

Podium

The psalmist asks God to show him steadfast love, salvation, and the ability to answer those who taunt him. He says he will trust in God's word, walk in freedom, and speak of God's testimonies before kings without shame.

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Automatic Shownotes

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Long Summary

Psalm 119:41–48 | Pursuing God's Promised Grace Through Prayer Month Date, Year•Erik Raymond•
Psalm 119 Main Point: The psalmist teaches that God's promised covenant grace is received through prayer, and that this prayer leads to confidence, perseverance, freedom to obey, and delight in God's word. Outline: 1. The request: ask for God's steadfast love and salvation according to his promise (v. 41) - The psalmist asks for covenant love, meaning God's promised, binding faithfulness. - He seeks the concrete experience of God's grace in the midst of difficulty and taunting. 2. The reasons: the effects of God's answering grace (vv. 42–48) - Confidence in opposition: trusting God's word gives an answer to those who taunt him (v. 42). - Perseverance to the end: he asks that the word not be taken from his mouth, so he can keep God's law continually forever (vv. 43–44). - Freedom to obey: he expects to walk in a wide place and speak before kings without shame because he has sought God's precepts and testimonies (vv. 45–46). - Delight in God's word: he loves God's commandments, lifts his hands toward them, and meditates on God's statutes (vv. 47–48). 3. Jesus as the perfect example - John 17 is presented as a model of this psalm: Jesus asks the Father to glorify him, keep his disciples, and sanctify them in the truth. - Jesus prays in faith even though he knows the outcome, showing how to rely on God's promises. - The sermon ends by emphasizing that Jesus still prays for his people, helping them trust God's covenant promises through prayer.

Brief Summary

Psalm 119:41–48 | Pursuing God's Promised Grace Through Prayer Month Date, Year•Erik Raymond•

Psalm 119 Main Point: The psalmist prays for God's promised love and salvation.

Tags

Psalm 119, prayer, God's promised grace, promised love, salvation, psalmist, pursuing God, scripture, Hebrew poetry, faith

Transcript

[0:29] Bibles to Psalm 119. So we continue our series in the Summer in the Psalms.

Trusting God's Covenant Love

[0:36] We're in the 119th Psalm today, verses 41 through 48. Each summer we go through the Psalms and we try each summer to go through a portion of Psalm 119, which is the longest of all the Psalms, and the focus is upon the word of God. And so this year we find ourselves in verses 41 through 48. Let's hear God's word. I'm going to go ahead and read.

[1:12] Let your steadfast love come to me, O Lord, your salvation according to your promise. Then shall I have an answer for him who taunts me, for I trust in your word. And take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth, for my hope is in your rules. I will keep your law continually, forever and ever. And I shall walk in a wide place, for I have sought your precepts. I will also speak of your testimonies before kings, and I shall not be put to shame. For I find my delight in your commandments, which I love. I will lift up my hands towards your commandments, which I love, and I will meditate on your statutes. This is God's Word. Let's pray once again. Lord, thank you for your Word today. Thank you that we can read and understand and follow it. And we do pray and we ask that you would help us to receive it, that word that gives us life and light. We pray in Jesus' name, amen. Well, there is a beloved old hymn that begins like this, "'Tis so sweet to trust in Jesus, just to take him at his word, just to rest upon his promise, just to know, thus saith the Lord."

[2:36] The hymn writer is demonstrating the beauty and the privilege of trusting in Christ and His all-sufficient Word. And that song and that truth has been a bomb for many, for quite a long time. But here's the question. How do we rest upon His promise? How do we lay a hold of His promises? How do we trust in His Word? What does that look like? How do we do that? That's what the psalmist is focusing on here in this passage. You'll notice as we just read it, that there's a repetition, as is throughout the whole 119th Psalm, upon the Word of God. You see it, in several different ways as the word is used. Verse 41, promise. Verse 42, word. Verse 43, word of truth. Verse 44, your law. Verse 45, precepts. 46, testimonies. 47, commandments. 48, commandments. And 48, statutes. It's pretty

clear the emphasis of the section in the whole is on the word, the word. So that lets us know that there's this access of these promises by view, by virtue of the word. How do we lay a hold of this word? Well, that's what this Psalm section helps us to see.

