

WEEKLY DEVOTION – Tuesday, September 21, 2021
Pastor Bruce Kischnick, Grace Lutheran Church, New Albany, IN

“More Than the Hairs of My Head”

READING: Psalm 40:11-16 – Do not withhold your mercy from me, O Lord; may your love and your truth always protect me. For troubles without number surround me; my sins have overtaken me, and I cannot see. They are more than the hairs of my head, and my heart fails within me. Be pleased, O Lord, to save me; O Lord, come quickly to help me. May all who seek to take my life be put to shame and confusion; may all who desire my ruin be turned back in disgrace. May those who say to me, “Aha! Aha!” be appalled at their own shame. But may all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you; may those who love your salvation always say, “The Lord be exalted!”

You might remember a devotion I did some months back where I talked about Bradford pear trees and how they weren't supposed to be able to produce seed, but they do. I told you of a small farm on Grant Line Road that the city had bought and let it grow wild. That whole farm was soon covered with Bradford pear trees growing thick as the hair on my head. In the spring it was beautifully white with pear blossoms. In the fall it was deep red until the leaves fell. But a man could hardly find his way through that tangle, let alone do anything useful there.

Well, about this time last month I was jogging past the farm one morning when I heard the sound of a large diesel engine and crackling sounds that sort of scared me. It sounded like some huge beast was stomping around amongst all those pear trees, and I couldn't help but wonder what manner of beast was on the loose in there. But when I applied both my hearing and my reason, I surmised that they were starting to clear that farm to build a nursing home that's due to go up on that property. I thought maybe there were using a bulldozer.

The following week when I was jogging past the farm again and my curiosity led me to walk in on the old driveway. What I saw was indeed some manner of beast! A machine was parked back near the old house that had a header full of grinding teeth that simply chewed all of those pear trees into little pieces. There were lanes already cut through the stand, and now, a couple of weeks later, the whole farm has nearly been cleared. Those trees were as thick as the hair on my head, but they were no match for that machinery. They are gone and gone for good!

So says King David! In our text he has the lines, “...my sins have overtaken me, and I cannot see. They are more than the hairs of my head...” David confesses his sinfulness. He realizes that he can never make good on all those sins. He cannot “make it up” to the Lord. David says that if God decides to withhold his mercy from him, he will be lost. If God does not save him, he cannot save himself – from his enemies or from his sins.

David is going to the right One! David turns to the Lord and beseeches him for mercy, for salvation, for forgiveness, and for life. He knows that only God's love and his truth can protect him. And God's mercy, brought to its fullest strength by the life, death, and resurrection of his only Son, Jesus Christ, can chew through all those sins and utterly destroy and discard them. Like that wood-chewing machine on the farm along Grant Line, God's salvation wrought by his Son, can take our sins and remove them permanently. When they're gone, they're gone for good!

I suppose next spring I'll miss all those white blossoms, but I suspect by next spring the old house, the outbuildings, and all those pear trees will be history and something new will be a-building. Once you and I

stand before God's throne dressed in white robes and holding palm branches in our hands, the sins that were as thick as the hair of our heads will be long gone and forgotten. Something new will have taken their place. They'll be forgotten because Jesus gave himself as payment, and in God's mercy, for his Son's sake, he'll have forgiven those sins AND forgotten them. Wow! We couldn't have accomplished that, but He did. Did it because He loved us and wouldn't give us up. Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ, our Lord! Amen.

PRAYER:

ANNOUNCEMENT(S):

- 1) The elders will be hosting the "ELDERS' BBQ" on Sunday, October 17, immediately following the 10:30 service. You'll be asked to RSVP for that at our Website (glcna.org) or by calling the office. You'll get a postcard in the mail shortly with all the details. Put the date on your calendar. You won't want to miss it!
- 2) Grace will be hosting this year's CIRCUIT REFORMATION SERVICE on Sunday, October 31, at 3:00 P.M. Get that on your calendar, too! It's going to be very special. Watch for details.