

Sermon Isaiah 54 10 Memorial Service

Sermon: Memorial Service - Lee Laspe

Text: Isaiah 54:10: "Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken nor my covenant of peace will be removed, says the Lord, who has compassion on you."

Theme: God's unfailing love

Goal: To comfort all with God's promises in the resurrected Christ

Dear Friends,

Dear Bob, Erica, Fanie,

Introduction: This text was Lee's Confirmation Verse. She was 15 years old when she confessed her Christian faith publicly before the church in Wynberg, and this text was given to her as a blessing for her life. Some people really cling to the Confirmation Verse, as Lee did (and I can remember that my mother did it too), and it serves as a guideline for their lives. Many times, when I visited her and Bob at home and after this at the Old Age Home, she mentioned her confirmation verse. She even has a Golden Confirmation Certificate with this verse! Truly, a beautiful and strong Bible verse this is, full of comfort and promises.

I – When one of our beloved ones passes away, it seems that our heart is broken. Even in a situation that Lee was facing, bound to a wheelchair for the last 16 years of her life due to a stroke, we broke down and cry. Death is not that natural as some people say. It was not in the original plan of God. The apostle Paul says: "Just as sin entered the world through one man and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned" (Romans 5:12). God describes this situation and all other bad situations of life saying in our text: "Though the mountains be shaken and the hills removed... you will not be shaken." Earthquakes are natural disasters totally out

of human control. But even then God is in control. The earthquakes that happen in our lives are under God's control – problems, crises, diseases, even death! Why can we be so assured of this?

II – Because of God's "unfailing love": "Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken." This unfailing love of God was shown when He sent His Son Jesus Christ to be our brother and to redeem us from sin, death and hell. "For God so loved the world (so loved Lee... put your name here too!) that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him" (John 3:16,17). God is faithful to His promises and we shall not doubt. Lee never questioned God's love in the situation that she had to face. "*Why? Why? Why?*" many people argue with God. No. Trust in and rely on Him alone. Once we all who believe in Jesus will be released from our suffering as Lee is now released and enjoying eternal life. The promise in Revelation (21:4) is: He (God) will wipe every tear from our eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

III – Our text says more: "Nor my covenant of peace will be removed." Covenant is a key word in the Bible. God made a covenant with Noah, with Abraham, with the Israelites at Mount Sinai, with King David... And He made two very special Covenants with us through His Son Jesus Christ: The Covenant of the Holy Baptism, that He forgives us and washes away all our sins, accepting us as His beloved children in His Christian family; and the Covenant sealed by the blood of Jesus on the cross and offered in the Holy Communion: The body and blood of Jesus given and shed for forgiveness of our sins. In her Confirmation, Lee confessed publicly that she was in good

Covenant with God since her baptism and that she would serve this God for her entire life. She received the body and blood for the very first time on her Confirmation Day. After this she received the Holy Communion regularly, being in peace with God through faith in Jesus Christ, because God's covenant of peace is never removed!

IV – These are not empty words, but they have a seal. The Confirmation text ends with the guarantee: “says the Lord, who has compassion on you.” God cannot lie or deceive anyone. His promises are true. And He assures us his love, His Covenant and His peace because He “has compassion on us”. Compassion – comes from the heart: From the heart of God to our heart.

Conclusion: This is our Christian faith; this was Lee's faith; this is the faith of Bob, Erica, and Fanie... We rely on this faith and on God's promises for our hope and comfort as we mourn Lee's death. She is now counted among the blessed ones in heaven. Steadfast in God's promises and believing in Jesus Christ, we follow our way till the day God will call us as well. Life is short and our priority shall not be accumulating goods and properties, or just survive the daily challenges; but “seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well” as Jesus said (Matthew 6:33). Our earthly life is nothing but a “doth” in comparison with the eternal life. It's worthy to provide for it. God's promises in Christ are for all and a Memorial Service is always a good opportunity to think about our priorities in life and to ponder upon what will be said at our Memorial Service.

“Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken nor my covenant of peace will be removed, says the Lord, who has compassion on you.” Amen.