

SERMON FOR LWML SUNDAY AT OUR REDEEMER 10-7-18

Psalm 62:1-8 "The Rest God Gives – The Rest We Share"

Dear Fellow Redeemed,

Social media have brought more information to our electronic devices than ever before. These media give us instant news with live interviews of people experiencing situations in their lives. Some of this has been a blessing to people in need. Rescuers bringing assistance to people in times of a crisis like a hurricane can receive calls, texts, emails, and messages from people who need help. First responders can pinpoint where these people are and where the nearest rescue team is to bring help and assistance.

But social media have, for many, raised the level of fear and uncertainty about their safety and even future. Church and school shootings, terrorist acts, and threatening Facebook postings are just a few things that have robbed many of any sense of security or peace. Instead of the world moving closer to peace and love, the world is moving closer and closer to destruction. Hatred and division are on the rise while love and peace seem to be losing.

Where does a person go for peace and security in an uncertain world like ours? Hiding will not help. We are all brought face to face with the reality of insecurity and uncertainty in our world.

King David was familiar with the insecurity of his world. David wrote Psalm 62 sharing his own uncertainty and where he found peace and rest. He was under a serious attack from an enemy or enemies who wanted to overthrow him as king. There are hints in Psalm 62 that David is an older man when he wrote the psalm. He uses the phrase, "like a leaning wall, a tottering fence," to describe himself. One does not build a wall to be leaning or a fence to be tottering, but after time this could happen to a wall or fence. Some bible scholars believe that this psalm might be a reference to the revolt by Absalom, David's son, when David was an older man.

- You might remember that Absalom would rise up early in the morning and stand by the city gate engaging people and telling them how their lives would be better if he were king (sounds like political ads today!)
- The Bible tells us that Absalom "stole the hearts of the men of Israel." After doing this for four years he gathered his supporters at Hebron and declared himself king.
- When the news came to David he had to flee Jerusalem quickly and if it were not for God's intervention David might have lost the throne. David was in a very precarious situation.

Whatever his situation was that caused his uncertainty and insecurity when he writes this psalm, he shares with us his strong response to threat and uncertainty. This Psalm proclaims David's strong faith, and it proclaims where we find rest and peace when we are confronted with the threats and uncertainties in our world. Rest and peace are found in God alone. He is the rock, fortress and salvation we need.

My friends, we have a God who David elsewhere describes as a God who hides us in the shadow of his wings as evil rages (Psalm 57). What other eternal refuge can there be than the God who sent His only Son to defend us and give His life for us.

- On the cross, Jesus took what would crush you and me and died in our place the death we deserve.
- The only place you can find lasting rest in this turbulent world is in the One who conquered death and gives you life.
- Through the living Word, Jesus Christ, we receive rest.
- Through the presence of Jesus in Holy Communion we are hidden in Jesus' grace, strength, and forgiveness.
- This world will rage. It may even injure you physically and emotionally. But Jesus, who is Lord over all, is your rock of protection and your salvation.

Psalm 62 is different from most psalms. Psalms usually describe the bad situation the writer is experiencing and the prayers or petitions asking God for help. Psalm 62 does not include a prayer or petition but makes a strong statement of faith and confidence while alluding to a challenging situation. Psalm 23 is another example of a Psalm without any request to God.

- Psalm 23 declares God to be our Good Shepherd, and though there might be challenges even to the point of death, God is present through all of the challenges as the Good Shepherd..
- Psalm 62 declares God to be our rock and salvation, the One who gives us rest and quiets our souls.
- Whenever we come across such psalms, we should take a closer look at them because they are Psalms that declare the greatness of God and therefore encouragement for living.
- David serves as a witness to God's grace and rescue. He is calling out from history that we, too, have a Good Shepherd. We, too, can trust God as our rock and salvation.

David does not use the usual word for "rest" which means a physical and emotional rest. David uses a less familiar Hebrew word that is translated in the ESV as "**silent**" or "**silence**". It goes beyond physical and emotional rest. It invites us to stand in the presence of Almighty God not saying anything and not bringing anything, but in silence receiving the peace that God our rock and salvation gives us no matter what is happening around us.

Up to this point David has declared that his soul waits in silence on God alone. God is his Rock and Salvation, and he will not be greatly shaken. He follows this strong statement of faith by describing the actions of those who want to defeat him. David inserts at this place in the Psalm the word "**Selah**" It is thought to be a notation for the singers, musicians, or reader to pause and calmly think about what has been said. It gives us the opportunity to move from the physical to the spiritual. We have enemies – the devil. He will challenge us to doubt God's forgiveness and love for us. We are in a spiritual battle against a mighty foe, but because of who God is and what He has done for us, we can say with David: ***"For God alone my soul waits in silence, from him comes my salvation. He alone is my rock and salvation, my fortress. I shall not be greatly shaken."***

There is one more “**selah**” in Psalm 62. It comes at the end of verse 8 after David speaks to his soul telling it to wait in silence for God alone. He repeats much of what he said in verses 1 and 2, but then David focuses on us when he says: **“Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your heart before him; God is a refuge for us. Selah.”**

My friends, in a turbulent and frightening world, this is the gift we’ve been given. Listen to the Apostle Paul as he describes the harrowing journey of God’s people through the wilderness in the Old Testament: **“For I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual Rock that followed them.”** And what was the spiritual rock that followed them and sustained them through flood and heat and scarcity and fear? Paul says this: **“And the Rock was Christ!”** (1 Cor. 10:1-4)

Through the power of the Holy Spirit working in your hearts, you too have Jesus! You, too, believe that Jesus is your rock and refuge; your salvation. It is Jesus who says to you, **“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest!”** Yes; in Jesus we stand before the Father with our soul silent, receiving life abundantly and salvation from Him.

Many congregations in the LCMS are celebrating and thanking God for the ministry of the Lutheran Women’s Missionary League. For 76 years the LWML has been supporting mission work nationally and internationally. The women truly are Lutheran Women in Mission, and they are also women of encouragement. The LWML hasn’t just been collecting pennies, nickels, dimes and quarters in their mite boxes; they have also been encouraging women and men in their faith walk to find true rest in God alone.

Over the 76 years of ministry, the LWML has lived through major challenges in our world and country, and even in their organization. Through all of the challenges and uncertainties, the LWML has placed their trust in God and have looked to Him for direction. Lives have been touched through their work and people have received rest that comes from our Lord and Savior, Jesus.

Let us be encouraged in our own witness by the witness of the LWML. There are people all around us that struggle with insecurity in this fast-changing world. We have true rest to offer them in a God who loves them and gave His Son for them. Let’s live in this rest and in silence receive His peace, and then share it with others.

David lived in uncertainty and so do we. David received from God a certain physical and emotional rest, and he also received a silence – a rest that nothing in this world of insecurity could take away from him. We have this same assurance as we live in this uncertain age. It is the gift we can stand on because God is our rock and salvation. - The One who loves us and sent His Son to redeem us. Let us say daily, **“My soul find silence in God alone.” Amen.**

