



Reformation Sunday

Text: Matthew 22:15-22

Recently I asked you to ponder the question – why have you come to worship today? You may well have been

spending time on this thought but why have you come today?

Have you come to be satisfied fully deep in your soul?

Have you come to seek God's voice on an issue in your

life? Have you come to just be in the presence of the

Lord? Have you come to find peace in the midst of

struggle? Well you have come to the right place because

God Himself is present in His holy word. He is

ministering to you right now as He comes to you in His

word – touching your soul in the deepest places.

Have you not heard Him speak to you through His only

Son Jesus today already? Your sins are forgiven. Go in

peace. Do you remember that part – that truth – that

which as you remember the words of Jesus Himself gives you peace?

So let's take you back out there for a few moments - after all we have to live out there as we can't stay in the church building forever - even if it feels like a more peaceful place than others. Maybe it is the place where you don't feel overwhelmed and you can just be? Maybe it is that hour of your week when you can forget all the other things and just be? Maybe it is the place you feel that time stands still and you have more time than you do outside?

But as we think of the out there place do you feel overwhelmed with life? Do you feel you are fast

running out of time each day to just get the basic things done just to at least feel you are on top of it all?

You see often we are overwhelmed by expectations. Expectations that we put on ourselves - you know those ones that say if I don't get this house tide I have failed - or if I don't get the lawn or garden finished and so on.

When it comes to work, parenting, paying bills, attending appointments and standing on the dots or spots of crosses to keep that distance do you feel you run out of time? Then as you get a moment to just be it hits you. Overwhelmed so much more to do and so little time. Still got things to do and there is no time left to just sit and be.

Do you ever feel like you are fighting a war with time and expectations and the feeling of failure, guilt, shame and worry?

You see the chaos that we experience sometimes is real but what we are told about it is a lie. When you look around, listen to the news and start to see the evil in the world you can easily be told there is no hope. Fear dominates our thinking not only on a global front but more local, even in our own church. Worrying about what if people stop coming and so on.

Yet the truth in chaos is that this love that Jesus speaks of is the love first that is from God. God loved the world so much He sent Jesus into the chaos to die on the

cross. To destroy sin, going into hell to defeat the devil and to be the sin for the world, yes your sin and my sin. Our hearts apart from the grace of God and the power of His spirit is opposed to our loving gracious, generous, faithful God.

God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging. There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy place where the Most High dwells. God is within her, she will not fall; God will help her at break of day. Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall; he lifts his voice, the earth melts. The

Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress. Come and see what the Lord has done, the desolations he has brought on the earth. He makes wars cease to the ends of the earth. He breaks the bow and shatters the spear; he burns the shields with fire. He says, "Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth." The Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.

Psalm 46 which we sang earlier in the song, 'A mighty fortress is our God' starts with the absolute truth that God is a mighty fortress. So what does that mean and how does that help me when I am overwhelmed?

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The earth because of sin is in rebellion to God too. The whole of creation has been effected by sin but notice that God is right here right now ever present in your life and my life. He has sent His son Jesus to redeem the whole of creation through His blood.

In the universal chaos God is our refuge and strength. In the struggle with the up roaring nations God is the river in the city. The sustainer, the provider the life giver and protector as the city will not fall.

But what about the chaos the struggle with sin and temptation and failure? It is great that God will protect and is a refuge and provider but what happens when we only hear the lies about our self? The reminder from the devil that God is far away and He doesn't really you're your prayer – if He did why is there still trouble? When will the struggle in my soul and life stop and I will finally rest and be at peace?

Some say when you go to heaven and that is wrong because your eternal life has begun already. The day you were baptised do you remember what you received?

Forgiveness of sins, eternal life and salvation. You were sealed by God's Spirit who now lives in you. Faith was created by God's word through His spirit and by faith you receive all the promises of God.

So how do we know God for He says to us in this Psalm Be still and know that I am God. Simply through His word.

The Reformation is all about God's word. Going back to God's word and reading it, praying it, hearing it and

living it. God's word is truth. God's word in Jesus is truth and this truth sets you totally free.

When you fear – God speaks to you the truth. I am with you always. When you doubt and struggle with your worthiness, just as Luther did it is God's word that speaks to you. To your whole being. You are forgiven and saved by grace through faith.

Your faith has made you well.

Then the devil tries to lie to you again. Are you really forgiven? Are you worth forgiving? Well my friends then you go back to the word in your heart, the word of God planted and watered and nurtured today again as God has come to minister to you deep in your soul to

give you peace in the assurance that the blood of Jesus has washed you clean – you are forgiven and your guilt and shame God has removed be at peace as you serve the Lord.

Amen.

The peace of God which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen