

Psalm 30 • Joy comes with the Morning

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Psalm chapter 30. We're going to go ahead and read the Psalm all the way through and it's not very long. Actually, it's only 11 verses. And then we're going to pray, see what the Lord has to share with us tonight.

It says,

"1 I will extol you, O LORD, for you have drawn me up and (have not let me, or excuse me) have not let my foes rejoice over me.

2 O LORD my God, I cried to you for help, and you have healed me.

3 O LORD, you have brought (my) up my soul from Sheol; you restored me to life from among those who go down to the pit.

4 Sing praises to the LORD, O you his saints, and give thanks to his holy name.

5 For his anger is but for a moment, and his favor is for a lifetime. Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the morning.

6 As for me, I said in my prosperity, "I shall never be moved."

7 By your favor, Oh LORD, you made my mountain stand strong; you hid your face; and I was dismayed.

8 To you, O LORD, I cry, and to the Lord I plead for mercy:

9 "What prophet is there in my death, if I go down to the pit? Will the dust praise you? Will it tell of your faithfulness?"

10 Hear, O LORD, and be merciful to me! O LORD, be my helper!"

11 You have turned for me my mourning into dancing; you have loosed my sackcloth and clothed me with gladness,

12 that my glory may sing your praise and not be silent. O LORD my God, I will give thanks to you forever!" (ESV)

Let's pray.

Heavenly Father, Your Word is delightful to us. It is food for our souls. It is a lamp to our feet, a light to our path, and we thank You for it. We thank You Lord, that You have preserved it for us. And we thank You Lord God, that it is living and active, and that through the power of Your Holy Spirit. You use Your Word in our lives to equip us, to challenge us, to encourage us, and to fill us with good things.

Lord, there's not one of us here who doesn't need that tonight. We need to meet with the Lord. We need to meet with our God, the One who saved us, our Redeemer. And I pray my Father God that through Your Word that we would be encouraged tonight and drawn closer to You, that we would know You better and that we would apply the things that we learned tonight in Jesus precious name, amen.

You can tell that David is rejoicing in this Psalm. He's using it as an opportunity to praise the Lord even though he has been through some kind of a difficulty that which the Lord brought him through. And we'll look at those verses.

But he begins this Psalm by simply saying, "*I will extol you, O LORD...*" and once again, we hit one of those words in the Bible that we don't use on a day-to-day basis. I don't use the word, extol on a daily. I don't think I ever use the word extol. Oh, I might say, he or she was extolling the virtues of such and such or talking...Because that's... The word means, to praise enthusiastically. Alright. So, when David says, "*I will extol you, O LORD,*" he's saying just that. I will praise you enthusiastically!

And so, I want to talk a little bit before we move on in this Psalm because this Psalm really encompasses a great deal of what it means to praise the Lord. I wanted to talk tonight a bit about praise. And the reason I want to bring it up here as we go through this Psalm, is that I believe praise is something of an underused tool by the body of Christ as it relates to our relationship with God. And as a tool to fight back the darkness. I guess I'll put it that way.

Here's my question: Are you able to praise the Lord? And I don't think it's an illegitimate question. Are you able to praise the Lord? I've actually been with people who are born again Christians who struggle to praise the Lord. When we sit down for prayer or whatever praise is how we're supposed to come to God.

The Bible says, we'll see this later on in the Psalms, it says, "*Enter... his gates with thanksgiving, and... his courts with praise.*" (Psalm 100:4) That's how we're to enter when we come before God, with thanksgiving and praise.

Here's my question to you: Do you find that difficult? Do you find it hard to praise the Lord? Do you do it very often? That's another question that's, I think, a good one for us to think about. How often do you just burst into praise?

Those of you who come to church on a fairly regular basis, I'm assuming, that when we get together and have a time of praise and worship you're probably participating at some level, at least I hope you are. But do you ever just break into spontaneous praise while you're driving in your car, or doing housework, or on your way to work, or on your way home, or working in the yard, or something like that?

