



Wednesday Prayer

17th Sunday after Pentecost – We must not give up

Do not fret because of the wicked; do not be envious of wrongdoers, for they will soon fade like the grass, and wither like the green herb. Trust in the Lord, and do good; so you will live in the land, and enjoy security. Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him, and he will act. He will make your vindication shine like the light, and the justice of your cause like the noonday. Be still before the Lord, and wait patiently for him; do not fret over those who prosper in their way, over those who carry out evil devices. Refrain from anger, and forsake wrath. Do not fret—it leads only to evil. For the wicked shall be cut off, but those who wait for the Lord shall inherit the land. Psalm 37:1-9

I remember a conversation with a friend years ago, when we were both single, where she expressed her anger and frustration at God because her prayers weren't being answered. "The bible says to 'take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart.' So why am I still single?" She was viewing God through the lens of prosperity Gospel thinking, which takes a verse like this literally; as if we can demand anything we want of God and expect to receive it. As much as we may not want to admit, many of us likely carry some of that thinking in our own lives: If I pray hard enough, and have enough faith, God will give me what I ask for. It's just that simple.

For my friend, a wedding eventually came, but not before she gave up on God. As we work for and wait for an end to child sexual exploitation, we may want to give up on God. We watch as the wicked prosper and carry out their evil. It seems like our cries for help go unheard, like it is taking too long for God to give us the desires of our heart. But we must not give up too soon!

The Psalmist says, "Do not fret...for the wicked shall be cut off, but those who wait for the Lord shall inherit the land." If we read through the end of Psalm 37, we see a poet's hope for the future. God is at work in the midst of the community working for justice, and so we must never give up, and we must never stop giving our time and energy to this cause.

There are victories every day, and lives being changed because of the good work of many through Cherish All Children and all organizations working to end child sexual exploitation.

God of love and transformation, give us the heart and the will to wait while we work. Grant us the courage and the strength we will need to continue our work of seeking safety and justice for the most vulnerable in our midst. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

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