

“I want my mommy!” Isaiah 66:10-14
Pentecost 7 7/17/2004 Pastor Jon Bergemann

Come Holy Spirit, renew our hearts and kindle in us, the fire of Your love! Amen. The Word of God for our consideration this morning is found in Isaiah chapter 66 (read text). In the name of Jesus, our comforting Savior, dear brothers and sisters in Christ.

“I want my mommy!”

Ever heard that phrase? I’m guessing you have. It’s a phrase that children and even some adults may utter from time to time when life is getting tough.

And why is that? Well, just consider the close relationship that by nature exists between a mother and her child. The child spends 9 months INSIDE OF the mother – that’s pretty close. A child looks to his/her mother for food, shelter, security, etc. The soothing sounds of a mother’s voice can be recognized even in the womb. For a child, his or her mother often embodies all that is safe, and comforting, and warm. A mother represents comfort and security in a world which often seems so uncomfortable and dangerous.

Don’t get me wrong, fathers are important too and bring their own unique and necessary strengths to a family and a developing child, but there is something about the warmth and compassion of a mother that is special.

I saw that in person a couple of weeks ago when my one year old niece whined and cried in every arm that she was held – from her uncle to her father – until her mother took her in her arms. Then she smiled. She wanted her mommy.

And consider the feelings a mother has toward her child – the delight and glee as she holds the child for the first time, the joy she has as she sees her child take his/her first steps, the tender affection and compassion she feels as she comforts her child through pain. Ah, the tender love a mother feels for her child is a beautiful cause for joy.

But with that special love of a mother can also come some unique heartaches. Maybe you’ve seen the pain of a mother who has lost her child, or the pain of a mother whose child has been rebellious or who has fallen into destructive behavior. You can see the pain in her eyes and in her heart as she sees her child waste his/her gifts, squander his/her potential, and experience a life far less than what his/her mother had envisioned. Both the love and pain of a mother can run deep over her children.

Some of that same pain would have been felt as one gazed at the children of God in our text today. God’s people – referred to as “Jerusalem” in our text – had made a shameful mess of their lives. God had been a perfect parent to them – He promised that a Savior would come to save them from their sins, He led them out of slavery in Egypt, He sent His messengers – His prophets such as Isaiah to warn them of their destructive sin and encourage them with His beautiful promises. Yet what had these children done?

They had rebelled. They had turned their backs on their perfect parent – their God. They ran away from home spiritually – they abandoned the worship of God alone and started to worship foreign idols and gods. They let the words of their perfect heavenly parent go in one ear and out the other as they became lax in their worship and dedication to His Word. They got into fights with the neighborhood bullies – the Assyrian kingdom had wiped out the northern nation of Israel and the Babylonians were threatening the Southern kingdom of Jerusalem. God’s children had made a mess of their lives. Those in the church at this time would have had many reasons to look at their condition and mourn with the same pain as a mother looking at her rebellious child.

Might we still feel some of that pain, that mourning, today as we look at God’s Jerusalem – His people, His church? I think so. We see His church surrounded by the bullies of this world – a society that encourages excess in lust, in greed, in selfishness. We see doors slammed in our faces as we try to invite others to hear of our Savior. We see opportunities for growth and evangelism lost as monetary funding falls short. And so we mourn for Jerusalem, for God’s people, for His church.

We see some confirmands who stand before God and promise to be faithful until death, only to walk away from the faith within four years. We see some couples married for over 20 years file for divorce. We see some parents who fail to be Godly spiritual leaders for their children and some children who fail to respect their parents. We see some brothers and sisters in Christ drift away from God's Word and disappear from our pews. And so we mourn for Jerusalem, for God's people, for His church.

We see ourselves. And if we're honest, we probably don't always like what we see. We see ourselves, children of God, who worry far more than we'd like to admit. We see ourselves, children of God, who doubt God's love and plan for our lives. We see ourselves, children of God, who complain. We see ourselves, children of God, who have not always put His Word number #1 in our lives. We see ourselves, children of God, who have thought things and done things that we would not want our earthly mothers to know much less our heavenly Father – our perfect, Almighty God – who holds the power over our life and death.

