

Security

We see the word security and a list of words it's paired with come to mind because we have national security, security systems, security guards, security cameras, security jobs. We spent almost \$1 billion on security for the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics. All of this was put in place for the purpose of protection of our person, our property, our image before the world, the Olympic athletes, the torch and so on.

As humans, we seem to need security in many forms – financial security, security in our own skins, security of position, security of place, safety from harm, none of which is provided by our circumstances. The Bible tells us: ***For only you, Lord, make me dwell in safety.*** (Psalm 4) We should all sleep like babies every night simply because we know we are children of the Lord and well cared for.

And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love. No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:38-39)

Nice words but Many of us feel like our experience is a million miles from that safe love that keeps us through troubled times. Over and over again in our world we hear the question, "If God is a loving God, where was He when" And we hear that in our own hearts even more loudly when we review the circumstances of our own past. Where is safety and protection in times of disaster, terror, pain, and loss? How can we count on God to provide for us and to keep us safe from harm? Haven't many of us passed through harmful circumstances? Don't we often feel as though we are a forgotten victim? Troubles have come and we've felt the painful effects. No one is there to keep us safe and secure, it seems.

God created us in love and from the moment sin entered the world the devil has been doing everything He can to destroy our experience of safety in our relationship with God. People do wrong things and fail to do right things. We don't know how to access protection when we need it. We don't know how to find healing from the wound that trouble brings so it's a "skinned knee" in need of salve and a band-aid rather than "gangrene" that requires amputation and permanent disability.

Jesus told us, "Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world." (John 16:33)

In the middle of everyday life and in the middle of desperate circumstances, God invites us to come and be with Him and let Him be with us. God promises us that, together with Him,

we will never have more than we can handle. God promises that He will give us what we need in each and every situation so we can face and even thrive in it all. God gives us information and promises about many situations in order to help us experience real security no matter what our circumstances are.

Problem is, it doesn't feel like it to us and we've been taught to follow our feelings. The truth is that we will all experience some trouble at various times in our life. We don't have to like it – in fact, we shouldn't like it at all. At the same time, God stands ready and available to heal and support and provide for us in love in EVERY SITUATION. Where once we didn't know that love and support was available, now we do. However, initially we only know it as fact rather than experience. The only way to know the safety we long is to take a risk to "look for the loving presence, protection, and provision of God" in the middle of the trouble.

Troubles multiply for those who chase after other gods Lord, you alone are my inheritance, my cup of blessing. You guard all that is mine. (Psalm 16:4-5)

There is no denying that unfair, unjust and just plain bad things have happened around us and to us and that they have had a profound effect on the deep places of our being. However, there is also no denying that Jesus' own words of promise are that His love overcomes the worst that life throws at us. There truly is NO OTHER safe ground to stand on.

We've desperately sought security in the familiar. It might have been a relationship, a job, a cheque, a neighborhood, or just a way of doing things, a way of defining things. For much of our life we've been fed the message that money, popularity, relationships, and other things will supply security if we just get enough of them. How much more of the alcohol, sex, drugs, and rock and roll are we going to chase before we finally "get it" that they don't give us the security we crave?

God tells us: ***Do not worry saying, "What shall we eat?" or "What shall we drink? Or "What shall we wear?" For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them.*** (Matthew 6)

So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most. (Hebrews 4:16)

When will we begin to live the truth that life on its own terms is uncertain and dangerous but life on God's terms is filled with peace, and hope, and a future? When will I take a risk to give God a chance to prove His promises in my life?

Questions For Discussion and Reflection

1. What do I usually need in order to feel secure?
2. Which of God's promises speak to an area of need in my life where I feel somewhat insecure today?