

Tuesday, November 10, 2020
Devotional Thoughts from Pastor Jim Murr...

"Preserve me, O God, for in you I take refuge."

Psalm 16: 1

What a very simple and yet profound prayer this is. "Preserve me!" I don't know what the Hebrew word is that was translated "preserve." But let's talk about the word "preserve" as we understand it. When I think of the word "preserve," I think of making something last over time – protecting it from the elements, or from those things that will make it corrode or fall apart. In this Psalm, David asks God to preserve him – to protect him from the elements, so to speak.

Life is hard. It's harder for some than it is for others. You may be one of the ones who have a harder life than others, but even if you don't have it too hard, you have had your share of struggles in life. The struggles that we deal with in life can have a negative effect on us. They can make us bitter. They can lead us into depression. Our struggles can tempt us to distrust God or to drift away from Him because we are under the mistaken impression that, if we trust in God, He will make our lives go smoothly.

As a pastor, I have wondered over the years what has caused so many "members" of the churches I have served to disappear from the church and from worship. Granted, some have left because they didn't like me, but I'm referring to people who left long before I arrived. They still live in town, but they have not started worshiping at another church. They just stop. They used to go. They used to be involved. But then something happens. I don't know if it's the result of ONE thing that happened or of a number of things. Either way, time has a way of corroding people's faith or at least their faithfulness.

In the Psalm verse above, David just prays a simple prayer: "Preserve me, O God, for in you I take refuge." In other words, help me to remain close enough to you as I live in this world so that I will not begin to lose what I had or who I was before. "Preserve me!"

David knows what the "preservative" is. He says, "for in you I take refuge." David was a fan of hiding in God. He would regularly escape from life for a period of time and just get close to God. This preserved Him. This renewed His faith in God. God was like his "Rest Area" like when we are on a long road trip.

I hope that you are staying "preserved" these days. I hope you are not letting the craziness of a pandemic or the struggles that you are dealing with personally cause your relationship with God to corrode. Take refuge in Him. Read His Word. Pray regularly. And if you feel safe enough, come to church again.

God's Peace!
Pastor Jim