[4:05] We pursue God's promised grace through prayer. We receive or we lay hold of or we take hold of God through prayer. God makes promises to us and we lay hold of them through prayer. His promises are in the word and the way that we lay hold or grasp onto or activate, if you will, is through prayer. Prayer is an essential element for the Christian, just like breathing is an essential element for the human. Prayer is the means by which we lay hold of God's promises through faith. And this is what David models for us here in this psalm. This psalm breaks up into two neat parts, I think. First verse 41, the requests that he has, and then the rest of the verse, 42 through 48, the reasons why he prays this way. So he's meaning to lay a hold of God's promises. So he makes a request. Then he shows the fruit or the reasons why he prays this way. And so for us today, as we think about this, think about how it would apply to our lives, it shows us how to pray and why we would pray this way. It shows us how to pray and why we would pray this way. Let's look first at the request. Verse 41.

[5:25] The request that he makes is essentially to experience God's love. You see it in verse 41. Let your steadfast love come to me, O Lord, your salvation according to your promise.

Prayer for Steadfast Love

[5:36] What's he talking about? Well, evidently the psalmist is in some difficulty. Not surprising, again, that conflict or difficulty or hardship produces songs of praise and growth. We saw that last week in Psalm 27. We see it here in Psalm 119. We see in the next section further down. And really, in verses 67 through 71, there's three references to some trials that he's dealing with. He says in verse 67, before I was afflicted, I went astray.

[6:05] Then in verse 69, the insolent smear me with lies. And then verse 71, it was good for me that I was afflicted, that I might learn your statutes. We see it in verse 42, right in this section. There's taunting going on. So evidently, there's some conflict against him, particularly because of his relationship to God. You might say because he's a believer and he is following God, there is conflict that he's experiencing. There's some heat, there's some turmoil, there's some resistance to him and his desire to follow God. That's the tension point. Living in this way, identifying with God and feeling this heat. So he offers this prayer. That's the context of it. He's got difficulty and he's asking, well, what's the prayer? You see it in verse 41. Let your steadfast love come to me, O Lord. That's what he wants, his steadfast love. What is steadfast love? What is he talking about?

[7:04] We know what love is. God is love. He's the source of love. He defines love. But this word, steadfast love, as it's translated in the ESV and most really good translations today, steadfast love is a bit of, a bigger word than we might think of initially. It translates the Hebrew word *hesed*, which has everything to do with God's covenant love. So when you see this word, steadfast love, it has to do with covenant. Covenant love. Now, that's opening up. We're opening up this Russian doll a little bit.

There's something inside of it now. Covenant love. What is covenant? Well, covenant is a binding oath. There's a binding oath with obligations. So, let's think about this. God, because the distance between God and humanity is so great, In order for God to relate with us and us with him, he has condescended or stooped down or even humbled himself to come down on our level to talk with us in ways that we understand so that we might enter into a meaningful relationship with him. So that you would know God, experience him, have some degree of certainty and assurance in your relationship with him, know how to interact with him, how to pray to him, what you would expect from him, what he would expect from you.

[8:34] That's the covenant relationship. And David here is calling for this covenant experience when he says, let your steadfast love come to me, O Lord. He could just as well be saying, let your covenant blessings that you promised to me come to me. Let your promises to be the God of the covenant come to me, one who lives under the covenant. Or say it another way. God, fulfill all of your promises, how you've obligated yourself to care for me. Or to say it the way he says it in verse 41, your salvation according to your promise. The promises of the covenant that God made, David is entering in and leaning into it and saying, Lord, fulfill what you've promised to do in my life. Let me experience the blessings of being a child of the covenant, of knowing you. Allow me the privileges of this relationship.

