

Psalm 4-6 “Crying Out To The Lord”

Last week if you remember we began our study through the book of Psalms and we might just keep in mind that the Psalms are perhaps what I would call the most intimate looks that we have of what a person's individual walk with God and their personal prayer life looks like...We might remember there are multiple writers throughout the book of Psalms...David was one of the writers, Moses was another and there were others as well.

Today we are picking up in the 4th Psalm and right away this time you are going to notice that it says that this was to the chief musician and that it was to be played with stringed instruments...We also learn that it's a Psalm of David.

Let's look at verse 1 which says this **Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness! You have relieved me in my distress; Have mercy on me, and hear my prayer.**

Right away we get the sense that David is going through some difficulty in his life as he requests the mercy of God, that God would hear his prayer and an acknowledgment that God had relieved him in his distress.

Some commentators actually attach this Psalm to the third one which we know took place while David was on the run from his son Absalom...the evidence for this is inconclusive but we can deduct that David was having a hard time in his life.

Twice here in this first verse David requests of God that He would hear him...the idea is that David is just running to the Lord with all of his heart.

I am thankful that when we pass through difficult times and we cry out to the Lord that He is always with us. I admit that when life is going crazy that it can be difficult to maintain your focus on Jesus... Instead I often find myself trying to figure things out and running through 5,000 different scenarios.

Jesus said the following over in Matthew 11:28-30 which says ²⁸ **Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.** ²⁹ **Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.** ³⁰ **For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.** These verses are a hard thing to learn to apply to our lives but it is true that when we come to Him He helps us and that's exactly what David is doing here in the opening of this Psalm.

Look with me at verse 2 which says this ² **How long, O you sons of men, Will you turn my glory to shame?**

How long will you love worthlessness. And seek falsehood? Selah

It would seem that as David was passing through this that people had turned against him... They were taking the glory of David and turning it to shame... He even says of those who are against him that they love worthlessness and it would seem from the text that those who were against him were seeking falsehoods. Perhaps the rumors were flying about David and there were those that were feeding into them as they worked to bring shame to his name.

I want to encourage us today that it's important as we go through life that we seek for the things of God and not the things of this world which ultimately are worthless. Humanity comes into this world with nothing and humanity will take nothing into eternity after we die.

Look at verse 3 which says ³But know that the Lord has set apart for Himself him who is godly; The Lord will hear when I call to Him.

David is here pointing out that there certainly is a distinction between those who seek worthlessness and falsehoods and those that the Lord has set apart for Himself.

It would seem to me from the text that though the world may come after an individual that the Lord can see the heart of a person and the Lord has a way of setting apart for Himself those that choose to live a life after Him.

And David seems to indicate that because of who he is and his knowledge that God is decidedly for him as he goes through life that the Lord will hear when he called out to Him.

I would also ask today do you have confidence that God hears you when you call out to Him? If you believe in Jesus, if your heart is set apart to Him then I know that He does...He may not give you all you ask for or allow things to work out how you imagine...but He does hear and He does desire to hear from you.

Look at verses 4-5 which say this ⁴Be angry, and do not sin.

Meditate within your heart on your bed, and be still. Selah

⁵Offer the sacrifices of righteousness,

And put your trust in the Lord.

I can imagine David going through this situation in his life where there are clearly those who are against him and perhaps for David he had this desire in his heart to respond in anger...Instead he says in your anger do not sin.

I would say that sometimes in life there may be a situation where you are rightly angry...I get angry when people are taken advantage of especially children, I get angry when the laws of our land are blatantly broken and mocked, I get angry about the millions of babies that have been killed due to abortion...**we should be righteously angry about these things**...and yet in our anger we are not to sin, we are not to take things to far we are not to take matters into our own hands but instead we must remember that Vengeance is the Lord's.

I can imagine David passing through this and his heart may have wanted to get angry as there were those that were decidedly against him, but then he reminds himself that he should instead meditate on his bed and be still...In other words he was working to quiet his mind before the Lord...probably sorting through his thoughts about things and processing through what has happened working towards not responding in anger and he is at the same time saying "Lord could you help?"

