

Children's Talk for Sunday, 18 July 2021

This has been a strange week for all of us. You have probably heard of scary things happening in South Africa, you may have heard loud noises in the distance at night. Mom and dad have also seemed worried, and maybe dad has gone out at night to join other people to keep us all safe. There are a lot of things that you don't know about but have probably felt happening around you.

When you are young it is hard to not know what is going on or what is happening or when it will end. And when you don't know it makes it even harder when the adults in your life also seem anxious and uncertain. If even they are worried then surely there is something worth worrying about. If you are on the older side you probably heard a lot more details and were able to make up your own ideas about the things happening. But even for you I'm sure there has been uncertainty and worry.

What do we do when we don't know what's happening or when it will end? What do we do when even the adults in our life seem uncertain? The Lord gives us hope for these times. There is an example of a time when even the disciples, the Lord's closest followers, did not know what was going on. Jesus seemed to be going away and they did not know if they would be able to follow Him. Jesus tried to let them know that no matter what they would be able to stay with Him, but they still had doubts:

You know where I am going, and the way you know."

Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?"

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. (John 14:4-6)

They did not know how to get to the Lord. But the Lord said that He Himself is the way. He is always available to us, if only we reach out to Him. The way to the Lord is to reach out to Him. You don't need to know the best prayer; you don't have to be the smartest person; you don't need to be the kindest or the best; you don't have to be an adult; you don't have to have anything. The way to the Lord is there for you in the darkest time, no matter what, forever.

So if the Lord is always there, why do we feel alone or uncertain or worried? Even though the Lord is here right now it takes time to notice. We have to wait for the Lord to reveal Himself. In the Word He says,

Wait for the LORD;
Be of good courage,
And He will strengthen your heart;
Wait, I say, for the LORD! (Psalm 27:14)

Waiting is hard. When we wait it feels like things will never end or never change. I bet earlier this week it felt like the Lord would never make things better. Day after day people were still nervous, mom and dad were still stressed, hard things kept happening. You may have felt like things would never go back to normal.

It's a bit like waiting for a plant to come back to life. In the winter, or when it just hasn't been well-treated, a plant can look like it has died and will never live again. I have here a pot that is empty. It looks like any plant that once was in here is dead and gone. Believe it or not, this pot also looked exactly the same. I had forgotten to water this plant and it looked dead. It looked so dead for so long that I thought it was gone and forgot about it. I left it outside in the sun and the rain. But to my surprise, after waiting a long time, it started to come back! What looked dead was actually very much alive.

When things are bad they feel like they will never get better. This is especially true the younger you are. When we are young a short amount of time feels like forever. But if we wait, if we go right to the Lord, if we remember that He is still and always will be with us, we will start to see Him again.

You can already see this happening. I hope you have noticed that the people around you are less nervous or worried than they were a week ago. Many thousands of people have been working hard to clean up the mess and get things back to normal. Even little things can be a sign that the Lord is with us: a nice breakfast, a quick hug, a peaceful sleep.

Prayer:

Lord Jesus Christ, we sometimes feel like you are far away; help us remember that you are close by, right with us, at all times. You never leave us.

Give us the patience to wait for you, to trust that we will see You and Your work as long as we take the time to notice and look for.

Help us see you in the smiles of friends and family; help us see you in hugs and kind words; help us see you in the millions of people working to make our country a better place; help us see you in the care our parents have put into keeping us safe; and help us feel You in the love we have in our hearts.