[9:47] We think of another parallel to the covenant between God and his people. You might think of a husband and a wife. There's a unique relationship established when a man and a woman are married together. They make a covenant. They make an oath. And there's obligations that are made. We see that in a wedding ceremony when there are vows made, promising to be with one another till death do part the couple. And they make this public obligation, a public oath, binding them together. And then you can envision a situation in which as they live together, they would have a desire for the experience of the blessings of that unique relationship, uniquely cherished, uniquely loved, uniquely understood, cared for, patience, endurance, all of that which characterizes the marriage together.

[10:40] And you can just imagine that when the recipient, whether the husband or the wife, is receiving of that blessing, of the grace in the midst of weakness and mercy in the midst of sin and faithfulness in the midst of trials, and unique and special blessing of love and affection and joy within the context of that relationship, they would be overjoyed. And he would say, this relationship is great because of the enjoyment that is experienced within the confines of that relationship. That's the marriage covenant. Similarly, David is looking with that covenant, unique relationship, an oath with obligations. I will do these things. You will do these things. You enjoy the blessings of the covenant. And David is saying, let the benefits of salvation come upon me. That's what he's calling for. He's praying down the blessings of the covenant. You can even see this in the way he says, verse 41, your steadfast love come to me, O Lord, his covenant name, Yahweh, that this blessing that God has made as he bound himself to his people to do these things, David is calling upon it, specifically to experience this love.

[12:01] It's important to note that God relates to his people on the basis of promise. He says this is true about himself, and he makes these promises to us. So he's ringing the bell, so to speak, of God's promise. God, you are a covenant God. You've made me promises. You've said you'd do these things.

Lord, keep your promises. This is similar to what I said last week of the quote from the Puritan Perkins, where he would say that God makes his promises in his word, and then in prayer we sue him for the promises. Sue has kind of a negative connotation, but we're not thinking in negative here. We're saying you're obligated to pay, not because we're entitled, but because you're faithful. You're a gracious God. And so he's praying, suing, if you will, for the benefits of it. So there's a claim upon God. And what he's wanting is a concrete experience of this promised grace. God, you promised to be good to me? I want to feel it, he's saying. I want to see it. What does he want? He wants fruit. He wants the expression of the promise to be in his life. And how does he pursue it? How do you do it?

[13:14] If the rope that is attached to the bell is the mechanism by which the bell gets rung in the morning before the service starts, then the rope by which the bell of the covenant blessings come is prayer. We pull the rope, so to speak, via prayer. And that's what he's doing. He's modeling it. I want to feel it. I want to feel the blessings. I want to see the blessings. I want to hear the blessings. I want the fruit of your promised grace. That's his request. Lord, as you promised. Do it.

[13:52] What's something practical implication of this? I think it's interesting and it's noteworthy that even though God has promised these things, he still prays. He still prays. He's very aware of God's promises. That's why he prays. You might think if God's promising these things, then I don't have to pray. He's just going to do it. But that would be presumptive. God has ordained the end, the fulfillment of the promises, and the means, our prayers. So it's not, even though God has promised it, now I need to pray. It's because God has promised it, I need to pray. God has made promises, so pray. Pray and ask. And it's like David believes that he has a right to these things the way he comes to God. Why? Why would he have a right to it?

[14:47] Because God's made him promises. And that's his grace. It's like the covenant recipient has an ID badge to access the secure location. He's able to get in there. How do you get into the secure location of heaven and claim the great benefits of the great treasury of the infinite merit of God? How do you get in there and say, I have a right to this place. I have a right to these blessings. I have a right these privileges. I can call upon the muscles of omnipotence to be at my side. I can call upon the one with the greatest compassion ever to be with me. I can call for the one who's all-wise to help me in the midst of situations. I can call upon him with the confidence that he is for me. Why? What gives you the right to call upon this God?

