



Jason Smith

Summer in the Psalms Part 2

Psalms 34:1–3

Title: "A Life That Magnifies the Lord"

Text: Psalm 34:1–3

**I will bless the Lord at all times;
his praise shall continually be in my mouth.
² My soul makes its boast in the Lord;
let the humble hear and be glad.
³ Oh, magnify the Lord with me,
and let us exalt his name together!**

Genuine worship flows from a heart that has experienced God's faithfulness.

Those who truly know God make praise their continual habit, their public testimony, and their invitation to others.

Introduction

Imagine walking into a room where everyone is complaining. The atmosphere becomes heavy. Now imagine someone enters with genuine gratitude, not pretending life is perfect, but confidently declaring that God is still good. That person's attitude changes the atmosphere.

David wrote Psalm 34 after one of the strangest and most frightening moments of his life. While fleeing from King Saul, he sought refuge among the Philistines in Gath, the hometown of Goliath.

When recognized, he feared for his life and pretended to be insane before King Achish (called Abimelech in the psalm's heading). God delivered him, and instead of boasting about his cleverness, David burst into praise.

This psalm teaches us that **worship is born not in comfort but in confidence.**

Historical Background

The superscription connects this psalm to the events of 1 Samuel 21:10–15.

¹⁰ And David rose and fled that day from Saul and went to Achish the king of Gath.¹¹ And the servants of Achish said to him, “Is not this David the king of the land? Did they not sing to one another of him in dances,

‘Saul has struck down his thousands, and David his ten thousands’?”

¹² And David took these words to heart and was much afraid of Achish the king of Gath. ¹³ So he changed his behavior before them and pretended to be insane in their hands and made marks on the doors of the gate and let his spittle run down his beard.

¹⁴ Then Achish said to his servants, “Behold, you see the man is mad. Why then have you brought him to me? ¹⁵ Do I lack madmen, that you have brought this fellow to behave as a madman in my presence? Shall this fellow come into my house?”

David was:

- Hunted by Saul.
- Homeless.
- Living as a fugitive.
- Surrounded by enemies.
- Unsure of the future.

Yet his first recorded response after deliverance was worship.

The psalm is also an acrostic poem in Hebrew. Nearly every verse begins with the next letter of the Hebrew alphabet, suggesting that praise should encompass our whole life, from "A to Z."

Reading the Text

"I will bless the LORD at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth."

My soul shall make her boast in the LORD: the humble shall hear thereof and be glad.

O magnify the LORD with me and let us exalt his name together."

I. Worship Is a Deliberate Decision (Verse 1)

"I will bless the LORD at all times."

Notice the words **"I will."**

David does not say:

- I might.
- I hope to.
- I will if things improve.

He makes a decision.

Biblical praise begins with the will before it reaches the emotions.

The Hebrew word בָּרַךְ (*barakh*) means "to bless," "to kneel," or "to speak well of." When used of God, it means to honor Him with grateful adoration.

David cannot make God greater in essence, but he can honor Him by recognizing His greatness.

Application

Mature believers learn that worship is based on God's unchanging character rather than changing circumstances.

Praise rooted only in blessings disappears when blessings seem delayed.

Praise rooted in God's nature remains steadfast.

II. Worship Is Continuous, Not Occasional (Verse 1)

"His praise shall continually be in my mouth."

The Hebrew word תָּמִיד (*tamid*) means "continually," "regularly," or "without interruption."

The same word describes the continual lamp burning in the tabernacle and the continual offering before God. (SHOW PIC)

David is saying:

"My praise should burn like the lamp in God's sanctuary."

This does not mean David sang every waking moment.

It means praise became the settled posture of his heart.

Illustration

A lighthouse does not shine only when the weather is pleasant.

Its light is most valuable during storms.

Likewise, the church's worship shines brightest during seasons of suffering.

Application

Ask yourself:

- Is praise your first response?
- Or your last resort?

III. Worship Is Humble Confidence (Verse 2)

"My soul shall make her boast in the LORD."

People naturally boast about:

- Success
- Wealth
- Intelligence
- Influence

David boasts in God.

Paul echoes this truth in 1 Corinthians 1:31:

"Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord."

"My soul" refers to David's inner being.

Biblical worship is not mere outward performance.

It flows from transformed affections.

"The humble shall hear thereof and be glad."

The humble recognize their need.

When they hear about God's greatness, hope rises within them.

Proud people celebrate themselves.

Humble people celebrate God.

IV. Worship Is Contagious (Verse 3)

"O magnify the LORD with me..."

David moves from personal worship to corporate worship.

True worship never remains private forever.

Those overwhelmed by God's goodness naturally invite others.

Notice the progression:

Verse 1: "I"

Verse 2: "My"

Verse 3: "With me."

Personal devotion becomes public invitation.

The Hebrew word גדל (*gadal*) means "to make great," "to exalt," or "to declare greatness."

We do not enlarge God.

We enlarge our understanding of Him.

Like a telescope:

A telescope does not make stars larger.

It helps us see how magnificent they already are.

Corporate worship is the church helping one another see God more clearly.

The Hebrew word רם (*rum*) means "to lift high."

God's name represents:

- His character
- His reputation
- His holiness
- His covenant faithfulness

The church exists to lift God's name above every competing allegiance.

Christ-Centered Fulfillment

David's praise points beyond himself to Christ.

Jesus perfectly fulfilled these words.

Even facing the cross, He praised the Father.

He sang hymns with His disciples before His arrest (Matthew 26:30).

The early church continued this pattern, praising God even amid persecution (Acts 16:25).

Because Christ conquered sin and death, believers have an unshakable reason to bless the Lord "at all times."

Illustration

A violin lying in a dusty attic appears nearly worthless.

But in the hands of a master musician, its true value is revealed.

Likewise, our lives may seem ordinary, or even broken, but when surrendered to the Master, they become instruments of praise that display His glory rather than our own.

Practical Applications

1. Choose praise before feelings. Worship is an act of faith as well as emotion.
2. Guard your speech. If praise is continually in your mouth, grumbling will have less room to grow.
3. Boast only in God's grace. Let your testimony point others to Christ rather than to yourself.
4. Invite others into worship. David's "with me" reminds us that worship is both personal and communal.
5. Cultivate a lifestyle of gratitude. Daily habits of thanksgiving train the heart to recognize God's faithfulness in every season.

Conclusion

Psalm 34:1–3 moves us through three stages:

- **A personal decision:** "I will bless the LORD."
- **A transformed heart:** "My soul shall make her boast in the LORD."
- **A public invitation:** "Magnify the LORD with me."

This progression is the rhythm of authentic Christian worship. We decide to praise, our hearts are shaped by God's greatness, and our lives become invitations for others to join us in exalting His name.

When the church lives this way, worship is no longer confined to a service on Sunday—it becomes the testimony of everyday life.

"The greatest evidence that God has become great in your heart is not that your problems disappear, but that His praise remains on your lips even while you walk through them."