Do you ever stop and look at the clouds and just go, wow! Lord, you are incredible! And begin to praise Him for who He is. Have you ever seen some kind of a natural power, like the wind or the waves or something like that and just related it to something that is praiseworthy about God.

We've seen David do that on several occasions here as we've gone through the Psalms on Wednesday night. My question again is, can you praise the Lord? How are you doing in praising the Lord and do you do it very often?

I don't know if you've ever thought much about it, but there are actually some wonderful benefits to praising the Lord. And if it's something that you've struggled with perhaps some of these will be an encouragement to you. I'm going to put these up on the screen for you. For those of you taking notes, perhaps this will help.

Benefits of Praise

Praise gets our focus off ourselves and back on God

The first benefit of praise that I'm putting up here is that **Praise gets our focus off ourselves and back on God.** And I think that this is a fairly significant benefit. Do you know, in order for you to praise God, you have to be thinking about focusing on God. And that means you have to take your focus off self for however long it takes to praise the Lord.

Praising the Lord has this natural sort of a benefit of just helping me to stop thinking about myself for just a minute. Because I want you to know and you need to know this, that the more we think about ourselves, our conditions and

our problems, the worse they become. The more depressed we become. The more enslaved we become to our circumstances and the difficulties that we deal with. But the more we praise God, the more we are set free from those things which would otherwise bind our lives. Because we are putting our focus where it really was intended to be.

I believe that before the fall of man, which is given for us in the Book of Genesis, I believe that mankind was created to put his attention on God. And I believe that God even created mankind with the ability to focus on God in ways that you and I struggle because of sin. We can do it. And especially after we're born again our spirits are revived. There is a place where we can commune with God, but I believe that was much superior to what it is today because of sin.

And it's interesting because when we read through the Book of Genesis, we see that sin caused man's attention to be turned inward where it was meant to be outward. It was meant to be directed heavenward, God, I praise You. I believe we were created to praise God, to glorify, to magnify God. And to think about the things of God.

Do you know it's challenging, isn't it? Let's just face it. We're challenged to think about the things of God for very long. It's challenging to pray for very long. It's challenging to meditate on God's Word for very long. It's challenging to think about God for very long.

But I don't think that was always the case. And the reason it's difficult for us today is because sin has caused our senses that would otherwise be connected to the presence of God, to be connected inward. Now we're thinking about ourselves. Even when I'm praying. I'm thinking about myself. I'm thinking about how cold it is in the room, or how hot it is, or that guy over there, I think he's sleeping. And over here, man this guy prays loud. And what's that smell? And on and on and on. And I'm just, and I'm just completely distracted. It's very difficult to be completely focused.

You guys know and I've brought it up many times. That in the Book of Genesis when God visits Adam and Eve, the man and the woman after their act of sin and rebellion against the Lord, we're told that they hid themselves. And God asked the man, he even said, where are you? And Adam said, I was afraid so I hid. And I was... Because I was naked. And God asked Adam the question, Who told you were naked? (Genesis 3:11)

Isn't that a weird question? There's only one other person really. I mean, there's Eve. I mean, I suppose the serpent could have, right after the sin could have

gone (Pastor Paul makes mocking noise) or something like that. But, nobody told Adam that he was naked. He was instantly, after the first sin, self-aware. His awareness became self-directed rather than God directed. And that self-awareness is what dogs you and I. And keeps us from being able to lift up our hearts in praise like we would otherwise, or like we were otherwise created to do.

Let me show you another benefit.

Benefits of Praise

Praise gets our focus off ourselves and back on God

Praise also brings us to a place of humility

Praise also brings us to a place of humility. And the reason I say that is because when we begin to praise God, we begin to magnify Him for who He is, basically, we begin to recognize that He's the one who's in control, not us. And that's a humbling thought but it's a good humbling thought. It's a thought that we need to have on a regular basis.