[15:38] Because he's made a covenant with his people. He's condescended down to his people, and by his grace, he's given you the access. So, one application for this would be scouring this book, this Bible, for God's covenant promises, writing them down. What does God promise you, dear Christian? Write them down. Journal them, put them in your notes app, put them somewhere, wherever you want to put them, so that they are accessible by you, so that you can fold through them and look at them and read them and meditate upon them. If you're good enough to memorize them all, memorize them all, so that you can dial upon them and bring them to bear upon God in prayer. And then you think about what God's promised, and then think about what God has said should characterize your life as a Christian. And then marry the promises with the pursuit in prayer and watch God work.

[16:46] God will do all that he promises to do for his people. Don't presume that God's going to do things that he doesn't promise to do. He may do things like that, but we should start with what he promises. Lean into those things and pursue them in prayer. So that's the request, to experience God's covenant blessings. I want to see the fruit of your covenant love, his prayer. I want to see the steadfast love. I want to feel it. I want to see it. I want to know it. I want to show up in my life. Let there be evidences of the fact that I'm with you. Okay. What's the second part? The reasons. What God's grace produces. I've outlined it in the bulletin because it's quite a few, more than we normally would for a couple of sub points. So there's four of them. Actually, the bulk of this section.

Confidence Against Opposition

[17:44] The first is in verse 42, confidence in the face of opposition. Look what he says.

[17:53] Then I shall have answer for him who taunts me, for I trust in your word. So you see the connection between verse 41, steadfast love coming to me, your salvation, then, so answer this prayer, then this will happen. This is why I'm praying this way, he says. He's got a problem on his hands. Someone's taunting him. Someone's mocking him because he's a believer. And it's tough. I'm sure if you've been a Christian for any length of time, you've experienced some degree of mocking or taunting, or at least an eye roll. Maybe loud, maybe soft, maybe passive, maybe active. But you've experienced some degree of action intended to make you feel a sense of humiliation for your identification with God. by somebody who's not a Christian. That might be a way to make them feel better about their lack of relationship with God, or it might just be frustration doled out at you. And oftentimes when that happens, we don't know what to say. It might strike a blow, hit you, rattle you to the point where you don't know what to say.

[19:03] And you might be tempted to lash out in anger, to fight fire with fire and go after them and begin to insult them and go up a level and just keep going and play the world's game. And that wouldn't be helpful. And David models for us that in the midst of that, he's already thinking about Tuesday while it's on Sunday. And he's thinking about, I know I'm going to deal with a problem.

[19:29] I need an answer for this one that's going to taunt me. And if you would shower your love upon me, your covenant blessings, you would help me to recall your promises, and I would have something to say when they taunt me.

[19:43] His basis for this is that he trusts God's word. He says, for I trust your word. If I trust your word, you'll use your word to equip me. That's what he wants. A great example of this is Stephen. You remember Stephen? You can read about Stephen in the book of Acts chapter 7. This is after Jesus was crucified, he was raised, and then he ascended to heaven, and the gospel's going forward. And Stephen is a leader in the early church, and he stands up to preach and to address religious leaders of the Jewish nation, people that just crucified Jesus a short time before. And Stephen is filled with the Holy Spirit. He stands up and gives him a whole history of Israel and tells him about God's faithfulness and the rebellion of people. But nevertheless, God continues to lean in with mercy and grace, giving

more opportunities. Finally, when Jesus comes, they crucify him. And Stephen stands there before the religious leaders and says, you stiff-necked religious generation, which one of the prophets, which one of your fathers didn't kill the prophets? And he leans into that and they snapped.

[20:50] And then they stoned him. They picked up rocks and they killed him. He knew that was going to happen. By the way, this whole thing was going. They were coming after him, but he stood there and he didn't try to make a deal. He didn't compromise. He didn't soft pedal the word of God. He stood there like a man of God, and he leaned in to God's covenant faithfulness, and he paid the price, but God showered him with blessings. Why? The text goes on to say that they looked up and they saw at the right hand of God, Jesus standing, looking down. That's the covenant smile of God.

