TODAY'S ORDER OF WORSHIP

Welcome by: Don Taylor /Opening Prayer by: Craig Girard

Morning Assembly Song Leader: Brooks McKelroy

#470 Victory in Jesus
#412 Jesus, Hold My Hand

Scripture Reading by: Parker Balch
#589 Leaning on the Everlasting Arms
Lord's Supper and Contribution

#490 It Is Well with My Soul
Sermon: "Dealing With Discouragement"
Nehemiah 4:6-10

#712 Jesus Is Coming Soon
#622 Ring Out the Message

Closing Prayer by: David Warren

4th Sunday night fellowship meal

Other Opportunities For Spiritual Growth

Sunday: 9:00am — Bible Study Classes, 10:00am — Worship, 5:00pm — Worship
Wednesday: 6:30pm — Bible Study Classes

November 28, 2021

"Stand Firm in…Liberty"

Galatians 5:1

When Life is the Pits

By the waters of Babylon,
there we sat down and wept,
when we remembered Zion.
On the willows there
we hung up our lyres.
For there our captors
required of us songs,
and our tormentors, mirth, saying,
"Sing us one of the songs of Zion!"

How shall we sing the Lord's song
in a foreign land?

- Psalm 137:1-3

As I write this article, we are busy making Thanksgiving preparations; by the time you read it on Sunday morning, the day will have come and gone. This should be one of the most joyous seasons of the year, with food, fellowship, football, and everything else that goes along with it. For the moment at least, all of these things lift us above the common place things of life and their attendant troubles. But then it's over, and we are back to reality, where we remember that we are living in extremely trying times. It is easy for us to get discouraged—something we will deal with more fully in our sermon—perhaps to the point that we find it difficult to be thankful in the first place. We might, like the Israelites in exile, ask *How shall we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land?*

I think another of the psalms helps us to answer that question. In **Psalm 40:1-3**, it appears the writer has been bogged down by the problems he faced; he has "lost his song," so to speak. In **v. 2**, he speaks of being in *the pit of destruction*, *the miry bog.* The superscription attributes this psalm to David, and we can certainly think of times when his life was in the pits. It may have been when Saul drove him from the palace and pursued him in jealousy. Remember, Saul was trying to take his life, and David narrowly escaped on several occasions. Or maybe it was when David's own son, Absalom, rose up in rebellion against him. Perhaps it was in the aftermath of

Family News & Notes

WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH YOUR CHURCH FAMILY

Our Sick

Virginia Cole, Glenda Wiggins' sister, is recovering from a broken leg and a broken elbow.

Continued Prayers
(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Gwen Pettit, Harold & Geri Cryer, Steve Ward, Frank & Tina Garcia, Winston Leifester, Caitlin Smith, Ka'Leisha Jones, Oscar Cantu, Joe Edd Stifflemire, Gary Nielsen, Jackie David

Shut Ins
(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Jim Smith, Winona Angelle, Myrtle Sheffield, Catherine Parker, Peggy McIntosh

Our Missionaries

Aaron & Marisa Bailey in Montepuez, Mozambique , Rod Kyle in the South Pacific

Upcoming Activities

Elders, Minister, meeting Monday, Nov. 29th at 5:30 p.m.

We will have our monthly fellowship meal at 5:00 p.m. today.

We will have a meal on Wednesday, Dec. 1st at 5:30 p.m. in the family life center.

We will have a Houston Food Bank truck on Tuesday, Dec. 7th at 8:00 a.m.

Primetimers will have their holiday party on Tuesday, Dec. 7th at 6:00 p.m. in the fellowship room. It will be potluck and bring a $10 gift to exchange.

Elders	Deacons	Minister
Ken Coleman	Daniel Balch	Bryant Perkins
Bobby Rader	Danny Balch	
Don Taylor	Phillip Strickhausen	
Robert Ward		

"Stand Firm in…Liberty"

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of his adulterous relationship with Bathsheba, when David added sin on top of sin by having her husband, Uriah, killed in battle. The son who came from their encounter became ill and died. Then again, possibly it was the grief he suffered when his son, Amnon, assaulted his daughter (and Amnon's half-sister) Tamar. Or it could have been something else altogether.

Whatever the pit may have been it was uncomfortable. It was dark and wet and slimy—a miry bog. It was impossible for him to get out of it without help. Maybe we have felt like that before; maybe we are feeling that right now. It could be that for you, life is the pits, and you would like to get out but you cannot. Maybe it's some sin you are struggling with. Maybe you're struggling to make ends meet. Maybe your job is essential and you are overworked. Maybe you're exasperated with your family.

Anything that causes a sense of helplessness and desperation and threatens to ruin life or take it away, that is the pit. And there is no secure footing in a dark, muddy, slimy pit. If you cannot stand up, you cannot escape. In the bog, the more you squirm, the deeper you sink—you're sunk.

We cannot get out alone. But the Psalmist reminds us that we do not have to. *I waited patiently for the Lord; he inclined to me and heard my cry. He drew me up from the pit of destruction, out of the miry bog, and set my feet upon a rock, making my steps secure* **(Ps 40:1-2).** David, overwhelmed by his rescue, thought of a rock when he thought of God's deliverance. He wouldn't have to sink anymore. He could freely move about, unrestricted on a sure foundation.

And God not only lifted him out of the pit, he restored the song to his heart. *He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God.* God did not create us to be defeated and silent. God created us to conquer and sing. That is a powerful metaphor, and no one helps us understand it better than David. As a young shepherd boy, David would play on his harp while he tended sheep. Later, he played the harp so well that it quieted the spirit of Saul. He was a composer—after all, the Psalms are fundamentally songs.

David knew music. But he had not yet experienced a new song. We may sing songs when we're in a hole in the ground. The songs we sing then are sad songs: the blues, country music. Songs about tragedy, misfortune, sorrow and grief. Songs about anger and bitterness. But when we get out of the pit, we want to sing a new song: a song of praise to the living God.

Living life inevitably brings pits—slimy, watery, sticky pits. We cannot escape them under our own power, wit, or wisdom. We must firmly plant our feet on Jesus the solid rock. Then we can sing the Lord's song, even if we remain in a foreign land.

Bryant Perkins