

## Psalm 22

Good Morning!! My name is Kelly Tibbitts I am the director of Kid's Harbor and one of the Elders here at Harbor of Hope. It is an honor to be able to share a message with you today.

I have been at Harbor for a little over 2 years now.

It has been so exciting to see Kid's Harbor grow in families and in staff. I am thankful for all of you who have given your time to serve in KH, or in the renovation to get it ready, I am also thankful to all who have given resources so we can have this amazing new space. We now have 5 rooms where our kids learn about God's great love for them.

This summer we are in a series called Summer in the Psalms. It ends next week when John Emery will bring us a message on Psalm 23. Today I will be sharing from Psalm 22. Last week Jed reminded us we are fearfully and wonderfully made. This week I will be sharing how God created us heart, soul, mind and strength. Our heart is where our emotions are.

Psalm 22 allows us to see Emotions, or feeling and Faith or truth lived out in the Life of David.

If I have not met you yet, I thought I should share a little bit about me. I grew up in Lowell. I have been blessed with several great church families who helped me grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus. Even though I have loved God since I was a child, I did not find my identity in him. I found that my identity was being the "good girl". A clear way to describe me 10 years ago, would be to say I was emotionally unhealthy. I loved God and thought if I were good enough- he would love me. I had a hard time identifying my feelings. It seemed wrong to be sad, or angry, and yet, I did not even know what made me happy, or more importantly – what filled my soul.

In my 20's I was a Christian-school teacher at ALCS in Wilmington. We would meet as a staff once a week to read scripture, and it was there that I fell in love with the Psalms. I loved the honesty poured out in the pages and how open the Psalmists were with joy, anger, and fear.

When I was 26, I got married, and this pattern of working for the approval of God and people continued. When my 3 daughters were born, I found myself like many moms do.. my life was consumed with making others, especially my children, happy. Around the age of 30, I started discovering a love of scripture, but I was still unhealthy. My physical, spiritual and emotional worlds had no discipline. Because of that- I would give to others, and in the end be left with a depleted soul. Small things would cause me to lose my self-control, and I could often be a mean, angry person in private.

When I was 33, I began serving my local church as a part time children's pastor. On the outside all seemed great. I had been a teacher before my girls were born,

had always worked in CM and my girls were part of the program, so it seemed perfect. I had been called to this role with a fire in my soul that only God could put there. But adding part-time ministry to my life where I was a mom, daughter, wife and friend was more than I thought it would be. Soon I felt exhausted and I was often angry.

Serving every Sunday meant I was not going to be able to worship upstairs with the rest of the church- I was downstairs with the kids. I had not discovered any other way to connect with God. I had always gone to church. I would serve, but my primary way of being fed spiritually, was to attend worship services. I went to Bible studies, but I lacked the personal disciplines that would allow me to meet with Jesus on my own.

One Easter morning- it all became too much. My family had come and gone to the first service, and I worked at the first and second services. When it was over, I got in my car and cried on the way home. My soul had become depleted. One of my friends on staff saw me leave and left a message on my home phone asking if I was coming back. That afternoon, my heart was screaming no –I can't do this any more...

I did return and kept serving. Some weeks were good, some hard. Thankfully God does not wait until we are perfect before he uses us. Around 2004, that same friend who called me on Easter Sunday introduced me to EHS and Geri and Peter Scazzero. I heard for the first time that my emotions and my spiritual life were connected.

I began to study the EHS book that was the easy part. I could tell it was true and that I needed this emotional part of who I was to be healed. Then we as a SF staff began to and do what it said. That was the hard part.

Shortly after we began this process, Pete was speaking in person at Gordon college. I was so thrilled to go and hear him. One of the things he had us do was make a genogram.

My friend's family had been missionaries to Africa...mine were basically the opposite. We were given a large piece of white paper. On it we would write our parents' names, their parents' names, our siblings, spouse, aunts, uncles, children and start making marks for issues in the lives of your relatives...things like divorce, cutting off from relationships, out of wedlock children, death... all these unhealthy family events would have dark marks- He used the lives of Jacob and Joseph, from the book of Genesis, as an example ...and in a few generations, patterns of sins became obvious...My paper was a mess...and I glanced over at his...it was white and beautiful.

