

A God Closer than You Can Imagine

Psalms 46 March 18, 2020

Introduction

1. **Thanks** to you, thanks to Chris and team; **Sunday worship** broadcast at 9:00, 11:15, and 5:00; SS (Children's SS at 10:00, other classes Zoom). We will email maybe as early as tomorrow and text link Sunday. Pass it on! One church that runs 4,000 had 18,000 viewers Sunday.
2. Q: What are you thinking about?
3. Explanation: Psalms 46 in (1) 3 stanzas, (2) and 3 declarations of God's presence (1, 7, 11), (3) 3 problems (fear, 2; moved 5,6; striving, 10).
4. S: This is what we are to think about in these days.
5. Illus: Set my alarm for the bottom of every hour to read and pray.
6. CBT: The Psalmist kept problems from overtaking him by thinking on God's presence.
7. Thesis: You can cope w/ problems if you will think about God's presence.

I. God's Presence Helps You to Resist Your Fears.

1. CX: v.2—3: Reverse 3rd day of Creation; most extreme circumstance.
2. Psalms 46:1—3: **God is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble. 2 Therefore we will not fear, Even though the earth be removed, And though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; 3 Though its waters roar and be troubled, Though the mountains shake with its swelling. Selah**
 - 1) **Think of God's Help as Full Help** (refuge=help for external threats; Strength=help for internal threats); God has everything covered. He has thought of everything. He has plans for all.
 - 2) **Think of God's Help as Fast Help**, exceedingly ready help, a help soon found, a help most surely found, a help to be found without fail, easily found; Haste 9x; God can come to your rescue quickly. You will get His help every time you need it.
3. Illus: "He is more present than friend or relative can be, closer even than the trouble itself" (Spurgeon). The best and quickest place you will find help is in God. All other strength is weakness (Spurgeon).
4. In this time, please look to God for His full and fast help and not something else. It is during times like these in which people develop addictions and habits that make things worse.
5. You need not turn to these; you can turn to God. **Think about that.**

II. God's Presence Helps You to Reinforce Your Footing.

1. S: God's presence can stabilize, strengthen, reinforce.
2. **Psalms 46:4—7: 4 There is a river whose streams shall make glad the city of God, The holy place of the tabernacle of the Most High. 5 God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved; God shall help her, just at the break of dawn. 6 The nations raged, the kingdoms were moved; He uttered His voice, the earth melted. 7 The Lord of hosts is with us; The God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah**
3. Illus: Walking into prayer closet, Kittens; Walking out, Lions
4. It is a mystery to me, but God reinforces me when I get into His presence. **Think about that.**

III. God's Presence Helps You to Relax Your Fight.

1. Psalms 46:8—11: **8 Come, behold the works of the Lord, Who has made desolations in the earth. 9 He makes wars cease to the end of the earth; He breaks the bow and cuts the spear in two; He burns the chariot in the fire. 10 Be still and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth! 11 The Lord of hosts is with us; The God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah**
 - 1) Keys=Invitations in v. 8 and 10. Come see the remains of My enemies (Babylon, Assyria, Bashan, Canaan); Be Still is not an invitation to contemplation but "Lay down your arms and let me battle" (Exodus 14:14—15).
 - 2) Summary: Come and stop. "Come and see My works in history and project that onto the future." Mentally, we must discipline ourselves to think of God's work in history then discipline ourselves to project these onto the future. His past acts are not so subtle clues as to how He will act in the future.
2. Illus: Bible story books
3. If we belong to the Lord, our future looks like the Lord's past. Look up to God and He will help you relax your fight.

Conclusion

1. Illus: "The outlook is horrible. The down-look is frightening. But the up-look is as good as ever." **Think.**
2. Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus/Look full in His wonderful face/And the things of earth will grow strangely dim/In the light of His glory-grace.