Notice that it says here he does this on his bed...in the next Psalm we'll see David talk about how he seeks the Lord in the morning...that's a good reminder for us that we are to have constant and open communication with our Lord. We should always be seeking His face and looking to just have that regular prayer life in our lives.

We can also see here that David really as he is giving this song to the Lord and making these things public says to those who would hear this song that we are to offer unto God the sacrifices of righteousness meaning we should be daily living a life that is set apart unto Him and

we should be displaying the fruits of a relationship with God in our lives.

Simply said that can't be done if we aren't regularly filled with the Holy Spirit in our lives...We must be connected to the vine who is Jesus before we will ever bear fruit.

And then David reminds us to put our trust in the Lord...Don't worry about all the peripheral noise, don't worry about what others say or think if they happen to be against you but instead simply trust in Him. Easier said than done, but true none the less.

I am reminded as we work to keep our trust in the Lord when times are difficult of what we have over in Philippians 4:6-7 which says **⁶Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; ⁷ and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.**

Let's look at verses 6-8 which say this **⁶There are many who say, "Who will show us any good?"**

Lord, lift up the light of Your countenance upon us.

⁷You have put gladness in my heart, More than in the season that their grain and wine increased.

⁸I will both lie down in peace, and sleep;

For You alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety.

David knows and had experienced what many of us have in life...and there can be times where we may think to ourselves "Who will show us any good?" You might look around and feel helpless and hopeless...perhaps you are there today in your own life where you are

surrounded by the storms of life...David here speaks of the simple fact that the Lord will lift up the light of His countenance upon us...Isn't it amazing how the Lord can shine light and life even in the depths of the difficulties that we face?

Maybe it has happened to you and maybe even now you are passing through the shadows of life and you are looking for a ray of sunshine, a bit of hope...I pray that even now as you listen to the Word of God that the Lord would meet you and help you and reveal Himself to you.

In verse 7 it is almost like David's position has changed...At the beginning of the Psalm It's as if he has been in despair over what he was passing through, and then as he meditated in his heart and put his trust in the Lord it was then that the Lord lifted him up...and he says the Lord put gladness in his heart even more so than when the harvest of the season takes place.

I'm so thankful the Lord can give peace that goes beyond understanding and that He can lift us up from the pits of despair that we sometimes find ourselves in...I wonder sometimes what it is like not to have the hope of Jesus in a person's life. Have you ever thought about that? Have you ever thought about what it would be like to have no connection with God, to have no one to pour out your soul and your mind to...if that's you today I just want you to know that there is One who gave His life for you, His name is Jesus and He wants you to come to Him that you might have a relationship with Him.

And then notice in verse 8 it says that David would lie down in peace and sleep...and that the Lord alone would make him to dwell in safety.

The Lord can give us rest as we simply drop our burdens off to Him...The Lord can watch over us even when everything around us seems difficult, the Lord can provide safety when it doesn't make sense...Even last week in Psalm 3:4-5 David in the midst of his enemies experienced the following...it says **I cried to the Lord with my voice, And He heard me from His holy hill. Selah ⁵ I lay down and slept; I awoke, for the Lord sustained me.**

How wonderful it is that our great God and Savior Jesus Christ desires to walk through life with us...that God is not far off in the distance and unwilling to be near to us, but instead Jesus who is God in the flesh became man, dwelt among us, lived perfectly, died in our place, rose from the dead and has now given us the Holy Spirit to dwell within each of us that believe.

Let's move into Psalm 5 and again it is written to the Chief Musician this time and we are told it was written by David.

Look with me at verses 1-3 which say **5 Give ear to my words, O Lord, Consider my meditation. ² Give heed to the voice of my cry, My King and my God, For to You I will pray.**

³ My voice You shall hear in the morning, O Lord; In the morning I will direct *it* to You, And I will look up.

I suppose my initial observation here is that there is only One that David's prayers are directed to...No mention of those that had gone before him, no mention of prayers to Moses nor to Adam nor to any of the heroes of the faith.

I want to just say here this morning that our prayers are not to go to saints, nor Mary, nor any other person but One and that is God Almighty.