[21:33] Leaning into the covenant blessings produces confidence in the face of opposition. You want to be strong on Tuesday or on Thursday. You need to pursue God's promise grace through prayer. You will not be strong in the face of opposition on your own. I mean, who are we kidding? We are weak. If David, mighty David, leans in in prayer. And if Stephen, with his steel spine, would lean in with prayer, how much more else?

Persevering to the End

[22:09] Confidence in the face of opposition. Second, perseverance to the end. This is what he wants, verse 43.

[22:18] And take not the word utterly out of my mouth, for my hope is in your rules. I will keep your law continually forever and ever. Look at verse 44. That's what he wants. Keep your law. Obey it. Those three words, continually, forever, and ever. See the point? I want to be faithful to the end. In other words, I want to persevere. And the way in which he sees that this is going to happen is if God graciously, answers his prayer to not take the word utterly out of his mouth. What does he mean? He's using an expression. If the word's in his mouth, presumably it's in his heart. If he has the word on his tongue, it's being treasured. He loves the word. We speak about that which we love. We love that which is important to us. And that's what David is saying here. Why? Because my hope is in your rules. So God, don't judge me in the midst of my weakness. Lord, keep your word in my mouth. Keep it dwelling in my heart so that I continue, after you. I think of Paul in Colossians 3.16, let the word of Christ dwell in you richly. Let this word just be in us.

[23:34] To the point that you persevere to the end. Why do you need prayer for that? Did you know the devil roams about like a roaring lion, 1 Peter says, seeking the one that he might devour? He's not playing games. He's not happy with a little religious club. He wants to take out Christians. There's flaming darts that are being thrown at you. Picture your life as they walk across a bridge. You're trying to go from conversion, birth, then to conversion, to get to the other side. The other side is glory. There's darts being fired. There's arrows coming at the Christian. He doesn't want to just trip you up and skin your knee. He wants to take you out. How are you going to get across the bridge? David feels the burden. How do I get over? And he's saying, I hope in your word, Lord, keep your word in my

mouth forever and ever continually. Look at the Apostle Paul, end of his life, 2 Timothy chapter 4. It's the last words he would write. And he says that great line, I fought the good fight. I've kept the faith. I made it to the end. And as they say, history tells us that shortly after writing 2 Timothy, when he's looking forward to the crown of righteousness that is laid up for him.

[25:00] In just a matter of short period of time, Paul's head would be chopped, severed from his body for his faithfulness to Christ. So when Paul says I fought the good faith I fought the good fight I've kept the faith and he's looking forward to this crown of righteousness that is there before him, and that short period of time it would go from his head being cut to instantly the crown of righteousness before his head could even roll, his head would be crowned with righteousness. God kept him to the end, and God keeps his promises. The Lord is so faithful. As you think of Paul.

[25:47] Also, we see the freedom to obey in verses 45 through 46. He says, And I shall walk in a wide place, for I have sought your precepts. I will also speak of your testimonies before kings and shall not be put to shame. This freedom he's talking about here, you can see it because he talks about walking in a wide place. It's this, think of a wide open field. There's no tight hemming you in. There's no boundaries. There's no restrictions. And he's walking in this wide place. It's the idea of freedom or wide open. Fear is bondage. Fear restricts us. Sin ensnares us. And the picture here is of David saying, it's if my arms are free. My feet aren't shackled. There's nothing pushing on me. I'm free to obey. That's what he wants. He wants the freedom to obey. He's not fearing man. He's not afraid what man can do to him. He's not calculating how he's going to live based upon how things potentially could work out. It's all about obedience to God, trusting him.

[27:01] And to leave him the point that he would be able to speak before kings and not be put to shame. That he wouldn't fear the strongest earthly ruler, these kings. He wouldn't compromise. I think of a great example of people who did not fear a king, the most powerful man on the planet at the time. But feared God instead. Said. You remember early in the book of Exodus, end of chapter 1 into chapter 2, where Pharaoh had basically seen that the Hebrews were being multiplied, the people of Israel were being multiplied to the point where they were becoming a threat within Egypt. And Pharaoh decreed that the firstborn son should be killed. The sons should be thrown in the water and killed and destroyed. And it says that.

