

Pastor column: Remembering both the nature, promises of God

The Homer Horizon

Pastor Jess Harren, Cross of Glory Lutheran Church

10:22 am CDT July 12, 2016

“Help, God — the bottom has fallen out of my life! Master, hear my cry for help! Listen hard! Open your ears! Listen to my cries for mercy. If you, God, kept records on wrongdoings, who would stand a chance? As it turns out, forgiveness is your habit, and that’s why you’re worshiped. I pray to God — my life a prayer — and wait for what he’ll say and do. My life’s on the line before God, my Lord, waiting and watching till morning, waiting and watching till morning. O Israel, wait and watch for God — with God’s arrival comes love, with God’s arrival comes generous redemption. No doubt about it — he’ll redeem Israel, buy back Israel from captivity to sin.” (Psalm 130:1-7, Peterson, Eugene H. *The Message* (2002). Bible Gateway. Web. 6 July 2016).

I love this Psalm. In other versions of the Bible, it starts out as, “Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord.” I love knowing that I have a God who welcomes my cries. When the world around me seems full of chaos, hate, discrimination, brokenness, violence and worship of things contrary to God’s Word (money, power, hate), I can return to this Psalm and trust that God hears my cries. That God is big enough for my pain, my lack of hope, my despair. Sometimes, this is also true in my personal life. I crave knowing that God is there, even when I am crying for help.

And then, this Psalm, a poem about God, goes on to reassure me about a few more things. It reassures me that sometimes it is OK if I don’t have answers. I don’t need them right away, because I can cry for God’s help and then wait and watch for God’s action.

I’m glad that this poem is not overly specific about God’s action, but it does tell us a few things about who God is. First, God’s habit is forgiveness. This is great news, because as the poet points out, we all need to be forgiven on a regular basis. None of us are perfect or above the need for forgiveness.

Finally, then, after we trust God is listening, we watch for God’s action and are assured that we are forgiven for our role in the situation, and God arrives with love, freedom and redemption. I can’t be sure how things will turn out, but I can be sure that there is a loving God promising all those things, and, in the midst of chaos, it gives me great hope. Join us at Cross of Glory on Sunday mornings at 9:30 a.m. to learn more about this God who promises us hope.

The opinions of this column are that of the writer. They do not necessarily reflect those of The Homer Horizon.