

Friday, September 4, 2020
Devotional Thoughts from Pastor Jim Murr...

**"Be merciful to me, O God, be merciful to me, for in you my soul takes refuge;
in the shadow of your wings I will take refuge,
till the storms of destruction pass by."**

Psalm 57: 1

We all know that if you live in a house with a basement, that that's where you should go if a tornado comes through. If you don't have a basement, I have heard that you should get in the bathtub. I don't really know why that is. But I do know that not too many people will fit in a bathtub, so how does a family decide who gets in the bathtub and who doesn't? I don't know.

What I do know is that God is our ultimate hiding place! He invites us to take refuge in Him until the storms of destruction pass by. Is God our Protector? And, if so, what does He protect us from? Is trusting in God a substitute for hiding in the basement during a tornado? I don't think so. Certainly God can and does provide us with physical protection when it is His will to do so. David wrote Psalm 57 when he was hiding from Saul who wanted to kill David. So, David certainly trusted in God for physical protection.

But God ultimately wants to protect us from all kinds of harm, especially from spiritual harm. God protects us from Satan's attempts to pull us away from Him. He does this by inviting us to be in His Word every single day so that we are constantly reminded of His love for us, and especially of the Good News of what Jesus has done for us on the cross.

There is a storm going on in our world right now. Actually, there are many storms going on. I don't need to remind you of what these storms are, but I will. One of the storms is obviously the pandemic. We don't know when that storm will end, or IF it will end. The other major storm, at least in our nation, is all of the social unrest, and – let's just say it – all of the hatred that people have for one another. We can try hiding in our basement, but we would have to come up at some point! Ultimately, all of the things that can cause us distress in this life will be around for our entire lives, or until Jesus returns. The distresses may change their faces over the course of history, but there will always be distresses in this life.

So, we need to know where to "hide out." When God is our refuge, we can "hide out" AND face the storms of life at the same time. In fact, that's the way God wants us to live. We can face the storms because we know that they can never change the status of our relationship with God. We can also face them, because we know that they are temporary. Every storm passes. Another may come. But we are always safe "in the shadow of God's wings."

God's Peace!
Pastor Jim