

E-Series

Seeing God in the Bad Times (Continued)



God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. 2 Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, 3 though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging. Selah 4 There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy place where the Most High dwells. 5 God is within her, she will not fall; God will help her at break of day.

6 Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall; he lifts his voice, the earth melts. 7 The Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress. Selah 8 Come and see the works of the Lord, the desolations he has brought on the earth. 9 He makes wars cease to the ends of the earth; he breaks the bow and shatters the spear, he burns the shields with 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 Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress. —Psalm 46

This morning I was talking with one of our church members. He brought up the sermon from this past Sunday, "Seeing God in the Bad Times." Then he said, "Do you remember my wife and me coming to see you in your office when you first moved here?"

(I did. It was right after a tragic loss in their lives. They were both angry and hurting. Their pain was palpable that night as they told me their story. It involved their children, and it was heartbreaking. In the midst of their anguish and grief, I think it was the wife who first gave tearful voice to their unspoken question. "Where was God in all of this?")

In times like that, our pain can make God notoriously hard to see.

I gave the only answer I knew how. I said, "I believe that God was right there with you. In fact, I think that his were the first tears to hit the ground. He knows exactly what you are going through. He really does know what it's like to lose a child...")

"Do you remember my wife and me coming to see you in your office when you first moved here?" When I said that I did, he recalled the above conversation verbatim. Then he said, "I want you to know that when I came in that day, I was angry. But that image—the image of God being there with us, shedding tears with us—caused my anger to melt away. When I left that night, I was still hurting, but I wasn't mad. I could see God in the middle of our lives."

I was grateful for him sharing that with me. It's humbling to be a part of such God-moments. Maybe you have been in a similar spot, maybe you are in a similar spot now, feeling abandoned, wondering where God is. I hope these words will speak to you.

Humbled,
Pastor Michael