

“Help, God—the bottom has fallen out of my life! Master, hear my cry for help! Listen hard! Open your ears! Listen to my cry for mercies.” Ps. 130:1-2 (The Message)

Eugene Peterson has hit it on the head. The Psalmist's cry may be our cry over these days. Cancer returns, stock markets fall, hospital visits become too frequent, children are, well children even though old enough to know better, aging parents demand our attention, death invades our circle, a local woman goes missing and is found dead (in our town) and the list seems to go on and on and on—hospitals and schools are now being bombed in Syria and it is an election year. Yes, the words of the Psalmist echo in our prayers, *“Help, God—the bottom has fallen out of my life.”* The Psalmist echoes our thoughts, *“My life’s on the line before God, my Lord, waiting and watching till morning, waiting and watching till morning”* (v.5b-6, The Message).

I imagine this might have been the thoughts of many of disciples on Saturday, the day after Good Friday. Those on the road to Emmaus told Jesus, *“...but we had hoped he was the one to redeem Israel”* (Luke 24:21). The bottom had fallen out of their lives. Their faith was being challenged not only with Jesus’ death but now there was a rumor, resurrection. The women had come with a story—they were returning to Emmaus lost in thought. The other disciples were hiding, afraid — the world, their world had had its bottom fall out. What are they to do? What are we to do? Each day seems to bring more discouraging or bad news.

The Psalmist though remembers God and even as his world falls apart around him he prays — *“O Israel, wait and watch for God—with God’s arrival comes love, with God’s arrival comes generous redemption. No about about it—he’ll redeem Israel, buy back Israel from captivity to sin”* (v. 7-8, The Message). His focus turns from what was happening to him at the moment to that day when God comes — he could not have imagined Easter and Resurrection. The great out-pouring of God’s love and generous redemption. The Psalmist's faith was that God will come — God will redeem. He simply had learned to wait for God, *“I pray to God—my life a prayer—and wait for what he’ll say and do”* (v. 5-6, The Message).

Did you get what God’s arrival brings? **Love! Generous Redemption!** Even centuries before Christ and resurrection redemption the Psalmist knew that God was more about love than the world wanted to acknowledge. I wonder why the last place love seems to be found today is in the Church, the body of Christ to the world. We have become judgmental, finger pointing, hating of those who are different - yes, we will love those who are like us but don’t be different. Hate speech coming from presidential candidates who clamor for the “evangelical” vote - and the “evangelicals” they are speaking to applaud and shout. Where is the love? The generous redemption that came with Christ?

We celebrate resurrection - we celebrate that God loved us - we celebrate our salvation and then we fail to love as we have been loved. We would rather shut people out than open the door and bring them in. Easter was the opening of a door, a door that no one ever expected to be open to all - to us. Jesus went to the cross not because he called for war but because he called for love. He died that we all might become One through his love. Easter/ Resurrection was the demonstration of that love, God’s love — WOW!

On Resurrection Sunday, March 27 (11 a.m.) we will again combine with the congregation of Young Nak in worship. What do an American Baptist and a Korean Presbyterian congregation have in common? **Love.** The love that says when God comes, love comes and loves unites us as one.

A **GENEROUS REDEMPTION** indeed.

GOD
is
LOVE

Alleluia
He is
Risen