

**Wednesday, July 15, 2020**  
**Devotional Thoughts from Pastor Jim Murr...**

**"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.  
Therefore we will not fear though the earth gives way,  
though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea,  
though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble at its swelling...  
The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress."**

*Psalm 46: 1-3, 11*

I feel so humbled by what has been going on in the world, and especially in our nation, for the past 5 or 6 months. I truly thought it would be over by mid-July. Right now I am referring to the COVID-19 pandemic. I'll get to the other stuff in a minute. I remember the Ebola scare, even though it was more than a "scare" for a lot of people who got it and ended up dying from it. I remember it, but it didn't seem to have such a far-reaching threat as COVID-19 does. There have been other health scares in the years of my memory. I remember hearing about SARS and MRSA. I kind of remember hearing about the Swine Flu. What else am I missing? But none of these health issues caused me to wear a mask and turn me into a bigger "germophobe" than I already was.

The reason I am so humbled because of the current pandemic is that, as of now, by God's grace, it has not really affected my life all that much. Sure I wear a mask in public places. I keep my distance from people. I don't eat at McDonald's. (That part has been better for me anyway.) My "job" has not been taken away from me due to the pandemic, as has sadly happened for so many people. Even though my life has not been drastically affected by COVID-19 (thanks be to God), I still find myself being irritated by it.

My life has also not been personally impacted by all of the looting and destruction. And yet, I admit, I have a certain level of fear about where our nation is going.

The fact that I am irritated and a little fearful is what humbles me. It humbles me because it makes me wonder how I would handle it if I were to be more directly impacted by these things. I need to stop pretending to be a person of great faith. I need to realize that, in actuality, my faith has been in the fact that I have lived in a cocoon of sorts – untouched by much of the pain that impacts so many people in world.

My faith needs to be much more directly placed in the God of Jesus Christ. This is so that WHEN "the earth gives way and the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea" – in other words, when those things that I have depended on DO fall apart, that I don't fall apart with them! Such is the point of Psalm 46: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear though the earth gives way..."

We live in a world that cannot be counted on. Just reread Genesis 3 to be reminded of that fact. But God is a different story! God is our fortress! He cannot be moved, and so those who trust in Him cannot be moved either. No matter what else falls apart, no matter what may change in our world, we remain strong and safe in the hands of God. This is what my faith needs to be based on. Not the things that I have become used to. They may not always be the reality. But God always will be. This is the basis of faith.

God's peace!  
Pastor Jim