And that's why praise is so important during times of difficulty and challenge in our lives. Because we're sitting here all focused on our problems. And focused on how we're going to solve them. And how in the world am I going to get out of this. And oh, what are we going to do? And when we begin to praise the Lord, we begin to magnify the Lord.

We begin to give attention to the one who is able, right, to truly respond to the issues of our lives with the kind of power and authority that we need, right, to resolve those issues. And that is, yes, that's a place of humility but it's a good place of humility. Lord, You're in charge.

Benefits of Praise

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Praise invites victory

Praise invites victory. Here's what I mean by that. There's some wonderful Old Testament stories, particularly one in 2 Chronicles, that tells about a time when King Jehoshaphat learned this lesson. It says, look on the screen. It says,

2 Chronicles 20:22 (ESV)

"And when they began to sing and praise, the LORD the Lord set an ambush against the men of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah, so that they were routed."

"And when they began to sing and praise, the LORD set an ambush against the men of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah, so that they were routed."

Isn't it interesting? When the army of Israel went out to face this group of nations that were coming against them in battle, they came out with praise. They came out with praise. And it says here, when they began to sing and praise, the Lord routed their enemies. Well, that's an important thing to remember.

Benefits of Praise

Praise gets our focus off ourselves and back on God

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Praise invites victory

Praise edges out complaining and negativity

Praise edges out complaining and negativity. Have you ever noticed that even when we pray, our prayers can be, complainy? I know that's not a word but you know what I mean. We can tend to complain in our prayers. And moan and groan and, oh God.

But when you're praising the Lord, you're not petitioning. A praise is not a petition. You're not asking God for anything You're simply magnifying who He is. And you know what? When you're sitting and magnifying God for who He is, complaining has to take a short vacation. At least for that period of time while you are praising the Lord. And that is a very healthy thing to do. Number 5.

Benefits of Praise

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Praise invites victory

Praise edges out complaining and negativity

Praise refreshes our spirits

Praise refreshes our spirits. Let me show you a passage from Psalm chapter 16. We saw this actually before in an earlier Psalm,

Psalm 16:11 (ESV)

You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand our pleasures forevermore.

You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand our pleasures forevermore.

Listen, when we enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise, that means we're coming into His presence. They're His gates, they're His courts. We're coming to Him with praise and thanksgiving. And now, we're in His presence.

And what happens when we finally get there? Well, David tells us here in this earlier Psalm that, there's fullness of joy and there are pleasures forevermore in the presence of the Lord. (Psalm 16:11) Praise brings us into that place where we can find our spirits refreshed in the Lord.

And don't you know people, when you're going through a difficult season and you're not sleeping and you're not eating the way you should. And you're not... Just life isn't the way it's supposed to be. That is so wearying. That is just so wearying. We get so weary. We need to be refreshed.

And I'm telling you, the best thing you can do is to go lock yourself in a room where you're alone. Put on some worship music, get down on your knees and spend time just singing to Him. Just spend time. Just get on your knees and stay there until you can get up from your knees refreshed.

I believe in the power to wait on the Lord and to rise up refreshed because I've seen it. Well, first of all, the Bible promises it. I've seen it happen in my own life. I've seen it happen in the lives of others. We don't take time to enter His gates with thanksgiving and then stay there long enough to be refreshed. There is renewal in the presence of the Lord.

You guys know that it was just last May that I went through a fairly major surgery. I didn't make a big deal of it. I didn't talk much about it because I didn't want to. I don't like talking about things like that. But it was a challenging time. Whenever you're getting bad news from the doctor or something like that's a challenging time.

And I... And yet I was still coming here every Sunday and every Wednesday to teach God's Word. And I needed to be refreshed. And I started doing just what I was suggesting that you do. I actually took my phone with me. And I started... I just would play some worship songs and just got down on my knees and just sang. Just sang to Jesus. Just sang to my Lord. Cried out to Him.

