

Thursday, March 19, 2020

[Click here to hear this message read aloud](#)

WE SHALL OVERCOME

There is a hymn book called “Praise Ways” that I had a copy of at home but had misplaced. I knew it would turn up eventually and yesterday, as Nadine did a thorough cleaning of our room, she pulled out our magazine bin. Sure enough, in the bin was the missing “Praise Ways”. When I opened the book to the first page, I came to the song “We Shall Overcome”. I began reading the words to the song and I thought to myself how fitting for these days and times. The first verse goes:

We shall overcome
We shall overcome
We shall overcome some day–
Oh! Deep in my heart I do believe
That we shall overcome some day.

There are six verses in this hymn. The sixth verse is filled with this message of hope:

The Lord shall see us through
The Lord shall see us through
The Lord shall see us through some day–
Oh! Deep in my heart I do believe
That we shall overcome some day.

As I read through the words to this song, I realized that it was at this time that God wanted me to find the missing “Praise Ways” and focus my attention on this hymn.

I did some research into the story behind this hymn and discovered that it began as a folk song sung by slaves in the fields. It was not meant as a marching song or a defiant song but rather as a song of promise with that promise being “I’ll be all right some day”.

It is believed that a Baptist named C. Albert Tindley made it into a hymn in 1901. This hymn has been taken up by many political movements and causes including the Civil Rights movement in the USA. The power and promise of this hymn turned up in speeches by Martin Luther King including one on March 31, 1968, just days before his death.

One of the beautiful things about this hymn is that as we face struggles such as this COVID-19 pandemic, this becomes our song. This song gives us a sense of faith and a sense of strength to continue to struggle and push on to the end because there will be that moment when we as individuals, as a nation and as a world will overcome this pandemic.

If there are moments over the days and weeks ahead when you are feeling fear or worry or doubt, take a moment and sing the words to this song. Let it do for you what it has done for so many through the years who have faced their own struggles – give you a sense of faith and strength to continue on knowing that the Lord shall see us through.

We shall over come – the Lord shall see us through. Keep singing as we all look forward to the time when we can gather to worship again.

Rev. Dean Adlam



Listen