



SOJOURNER PSALMS

“Seeking”

Psalm 34

Sunday, March 24, 2019

1. Sunday Summary: This morning we continued our sermon series for Lent that we’re calling *Sojourner Psalms*. Why a series on the Psalms? Because the Psalms train us well in two essential Lenten practices: prayer and repentance. This morning we examined Psalm 34 and looked at what it means to seek after the Lord in order for him to deliver us from our troubles and fears. David suggests in this Psalm that it’s not necessarily our circumstances that need to change, but how we respond to them. We have to stop fearing the troubles and difficulties in our lives. In other words our fear needs to be transformed. We’ll be able to do that when we do the three things this Psalm suggests.

- a) Understand the reality of the destructive fears that you already have in your life. We have to be honest about the fact that there’s little we can control in our lives. There are things that come into our lives that create a fear that is “above our pay grade”, so-to-speak. The problem is that fear paralyzes us, and makes us turn inward. These fears demand our full attention, and make us forget about God and what he asks of us. This is the first step to recognize that we have these fears and they need to be dealt with.
- b) Practice the fear of the Lord. If we practice it, the fear of the Lord will replace the servile fears in our lives. The fear of the Lord is not like our servile fears. Our servile fears are about punishment, or about being hurt, but the fear of the Lord is not like that. The words, “Woe!” and “Wow!” sum up the fear of the Lord nicely. Woe – when we stand before God we sense our own smallness, and unholiness. But we simultaneously feel a Wow! – we sense his brilliant awesomeness, like when we catch a glimpse of Mount Robson on a clear day. Then we’re filled with wonder and joy. Then there’s no room for servile fears in our lives.
- c) Do God’s will – Fear of the Lord means doing the will of the Lord, and obeying Him in all we do. This is what it means to be righteous. But who are the righteous? Those who understand their deep need for God, for a Saviour.

2. Connecting Questions: (Interactive, life sharing, thought & feeling type stuff)

- Can you name some of the fears you have in your life? How have they controlled you?
- What do you think is at the root of your worst fears?
- Have you ever experience the “Woe” and “Wow” of God? When? What was that like?
- When have you felt your need for a Saviour most acutely?
- What insights from today’s message were most helpful for you?

3. Truth Questions: (What does the Bible say?)

- Think together about some other passages that deal with the topic of repentance. Can you think of any? What might they add to the conversation?
- Read 1 John 4:18. How do you think perfect love drives out fear? Have you ever experienced perfect love? Can human love ever come close to that? Is perfect love the same thing as the fear of the Lord?
- Read Isaiah 43:1-7. How does this passage help us to overcome our fears? What does identity have to do with redemption, and the overcoming of fear? How does having the Lord with us keep fear at bay?

4. Formation Questions: (Taking it further, How does the Truth change the way I live?)

- What concrete steps can you make to sink the gospel truth that we dealt with today deeper into your life throughout this week? What will you do about the message you heard today?
- How can you remind yourself to seek the Lord this week?
- How will you continue to learn and cultivate the fear of the Lord?

5. Resources for Further Study:

1. Peterson, Eugene. *Answering God: The Psalms As Tools For Prayer*. (Harper One: New York, NY. 1989).
2. Brueggemann, Walter. *The Psalms and the Life of Faith*. (Fortress Press: Minneapolis, MN. 1995).

