

5-Day Devotional: Singing in Strange Lands

Day 1: The Song That Sustains

Reading: Psalm 137:1-6

Devotional: By the rivers of Babylon, God's people wept, their harps hanging silent on willow trees. Yet notice—they hung them up but didn't throw them away. Your praise may be paused, but it's never canceled. Life's exile seasons—those unfamiliar, identity-shaking moments—don't remove your ability to worship; they only diminish your desire. The psalmist resolved: "If I forget you, Jerusalem, let my right hand forget its skill." Before forgetting God's faithfulness, they'd forget how to function. Today, your circumstances may feel strange, but your song remains. Even with tears streaming down, you can whisper thanks. Worship isn't sustained by emotion but by willful devotion. What song has God placed in your heart? Don't let Babylon steal it.

Day 2: Remembering Who He's Been

Reading: Deuteronomy 8:1-10

Devotional: How do we sing the Lord's song in a strange land? We remember. We rehearse His faithfulness. You can sing about God being a healer today because He healed you yesterday. You can declare Him a provider because provision has marked your journey. Even young Daniel, who never crossed the Red Sea, could shout over that testimony because the same God who delivered then delivers now. Your ancestors' victories become your ammunition. When the enemy whispers defeat, counter with remembrance: "He brought me through before; He'll do it again." Make a list today of five times God proved faithful. Let those memories become lyrics. Your testimony isn't just history—it's prophecy of what He'll do next. Sing from your scars; they've become your strength.

Day 3: Spirit Over Circumstance

Reading: Romans 8:5-11

Devotional: You are a triune being—spirit, soul, and body. When sin entered, your spirit died while your body still breathed. But salvation shocked your spirit alive, connecting you to the eternal God. Now the battle: Will your spirit lead, or will circumstances dictate? Your body may be sick, your mind frustrated, but your spirit declares, "By His stripes I am healed." This is spiritual warfare—bringing thoughts captive, making your soul follow your spirit's lead. You're in

this world but not of it. Even in strange lands, the Kingdom resides within you. Today, practice spirit-led living. When your body wants to react in anger, let your spirit command peace. When your mind spirals into worry, let your spirit proclaim His promises. You're more than your circumstances; you're a carrier of His presence.

Day 4: The Transforming Power

Reading: 2 Corinthians 5:14-21

Devotional: God said, "Come as you are," but never intended you to stay that way. His power transforms. Yesterday's identity doesn't define tomorrow's destiny. The enemy wants you to forget where God brought you from, to act like you were never in bondage. But your testimony—the raw, real story of transformation—gives Him glory and gives others hope. You can now pray for enemies who once made you curse. You can walk away from temptation that once enslaved you. This isn't fake holiness; it's authentic change. "Things I used to do, I don't do anymore" isn't self-righteousness—it's evidence of His work. Today, thank God for what He's changing in you. Share your testimony with someone who needs to know transformation is possible. Your story matters.

Day 5: Keep Singing Your Song

Reading: Psalm 103:1-5

Devotional: In midnight hours, when life gets tough and the devil pushes down, you need a song. Not someone else's—yours. That personal melody born from your unique journey with God. Your song may not have perfect pitch or a click track, but it's authentic. It's the song that says, "Trouble won't last always." It's the song that declares, "If it had not been for the Lord on my side, where would I be?" Sing when you're alone in your car. Sing when tears blur your vision. Sing until walls fall, giants drop, and Red Seas part. This season demands boldness. You're a peculiar people with peculiar weapons—worship that warfare can't withstand. Today, sing your song intentionally. Let everything within you bless His holy name. He's worthy of your praise, even—especially—in strange lands.

Title: Just Keep Singing: Worshiping God in Strange Places

Sermon Summary:

This powerful sermon addresses the challenge of maintaining worship and praise during difficult seasons of life. Drawing from Psalm 137 and the context of Daniel's exile in Babylon, the pastor explores how believers can continue to worship God even when circumstances feel unfamiliar, painful, or strange. The message emphasizes that while grief may diminish our desire to worship, it doesn't remove our ability to praise God. True worship must become an act of willful devotion rather than merely an emotional response. The sermon calls believers to remember

God's faithfulness, maintain their testimony, and allow their spirit man—renewed through salvation—to lead their soul and body in worship, regardless of their current circumstances or emotional state.

Key Points:

- Most people don't expect to encounter something beautiful in an ugly place, yet God provides blessings even in difficult seasons
- Grief and struggle don't indicate a lack of faith; believers can be godly while still wrestling with hardship
- Every believer will experience a "Babylon season"—a time when life feels unfamiliar and worship feels difficult
- Worship was never meant to be sustained by emotion alone; it must be an act of willful devotion
- The spirit man, once made alive through salvation, must lead the soul and body rather than being controlled by feelings
- Remembering God's past faithfulness empowers us to praise Him in present difficulties
- Believers are triune beings (spirit, soul, and body), and spiritual transformation occurs when the spirit man takes control
- We must not allow our current situation to make us forget who God has been and what He has brought us through
- Singing our song means praising God even when circumstances are strange, painful, or unfamiliar

Scripture Reference:

- Psalm 137:1-5 (primary text): "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept when we remembered Zion. We hung our harps upon the willows... If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning"
- Book of Daniel (contextual reference to the Babylonian exile)
- Ephesians (being dead in trespasses and sin)
- Psalms (various references to praise)
- John 4 ("God is a spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth")

Stories:

- The 1976 Joshua Bell experiment: World-class violinist Joshua Bell performed in a Boston concert hall where tickets sold out at \$100 minimum. Days later, he played the same music on the same priceless violin in a Washington DC subway station for 45 minutes. Thousands walked by without pausing, revealing that people don't expect something beautiful to show up in an ugly place
- Personal illustration about children losing their appetite when sick, comparing it to believers losing their desire to worship when spiritually unwell
- Reference to old mothers and fathers of the church spontaneously praising God while doing everyday activities like driving or watching TV

- Historical reference to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and civil rights activists singing "We Shall Overcome" during segregation and Jim Crow, maintaining hope through song despite present oppression
- Testimonial references to ancestors crossing the Red Sea and experiencing God's deliverance, connecting past testimonies to present faith