

The Worship Sermon of Psalm 34

Psalm 34:11-22

Pastor Michael Lynn / West Hampden Baptist Church

April 23, 2023 p.m.

Introduction. This morning we looked at David's worship song. We noted his exaltation of the Lord, his experience with the Lord, & his exhortation for the Lord. Could you sing such a Psalm from your heart? Consider here tonight David's worship sermon. He invites those who are the children of God to hearken unto his message, that of teaching the fear of the Lord. Scroggie suggests, "To fear the Lord does not mean to be afraid of Him, but signifies that attitude of devout reverence towards Him which becomes us all, & the conduct which it demands." Note with me here the requirements, the reasons, & the results of walking in the fear of the Lord.

- I. The **requirements** for walking in the fear of the Lord (:11-14) > David's exhortation "To teach men how to live & how to die, is the aim of all useful religious instruction" (Spurgeon). "Make sure that when it comes time to die, that all you have to do is die" (Jim Elliot).
 - A. Ask God to **guard** your **speech** (:13) - the command is to "*keep.*"
 1. To control one's tongue is to control the source > the heart, cf. Matthew 12:33-37 & Jeremiah 17:9 (& cf. James 3:8 with Psalm 141:3).
 2. To speak guile is to speak hypocritically (to give only lip service).
 - B. Ask God to **guide** your **steps** (:14a) - the command is to "*depart.*"
 1. "Be practical, active, energetic, persevering in good. Positive virtue promotes negative virtue; he who does good is sure to avoid evil" (Spurgeon).
 2. I Peter 3:11, "Let him eschew evil..." & cf. Job 1:1 - avoid it as one would the plague.
 - C. Ask God to **gladden** your **search** (:14b) - the command is to "*seek*" & to "*pursue.*"
 1. Not simply a preference for peace, but a pursuit of peace (with zeal).
 2. Peace with God (Romans 5:1), peace with fellow-man (Romans 12:18), & peace in one's own heart (Philippians 4:6-7).
- II. The **reasons** for walking in the fear of the Lord (:15-18) > David's explanation
 - A. We are aware of His **presence** (:15).
 1. The **recognition** of His providence (His watch-care over us; His eyes upon us, His ears open) "He observes them with approval & tender consideration; they are so dear to Him that He cannot take His eyes off them; He watches each one of them as carefully & intently as if there were only that one creature in the universe" (Spurgeon).
 2. The **realization** of prayer (His waiting to hear us; cf. 34:4, 6).
Summary: Compare Matthew 6:8-13, the "disciples' prayer."
 - B. We are aware of His **power** (:16-18).
 1. The **destiny** of the unrighteous – "*The face of the LORD is against...*"
 - a. Their conduct > "*do evil.*"
 - b. Their consequence > "*cut off.*"
 2. The **deliverance** of the righteous – "*...saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.*"
 - a. "Our afflictions may be numerous & complicated, but prayer can set us free from them all, for the Lord will show Himself strong on our behalf" (Spurgeon).
 - b. Those characterized by a "broken heart" (humility) & a "contrite spirit" (repentance).

C. We are aware of His **promise** (:18).

1. To those with a broken (humbled) heart > humbled over sin.
2. To those with a contrite (repentant) spirit > emptied of self.
[Literally, a “beaten-out” spirit > “It implies a spirit that has been hammered & is in a state of submission to whatever God has for it” (Hindson). See also Isaiah 57:15.]

III. The **results** of walking in the fear of the Lord (:19-22) > David’s expectation

A. There is **deliverance** (:19).

1. The experience of the righteous:
 - a. See Acts 14:22, “...*that we through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.*”
 - b. See II Timothy 3:12, “*Yea, & all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.*” [Ryrie suggests it was because of the aggressive witness of Paul.]
2. The expectation for the righteous:
 - a. A joyful end to the believer's trials (cf. Psalm 73:24) - delivered through the afflictions. [“Whenever God has allowed tribulation to do its perfect work in purging, molding, & shaping us, He will then remove that tribulation from us” (Hindson).]
 - b. “The same Lord Who sends the afflictions will also recall them when His design is accomplished, but He will never allow the fiercest of them to rend & devour His beloved” (Spurgeon).

B. There is **protection** (:20).

1. The prophecy > cf. Exodus 12:46 with John 19:36.
2. The parallel >
 - a. Providential protection from injury?? - “As not a bone of the Lord's body was broken at His crucifixion, not a bone of the Body of Christ, the Church, will be broken, harmed, segmented, or lost” (Hindson).
 - b. Prevention of great injuries of soul, prevented by Divine love... no fatal injury. We are kept by His power (cf. I Peter 1:5 & Jude:24).

C. There is **redemption** (:21-22).

1. Desolation of the wicked (:21).
 - a. Punished with their own evil.
 - b. “Desolation will be their everlasting portion. They... shall be condemned as guilty, & laid waste forever, shall be forever forsaken & abandoned of God” (Matthew Henry).
2. Salvation of the righteous (:22) [“*redeemeth*” – rescued, delivered; cf. Psalm 107:2]
 - a. Redeemed by the blood of the Lamb (cf. Revelation 1:5 & 5:9).
 - b. Received by faith in the Lamb (cf. John 1:29).

Conclusion: Is Christ your Redeemer? If so, are you walking in the fear of the Lord? How is your speech? Where do your steps take you? Are you seeking peace? To walk in His fear is be aware of His presence, His power & His purpose. Such a walk results in His deliverance, His protection, & His final redemption.

Do you want to have a blessed life, one that is successful & prosperous? Do you desire a better marriage, enjoying a loving relationship with your spouse & raising obedient children who are trained to love & serve the Lord? The challenge then is to heed the Psalmist's sermon, “*Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the Lord*” ?