As I sat there I remembered a story Beth Moore had told. It was from a Gilda

Radner book "There... was a dog out in the yard one day and got in the way of a lawn mower and her two hind legs got cut off. They rushed her to the vet and he sewed up, and over the next week the dog learned to walk. She didn't spend any time worrying. She just learned to walk by taking two steps in the front and flipping up her backside, and then taking two steps and flipping up her backside again. She later gave birth to six little puppies, all in perfect health. She nursed them and then weaned them. And when they learned to walk, they all walked like her."

Beth prayed that God would help her girls not be broken like she had been. And my prayer became- God do that for me.... may my children and grandchildren's lives look like the lives of children who came from emotionally and spiritually healthy families.

May these patterns of sin end with me...I know Christ came so that we could be returned to a relationship with God and so He could heal us so that we could be who He created us to be!

When I had the chance to pick a Psalm to share with you, I really wanted to share Psalm 22, a Lamenting one, and I will be so happy if when you leave today if you realize that you were made Body, soul and spirit with emotions that were given to you by God.

Like all the rest of fallen creation, God desires to redeem the emotions that may be hidden deep inside you and me. Harbor exists so we can find our way back to God so that we can Live Fully, Love deeply and Give freely. I do not think it is possible to do any of those things, if we stay emotionally unhealthy.

The hardest part about change is that it makes us feel uncomfortable. When we start to become physically healthy- sometimes it hurts. The same is true with EHS, we have developed patterns over our lives and it will be uncomfortable to change.

Psalm 22 is one of the Lamenting Psalms

Lamenting not spoken of much in church. It is a big word that means weeping, crying, mourning and grieving. Most of us struggle with how to do this. It makes us feel uncomfortable, and we try to avoid it.

I think we prefer scripture verses like Phil 4:13 I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

What EHS did for me is help me see that all my emotions are ok. I can be happy and I can be afraid.

EHS helped look at my past, into my family history to see patterns of sin that needed to be brought to God.

When I started to study this- I was shocked to realize that I did not even know I was unhealthy.

Over these last 5 years, God has shown me that He can heal the wounds of the trauma that caused me to become unable to Live fully- Growing up with an alcoholic dad taught me to Live fearfully.... Only God can help me to Love deeply, I was too afraid to Love – because it hurt. And walking with Christ has taught me I can Give Freely, because He is Jehovah Jireh- my provider. I do Give out of duty, but because I now know I am blessed to be a blessing- and all that I have, every good gift, comes from the Father.

I believe that when we do not know what our primary emotions are, then anger, a secondary emotion comes in and we end becoming bitter and resentful people.

We live like David, who at the start of Psalm 22- says  
My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?

Psalm 22 to me is so beautiful. David is writing from a place of honesty. He knows God. In Psalm 22 we see a pendulum go back and forth between feelings and faith.

Scripture says David is a man after God's heart. That is what I was trying to do in my own strength. Be like David. Yet here I was in part time ministry, and I was emotionally broken. I was crying in staff meetings and yelling at my children and husband. I could not please everyone and I was exhausted from trying. When I heard Peter Scazzero that day, the first thing that resonated with me was he said that most Christians come to Christ and their lives are like an iceberg. We fix the 20% of our lives that are visible. But leave the things deep inside us untouched. We join a SG, go to church and learn to say the right things. But deep inside we feel like we stay the same broken person.

I remember my first Beth Moore Bible study was called Breaking Free. I was totally surprised by the fact that the more I learned about God and His great love, the more I saw that His light was exposing darkness in me I did not even know was there. I began to identify the things in my life that I wanted God to change. In order to change I needed to confess- get my sin out of the darkness, and repent.

I would confess by telling those around me the truth.  
I would repent when I learned the truth of God's word and believed it, and with God's help I would take steps to go the other way. I began to fill my mind with

truth, scripture. The book of Deut- says we are to love God with our heart soul, and strength.

Christians are often called Hypocrites. That word only means actor. We become actors when we make lists of what we think are the right things to think, say and do and put on a religious show.

Only those who are closest to us see the “real” us. And when that happens we often feel exposed...and again...we feel angry.

How do we get to place where we can be Emotionally Healthy? It starts by realizing feelings are part of who we are and seeing that God created them.

Looking at Psalm 22 . David says that God is His God. Twice He calls God “My God”... Let’s start there

Know that God is who He says He is and can do what He says He can do. He is your God and My God – He is for us, not against us.

