

1/11/08

Dear Friends,

Thoughts:

There are times when we all feel that there is darkness surrounding us. Sometimes the onslaughts of life simply overwhelm us. It is then that we need the light the most.

The psalm writer speaks the words for us.

Psalms of Lament are the most common style of writing in the book of Psalms. These Psalms were often used in the context of worship. I offer these words for you, as your prayers of Lament. I have been in touch with many in these past few days who are surrounded by darkness. Winter is tough because the skies are so dark, it is cold outside and we are stuck inside often with the shades pulled. SO what can help?

Hear these words of Lament. Let them speak for you and then let the words of our Lord be your answer, your light for the hour.

"I am overwhelmed with troubles, O Lord, and my life draws nearer to death. I am counted among those who go down to the pit; I am like one without strength. I am set apart. You have put me in the lowest pit, in the darkest depths. You have taken me from my closest friends, and you have made me repulsive to them. I am confined and cannot escape. 'My eyes are dim with grief.' (Portions of Psalm 88)

"I sink in the miry depths, where there is no foothold. I have come into the deep waters; the floods engulf me. I am worn out calling for help; my throat is parched. My eyes fail. I am like a foreigner to my family. Rescue me. Do not let me sink. Do not let the pit close its mouth over me." (Portions of Psalm 69)

Job adds his lament: "Thick darkness covers my face." (Job 23:17)

John says, "In the beginning, from the very first moment of time even, friend, before the beginning of things as we know them, before darkness or light, night or day, even came to be, (amazing), was the word, and the word was with God, and the Word was God. In Him was life, and that life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it. The True light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world." (Portions of John 1). And Jesus said, "You are the light of the world." You, my friends are filled with Light. The light is all about you. "A city on a hill cannot be hid. Let your light shine." (Portions of Mathew 5). "Those who follow me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." (Portions of John 8). "I am the light of the world." (Portions of John 9)

Friends, let the words of Jesus invade your soul. Let them permeate your darkness, whatever it is. Let Jesus answer you. Let the Light of Christ fill you. It is the season of Epiphany in the church, a time to celebrate the light of Christ in our lives. And, know that God is there with God's warming light. And that nothing is too far, too far, from God's reach. Nothing is too dark for God. The Psalm writer even answers his own lament: "Even the darkness is not dark to you, Oh God; the night shines like the day." Take a moment to see the light.

Questions to ponder:

Have you ever felt like things were the "Pits"? Have you ever had one of those dull drum days? What, or who pulled you out? Could it be that God was instrumental in redeeming your life from the grave at that very moment, because it is God's nature after all?

Song:

For some reason this song keeps popping into my head. It keeps showing up on the radio. It's one of our best loved Worship songs:

"Here I am to Worship": By Tim Hughes

(You can access the CD and listen in on "You Tube" - simply type in the Song title on word search and it will pop up or type it in on the web site for You Tube. You can also listen to the songs on

www.worshipmusic.com)

Here I Am to Worship

Words and Music by Tim Hughes

Light of the world,

You step down into darkness.

Opened my eyes let me see.

Beauty that made this heart adore You

Hope of a life spent with you.

Chorus

Here I am to worship,

*Here I am to bow down,
Here I am to say that You're my God,
You're altogether lovely,
Altogether worthy,
Altogether wonderful to me.*

*King of all days,
Oh so highly exalted
Glorious in heaven above.
Humbly You came to the earth You created.
All for love's sake became poor.*

Bridge - 4x
I'll never know how much it costs to see my sin upon that cross.
God bless you Friends. And, Happy Epiphany!
R.F