In these verses we see David say Give ear to my words, give heed to the voice of my cry, that his voice would be heard by the Lord in the morning...I get the idea that David not only prayed silently in his heart and in his mind but there was a vocalization to his prayers as well...

Now I know people may think you are odd or something but I am not afraid to talk out loud to the Lord from time to time especially in my car or when something is really troubling my heart.

Notice David in verse 2 as he speaks to God declares that God is his King...I have to ask you a question today...Is Jesus the King of your heart and your life or are you the king of your life? That's a very important question to answer in your life. If Jesus is not king it means you are the king and if you are the king it means you want those things that you want and you aren't as interested in what God might want for your life.

I appreciate what took place in the life of Saul in Acts chapter 9 as he was on the road to Damascus and suddenly he met Jesus...Saul who was a persecutor of the church and a hater of God asked a question of God saying "Who are you Lord?" meaning Jesus had moved into the position of authority in his life.

There is a difference between knowing about God and knowing about Jesus and having Jesus as the Lord of your life and King of your soul. When someone is the King it carries with it some serious

authority...When a king says something then you had better respond and be obedient especially when that king is Jesus.

Maybe you are here today and you have a battle in your heart over who is the king of your life...Maybe today you know the Lord would have you live a certain way but you refuse to go in that direction, maybe you are kicking against what the Lord wants for you life...I have to tell you that fighting against God's desires and calling for your life are going to land you in a rough spot...We ought to remember Jesus is the Lord and He should be the King of our hearts.

David also mentions in verse 3 that in the morning as he spoke to the Lord that he would look up...It's amazing how bringing things to the Lord can cause us to look up. Life may have you down and out but the Lord can lift up our eyes.

Look with me at verses 4-6 which say ⁴**For You are not a God who takes pleasure in wickedness,**

Nor shall evil dwell with You.

⁵**The boastful shall not stand in Your sight;**

You hate all workers of iniquity.

⁶**You shall destroy those who speak falsehood;**

The Lord abhors the bloodthirsty and deceitful man.

Here David makes mention of the truth that God does not take pleasure in wickedness and evil will never dwell with the Lord...We ought to remember that our God is holy and is not pleased with moral wrong and that the wicked cannot and will never be in his presence.

Neither can those who boast or those that regularly work iniquity be near the Lord...We all struggle with pride in some form or another...as I

have said many times from this pulpit and will always do so we must ask the Lord to keep us humble.

Equally we should know that those that speak falsehood will be destroyed. We should be careful what we say about others.

Those who are bloodthirsty are also abhorred by the Lord...of course those that choose to live in sin, those that choose to sow to the flesh will from the flesh reap corruption.

I can't help but think of what we have over in 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 which says **⁹Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites,¹⁰ nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.¹¹ And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.**

For all of us we used to be those listed in Psalm 4 verses 4-6 and 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 but God has washed us and justified us in the name of the Lord Jesus.

Verses 7-8 say this ⁷But as for me, I will come into Your house in the multitude of Your mercy;

In fear of You I will worship toward Your holy temple.

⁸Lead me, O Lord, in Your righteousness because of my enemies; Make Your way straight before my face.

David knows that for him he can't be labeled as a person of wickedness, but instead he would come into the house of God in the

multitude of God's mercy. Man that's a beautiful thing to think about isn't it?

For you and I in a New Testament sense we have full access to the throne of grace, we have full access to be as near to the Lord as we choose...And yes, we can all say that God is full of mercy. I'm so thankful God doesn't write us off when we make mistakes. I'm so thankful His forgiveness is readily available. 1 John 1:9 makes it clear how easy it is to find forgiveness when it says **⁹If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

Notice David also worshipped the Lord...I would ask you today how is your worship of God? Do you regularly thank Him and praise Him for His work in your life? Do you sing unto Him? Do you listen to worship music and lift His name on high? What about when you come to church? Do you connect with Jesus during the worship times? Or are you just singing along with no heart?