Next David cries Why? Life is full of questions that lead us to say God- why have you forsaken us? Our emotions do not know what to do when our Lives become full of pain, hurt and disappointment. My summer has had many painful moments- a friend is given a horrible diagnosis, my firstborn leaving for college...partners in ministry moving on. My prayer time has been filled with people I love who are in pain and my heart aches. But I know what God has promised. When it feels like He is not here- He has promised- to never leave us or forsake us. Our feelings are indicators, we need to feel them and bring them to the foot of the cross. But they are not truth.

Psalm 22 continues with a pattern- Faith in the truth, and feelings. Hebrews 11:1 says

Faith is being sure of what we hope for, certain of what we do not see. Without faith it is impossible to please God. We can’t live where our feelings bring us. God is pleased when we have faith- we know He exists and he rewards those who earnestly seek Him.

If He is not going to leave, and He is for our good...we need to listen to His still small voice, every moment, every hour, every day...not just once a week at a worship service. Faith requires us to daily pick up our cross and follow Him.

In verses 3-5 we see faith-Truth- God is who He says He is and Will do what He says He will do.

Psalm 22:3-5 New Living Translation (NLT)

**3** Yet you are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel.

**4** Our ancestors trusted in you, and you rescued them.

**5** They cried out to you and were saved. □

They trusted in you and were never disgraced.

And in verse 6-8 we have David sharing His feelings...The book of Psalms is like a glimpse into David's journal. He pours out his heart to God. The Bible and our own journals are where we can be reminded of the faithfulness of God. Listen to truth.

David says "I am a worm. Everyone scorns me."

Do you ever feel that way? I have. But it is a feeling. The truth is I am not a worm, I am the beloved daughter of the most High God.

I love God's Word. It is one word...spoken to different people at different times in history. The more you read it the more you discover that God's great rescue plan has been written before Christ was even born. I wish I had the time to go through each verse with you, but I hope this week you will take some time, open Psalm 22 and study it.

For instance this word "worm", describes the worm that was used to make scarlet, or red dye...

As we continue on in this Psalm we will discover that Psalm 22 is a prophetic Psalm which speaks of the death and resurrection of Christ generations before He was born. We celebrate in worship each week because Christ paid the price for all of our sin. In the book of Isaiah 1:18 it says though our sins were like scarlet, through the death and resurrection of Christ – we are now as white as snow.

That is truth. You may be sitting here this morning feeling like an unloved, sin covered worm...but that is not truth! It is a feeling.

EHS has shown me that just like we grow physically, we are also supposed to grow spiritually and emotionally.

In KH- children come in the nursery as babies, but as they grow physically, they move to the toddler room, preschool, elementary and then out of KH to Junior High...

The apostle Paul says we should all grow Spiritually as well.

*Hebrews 5:12 says "You have been believers so long now that you ought to be teaching others. Instead, you need someone to teach you again the basic things about God's word. You are like babies who need milk and cannot eat solid food"*

It is possible to come to church each week and 10 years from now be 10 years older physically, but not grow emotionally or spiritually. And I found that trying to grow spiritually when we are wounded emotionally leads to discouragement.

Through Emotionally Healthy Spirituality, I learned I was acting like a toddler when I was a physical adult, Emotional outbursts occur when we feel empty and exhausted -BUT IT IS NOT OK. I am responsible for my reactions. You are as well.

Through the EHS study I learned that many of us develop unhealthy patterns because those in our family did life that way. In some families there was a lot of screaming in anger, in others there was sarcasm and some families would ignore children or cut people out of their lives when they became angry or disappointed.

This is not the Kingdom of God that Jesus spoke of. We are the sons and daughters of the King who loves and forgives. We are called to be His hands and feet.

An illustration I found helpful was to view my soul like a glass of water. The glass can be empty, full to the rim, ½ full or there could be a few drops left at the bottom. Coming to a worship service once a week fills us. But we can't stay full of this joy by being in a worship service for one hour a week, nor can we stay full physically if we eat one big meal once a week.

God alone can fill our soul. I found I needed to sit at His feet not just once a week for an hour, but daily, hourly. When I have a depleted soul, then joy of the Lord, which is my strength...leaves me.

As Christians, we know that when we lack this joy-we become angry, and bitter...we are not full of love and peace or self- control.

In Verses 9-10 of Psalm 22 we see a return to Faith and Trust and in verse 11 David's feelings return.

