

## Chat with the Children

- Explore what the "make your face shine upon us" (Psalm 80:3) image communicates
  - when do our faces "shine"?
  - what good would it be to us to have God's face "shining" on us?
  - "the glow of kindness and friendship" (Derek Kidner)

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## What is Wrong?

- What is wrong?
  - with the world?
  - with the church?
  - with life in general!?
- Session discussions recently
  - prompted us to pray
  - and I was drawn to this Psalm as a guide, as a shape to our praying as a Session
  - want to share it with everyone that we might together seek God

### What is wrong?

- Suggest there are three possible kinds of answers:
  - others are wrong...
  - God is wrong...
  - we are wrong...

## Lots wrong!

- There is something of each of those dimensions in this Psalm:
  - **others are wrong**: v6 points to the part others are playing the calamity striking God's people (probably destruction of Samaria, northern 10 tribes of Israel, by Assyrians; and the whole calling into question of the power of enemies to overcome even "sister" Israel...); see also v.12,13
  - **God is wrong**: but also that destruction seems to the Psalmist rooted in God's action - its his anger (v.4), the tears come from him (v.5), its him who caused the trouble with the enemies (v.6, v.12,13)
  - **we are wrong**: ultimately, though, the key is in God's people themselves

### We are wrong

- Repeated "restore us" has overtones of "turn us to yourself"
- v.18 in particular has sense of need being for return to God, and that this has not been the case in the past
- Psalmist came to repent, to turn from his and his people's sin
  - do we?
  - I fear not!
  - we tend to the "woe is me", society is changing, its all someone elses fault... and why is God holding back his hand...?
- Dare we forget the core:
  - we are sinners, and whether we are acutely conscious of particular things we have done wrong or not, we are fundamentally sinners in need of God's grace and mercy and forgiveness
  - we have no right to his favour, no right to his blessing
- *And at the core of the core is whether we, as first priority, are seeking God*
  - is our first priority - with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our mind, with all our strength - to love the Lord, to call on his name, to turn to him?

- Repentance: confession and change, turning to God

## Lots right!

- There's also lots right here!
- Real confidence in and knowledge of God:
  - v.1,2
  - amplifying titles in vs.3,7,19
  - rehearsal of their "God story" (v.8-11)
  - and the repeated refrain of God's smile, of the possibility of restoration, of salvation
- *Restoration - Smile - Salvation*
- Let's seek God, and pray this Psalm for our congregation!