future grace in view, we retell the story of our lives and the story of history. Consider [Psalm 23](#), for example, as a template. We become, by faith, the sheep of the Lord. Joy and rest are the order of the day. But sheep have to stay on the move, and that journey will include trouble, as we witnessed when the Lamb of God submitted to His Shepherd on the same path. The trouble can be intense. It can include Assyria, Rome, and other threats that can kill us. But the story does not end there. Our enemies will watch from a distance as we sit around the banquet table of God. They will be shamed; we will be family with the Honored One. As we walk to the house of the Lord, fearing no evil, we pray that His will be done on earth as it is in heaven ([Matt. 6:10](#)). And the pilgrimage takes us to the house of God, where His will is done continually. The story of Scripture always ends well.

Indeed, life and history end gloriously for God's people, and while we look toward that end, we predict this: the grace of God can pursue us in such a way that we fear evil less and less.

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Ed Welch, "Fear of the Future," *Tabletalk*, Oct. 2013