Yet you brought me safely from my mother's womb... I was thrust into your arms at my birth.

You have been my God from the moment I was born.

These are the kinds of verses we need to keep hidden in our hearts. David continues...

Do not stay so far from me, trouble is near, and no one else can help me.

I have felt this way so often. But the truth is Nothing can separate us from the Love of God. How many times have we left church

on a Sunday morning so confident in the love of God, only to wake up Monday morning wondering- My God, why?

(Illustration)- I Love to read- and I often end of books first...I know most people are horrified that I do this...But I like knowing how things will end.

My peace in life comes because I know that author of life knows all, sees and works all for good and for His Kingdom. My faith is built on this truth, not on my feelings.

Matthew is one of the 4 gospels found in the beginning of the NT. In Matt. 27:45, Jesus hangs on cross and Matthew tells us Jesus speaks Psalm 22 out loud said it in Aramaic-- He cries- My God, My God- why have you forsaken me?

Psalm 22 is prophetic. The words were true of David's pain when He wrote it, but it and also spoke of when Christ would come. Jesus was quoting in Aramaic and referring to this Psalm. There were scrolls then, bit the Bible as we now have it. Today we would know a verse when someone references a Chapter and verse of scripture. Like John 3:16.

Psalm 22 verses 12-21 speaks of a death not even invented yet...a death on a cross.

We see In Psalm 22:16-18 David cry out in pain, and use descriptive language to describe both his own feelings and truth of what that one day would occur as Christ died on the cross for you and me

"They have pierced my hands and my feet," They divide my garments and throw dice for my clothing."

I believe that when Jesus said these words, He was reminding all who spoke and understood Aramaic that He was now fulfilling this Psalm. This emotion filled Psalm does not end in despair. It ends in victory. That is where our faith comes from. We know the ending. God is good and will work all things for His glory and our good.

The end of the Psalm tells us one day we will Praise Him in the great assembly. Verse 26 is translated in the Message version as All the poor and powerless, the whole earth, all will bow down and worship Him.

I love the promises of the final verses. These are the verses we began the day with. They remind us that

Our faith is based on truth  
Our hearts will live forever



God will never leave or forsake us

His promise is that future generations will hear about the wonders of the Lord. His righteous acts will be told to those not yet born. They will hear about everything He has done. Many translations end this Psalm with the words He has done it.

But in the Septuagint, Psalm 22 ends with the last words Christ spoke- It is finished.

EHS does not end with us looking at our past- we are unable to decide to walk in faith in our own strength...we change with the power of Christ.

It calls us to find rest. The final thing I wanted to share today is that there is one way our souls are restored-rest.

God has said since the creation of the world, our souls need rest. Sabbath is a gift. In silence we hear from God. When we slow down enough to hear His still, small voice we remember that God is God, we are not. When we look to scripture and see the faithfulness of God, we are reminded that

We are not able to do this in our strength- Joy is a gift He gives - The joy of the Lord, is our strength.

I think that is why we love to come to worship together. It is an hour where our souls rest.

When we look at situations around us and say Why? We become anxious. This is the lesson God taught me this month. Each message I write- God first uses to teach me.

Philippians 4:6,7

DO not be anxious- about ANYTHING...

1. Recognize feelings

But in everything with prayer

2. With prayer ask God to help

And petitions with Thanksgiving present your request to God.

3. Be thankful- Speak truth out loud.

God-You are Good, Your word says you will never leave.

The promise is that the peace of God will guard your heart and your mind in Christ Jesus

We began this morning looking at Psalm 22-

And as we leave today, we can choose truth and faith over feelings.

We need God to help us lay our lives- our Heart, soul, mind and strength, at the feet of the cross.

Feel our feelings  
Do stuff them deep down or deny them.

And Finally, we need to choose to believe truth.

Truth says we are not abandoned, we are adopted and loved. So loved, that Jesus died on the cross the death that we deserved. He gladly gave His life for us so we could return to the relationship with God that we were created to live. Nothing can separate us from that love.

I am going to finish with verses 28-31 from Psalm 22.  
In the message it says.

God has taken charge; from now on he has the last word. All the power-mongers are before him - worshipping! All the poor and powerless, too - worshipping! Along with those who never got it together - worshipping! Our children and their children will get in on this As the word is passed along from parent to child. Babies not yet conceived will hear the good news - that God does what he says.