He is worthy of our worship...In heaven there will be much worship of God. In my devotions recently I was reading Revelation 5 and it says the following as it speaks of a scene in heaven in verses 11-15 which say **¹¹Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, ¹²saying with a loud voice:**

**“Worthy is the Lamb who was slain
To receive power and riches and wisdom,
And strength and honor and glory and blessing!”**

13 And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying:

**“Blessing and honor and glory and power
Be to Him who sits on the throne,
And to the Lamb, forever and ever!”**

14 Then the four living creatures said, “Amen!” And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshiped Him who lives forever and ever.

One day in heaven I am convinced our worship of the Lamb who is Jesus will be nearly constant as we thank Him for all He has done in our lives and hearts and we rejoice in His great redemption...I would say our worship of God in this world should be of utmost importance as well and that includes simply living our lives as a living sacrifice unto Him.

David also asks the Lord to lead him because of his enemies and that God would make His path straight as David walked through life...David wanted to follow the Lord, he didn't want to be in the driver seat but instead in the passenger seat of his life. David made constant and deliberate decisions to follow his King and submit his life unto the direction of the Lord.

Back to the enemies of David or those that are wicked again in verses 9-10 which say **9 For there is no faithfulness in their mouth; Their inward part is destruction; Their throat is an open tomb; They flatter with their tongue.**

10 Pronounce them guilty, O God! Let them fall by their own counsels; Cast them out in the multitude of their transgressions,

For they have rebelled against You. It's just a reality that in this world those who live for wickedness are found to be unfaithful...The wicked will go with the winds of the air being blown about by whatever sinful pleasure grabs hold of them...A life lived like this will always lead to destruction.

I can tell you that a sinful lifestyle will always bring about destruction. My life was pretty wicked before I surrendered to Christ. It led to my life being a disaster and things being difficult for me in all kinds of ways.

For the wicked their throat is an open tomb and they flatter with their tongues...meaning the words from their mouths and hearts lean towards evil, they look to take advantage of and manipulate people.

And then David goes ahead and says pronounce them guilty O God! And let the counsel that comes from their mouths come to nothing...David here just pleading with God really to take up his cause and stand against those that are doing that which is wrong...and then he simply says they have rebelled against You...Keep that in mind when people are doing wickedly...often times if they are against you they have a bigger grievance against God.

Then take a look at verses 11-12 which say ¹¹ **But let all those rejoice who put their trust in You;**

Let them ever shout for joy, because You defend them;

Let those also who love Your name

Be joyful in You.

¹² **For You, O Lord, will bless the righteous;**

With favor You will surround him as *with* a shield.

I like how this Psalm ends...David says all those who have placed their trust in Him should rejoice and that is indeed true isn't? You and I who believe and trust in the Lord God Almighty and have come to Jesus Christ should rejoice in all the greatness and majesty of God.

We ought to shout for joy for the great things that our king has done...and no I'm not going to jump up and down and pound the podium here but hey we ought to be joyous over what our God does as He defends us on a regular basis.

David then says if you love the Name of God then we should be joyful in Him.

You know sometimes we can go through hard times and great difficulties and we can lose our joy...It's happened to me where I am down in the dumps and struggling and I can focus on the negative things happening all around me...and I forget about all the amazing goodness of the Lord that is taking place all around me.

We are told in verse 12 that the Lord will bless the righteous and with favor surround Him as a shield...I want to just remind you that if you are in Jesus, if the blood of the Lamb covers your life...You are considered as righteous, not by your own works but by the goodness of the Lord as He has washed our sins as far as the east is from the west.

And I want you to just think for a second about how the Lord with favor will surround the righteous as a shield...You know that's pretty amazing to think about because you and I can often be very vulnerable as we go through life...I'm thankful that as we rest in Jesus that He shields us from so much in life. The Lord can shield us from

the attacks of the enemy, He can shield us from despair, He can shield us even from the wicked who might come against us.

Ok one last Psalm here if you can look with me at chapter 6 which again says it is to the chief musician and this time it's on an eight stringed harp and it is written by David.

Look with me at verses 1-3 which say this **6 O Lord, do not rebuke me in Your anger,**

Nor chasten me in Your hot displeasure.

²Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am weak;

O Lord, heal me, for my bones are troubled.

³My soul also is greatly troubled;

But You, O Lord—how long?