Let the words, the lyrics of the songs, just wash over my heart. And I... There were more than once that I got up from that place of prayer with just a joy that... And there was nothing in my circumstances that was joyful at the moment. But God gave me His joy and it's a wonderful thing. Lastly,

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Praise opens the door for supernatural works of God

Praise opens the door for supernatural works of God. I don't need to probably remind you, but I will anyway. From Acts chapter 16. Check this out on the screen.

Acts 16:25 (ESV)

About midnight, Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them, and suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken. And immediately all the doors were opened, and everyone's bonds were unfastened.

About midnight, Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, (you know what happened as) and the prisoners were listening to them, and suddenly there was a great earthquake, (and we're told) so that the foundations of the prison were shaken. And immediately all the doors were opened, and everyone's bonds were unfastened.

And I've always felt like that story was an incredible picture of what takes place when we praise in the midst of challenging circumstances. Because don't you know people, that challenging circumstances want to imprison you. They want to bind you. They literally want to put chains on you. How are you going to get rid of those? How are those chains going to fall off?

Well, it's not going to be by you picking and scratching and yelling and screaming and this and that and the other thing. It has to be a work of God. A miraculous supernatural work of God. I love this passage because, here they were, these men were literally chained in a dark, probably dank, prison type place where you wouldn't probably want your dog to stay in a place like that. And here they were praying and singing hymns to God. They were magnifying God. They were praising the Lord. And miracles took place.

It's not your responsibility to make miracles happen. That's God's. You just give the opportunity.

Let's go on now here and look at the next... We're still at the very beginning of this Psalm. David now gives the reason for his joy. He says, "*for you have drawn me up*" and your Bible may say, "*you have lifted me up.*" The Hebrew word here literally though means, to draw out, such as from a well or something like that. And then it also carries the idea of to be set free. To be drawn out and set free.

And so David is telling the Lord, this is why I'm praising. Because you have drawn me out. Drawn me up and set me free. And in this case, he's referring to being literally drawn up or released from the very precipice of the grave, which he talks about here in a bit.

And he continues with his reasons for praising God. He says at the end of that verse, "*and you have not let my foes rejoice over me.*" And that was a big deal for David. To rejoice because God had saved him not only the humiliation, but God's name had been preserved. That was more important to David. David wanted the Lord's name, the Lord's reputation to be well kept. And so he would, he would say, Lord, for the sake of Your own name, save me, and so forth. He said, I'm praising You Lord because you haven't allowed my foes to rejoice over my downfall.

And so those are the reasons that David gives here for praising the Lord. You've drawn me up, you've lifted me up, and you have saved me from my foes, my enemies rejoicing over my downfall. Do you think that's a significant enough reason to praise? Well, it was David's reason, it generated praise from his heart, and that was good enough.

When we look at David's reasons for praising, it brings up the question in our lives, what do you have to praise God for? Because we're talking about David's life here. This is his life. This isn't your life. Now you might be able to relate to

it, fairly intimately. But you may have other reasons. What are your reasons to praise the Lord? What reasons do you have to praise God?

And I do believe that there are people who struggle with finding reasons to praise the Lord. I really believe that people struggle with that. And they've probably been in church long enough to know that, well, I know that I can always praise God for my salvation. But man, that gets old. Shouldn't get old at all.

But you know when we're praising God, things should roll right off our tongue. I mean, there should be an abundance. You should be able to praise God for an extended period of time without having a mental lapse about what to praise Him for because of who you're praising. And I personally think one of the greatest ways to lay hold of great opportunities for praise is to meditate upon the attributes of God.

And I'm going to put a few of them on the screen here for you. But this is just the tip of the iceberg.

Reasons to praise God...

He is faithful

He is merciful

He is kind

He is loving

He is pure

He is holy

For example, you can praise Him because **He's faithful**. You can praise Him because **He's merciful**. You can praise Him because **He's kind**. You can praise Him because **He is loving**. In fact, we're told in the Bible, God is love. You can praise Him because **He's pure**. You can praise Him because **He's holy**.

Do you know the angels who are around His throne, it says, day and night, never stop crying, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty. (Revelations 4:8) Wow! And the reason for you and I that, that word holy doesn't mean so much is because we've not beheld His holiness like they have. Were we to have beheld it as they do, we would, well...

