

MINISTER'S MESSAGE

Be Patient with me God!

Based on Psalm 90

There was a day when sneaking a photo of the royal family or a Hollywood superstar on holiday through the bushes, was considered unusual and slightly scandalous. It was the kind of thing that made paparazzi photographers rich, and late night talk shows entertaining.

But the world has changed. Today we live in a world of dash cams in cars, Instagram 'selfies' on cell phones, security cameras in stores and restaurants, and nanny cams hidden in homes. And in a world of YouTube videos and satellite communication, it is only a matter of minutes before your embarrassing summersault while trying to scratch an awkward itch could be on the Internet for all the world to see. The kinds of pictures and stories that used to fill the pages of the National Enquirer, are often now, considered to be evening news.

So on a day such as this, or more broadly speaking, in a week such as the one passed, what would our God think if He were watching the evening news? Not as one slouched on the couch with a cup of after dinner tea,

catching up on the day's events, but One who was watching our news to catch a reflection of who we are as people? What would He think of us? And perhaps the more difficult question: If God was to look at me, would I be reflecting back, the very best of what God wants me to be for the world? Would I be, as the Psalmist said, "*Living wisely and well?*" (v12)

The writer of Psalm 90 found himself in a difficult position. He did not want to disrespect God or anger Him further, but at the same time, he was struggling with what he perceived at God's frustration with the world and its people.

"*Patience!*" said the Psalmist. "*We live for seventy years or so (with luck we might make it to eighty), and what do we have to show for it? Trouble. Toil and trouble and a marker in the graveyard.* (v13-17) "Yet," continued the Psalmist,

"you watch every move, and keep track of every mistake. Give us a break, God. Turn that frown upside down!"

Which begs the question, just what had the people been up to that had so angered God, and made them so aware of His dissatisfaction? Perhaps they had not been reflecting the very best of themselves back to the world. Perhaps they had been so busy nitpicking and back-biting and straying from the principals of kindness and generosity, that God had become a little fed up with the situation! I wonder if God were to watch our evening news these days, if He might not come to the same conclusion!

The Psalmist begged for reprieve. He did not beg for mercy. He asked instead, for time and for tools.

Oh! Teach us to live well...

Surprise us with love at daybreak...

Let the loveliness of [you] God, rest on us, confirming the work that we do.

"*Show us once more, God,*" said the Psalmist, "*then we'll skip and dance all the daylong [and] make up for the bad times with some good times.* (v15)

We find ourselves today, remembering the chaos of the past, considering the chaos of the present, or contemplating the chaos of the world yet unknown. And like soldiers hidden in foxholes of battles long ago, or present day political battles in government buildings, or personal and private struggles behind closed doors, we recognize that we may not always reflect back to the world, the very best of the world, or of ourselves. It is easy to get caught up in this chaos of memories, or present circumstance, or fear of the future and lose sight of God in the mix of it all. It is not that we feel abandoned by God, but perhaps a little lost from His guiding whispers. We are pushed this and that in our thinking, watching our backs or glancing around to

see who might be watching us.

But if you make yourself stop twirling in circles, if you stop yourself from getting caught up with the latest scandalous news, if you plant your heart firmly on The Word and focus your attention on the Saviour, then you will find yourself hearing His whispers again. It is unlikely that the chaos around you will cease, or even slow down, but you will have stopped, and you will have slowed down. And like the Psalmist of old, you will discover, that even in the midst of all that noise and confusion the world so delights in, you will re-discover the 'loveliness of God' (v17).

And that my friends, is how you begin or begin again, to

reflect the love of our God to the world.

Some today, will remember...
Some will stir the pot...
Some will turn away from hope...
Some will antagonize for personal gain...
Some will be cruel...

But you shall say quietly, instead,
"Show me again, God. Teach me to live wisely and well. Let your loveliness rest upon me, today. Let me reflect the very best of You back to the world."

*"Let there be peace on earth,
and let it begin with me."*