

QUIET REFLECTION ✚ Second Saturday • December 11, 2021



Hemmed In ~ His Hand Upon Me

Psalm 139:5-6; Psalm 86:1-13

During these times of quiet reflection, we're asking two basic questions: What do I want to ask of the Lord, and what does He want to say to me at this time. We then wait, listening for His response. Let these questions guide your reflections and help you identify the things you want to process with the Lord. Take time to quiet your mind. Ask the Lord to help you hear what He is saying, and to give you freedom to pour out whatever is on your heart.

Responding to Paul's Teaching

1. Read again Ps. 139:1-4 (our focus of last month's Second Saturday). As you reflect on vss. 5-6 in light of those first four verses, how do you feel the Lord is speaking to you about what he knows about you, and how he is guiding, providing and correcting you as your loving Shepherd?
2. How do you receive the Spirit's encouragement within your life as you see David's great example of love and heart-for-God, that also evidences great struggles and weaknesses?
3. What do you need to cry out about to the Lord as you continue in the long process of his loving transformation within your life? Does His correction and healing seem too painful, too long to endure? Ask Him how to lean into His love-filled guidance and protection.
4. Is the Spirit guiding you to places in your life where you have moved "too high", outside of the Shepherd's guidance, to understand and direct your own steps?

The Creativity of the Holy Spirit

Quiet reflection—also called journaling, is meant to extend beyond processing of feelings and thoughts. One of its main values is in giving God time to speak to us! For example:

☞ Listen

Is He asking questions of you?
Is He providing much needed counsel—His interpretation of your inner thoughts?

☞ Dialogue

Conversation with the Lord brings much understanding and draws us closer to Him.
~ Invite Him to speak to you. Wait in the quiet. Respond. Wait again, etc.
~ Write a letter, poem or psalm to express your heart.

☞ Images that Speak

~ Draw a picture or symbol of what is on your heart.
~ Ask Him for an image that depicts how He sees you or something you're concerned about at this time.

☞ Editing Your Story

Ask Him to bring to light any assumptions or perceptions embedded in your heart and story that are not true. What is true that He would write in place of what is written there?

☞ Quiet

Invite the Lord to minister to you in the quiet. Whether with words or in the simple awareness that He is present with you, let Him "restore your soul" in whatever way you need. • You may want to journal and reflect on this time later.

Responding to Chris's Teaching

1. **Door of Petition | Ps. 36:9** “... in his light do we see light.” • These questions may help you strengthen the practice of asking the Lord into your inner life, to show you what only he knows about you. Often such questions lead to a fresh season of restoration and growth. The Lord may change your perception of an experience, or of yourself. Ask the Lord:
 - a) for **awakening** to the possibility of change where you’ve assumed something about you or your life could never change. Ask for help, to see this from his point of view.
 - b) to open a **season of change** regarding your image of God. Ask his help in identifying where your image may be false, and its origin. ✧ How would he help you replace it with what is true about him and help you see and experience him as he is?
 - c) to **affirm** something about you yourself, or about a strength or trait that pleases Him and reflects who you are.
2. **Responsiveness to the Lord** ✧ Preparing for this time, we were reminded of how much our love and responsiveness to the Lord means to him. Three specific images spoke to us. Write what comes to mind as you ponder these. What is he saying to you; what would you like to tell him?
 - a) The curtain of the temple was torn in two as Jesus died. Therefore, we can come humbly, and often, just as we are, because we are reconciled to Father through Jesus’ sacrifice. We can have a face-to-face, heart-to-heart dialogue with the Lord, by whom we are fully known, and loved.
 - b) Like David, who had a hunger for God, we can pour out like water, from the wellspring of our hearts, what we hunger for. Where there is desperation, and we recognize the need, we find we are “hemmed in” by the Lord.
 - c) David’s psalms are the soil and fruit of his relationship to the Father. He was rooted in the soil of God’s love, and the psalms record the fruit—the cries of his heart – his desire for an undivided heart and to be taught God’s ways. Paul’s imagery in Ephesians 3:14-21 calls us to let our roots go deep in his love, recognizing that he fills us with his fullness, abundantly more than we can ask or imagine.

PSALM 139:5-6 • You hem me in behind and before, and you lay your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain.

PSALM 86:1-13 Hear me, Lord, and answer me, for I am poor and needy. ² Guard my life, for I am faithful to you; save your servant who trusts in you. You are my God; ³ have mercy on me, Lord, for I call to you all day long. ⁴ Bring joy to your servant, Lord, for I put my trust in you. ⁵ You, Lord, Lord, are forgiving and good, abounding in love to all who call to you. ⁶ Hear my prayer, prayer, Lord; listen to my cry for mercy. ⁷ When I am in distress, I call to you, because you answer me. ⁸ Among the gods there is none like you, Lord; no deeds can compare with yours. ⁹ All the nations you have made will come and worship before you, Lord; they will bring glory to your name. ¹⁰ For you are great and do marvelous deeds; you alone are God. ¹¹ Teach me your way, Lord, that I may rely on your faithfulness; give me an undivided heart, that I may fear your name. ¹² I will praise you, Lord my God, with all my heart; I will glorify your name forever. ¹³ For great is your love toward me; you have delivered me from the depths, from the realm of the dead.

EPHESIANS 3:14-21 ¹⁴ For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, ¹⁵ from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, ¹⁶ that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, ¹⁷ so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸ may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, ¹⁹ and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. ²⁰ Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, ²¹ to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.