

A Word on Wednesday from Pastor Tonia

"Hope as Healing" 3/8/23

... a man from the crowd cried, "Teacher, I beg you to look upon my son, for he is my only child; ... then the demon tore the son and convulsed him, but Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the boy, and gave him back to his father (Luke 9:38,42)

After His transfiguration Jesus returned from the mountain top experience and went right to work. Jesus is met by a man who pleaded with Him to heal his beloved only child. The boy would be thrown into seizures which would shatter him. Even though Jesus' disciples had not been able to drive out the spirit, the father did not give up hope. He waited for Jesus to come back and begged Him for a healing. Jesus spoke a word of rebuke, the spirit left the boy, and he was healed. Hope as healing. Hope which did not waver even though it had to wait. Hope in and healing from the Teacher, the Word, the Son of God.

There is program, Violins of Hope, which consists of a collection of stringed instruments having belonged to Jewish people during WW II. Violins, violas, and cellos of victims of the holocaust are being restored and played in concerts as a way for the memory and stories of the victims, of the time, of the unspeakable inhumanity of humans to be remembered and heard again. The instruments, decorated with the Star of David, had been owned by and played by people in concentration camps. Musicians, while hoping for healing, held on to their faith and memories of better days, while enduring the atrocities of hate. They held on to hope as healing.

These instruments are being restored just as those victims had hoped for restoration for the future. Through these instruments their stories do not die, the victims continue to live and to speak. Through their music, hope is given to others. The people, the culture, the faith of those who endured great tribulations, is remembered and there is hope in healing - and healing in hope.

These instruments continue to make music in concert halls around the world, bringing hope as healing to a wounded world.

Jesus saw the hope of this father, felt his love for his only child, and saw hope as healing for this child, this parent. Soon all would see hope played out as sweetly as a well-played violin.

What do we bring to Jesus to be restored? How do we see hope as healing? For what do we anxiously await, a hope for healing? Jesus is here and He sees you. Lift up your burden, your loved one, your wounded heart, the injustices being perpetrated, the hatred being bandied about, the illness of minds, the brokenness of families, of churches, businesses, communities, and countries. Jesus longs to say, "Have hope. Be healed."

Remember, our laments are surrounded by God's promise of hope as we journey through this wilderness which leads us to Easter morning. As we wander the unknown, let us abound in hope, for God's love and forgiveness washes over our guilt and our shame to set us free and help us to see hope as healing.

Please pray with me:

Lord of the Journey, thank You for giving to us hope so we may endure the journey through the wilderness. Help us to lay down those things in our lives which are unneeded baggage and to pick up new ways to serve You and love others. In You we receive hope as healing. Your presence and Your love strengthen us to seek the path where we abound in hope.

Amen.