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Grace Church is affiliated with the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA).

Reflections

We are so quick to assume that if God is with us, there will be no pit, no pain. When the unthinkable happens to us, we accuse God of abandoning us, not caring about us, not loving us. Because we think it is God's job to hover around us ensuring our comfort, whenever we find ourselves in a hard and dark place, we think God has somehow fallen down on the job.

– Nancy Guthrie
The Promised One: Seeing Jesus in Genesis

We do not trust in him so that we can evade suffering, nor do we present Christ as an assured means of escape from hard times. Rather we trust so that in good times *and* bad our lives will reflect fidelity to him and the courage that Jesus modeled and imparts. The same suffering that hardens some or drives them to faithless despair can be an occasion for the bold move of hope in Christ in spite of suffering's disincentives to affirm and believe in God.

– Robert W. Yarbrough
"Christ and the Crocodiles" in *Suffering and the Goodness of God*

We cannot read God's favor or disfavor by assessing how troubled a person's life is...We cannot read God's favor or disfavor by assessing how easy and trouble-free a person's life is...Suffering is both the acid test and the catalyst. It reveals and forms faith. It also exposes and destroys counterfeit faith. Afflictions expose illusory hopes invested in imaginary gods. Such disillusionment is a good thing, a severe mercy. The destruction of what is false invites repentance and faith in God as he truly is. Suffering brings a foretaste of the loss of every good thing for those who profess no faith in the one Savior of the world, God's inexpressible gift, the Lifegiver. Affliction presses on unbelief. It presses unbelief towards bitterness, or despair, or addiction, or ever more desperate illusions, or ever more deadly self-satisfaction- or to a reconsideration of what lasts. To lose what you are living for, when those treasures are vanities, invites comprehensive repentance.

– David Powlison
God's Grace In Your Suffering

Adversity makes us far more compassionate than we would have been otherwise. Before, when we saw others in grief, we may have secretly wondered what all the blubbering was about, why people can't just suck it up and go on. Then it comes to us - and ever after, we understand. When we have suffered, we become more tender hearted and able to help others in suffering. Suffering creates wisdom in people, if they handle it and it doesn't make them hard. It gives us a range of insights that are useful to many other people we meet.

– Timothy J. Keller
Walking With God Through Pain and Suffering

Grace Presbyterian Church

The Lord's Day
March 29, 2020
10:30 a.m.

Words of Welcome

Praise

Call to Worship

Psalm 107:1-3,19-20

Leader: Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever.

*People: Let the redeemed of the LORD tell their story -
those he redeemed from the hand of the foe,
those he gathered from the lands, from east and west, from north and south.*

Leader: Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble,
and he saved them from their distress.

*All: He sent out his word and healed them;
he rescued them from the grave.*

Prayer of Adoration

Renewal

Scripture Reading

Psalm 46:10

He says, "Be still, and know that I am God;
I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth."

Confession of Sin

*Minister &
People:*

Father of mercies, quiet our anxious thoughts and help us to be still before you. We confess that we do not run to you as our refuge and strength, but turn to many other sources of hope and help when our souls are troubled. When our lives and worlds fall apart and our hearts are like roaring and foaming seas, we are prone to fear you, accuse you, hate you, and feel abandoned by you. If we have been obedient to you, we think you owe us better than this cup of suffering. When we have disobeyed, we fear you are judging us and imagine we have spoiled your plan for our lives. Forgive us. Thank you for your presence with us in our joy and our sorrow, in our strength and our weakness. We praise you that we cannot ruin your plans, for you work all things, even our own sin and the sins of others against us, together for our good and your glory.

Private Confession and Reflection

Words of Encouragement

Psalm 86:5-7

You, Lord, are forgiving and good,
abounding in love to all who call to you.
Hear my prayer, LORD;
listen to my cry for mercy.
When I am in distress, I call to you,
because you answer me.

The Prayers of the People *(concluded with the Lord's prayer)*

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory for ever. Amen!

_____ *Commitment* _____

The Offering

The offering is a way for members and friends of Grace Church to support the church's mission and ministry. To give online, go to <https://www.elixiogiving.com/App/Giving/grac8989200>. This link can also be found on the Grace Website at gracewoodlands.org under the Care/Give tab. Please contact the church office with questions.

Scripture Reading

Genesis 39:20b-40:23

But while Joseph was there in the prison, 21 the Lord was with him; he showed him kindness and granted him favor in the eyes of the prison warden. 22 So the warden put Joseph in charge of all those held in the prison, and he was made responsible for all that was done there. 23 The warden paid no attention to anything under Joseph's care, because the Lord was with Joseph and gave him success in whatever he did.

40 Some time later, the cupbearer and the baker of the king of Egypt offended their master, the king of Egypt. 2 Pharaoh was angry with his two officials, the chief cupbearer and the chief baker, 3 and put them in custody in the house of the captain of the guard, in the same prison where Joseph was confined. 4 The captain of the guard assigned them to Joseph, and he attended them.

After they had been in custody for some time, 5 each of the two men—the cupbearer and the baker of the king of Egypt, who were being held in prison—had a dream the same night, and each dream had a meaning of its own.

6 When Joseph came to them the next morning, he saw that they were dejected. 7 So he asked Pharaoh's officials who were in custody with him in his master's house, "Why do you look so sad today?"

8 "We both had dreams," they answered, "but there is no one to interpret them." Then Joseph said to them, "Do not interpretations belong to God? Tell me your dreams."

9 So the chief cupbearer told Joseph his dream. He said to him, "In my dream I saw a vine in front of me, 10 and on the vine were three branches. As soon as it budded, it blossomed, and its clusters ripened into grapes. 11 Pharaoh's cup was in my hand, and I took the grapes, squeezed them into Pharaoh's cup and put the cup in his hand."

12 "This is what it means," Joseph said to him. "The three branches are three days. 13 Within three days Pharaoh will lift up your head and restore you to your position, and you will put Pharaoh's cup in his hand, just as you used to do when you were his cupbearer. 14 But when all goes well with you, remember me and show me kindness; mention me to Pharaoh and get me out of this prison. 15 I was forcibly carried off from the land of the Hebrews, and even here I have done nothing to deserve being put in a dungeon."

16 When the chief baker saw that Joseph had given a favorable interpretation, he said to Joseph, "I too had a dream: On my head were three baskets of bread. 17 In the top basket were all kinds of baked goods for Pharaoh, but the birds were eating them out of the basket on my head."

18 "This is what it means," Joseph said. "The three baskets are three days. 19 Within three days Pharaoh will lift off your head and impale your body on a pole. And the birds will eat away your flesh."

20 Now the third day was Pharaoh's birthday, and he gave a feast for all his officials. He lifted up the heads of the chief cupbearer and the chief baker in the presence of his officials: 21 He restored the chief cupbearer to his position, so that he once again put the cup into Pharaoh's hand— 22 but he impaled the chief baker, just as Joseph had said to them in his interpretation.

23 The chief cupbearer, however, did not remember Joseph; he forgot him.

Sermon

Mr. Kyle Bobos

LIVING IN THE SHADOWS
THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOSEPH

Benediction¹

Colossians 3:15-17

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Dismissal

Minister: Now, let us go forth to serve this community and the world as those who love our Lord Jesus Christ.

ALL: Thanks be to God!

¹The benediction is much more than a wish or even a prayer. It is a renewed ordination of the people of God to their service to each other, to their community and the world. God declares his own favor toward his people.