You've no doubt read some examples of what happened to Biblical characters when they came into contact with the presence and glory of God. Daniel, read

through Daniel. Daniel had visions from the Lord that were so overwhelming, he collapsed. In fact, at one point, he couldn't breathe. He said he was on his hands and knees and he... And the Lord speaking to him, and he said, Lord, I can't even breathe, let alone talk to You. And it said the Lord came over and touched him and said, Be strengthened. And he was able to now take a breath and get up and begin to converse. (Daniel 10:9-11) But the holiness of God was just overwhelming.

How many characters? John, fell on his face as though dead. (Revelation 1:17) Other individuals some responded to the presence of the Lord and didn't even know it was the presence of the Lord. Paul tells about when he was on his way from Jerusalem to Damascus, when he received that vision of the Lord appearing to him and speaking to him. He say it knocked everybody to the ground. Everybody fell down. But only Paul was spoken to. And these other guys, all they knew is that they just fell down. They just got knocked to the ground. (Acts 9:3-8) The glory of God, the holiness of the God that we serve.

Those are just, that's a very modest list of things that you can praise God about. I would encourage you to do a search on your, in your Bible. You can even do it online. Get on Google. Just type in, the attributes of God. And make sure you're going to a sound website, but, there's plenty of them. And just look at the attributes of God and take, write them down. Put a list in your Bible. When you're praying, spend time praising Him about those things. Praise Him for those things. Lord, I thank You that you are faithful. I could sit and praise God for hours just on, alone on His faithfulness. And the older I get, the more precious His faithfulness is to me. And so, use those. Alright?

We've just gotten through verse one of this Psalm. Verse 2 and 3. David is specific now a little bit more for the reason of his praise. He says, "*O LORD my God, I cried to you for help, and you have healed me.*" We don't know what was going on. It sounds like a physical healing, but we're not sure.

He says, "*O LORD, you have brought my soul up from Sheol;*" which is the grave. You brought me up from the grave. David apparently believes that the Lord saved him from an untimely death. He says, "*you restored me to life from among those who go down to the pit.*" Whatever was going on, David says, I cried out to you, and you healed me.

And what is his response? Well, he's been praising the Lord, but look in verse 4. He calls upon the saints to do the same. He says, "*Sing praises to the LORD, O you ...saints, and give thanks to his holy name.*" And then he says an interesting

thing in verse 5. *"For his anger is but for a moment, and his favor is for a lifetime. Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the morning."*

I know for a fact that this, the end of verse 5, has been a great comfort to many people who've gone through times of grief and loss and darkness. And I think it's a wonderful thing to be able to share. Because when we're talking to somebody who's going through a terrible grieving time it's really hard to find the words, isn't it? In fact, most of the time we don't know what to say. And frankly, a great deal of the time, it's probably best not to say anything. Just to be there with them when they're going through that.

But one of the most comforting things that the Word tells us is that, *"Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the morning."* The Bible says that God's mercies are new every morning. (Lamentations 3:22-23) And there is a Biblical idea that is being conveyed here. It's not literally saying that tomorrow morning is going to be completely better and all your problems are going to be gone. That's not the point. The point is that God is faithful and there is a certainty to His faithfulness.

Let me show you a quote that I found online from another Bible teacher, David Guzik. He writes this, and he's talking about this verse in this statement. He says,

This is an emphasis on the certainty of God's comfort and joy to His people. Morning always follows night, and the weeping believer may be confident that as they keep their focus on God, He will bring them once again to joy.
- David Guzik

This is an emphasis on the certainty of God's comfort and joy to His people. Morning always follows night, and the weeping believer may be confident that as they keep their focus on God, He will bring them once again to joy.

I believe that with all my heart. I believe that as we keep our focus on Him, God will bring you through that place of grief, that place of sorrow, that place of darkness. I believe the Lord will bring you through. Even if it's bringing you home, He will bring you through. He'll bring you through safely. And this wonderful statement in verse 5, is a glorious promise for you and I that we can understand. There is a surety to the comfort of the Lord in our lives.

