



COMMUNITY
CHURCH

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Psalm 34: A Song for the Afflicted

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4 Encouraging Practices and Truths in Times of Affliction

1. Thanksgiving/Gratitude v. 1-6

I will extol the Lord at all times; His praise will always be on my lips. I will glory in the Lord; let the afflicted hear and rejoice. Glorify the Lord with me; let us exalt His name together.

“Gratitude is a decision of the will, and if a decision of the will, the choice resides squarely with us. Deciding to be thankful is no easy task. It takes work.” (Chuck Swindoll)

Can you think of moments in your life when God has “shown up”? Are you naturally thankful/grateful person? Or is it a struggle for you? Given that gratitude is something that we are called to as believers, what are some practical steps that we can take to grow in gratitude?

2. Seeking the Lord v. 4-10

I sought the Lord, and He answered me; He delivered me from all my fears. ⁵ Those who look to Him are radiant; their faces are never covered with shame. ⁶ This poor man called, and the Lord heard him; He saved him out of all his troubles. ⁷ The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear Him, and He delivers them. ⁸ Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the one who takes refuge in Him. ⁹ Fear the Lord, you his holy people, for those who fear Him lack nothing. ¹⁰ The lions may grow weak and hungry, but those who seek the Lord lack no good thing.

“For most of us, you’ll never find out that Jesus is all you need until you get into a situation where Jesus is all you got.” (Tim Keller)

What or whom are you prone to seek or confide in during times of affliction? Have you set up little idols in your heart and mind that contend with God? What does it look like to “seek the Lord” practically? Can you think of a time in your life when you fully understood that “Jesus is all you got”?

3. Peace for the Righteous v. 11-18

11 Come, my children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord. 12 Whoever of you loves life and desires to see many good days, 13 keep your tongue from evil and your lips from telling lies. 14 Turn from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it. 15 The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and His ears are attentive to their cry; 16 but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil, to blot out their name from the earth.

“The wicked commit slow suicide; they waste their lives hating the good.” (Eugene Peterson, MSG)

What is the difference between “positional righteousness” and “practical righteousness? How can Jesus make sinners “righteous” and give them peace with God? What does it look like to “seek peace and pursue it” in verse 14? How does obedience to God bring peace to our lives? What are some consequences that result from straying from the way of Jesus (or his path)? Consider what it’s like to stray from the trail when hiking.



4. Eternal Hope

¹⁹ The righteous person may have many troubles, but the Lord delivers him from them all; ²⁰ he protects all his bones, not one of them will be broken. ²¹ Evil will slay the wicked; the foes of the righteous will be condemned. ²² The Lord will rescue his servants; no one who takes refuge in him will be condemned.

*"We ought to give thanks for all fortune: if it is good, because it is good, if bad, because it works in us patience, humility and the contempt of this world and the hope of our eternal country."
(C.S. Lewis)*

What does it mean that the Lord delivers us from all of our troubles? Is this true? Is the Christian life one that is free of trouble? How does focusing on our eternal hope help us face the trouble in our lives? What will Jesus do when he comes back again?