

Friday, March 14

Psalm 31:9-16

### In your hand

Desperate (Ps 31:14, Peterson) - I'm not feeling that way right now. Desperate - I haven't felt that way in a long, long time. I'm not sure the troubles have gotten any better - or easier to handle. I'm not sure the 'opposers' are any kinder - or simpler to get around.

Desperate. Hmm - I wonder - is it because I've cut back, drawn in, hid behind the things I know and like to do? Have I simply given up on the things that might push me over the edge, turn me into a basket case? Might be.

I can remember some heavy times when 'desperate' might be accurate. Breaking out in hives one night when I had a paper due in high school. Being lost in a forest in northern Wisconsin. Getting torpedoed by a friend when I proposed a new venture for a congregation. Being accused of sending a person over the edge emotionally. Hmm - desperate?

One of the gifts my dad gave me was a simple trust in God, knowing that "hour by hour I place my days in [God's] hand." (Peterson, Psalm 31:15). I'm not sure how it works. I'm not clear what it would be like not to trust God that simply for each moment. I've had plenty of arguments with God, and with people about God, and with myself over how to deal with God - all the while trusting God for the moment.

What so deeply impresses me with Psalm 31 (and many others) is the way the psalmist casts the problem directly into God's hands: Be kind to me. I throw myself on you. Warm me with a smile. Save me. God, your hands hold me. Your smile warms me. Your kindness surrounds me. You catch me every time I leap into your arms. Thank you, God.

#### A Way to Pray – Hands

- I was many decades old before I noticed that it makes a difference how I hold my own hands. When I gently cup one hand over the back of the other hand, there is a warmth, a smile, a kindness, a power that fills my hand that is being held. What a treat!
- While gently cupping the back of one hand in the other (palms up, down, sideways – your choice),

- invite God to warm your heart
- smile at yourself and what you enjoy
- kindly look at someone you know
- name one desperate person you know and offer them the same warmth, smile, and kindness.