Now verse 6 is really interesting because this tells the story of so many of us. He says, *"As for me, I said in my prosperity, I shall never be moved."* In other words, what David is saying is, when things were going great I didn't think

twice about it because I figured I was bulletproof. And that's the way we are when...

You guys know right, that there are seasons to sin. There's literally a spring, and a summer, and an autumn and a winter to sinful activity in our lives. And when we're in the spring and summertime of our sin, things are going great. We're still living our lives the way we want to live them and whatever. And we just figure, hey, I'm bulletproof, it's going great. I don't have to be in church, things are going good. I don't have to read my Bible and pray all that stuff.

But those seasons, just like the seasons are moving along right now and they're unstoppable. Here we are in October, folks. I got news for you. November's coming next. And then after that, it'll be December. And then we'll be in January, which I'm sure we all love. That coldest, darkest time of the year. The seasons come, they're going to come. And when we get to those days in our sinful behavior, suddenly we're not so bulletproof. And we're longing for the warmth of God's presence again in our lives.

What David is saying here is, during the season of my prosperity, when things were going well I said to myself, I'm never going to be moved. But I want you to look at the contrast here at the end of this verse. He says, "*you hid your face; (and) I was dismayed.*" Notice the change. Suddenly now things aren't going so well.

And by the way, when David uses that phrase, "*you hid your face;*" he doesn't literally mean that God looked away. Because the whole idea of God's face, either being toward you or away from you, was a powerful image for the Jews to depict either God's blessing or God's disfavor. Okay? In other words, when God's face was turned to you, that was a way of saying, I am enjoying the favor of the Lord. If you were going through a difficult season, you would say that, the Lord has turned His face away from me. Which means, I apparently have fallen out of favor with the Lord or something like that.

You guys will probably remember that the priests were taught in Israel, to pray a blessing over the people. And one of the things they were to say was, may the Lord turn His face toward you and give you peace. Again, the picture there is may the Lord's favor, right, be upon you. Okay?

So, David is talking about a time in his life when it feels very much to him like the Lord has turned His face away. And what was his response? He says, "*I was dismayed.*" And it's really crazy that people will come... What brings people to church is when they're dismayed, mostly. I mean, some people come to church

because they just, they feel like, I need to be in church and I need to be hearing the word and being fellowshiping and worshipping with other believers.

But a lot of people come to church because they're dismayed. They're going through a period or a time in their life where it's just not, things aren't fun anymore. Life is hard and it's... They're facing some real serious challenges in their life, emotionally, physically, spiritually.

Man, I remember back when we as a nation, when we've gone through difficult periods of time, like even 9/11. People came to church after 9/11 because they were dismayed. They were bothered that this thing hit very close to home so many people died. They were very dismayed. And so it brings people to a place of recognizing, I need the Lord.

Now, David is going to tell you and I, in verse eight and following, how he prayed to the Lord in the midst of his despair and dismay. He says, *"To you, O LORD, I cry, and to the LORD I plead for mercy: (And here's what he said,) "What profit is there in my death, if I go down to the pit? (Meaning, if I end up in the grave. He says,) Will the dust praise you? Will it tell of your faithfulness?"* David had a sense of his role on earth.

David believed that he knew that God had gifted him as a worshiper. And so David even says to the Lord in almost a challenging sort of a tone, how am I going to be able to walk in this gift that You've given me, if I'm dead? If I'm in the grave? You've anointed me. You've given me this ability to encourage people in worship. How many songs did David write? He is considered to be the worshiper of Israel. So, he's saying to the Lord, How am I going to fulfill this ministry that You've given to me from the grave?