[27:58] The mothers, the Hebrew mothers, and the midwives feared God rather than Pharaoh. And instead of capitulating and doing what an earthly king says, which is kill the children, they fear God and they deliver the child quickly and run them off. And didn't fear the king. And what happens as a result of that? God's covenant blessings upon them and on their children goes forward, and then they continue to multiply, and Moses, the mediator, comes out of it, hidden in the river, nursed and cared for under the king's own eye. They didn't fear man. And then Moses grows, and he testifies before Pharaoh of God's faithfulness and God's goodness. These are the covenant blessings of God.

Delight in God's Word

[28:55] The fourth area is delight in God's word. We see it in verses 47 and 48. For I find my delight in your commandments, which I love. I will lift up my hands towards your commandments, which I love, and I will meditate on your statutes. You see the emphasis there, delight and love and meditate. Just the repetition of love multiple times. He loves God's word. The idea of lifting up his hands to the commandments could be an expression of worship, not that he's worshipping the Bible, but he's worshipping the God of the Bible. Or it could be grasping out at, trying to lay hold of. It could be the visual of that. We're not quite sure what he's saying there, but in other words, it's clear that what he's talking about is a whole-souled devotion to God, expressing it as everything, even his hands, extended towards God and his word. He loves God, and he loves his word.

[29:54] David here is demonstrating for us a heart that doesn't just love the consequences of this covenant blessing, that is, that things work out well for me in the end, but actually loves God and loves his word. Really, truly loves God and loves his word. It says in Psalm 40, also Psalm of David, that he delights to do God's will. This is a delight in doing God's will, not just in a delight in getting good consequences, but a delight in the will of God. And so these are the reasons why this prayer is offered. There's a request, covenant blessings, God's love, and then there's reasons. Let me ask you a question.

[30:44] Thinking about Jesus. Again, the question I'm asking every week in the Psalms is how might Jesus have prayed this Psalm? And what would the implications be of it? Could he have? Sure, Stephen's a great example of Paul and the Hebrew women, the midwives, David even. We can think of Daniel and Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. We can think of Isaiah. There's countless examples, but I always want to see where's the best example of this. And I think Jesus is the perfect example. I think he models this, what the psalmist is showing us perfectly. To get there, if you would, flip over to John 17, a prayer of Jesus. If you're newer to the Bible, you can listen and follow along, but the context of John 17, as we just wrap this up and think about it together, make our way to the Lord's table, John 17 is right before Jesus' crucifixion, and he's praying to his father. Basically prays for himself. He prays for his immediate followers, and then he prays for you and me that would follow Jesus until he comes back. That's how the passage breaks out.

Jesus Prays the Covenant

[31:57] But if we're thinking about Jesus in the face of opposition, there's no greater opposition than him going to the cross. He's facing opposition. Well, how does he pray? How does he pray? Well, I submit to you that he's praying for God to keep his covenant and to keep his word. Look at chapter 17, verses 1 through 5. I'm not going to read every verse of this chapter, but several. When Jesus spoke in these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, since you've given him authority over all flesh to give eternal life to all you've given him. And this is eternal life. They know you, the only true God, Jesus Christ, whom you've sent. I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do. And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.

What is he doing? He's calling for the covenant blessings to come down on him. He's about to go to the cross and he's saying, Father, I've kept the terms of the covenant. I glorified you on earth. I did the work you gave me to do. Now I'm going to the cross and I'm going to die. And I'm going to trust you to my death.