And can you imagine the emotion that our God feels as He sees us, His children, rebel against Him and make so many sinful messes in our lives? Can you see how He would be disappointed at our lost potential? Discouraged at our lack of trust? Full of sorrow and mourning at our spiritual laxity? Full of rage at our sinful rebellion? Can you see why our God would have every right to mourn over us and to “throw us out of the house” so to speak, to throw us into the fires of hell? Look at your sin. That's what you deserve. And so we mourn for Jerusalem, for God's People, for ourselves.

And in the midst of our mourning, when our eyes have fallen to the ground in shame for our sin, our God directs them to his command in verse 10 of our text: **“Rejoice with Jerusalem and be glad for her, all you who love her; rejoice greatly with her, all you who mourn over her.”** He tells you and me to look at Jerusalem – His people, His church (which includes you and me!) and to do what? To rejoice and be glad!!!

Why? Because, as He says in verse 12, **“I will extend peace to her like a river.”** Our God promises to bring into the rebellious lives of us, His children, a peace that flows like the continued current of a river. Instead of punishing us, His children, He promises to give us peace!

But what about our sins? Is God looking at us with “blind love”? Is God like a mother who refuses to see any wrong in her child? Is He like a mother whose son has rightly been found guilty of murder and yet responds, “Oh, he's still a good boy” in blind love?

No! God sees each and every one of our sins. In fact, He sees and knows them better than we do. But His heart goes out to us. He looked at us with a mother's love and knew He had to do something to rescue us from our state. Maybe you've heard stories of mothers who have seen their children trapped under a car or other heavy weight and in a moment of extreme adrenaline and love have lifted the weight off of the child? Well, our God saw us trapped under the weight of sin. He saw us helpless and hopeless. What did He do?

With a mother's love, He rescued us. He ran right into the face of danger to get us. He came to this earth as our Savior Jesus. He lived a perfect life for us, took the punishment for our sin on the cross, and then rose again to prove that our sin is paid for. That we are forgiven.

With a mother's love, He looked at the dirty diapers of our sin and clothed us with the perfection of Jesus. He washed us clean in baptism. He feeds us in the Lord's Supper. He comforts us with His voice in the Word. He runs after us, His children, who have so often run away from Him. He stops us in our tracks, throws His arms around us, and says to us the beautiful words of verse 13, **“As a mother comforts her child, so will I comfort you.”**

“As a mother comforts her child, so will I comfort you.” Think back to those pictures we discussed at the beginning of the sermon of a mother's love. Can you see the mother holding the child after birth – wrapping her child in a blanket and holding it close? Can you see the mother calming the child with her soothing voice when the child is scared? Can you see the mother drying a child's tears after the child becomes sad? Can you see the mother bandaging a skinned knee? Can you hear the mother's voice say, “It's all right my

child. I'm here. I'm with you. No one's going to hurt you. I love you." Can you see how a mother feels toward her child and comforts her child with an incredible love? THAT is how your God says HE feels about you. THAT is how your God says He will comfort you.

When the pressures of life leave you unsure as to how you're going to make it though tomorrow, much less next week or next month or next year – hear the comforting voice of your heavenly Father. He says, "It's all right my child. I'm here. I'm with you. No one's going to hurt you. I love you."

When the pain of your sins and failures leave you ashamed and feeling alone, hear the comforting voice of your heavenly Father. He says, "It's all right my child. I'm here. I'm with you. No one's going to hurt you. My son died to forgive your sins. I love you."

When the possibility of death looms at your door, hear the comforting voice of your heavenly Father. He says, "It's all right my child. I'm here. I'm with you. No one's going to hurt you. My son rose from the dead and so will you. I love you."

When the paradise of heaven greets you, and you join every other child of God in eternity, hear the comforting voice of your heavenly Father. He says, "It's all right my child. I'm here. I'm with you. And so is every one of your brothers and sisters in Christ. No one's going to hurt you. I love you."

When life gets you down, you can call for your mommy if you wish. But don't forget to cry out to your God! He is with you! He loves you! He forgives you! He wraps you in His arms! He dries your tears!

Which leads us to exclaim what? "I want my daddy!" – our heavenly Father who comforts us with a mother's love. Amen.