Verse 10. He says, *"Hear, O LORD, and be merciful to me! O LORD, be my helper!"* Now, take verses 8, 9, and 10; actually, just 8 and 10. And you'll notice that twice David mentions mercy. First of all, verse 8, *"To you, O LORD, I cry, and to the LORD I plead for mercy:..."* And then verse 10, *"Hear, O LORD, and be merciful to me!"* Did you catch that? You might want to underline or even circle those words in your Bible. David pleaded for mercy and he asked the Lord to be merciful.

I want you to remember something, mercy, is defined in the Bible, essentially, as, not getting what you deserve. It's not getting what you deserve. Whereas, grace is getting what you don't deserve. Mercy is not getting what you do deserve. So, when you call upon the name of the Lord to extend mercy to you, what you're saying, when you say, God, be merciful to me, you're saying, I'm

guilty. I have no excuse. I have no justification. I am a guilty person. Lord, be merciful to me. Pour out Your mercy.

Now, why would you pray that unless you believed that you might get a favorable answer? Well, that's where knowing the Lord changes how we pray. Because the Bible says, "*He (God) delights to show mercy.*" (Micah 7:18)

Do you guys catch that? He delights. He delights to show mercy. That means you and I, even when we understand that we're guilty, can come to the Lord and cry out and say, Lord, be merciful to me. Do you know what most people do when they understand their guilt? They withdraw from the Lord and they don't talk to God because they say, I have no right to talk to God because I'm guilty.

David didn't think that way. He knew that he didn't deserve the Lord's help, so, he cried out and said, Lord, be merciful to me! I think that's just a really important thing to remember when you and I are praying. Or when we are being tempted not to pray by our own guilt or the enemy whispering in our ears. Listen, the God we serve is a God of mercy and He loves to show it. He loves to. God be merciful to me, a sinner.

When Isaiah was given a vision of the glory of the Lord, that was all he could say to the Lord. I'm a sinner, I'm a sinner. I am a man of unclean lips and I live among a people of unclean lips. (Isaiah 6:5) He knew and understood his condition. But God was merciful. God didn't say, oh, no, you're not. You're not such a bad guy, Isaiah. Oh, come on, get up off your knees. No, the Lord acknowledged. This is an act of mercy on His part.

You and I, dare I say this, we can expect God's mercy. We can have an expectation. And that doesn't mean that we get sloppy or reckless or careless about how we live just because God's merciful, and I want to give Him lots of opportunities to show His mercy. That's not what I'm saying at all. I'm just saying that when we sin, because we will, we can expect God's mercy to be poured out in our lives.

And then David says in verse 11, "*You have turned ...my mourning (correction-turned for me) into dancing; you have loosed my sackcloth (which of course was that horrible burlap kind of a thing that they would put on when they were fasting and crying out to God. And he says, instead, you've) clothed me with gladness,*" My time of sorrow has become a time of rejoicing. Isn't that amazing? My time of sorrow has become a time of rejoicing because of the goodness of the Lord.

And then he ends by saying in verse 12, "*that my glory may sing your praise and not be silent. O LORD my God, I will give thanks to you forever!*" And I love how David ends the Psalm. "*I will give thanks to you forever!*" There was just a determination in his heart to say, Lord, I'm never going to forget this.

If you ever... Have you ever done something for someone, or, something someone did something for you and the statement was made, man, I thank you. I'm never going to forget this. I'm never going to forget what you've done. Never going to forget your kindness. Never going to forget how you gave so wonderfully!

That's what David is saying to the Lord. I'm never going to forget this. I'm never going to let this out of my head, what You've done, how You've blessed me. How You've kept me. How You've delivered me from the difficulty of my situation.

I think it's really important for you and I, when we've gone through, or I should say, when the Lord has brought us through a very difficult and challenging time, to give praise to God for what He's done.

And I love to hear praise reports, don't you? I love it when people do that. When they'll say, hey Pastor Paul, got a praise report. Whoa, I'm all ears. I love hearing those! Praise report. Let me hear it.

I love praise reports. People will say, prayed about something. God answered. Here's how He answered me. Oh, I just... It's wonderful we can rejoice together the Lord's incredible answer to prayer!