

## 091822 Sermon "Come to God with Expectation" Psalm 130:5-8

A man sat at a metro station in Washington DC and started to play the violin; it was a cold January morning. He played six Bach pieces for about 45 minutes. During that time, since it was rush hour, it was calculated that thousands of people went through the station, most of them on their way to work. In the 45 minutes the musician played, only 6 people stopped and stayed for a while. About 20 gave him money but continued to walk their normal pace. He collected \$32. When he finished playing and silence took over, no one noticed it. No one applauded, nor was there any recognition.

No one knew this but the violinist was Joshua Bell, one of the best musicians in the world. He played one of the most intricate pieces ever written with a violin worth 3.5 million dollars. Two days before his playing in the subway, Joshua Bell sold out at a theater in Boston and the seats average \$100. This is a real story. It was organized by the Washington Post as part of a social experiment about perception, taste and priorities of people.

There are many things to think about through this story. Why did he have to waste his precious talents and time during one of the very busy times of the day? People might say, 'Maybe a lot of people would have enjoyed his music if he hadn't been there during rush hour...' But, is that really the case? Sometimes we can choose to attend a good concert, but does everything go according to our timetable? In fact, more often than not, in a commonplace environment at an inappropriate hour: Do we perceive beauty? do we stop to appreciate it in places we never expected? If we do not have a moment to stop and listen to one of the best musicians in the world playing the best music ever written, how many other things are we missing?

Furthermore, through this story, I thought about how important it is to expect and hope in our lives. Perhaps if Joshua Bell had been playing and letting people know who he was from the start, a lot of people would have gathered around him even though they were busy. But when they listened to music without expectations and trust from a street performer, no one recognized its value.

Being able to stop, listen, and expect is so precious in our lives. I think this is very relevant to our spiritual life. Even if you come before God to worship, pray, sing hymns, and listen to the Word, if you do not have expectations of God, you will not be able to appreciate the true value of your life of faith. Today's psalm also shows how precious a life that expects God and hopes for God is.

Psalm 130 tells us that no matter what our current situation and circumstances, we must realize the heart of God who has mercy on us and become a holy people who live according to God's word. And in order to do that, we must always expect God and live in prayer. In today's scripture, the word 'wait' is repeated 4 times in verses 5 and 6. Also, the word 'hope' with a similar meaning is repeated twice in verses 5 and 7. How much do you expect and wait for the God that the psalmist longed for so much? Your life is so intense and busy that you can't afford to wait?

Verse 5 says, "I wait for the Lord, my soul waits, and in his word I hope;"

The word "waiting" in the Bible is different from what we usually think of waiting. Here, to wait [kaaba in Hebrew] is 'to look forward to'. The original meaning is 'bind together'. Literally, 'I wait for the Lord' means 'I bind myself to the Lord'. I bind myself to the Lord because I keep going the other way. I bind myself to the Word of God, because I often get lost. I bind myself to the Lord and trust in him more consciously because it is easy for me to miss the Lord due to other things in my busy life.

In John 15:4 Jesus says, 'Abide in me, and I in you; just as a branch cannot bear fruit of its own accord unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless ye remain in me.' I believe that when you bind yourself to the Lord and abide in the word of God, you will see the presence of God in your life, and there will be no impossible things.

As such, what the Bible says about 'waiting' does not mean sitting around doing nothing. Earlier, I said that waiting is binding my life to the Lord, but I am going to talk about prayer in a specific way of binding. David is a representative figure in the Bible! Even in the midst of countless difficulties and pains, he bound himself to God, and then he triumphed and prospered like that. David's waiting is David's prayer. Do you eagerly wait for God when you come to church? Do you earnestly pray to God in your home and workplace?

Your prayer life may feel like nothing! Rather, there may be some who feel that the problem has gotten worse after praying. When we pray, the Bible testifies that there are certainly evil forces that hinder our prayers! But! Nevertheless, we must pray. We find ourselves wanting to take a break from our busy social life. But according to the Bible, we are told to pray without ceasing. We usually hope that there will come a time when we can pray. 'Pastor, the situation is not good right now. I am not in a situation where I can pray because I am so busy, because I am so tired.' But the Bible tells us to pray in season or out of season. Why does the Bible keep saying such nonsensical things? Let's find the answer in today's psalm.

Verses 7 and 8 say, "O Israel, hope in the Lord! For with the Lord there is steadfast love, and with him is great power to redeem. It is he who will redeem Israel from all its iniquities."

The reason for hoping and waiting for God so much is revealed here. It is because of God's steadfast love and abundant redemption. We say we will pray when the problem is solved and when we have more time, but the Lord tells us to pray for the solution of the problem. We say the problem is the closed door in front of my way, but he says that the problem is not the door that is closed before your ways, but the problem is not praying. Dear brothers and sisters, pray! Pray for your family, pray for your children, pray for your work, and pray for your academic works. Furthermore, let's pray together for our church, for our country, and for the world.

Howard Kelly, a professor and surgeon at Johns Hopkins University, was a devout Christian and tried to live as a witness of the Lord in his daily life. On

his lapel he wore a pink rose in a small glass bottle of water. Then a student said, 'Sir, how can the flower not wither? Do you have any tricks?' When asked he turned his lapel to reveal the stem in water and said, "This is a Christian rose with hidden sources of grace and life.

In order to live a life of faith in the harsh world we live in, we need God's steadfast love and abundant grace of redemption every day. Have hope in God. Ask God and pray! Dear beloved brothers and sisters in Christ, life is hard these days. We race towards something, but sometimes it's hard to tell if that's the right direction. The busier you are, the more you should not stop praying! Bind yourself to the Lord in prayer. Ask your friends in faith for intercessory prayers! And above all, let's look forward to what God will do among us.