

“A Mighty Fortress is Our God” – Psalm 46 – Mark Mullery – Nov. 25, 2012

1. Introduction

- A. Where will you turn when things seem out of control and the ground is shaking in your life? Where are you going to go when something you thought was unshakable begins to shake? Where do you turn when things seem out of control and are out of your control?
- B. What is God’s agenda when fear strikes?
 - God’s agenda is not to always remove you from your fearful experience.
 - God’s agenda is always to be with us. A very present help in trouble. That is the message of Psalm 46.

2. Scene 1 - Earthquake (1-3)

- A. The picture here seems to be of an earthquake followed by a tsunami – mountains and oceans are trading places. This seems to be a more catastrophic event than anyone has ever seen. Where is God when this happens? God is our Refuge and Strength, a very present help in trouble.
- B. When the earthquake comes, you’ve got to pick sides: will my soul’s condition be determined by the earthquake or by the God who created the earth? *“On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand; All other ground is sinking sand.”*
 - Are you on sinking sand today?
 - Let Psalm 46 open the eye of faith to see that if Christ is your rock, you are not alone, He will strengthen and help you. Prepare your soul to develop a path that when trouble strikes you have a well-known path to run to God.

3. Scene 2 - The City of God (4-7)

- A. The nations are loud, but the Lord is louder. The nations may outnumber the people of God, but the Lord is greater! Where is this holy habitation where the LORD dwells? The church. Jesus died on a cross, rose, ascended to heaven, sent the Holy Spirit to create a people, a city, a church.
- B. Stay planted in the city of God. Stay close to the people of God. We must be with the people of God. God is in the midst of his people so we must stay close and press into the people of God.

Sermon Outline

4. Scene 3 - The End of War (8-11)

- A. God is making war cease to the ends of the earth. War still rages but their days are numbered. This is God's agenda he will put all of His enemy's under His feet.
- B. In the midst of this there is a voice. One day everyone will hear that voice. God will be exalted among the nations, God will be exalted among the earth. The day is coming when every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus is Lord. God is committed to his Glory extending to the ends of the earth.

5. Conclusion

- A. The desolation of this passage leads us to think about the desolation that God brought in Jerusalem on little hill outside the city to a man hanging on a cross. There on the cross, Jesus Christ was destroyed, desolation was brought upon him, so that enemies of God could be still and know that He is God and be adopted and brought near. And to hear these words: "I am with you, I will never leave you, I am a very present help in time of trouble." The desolation of the cross makes that promise possible.

*A mighty fortress is our God, A bulwark never failing.
Our helper He amid the flood Of mortal ills prevailing.
For still our ancient foe Doth seek to work us woe.
His craft and power are great, And, armed with cruel hate,
On earth is not his equal.*

*Did we in our own strength confide, Our striving would be losing,
Were not the right man on our side, The man of God's own choosing.
Dost ask who that may be? Christ Jesus, it is He.
The Lord of Hosts, his name, From age to age the same,
And He must win the battle.*

*And though this world, with devils filled, Should threaten to undo us,
We will not fear, for God hath willed. His truth to triumph through us.
The Prince of Darkness grim, We tremble not for him.
His rage we can endure, For lo, his doom is sure.
One little word shall fell him.*

*That word above all earthly powers. Not thanks to them, abideth.
The Spirit and the gifts are ours, Through him who with us sideth.
Let goods and kindred go, This mortal life also.
The body they may kill, God's truth abideth still.
His kingdom is forever...*

Sermon Outline

Fellowship Starters

1. Take time as a Care Group to read Psalm 46
2. Has there ever been a time in your life that you felt as if everything was shaking? Did you feel like you had any control over these circumstances? Why or why not?
3. Do you feel like God is a refuge and shelter for you to go to when trouble strikes? What has shaped or influenced your view of God as a very present help in trouble? Are there any other truths from God's word that encourage you in times of trouble?
4. Do you know deep in your soul that you are not alone when troubles strike? How does it make you feel knowing that if you are in Christ, God is always near when troubles strike?
5. Do you feel being in the midst of the city of God (the church) is a safe place when your world is shaken? Why or why not? How does it make you feel knowing that God is in the midst of His people? Are there any other places you are drawn to when troubles strike? Are these places safe?