

SERMON NOTES: PREGNANT PAUSES (7 February 2016)

SCRIPTURE

Psalm 63

A psalm of David. When he was in the Wilderness of Judah.

¹ God, You are my God; I eagerly seek You.

I thirst for You;

my body faints for You

in a land that is dry, desolate, and without water.

² So I gaze on You in the sanctuary
to see Your strength and Your glory.

³ My lips will glorify You

because Your faithful love is better than life.

⁴ So I will praise You as long as I live;
at Your name, I will lift up my hands.

⁵ You satisfy me as with rich food;
my mouth will praise You with joyful lips.

⁶ When I think of You as I lie on my bed,
I meditate on You during the night watches

⁷ because You are my helper;
I will rejoice in the shadow of Your wings.

⁸ I follow close to You;
Your right hand holds on to me.

⁹ But those who seek to destroy my life
will go into the depths of the earth.

¹⁰ They will be given over to the power of the
sword; they will become the jackals' prey.

¹¹ But the king will rejoice in God;
all who swear by Him will boast,
for the mouths of liars will be shut.

Deuteronomy 29:19

¹⁹ When such a person hears the words of this oath and they invoke a blessing on themselves, thinking, "I will be safe, even though I persist in going my own way," they will bring disaster on the watered land as well as the dry.

KEY POINTS

- + We don't really understand absence. We live in a world without pause, and where this is pause, we see it as dead time.
- + In choosing to follow Christ, we move into the spiritual life, but find ourselves living in the

contours of the flesh, often falling into 'spiritualised versions' of sin.

- + A pregnant pause is a pause for a purpose, for God to birth something in us. In times of withdrawal or weaning, God is moving us into deepening maturity and fortitude.
- + We are called to hold lightly the treasures of this world, knowing that the Lord's love is better than life.

QUOTES

"I don't know who I am—only my appetites [my desires]." - Anna, in Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- + What about Lent makes this season a pregnant pause? How can you engage with Lent as a purposeful pause?
- + **What stuck out to you from the teaching?** Did God remind you of something you'd forgotten, or reveal something new? Did the Spirit minister to you? How?
- + **Were any questions raised for you?** Did you get stuck on any scriptures or points? Anything you need clarity on?
- + **Where do we see Jesus Christ in this teaching?** Jesus is at the centre of everything in the Scriptures. It follows that he is at the centre of everything we understand about church, faith and the Kingdom. What in the teaching has helped you see more of Jesus and the cross, or moved you to love him more?
- + **How can you personally apply this teaching?** Identify and commit to something you sense the Spirit is leading you to do in obedient response. Make it actionable and personal. What is in place to help you stay accountable to this?
- + **What/with whom can you share from here?** Who in your life needs to know the truth you've discovered? How can you share it with them?