

Lord, would you use me as a vessel for your word in this sermon prep. Not having bias nor agenda that would hinder me from teaching well. Would you open my and our attender's hearts to well what you have in store for us in this text. Amen.

"SLOW DOWN"

Text: Psalm 116

Title: A Testimony of God's Deliverance

Date: August 3rd, 2025 | Christ Community B-L

Intro: Have you ever had that moment where you feel overwhelmed, trapped, near death or burnt out? Physically or mentally. The psalmist here walks us through that and praises the Lord for their deliverance.

[Prior to Scripture Reading]

Psalms 113-118 were a part of the Hallel psalms. These were songs of praise and corporate worship that the ancient Jewish would sing during the Passover remembering how the Lord rescued his people from Egypt. **This psalm was sung by Jesus before he went to be crucified.**

FCF: We are powerless in the face of death and suffering, and our hearts are slow to trust the God who hears and saves.

Thesis: Because we have a saviour who hears and saves, we are to respond in thanksgiving, worship, and testimony.

Trans: Let's see how the writer of this psalm is feeling in the beginning.

I. The Lord Hears Us in Our Distress (v1-4)

- "I Love the Lord, because he has heard my voice..."
 - God hears the cries of His people.
 - God is not distant; He bends His ear toward us.
 - Psalm 34:15 – "The eyes of the Lord are toward the righteous and his ears toward their cry."
 - Exodus 2:23–25 – God hears Israel's groaning in Egypt and remembers His covenant.
 - The psalmist was facing death. We don't know to what magnitude or spiritual or physical. Pangs of Sheol. "I was at death's door" -C.S. Lewis

Illustration/Application:

- Have you ever had to just call on the name of Jesus? You don't have to pray perfect prayers; God listens to the desperate cries from his people. "If I couldn't say one word, I'll just wave my hand"

Trans: Because he hears he delivers

II. God Delivers and Sustains His People (v5-11)

- “Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; our God is merciful... Return, O my soul, to your rest.”
 - God is exactly who His people need Him to be. Gracious to forgive. Righteous to act justly. Merciful to forgive and save.
 - Exodus 34:6 – “The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious...”
 - Ephesians 2:4–5 – “But God, being rich in mercy... made us alive together with Christ.”
 - Matthew 11:28 – “Come to me... and I will give you rest.”
 - “Return, O my soul, to your rest; for the Lord has dealt bountifully with you.”
 - Not just temporary saving but eternal life.

Illustration/Application:

- Our hope isn’t more so on our hold on God but in his hold on us.
- Jesus delivers us from the ultimate “Sheol”/death and gives us true rest and sustains our souls.

Trans: Because he hears and delivers he deserves our worship and testimony

III. God Deserves Our Grateful Worship (v12-14)

- Charles Spurgeon following “All mankind are liars”: He wisely leaves off fretting about man's falsehood and his own ill humour, and directs himself to his God. It is of little use to be harping on the string of man's imperfection and deceitfulness; it is infinitely better to praise the perfection and faithfulness of God.
- “What shall I render to the Lord... I will lift up the cup of salvation.”
 - Salvation leads to worship, not repayment.
 - “Cup of salvation” = receiving grace and publicly rejoicing in it.
 - “Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints” = even in death, we belong to Him.
 - Jesus drank the cup of wrath so that we could lift the cup of salvation and call on His name in praise.
 - Romans 12:1 – Present yourselves as living sacrifices.
 - Hebrews 13:15 – Offer the sacrifice of praise continually.
- “I will pay my vows to the Lord in the presence of all his people.”
 - Perfect illustration is the presentation of new membership we got to see today!

Application:

- Grateful worship should spill over into our lives and into true testimony. True testimony to God's work doesn't include us and our work, but the work of the Lord through us.

III. Praise and Testify (v15-19)

- "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."
 - Amen. While true, our writer continues on to pay homage and thankfulness that the Lord has allowed him to continue living.
 - v17 "I will offer to you the sacrifice of thanksgiving and call on the name of the Lord." Old Testament thank-offering (Lev. 7:11–15). Now fulfilled in our praise (Heb. 13:15)
 - Psalm ends with "Praise the LORD" (Hallelujah!)—what a fitting conclusion of a rescued life.

Application:

- Worship is not repayment; it's a joyful response.
- Our gratitude is corporate—our testimony should point others to God's salvation, not our own strength.
- Even our death is not loss—it is precious to God and a final act of worship.

Summary:

- This psalm is the journey of every believer: from the snares of death to God's rescue to public praise.
- Remember, this is part of the Hallel Psalms—likely sung by Jesus on the night of the Last Supper. He sang it knowing He was about to be crucified so that we could be set free.
- "Because He hears you, because He has rescued you, love Him. Call on Him. And lift the cup of salvation with gratitude and praise."
- R.C. Sproul: "our testimony is not the gospel. We are simply witnesses to what happened *to Christ* on our behalf—because that gospel has now become living evidence in our hearts." That's exactly what Psalm 116 models. It's not about what we've done—it's about what God has done. The psalmist isn't pointing to his strength or endurance or how he delivered himself. He's testifying to the One who heard him in distress, saved him, delivered him, and now receives his vow of praise.