

3/20/20 - Remember Lent?

*I lift up my eyes to the mountains— where does my help come from?
My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth.
He will not let your foot slip— he who watches over you will not slumber;
indeed, he who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.
The Lord watches over you— the Lord is your shade at your right hand;
the sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon by night.
The Lord will keep you from all harm— he will watch over your life;
the Lord will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore. - Ps. 121*

Last year as we approached Lent in what seems now a different world, I began thinking about music. When Advent - the season before Christmas - arrives, I immediately change my car radio to the station playing Christmas songs, move to a Holiday playlist, and pull out my CD of Handel's Messiah. But when Lent - the season before Easter - arrives, I have no musical tradition of my own. So last year, I began one. I created my [Lenten Playlist](#) which I listen to through Lent. It's not long, but then I don't get a lot of chances to listen to music during Lent anyway, so it's long enough for me. I add to it once in a while if a song strikes me. And this year, as Lent approached, I found myself really looking forward to playing those songs again. Tradition begun!

One of the first songs on the list wasn't one you might expect. Rather than a hymn or even a praise song, it was "[Kyrie Eleison](#)" by the 80's band Mr. Mister. This song was a favorite back in high school and holds many good memories for me. Then came "[Kyrie Eleison](#)" by Chris Tomlin, then "[Kyrie Eleison](#)" by Piano Prayer... seeing the theme here?

Kyrie Eleison is Latin and means "Lord, have mercy." A fitting sentiment for Lent, and even moreso for Lent 2020. And yet even that short prayer has changed for me this year. While last year, "Lord, have mercy" was a cry of penitence, reminding me of my sin and bringing me to my knees, this year it is a cry of desperation in the midst of a changed world, not mercy for my sins, but mercy from the foe at the door. Lord, have mercy indeed.

Yesterday we talked about the fact that though our human creations seem to be shaking loose and falling around us, God's creation stands firm. In the same way, though our focus has been changed due to the COVID-19 virus, Lent still stands as a season of reflection, confession, and repentance in preparation for the miracle of Easter. Kyrie Eleison is still the cry of our hearts to a loving, forgiving, holy God who seeks our worship and our blessing. Don't let the current focus on ourselves cause you to forget Lent, Easter, and God's amazing faithfulness.

How has COVID-19 changed your Lenten practice this year? Has it strengthened with more time to contemplate or weakened due to our interrupted schedules? How might you bring Lent more strongly into your life in the weeks to come?