

November 25, 2018 He Is Lord! Psalm 93

In April 1983 Barbara and I moved our family to Pickering from Northeastern Ontario. I had accepted an assignment under our Board of World Mission at the time, to start a new work in what was to become the city of Pickering. At the time it was difficult to foresee. The lands currently housing close to 190,000 people were farms. Some had been bought up by the big GTA developers, and some were still growing crops. We were told by our new neighbours on Shadybrook Drive that there had been a shady brook when they moved in 2 years before us. Where Amberlea Presbyterian Church stands on White's Road was an apple orchard owned by the Stroud family.

I wanted this new church to be a church that celebrated when it worshipped. Within a month of beginning to hold services in Dunbarton High School I chose to have every service begin with the worship chorus Majesty, which happens to be # 3 in The Master Chorus Book. I had not discovered The Master Chorus Book, but I had discovered a Collection of Choruses entitled Praise, published by Maranatha Music, distributed by Word Music out of Nashville Tennessee in the USA. The Praise books would eventually become a set of 4. The covers were colour coded. Tan, Red, Green and Purple. We used about 60 choruses out of the Tan volume, and Majesty was our first praise number every Sunday for 23 years.

I mention that as we turn to Psalm 93 this morning which begins with the line, “The Lord reigns, he is robed in majesty.” Followed by the line, “The Lord is robed in majesty, and is armed with strength.” It is an ascription of Praise that proclaims that God who made the world, who has saved it in Jesus Christ, and sustains it by the Holy Spirit is King, and the One to whom we owe first allegiance. Israel was called into being as a Theocracy, and to a degree her problems really started when her people decided they would have an earthly king like the other nations around them. Worship Choruses like Majesty, and Our God Reigns are based on that Biblical theme. And spirituals like He’s Got The Whole World In His Hands, continue to celebrate that theme, illustrating how personal that theme is: He’s got you and me brother, you and me sister....in HIS hands.

Psalm 93 lays the ground work, and prophesies the modern cry of “All hail King Jesus, All hail Emmanuel. As the divines from Scotland worded it in the Westminster Confession, God is the only King and Head of the Church. The Lord reigns.

And that theme, that God reigns over us, because we believe, because we are a people of faith, makes the point that the Bible trumpets from cover to cover, that HE has first claim on our lives, that HE is supreme when it comes to power. That He is first when it comes to loving us. That HE orders our lives whether we believe it or not, acknowledge it or not, worship HIM or not. The Lord reigns. He is robed in

majesty....and because HE is the saving God, the world is firmly established and cannot be moved. If we are to have confidence about anything as we live our lives on this jewel of a planet....it goes back to the reality that God created it, and that God first and last is the Lord of life.

We are beginning to realize how we live in this earthly realm is of significance. We are beginning to realize that we can foul our nest to the point where we make it fragile. Where we threaten the existence of species of animals and wildlife, and even the ability of mankind itself to survive. Science has shown, that one of the effects of heat and higher temperatures in what we would call the Summer season...rapidly becoming the Spring, Summer, Fall seasons...is that the ability of the human race to reproduce becomes threatened. The truth is we have been careless in our appointed task of caring for this planet in order that it might indeed sustain us. Our sin and our faithfulness or lack thereof, may well become the greatest threat to our existence every known to mankind.

As Psalm 93 concludes, the Lord's statutes stand firm, for endless days, for eternity. Which is to say sin is real. And its consequences are real. We have a tendency to focus our attention on how sin makes our relationships difficult. It is simply easier to fight with your neighbour than to love your neighbour. But the ultimate effect of sin is not what it does to human relationships, but what it does to our relationship with

God who is supposed to have first claim on our lives and whom we are supposed to serve in everything we do and the way that we do it. As a society we have come dangerously close to forgetting the Lord who made us and has saved us from our sin.

As a world we have come dangerously close to forgetting the Lord God who made us and calls us to behave sensibly. Think of some of the headline news stories of this past week and how the sinfulness of man lies behind them. Mass killings. The fires that have ravaged California. The inability of nations to get along, whether it is about trade, immigration, or resources. We tend to want the other guys to do things in such a way that we end up with more. More of everything. Money talks. And we tend to like the sound money and money making makes. People get crushed in the process. And too often we remain silent as people get killed in the process.

The throne of God was not established in our time, God's majesty belongs to eternity. And instead of seeing the significance of that we tend to treat God's sovereignty like it was old hat, out of date, something we could do without. We sometimes leave the impression we could live without God. That we could do without Jesus. That the Holy Spirit is not influencing us or our lives or our world. I am not comfortable with taking on the shawl of an Old Testament prophet but....think of what the world would be like without Jesus. No care for the poor. Not just less care...no care. A lot of people

dying in the streets. Terrorism as routine tactics. Blood baths that would make what we have seen, look like a picnic. I shudder to think of the inhumanity of which humanity is capable.

Next week, we will enter the season of Advent. We have already started to decorate our home in preparation for Christmas. The Nativity Set came out this week. Some of the lights came out and came on this week. Reminders of the angels of God have been placed where we can see them and in order that we might remember.....that the world took a turn for the better when the sky over Bethlehem was filled with a host that sang praises to God. When the wisest of their time invested a fortune to go and see a baby born in Bethlehem...because that baby was the King of Kings...Emmanuel. God with us. Jesus. God who saves and saves us from ourselves and makes us think about the well being of the guy next door. And about sharing with those who have less, especially those who have nothing. The Lord reigns. It is time to remember that Christmas is the Christ feast. God reigns, and HE is robed in Majesty.

The miracle of life is just...a miracle. The Lord creates it. HE calls us to share it. HE calls us in the midst of these times to celebrate life and life eternal. Life in the midst of which faith is important. Life that has eyes to see, life that remembers....the Lord reigns. The Lord is robed in majesty. He is Lord! Let us pray

Lord God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, One in Three,
Three in One;

Bless us as we begin this holy season. Cause YOUR light to illumine our vision. May we see need and minister to those who need us most. Help us to love those who need to be loved. Grant that we may stand with those who are in pain and with those who struggle and grieve. May we be as candles in the midst of darkness, to the glory of YOUR holy name. Amen