



June 14 - Redemption Song, by Bob Marley

This is a bittersweet Sunday. It feels like it was just a few weeks ago we were welcoming Vicar Lotegeluaki into the Grace community, and now we are gathered to send him off into the world, prepared for parish ministry and the proclamation of the redeeming love of God.

If you did not realize it, Vicar Lotegeluaki likes music, a lot. We have had many conversations about music, and in one conversation we started talking about the similarities between East African music and Reggae music. He was surprised when he found out one of my absolute favorite songs in Bob Marley's "Redemption Song." On numerous occasions he has reminded me that he would like to hear me sing it. Well, today is that day.

This song was written after Bob Marley was diagnosed with cancer. There is a sense of surrender in this song, a surrender and peace that is rarely seen in the world. One of the only places I have witnessed such a sense of peace is in those with whom I have journeyed through a terminal illness. After facing your own mortality, there is nothing else to fear. This sense of peace and surrender leads to a different way of living, seeing every day as gift, and sharing the whole of the human experience with others.

As Jesus sends his disciples, he invites them into a form of surrender and peace. They are to go out and proclaim, come what may. Jesus never says that everything will be smooth. He simply invites them to see every day as a gift and to proclaim God's love.

Bob Marley uses a Marcus Garvey quote to express this: "Emancipate yourselves from mental slavery. None but ourselves can free our minds. Have no fear for atomic energy, 'cause none of them can stop the time." The world will try to silence any voice that speaks of true peace. May this be a reminder to you, and to me, how important it is to share the love of God with the world around us.

Redemption Song – by Bob Marley

Old pirates, yes, they rob I;  
Sold I to the merchant ships,  
Minutes after they took I  
From the bottomless pit.  
But my hand was made strong  
By the 'and of the Almighty.  
We forward in this generation  
Triumphantly.  
Won't you help to sing these songs of freedom? -  
'Cause all I ever have: Redemption songs.  
Redemption songs.

Emancipate yourselves from mental slavery;  
None but ourselves can free our minds.  
Have no fear for atomic energy,  
'Cause none of them can stop the time.  
How long shall they kill our prophets,  
While we stand aside and look? Ooh!  
Some say it's just a part of it:  
We've got to fulfil the book.  
Won't you help to sing these songs of freedom? -  
'Cause all I ever have: Redemption songs.