

PSALMS OF HOPE

@UnitedChurchFerndown



United Church Ferndown's 2023 Lent Programme

Friday 3rd March

Reflection #10

LIVING IN A BROKEN WORLD



Pray:

Lord, let everything I do in this season of Lent come from You, be inspired by You. I long to be closer to You. I long to receive the hope that You offer. Help me to remember that nothing is more important than You in my life. Help me to rely on You for help. I want to walk in your footsteps, Jesus. I confess that I have often felt I knew better and ignored Your presence. Heal me, Lord, and help me to find You in the darkness of my life. Let me reach out and feel your hand and love there to guide me. Speak to me in this moment, Lord God. **Amen.**

Introduction:

Right now, the world seems broken. Right now, many people are struggling with all that is going on because of Covid and the effects it has had. As I write this, I too sit and think about what seems to be a broken world. But then I look out the window and spot the blue tit in the tree, the people walking past chatting to one another – a rare but lovely sight. One of my favourite poems is 'Footprints in the Sand'. I love it because it reminds me that while we are in a broken world, God is bigger than that and he carries us through those tough times.



Read:

Psalm 12:6-8 (NIV)

⁶ And the words of the LORD are flawless,
like silver purified in a crucible,
like gold refined seven times.

⁷ You, LORD, will keep the needy safe and will protect us forever from the wicked,
⁸ who freely strut about when what is vile is honoured by the human race.

Psalm 101:1-3 (NIV)

I will sing of your love and justice; to you, LORD, I will sing praise.
² I will be careful to lead a blameless life— when will you come to me?
I will conduct the affairs of my house with a blameless heart.
³ I will not look with approval on anything that is vile.
I hate what faithless people do; I will have no part in it.

Consider:

The psalmist asks the big question 'where is God in our suffering?' But God responds that he sees injustice and oppression and acts upon it. He hears the cries of the weak, even the unintelligible 'groaning of the needy', and in his time, he will 'arise'. Often, if we cannot recognise that God is working in the situation, we mistakenly conclude that he doesn't know of our suffering, or that he doesn't care about our suffering, or that he is powerless to act to remedy our suffering. However, our sufferings do not prove the absence of God, but rather, the results of our sufferings prove the presence of God through our sufferings. God has promised, 'Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you' (Hebrews 13:5), and so he is with us even in the worst of times. We suffer in this world so that we might not cling to the things of this world, but rather cling to God and the things of God, longing for the treasures he has promised.

David ends the psalm with a reflection on the problem with society in the first place. Our sufferings are not the result of random events but actually because we live in a broken world. Even Christians honour the vile. We esteem the rich and strong, scorning the meek and humble. We chase after our wants instead of what God wants.

Pray:

Lord, let the values of society change, beginning with us. Give us the strength to honour what you honour, and to value what you value. We praise you for the fact that your words are flawless and that we can trust in them and rest in them. Be glorified in our lives and continue to work in them, even through our suffering, to purify us and to bring us into a closer relationship with you. In the name of Jesus, we pray these things, **Amen.**

Try it out:

Read 'Footprints' and thank God for the days he has carried you.