

Home Group study: week beginning 27th April 2020

Psalm 46

What do you do, or where do you go, to find peace and quiet? Describe an experience you've had where you've really known peace and quiet. Are peace, quiet and solitude things you long for, or are they things you avoid?

Read: Psalm 46

Look at verse 1, then verse 7 then verse 11. What strikes you about them? Then verses 2-6 tell us about the state of the world and contrast it with where God is. In verses 8-10 we're invited to come and see what God has done. Do you get a sense of verses 1, 7 and 11 being like the walls of a fortress? And how do the other verses fit between those walls? Do you get a sense of reassurance from this?

Do verses 2 and 3 remind us of our current situation? What do verses 5 and 6 tell us about God's place in our situation? Have a look at verse 9. It describes very specific ways in which God disarms our enemies; what are they? What do you think that means when our enemy is a spiritual rather than a military power?

Understanding

What is the river described in v4? What do you think it means by 'the City of God'? Do you think it's referring just to heaven? After all, it's very clear, God is speaking to *us* through this Psalm to reassure us when we're in a place of danger and uncertainty. And Heaven is already full of gladness, unlikely ever to fall, or need God's help (vv4, 5). What is the reassurance he is offering to us?

Application

When things are tricky we can feel very easily that we need to spring into action and immerse ourselves in great activity. As Matt reminded us on Sunday we can even immerse ourselves in doing things for the church or for other 'good causes'. He warned us that our work can be a form of idolatry, something that becomes so important to us, and makes us feel so important, that we can drive ourselves away from God.

Matt reminded us of James 4: 13-15. Have a look at those verses. What does God say about our great plans for 'busyness'?

Back to Psalm 46, verses 2 and 3, plus the first part of v6. It is clear that the Psalmist here is talking of troubled times, with great turmoil going on all around. What does God want our response to be? What can we do, very practically, to 'Be still, and know that I am God'?

God goes on to say in v10: 'I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.' How do you think we can exalt him from a position of stillness?

Let's spend some time in repentance for letting our lives get so busy that we exclude God, in recommitting ourselves to growing close to God and then in quiet stillness before God, encouraging people to listen to what God has to say in the silence.