Now really as we read this it almost seems like a Psalm of repentance like something has happened in David's life and he is kind of returning to the Lord for we can see here that David asks the Lord not to rebuke him in His anger...I think we should be reminded that God does discipline those that He loves...What father doesn't discipline his kids? My kids usually do pretty well at being obedient but sometimes they get out of line and punishment does take place. I find taking dessert away from a child for the day or taking away TV time is quite effective.

God also disciplines us, He can cause conviction to sit in our hearts but David here is pleading with God saying Lord don't give me perhaps what I deserve, Lord don't go to far with me, Lord have mercy on me for the things that have taken place.

I don't know about you but I have made mistakes in my own life and I have asked God to cover my mistakes, to forgive me without disciplining me, to really have mercy on me for the wrongs that I have done.

I'm thankful the Lord so often gives grace to me that I don't deserve...We all fall short as we go through life...yes there are consequences but I'm thankful the Lord certainly forgives us.

Verse 3 mentions that David's soul is greatly troubled...Have you ever had that happen in your life? It's a hard place to be.

Bringing sin to the light is the best thing you can do as you go through life...Sometimes hidden sin can hold us back from walking in the grace and mercy of the Lord.

Look with me at verses 4-5 say this **4 Return, O Lord, deliver me! Oh, save me for Your mercies' sake! 5 For in death there is no remembrance of You; In the grave who will give You thanks?** David wants the Lord to work in his life now, he wants to see the Lord's mercy for he knows that in death there is no remembrance of You and in the grave none can give Him thanks...I think really what David is trying to convey is that he desires that God would just do a wonderful work in his life now as he was in this world for once someone has died things are different indeed.

Look with me at verses 6-7 which say **6 I am weary with my groaning; All night I make my bed swim; I drench my couch with my tears. 7 My eye wastes away because of grief; It grows old because of all my enemies.**

I am struck by how David speaks about sleep from one Psalm to the next...Previously he was running from his enemies, and he said that he found rest even in trouble.

Now though we can see he was up all night as he wept and sought the Lord. There are times in life when sleep flees from us...Paul even said of his ministry that he often had sleeplessness...Perhaps you have been or are passing through a time like that in your life today...It's tough because you can't find rest, you can't stop your mind from thinking and you are crying out to the Lord for help and restoration in your soul.

Physically David was having a hard time as he says his eyes were wasting away because of his enemies.

Look with me at verses 8-10 which say **8 Depart from me, all you workers of iniquity; For the Lord has heard the voice of my weeping. 9 The Lord has heard my supplication; The Lord will receive my prayer. 10 Let all my enemies be ashamed and greatly troubled; Let them turn back and be ashamed suddenly.** And now David at the end of this Psalm is seen to be strengthened...At the beginning he is asking how long O Lord...and he is asking God for mercy that He would not rebuke him in his anger and now it would seem the Lord has strengthened his position in life.

How awesome it is that the Lord as we seek after Him helps us and restores our soul putting our feet on solid ground. That the Lord hears us even when we are weeping before Him...David clearly says the Lord has received my prayer...How amazing when the Lord breaks through in our hearts and minds.

We then see David close by saying may my enemies be ashamed and greatly troubled; and them turn back and be ashamed suddenly...God has a way of doing that with those that come against His people. The Lord can turn the tables on those who come against the children of God. There are times that situations can look very bleak but God will turn them around and use them for His glory.

Today I hope you are encouraged and really I want to just throw this out there as a final exhortation...You and I should work on our relationship with God all the time...We should learn to cry out to Him in times of great joy and in times of great sorrow. We should learn that God is for us and if God is for us there is not one that can be against us.

Today if you are here and you know you just need a touch from Jesus in your life if your heart is stirring I want to just encourage you guys to come on up during our time of worship as I would love to pray with you

Let's pray

Psalms 4-6 “The Multitude of His Mercy”

Cross References

Chapter 4

Verse 1

Matthew 11:28-30

Verses 4-5

Philippians 4:6-7

Verses 6-8

Psalm 3:4-5

Chapter 5

Verses 4-6

1 Corinthians 6:9-11

Verses 7-8

1 John 1:9

Revelation 5:11-15