[33:18] And what I'm asking you, God, is that you would raise me up from the dead, just like you said, and you would bring me back to glory, to heaven, just like you said, and you would give me my people, just like you said. You see, he's pulling the rope of God's promises. He's ringing the bell, so to speak, through prayer. God, keep your word. If ever there was someone who knew the future and knew everything about God and was sinless, and you might think, probably doesn't need to pray. It's Jesus. But it's because he knew God, knew the word, and was sinless that he prayed. In this, Jesus is the perfect example. He shows us how to interact with a God who makes a covenant with us.

[34:12] You call for the covenant blessings. Jesus says, glorify your son. But he does more. Look at verses 14 and 15. You think of the second point of confidence in the face of opposition. He says in verse 14, praying for his disciples, I've given them your word and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but you keep them from the evil one. Protect them. Keep them. Let them be faithful in the midst of opposition. And he does it again, a perseverance to the end. Look at verse 11.

[34:59] He says, and I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you, Holy Father. Keep them in your name. Persevere, which you have given me, that they may be one, and even as you and I are one. Verse 12, while I was with them, I kept them in your name, which you've given me. I've guarded them and not one of them has been lost except the son of destruction that the scripture may be fulfilled. Verse 15, I don't ask you to take them out of this world, but I ask you to keep them from the evil one. This is perseverance. This is protection. This is what Jesus is praying for. Incidentally, it's the same thing the psalmist is talking about. Keep them in the name.

[35:43] Then you see this boldness to obey and even to take the name forward. Verse 18. He says, as you sent me into the world, I've sent them into the world. He's sending us into the broad place to speak his word with boldness. Maybe not before kings, but from the one whom you would fear most.

[36:10] And then David, who's talking about delighting in God's word, Jesus shows us in verse 17, that he loves the word. Sanctify them in truth. Your word is truth. That's what he appeals to. Use the word to sanctify them, to make them holy. See, Jesus exemplifies pursuing God's promised grace through prayer. All of these things that Jesus is praying for is what God promises for his people in the covenant. And the way in which Jesus goes about pursuing it is through prayer. He prays to his father for himself, even though he knows how things are going to work out. He prays. And he prays for his immediate disciples, and then by implication, all of us who would believe upon him through the word. He prays for you. He prays for me, all of his people. So in this, we see Jesus exemplifying exactly what the psalm is teaching. Pursue God's promised grace through prayer. But then also, he empowers it. I'm not just saying, pull yourself up by your bootstraps, grit your teeth, clench your fists, pray harder,

move faster. You can do it. Be strong. That's not what I'm saying. I'm saying this is what the psalm teaches us to do.

[37:30] And look to Jesus and see how he does it and be encouraged that he empowers you to do it. How? He prays for you. He prays for you. He prays for you to lean into God's word and get into the current of the thing and to pray in accordance with it, that you would, in fact, have confidence in opposition and persevere to the end and obey boldly and delight in his word. Jesus is praying for his disciples to that end, not just one time, but interceding successfully and continually and faithfully and powerfully right now before the throne of grace for his people. So, as you pursue God's promised grace through prayer, look to Jesus. Look to Jesus. As the hymn writer says, "'Tis so sweet to trust in Jesus, just to take him at his word, just to rest upon his promise, just to know. Thus saith the Lord. Let's pray.

[38:59] Our Father, what a comfort it is to know that our Savior prays for us. I think of the quote by McChain that if we could hear Jesus praying in the other room, we wouldn't fear a million armies. Indeed, it's true to think of such a faithful one. And your word says, the prayer of a righteous man avails much, for none have been more righteous than our Lord Jesus Christ and yet he prays for us.

[39:33] You will answer his prayers and you will faithfully keep the terms of the covenant because you are a good and faithful God. Increase our faith to believe that truth and to lean upon you in prayer, and to continue to come to you knowing your promises and learning your promises, and pulling on the rope through prayer so that we hear and we see the bell of your promises ringing around us. We see fruit in our lives and around us and our church family and even in the world. Lord, we need your help. Thank you for your precious word. Thank you for the privilege of prayer. And thank you that you are a faithful and good and loving and gracious God. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Music.