

PURSUING PEACE



IN A CHAOTIC WORLD
PSALM 34

Seek the Lord

Psalm 34: 4-7

- I was watching some of the discussions this past week on the war against Israel. World leaders have discussed and debated what the right course of action should be. The U.N. Security Council met to discuss the issues.
- It made me think of the song – Where Could I Go?
 - o People look in all kinds of places for solutions to the problems of this world. We live in a sinful world. The result of sin is chaos and confusion. Broken hearts, broken homes, and broken nations.
 - o As humans, we don't have the solution to the problem that we created. But as the church we have the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

- Where could I go but to the Lord?

Main Point: We can seek peace by seeking the Lord.

- What does it mean to seek the Lord?
 - We pray continuously – not just when we think we need to.
 - We pray fervently – dedicate yourself to extensive time in prayer and devotion.
 - We worship regularly.
 - We study His Word faithfully – this means we start to see the issues of this world through the lens of scripture.

- What happens as a result of seeking the Lord? **And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:7**

I. God answers our prayers

- VERSE 4
- One of the ways that counselors will encourage better communication in relationships is to have a conversation in this way.
 - Someone says something to you.
 - You respond by first rephrasing what you believe they said.
- It shows that you not only heard them, you understand them. You are listening and responding to them.
- Sometimes when we are saying something important to our children we ask, “Do you hear me?”
- When it says the Lord “heard” what it really means is the Lord answered me.

- f. We can know – not only does the Lord hear us, He understands and responds to us as well. In fact, the Lord understands better than anyone else in this world. He sees all the details – past, present, and future.

II. He brings joy

- a. VERSE 5
- b. CSB says of this verse – Those who look to the Lord are radiant with joy.
- c. Corrie Ten Boom experienced very difficult persecution at the hands of the Nazis during World War II. Her family helped many Jewish people escape and they were caught and sent to a concentration camp. She is widely read today, and she has inspired millions with her testimony of faith.
 - i. Jesus did not promise to change the circumstances around us. He promised great peace and pure joy to those who would learn to believe that God actually controls all things.
- d. Interesting that David phrased this verse the way that he did. In many ways, joy is the opposite of shame.
 - i. Shame will make you miserable. Always concerned with the opinion of others. Joy leads us to be who we are in Christ. And to be at peace with that, regardless of what people think.
 - ii. There is something to say about protecting your Christian witness. In that sense, we should care about the influence we have on others. But shame will lead us to be driven by the opinions of others. You start to do things simply because that is what others expect you to do.

- iii. Shame not only causes you to do things driven by the opinions of others, it will also keep from doing things based on the opinions of others.

III. The Lord offers salvation

- a. VERSE 6
- b. I remember the day I was saved.
- c. I can also remember numerous days since then where the Lord has continued to save me.
- d. Irenaeus - Unless it had been God who had freely given salvation, we could never have possessed it securely. And unless man had been joined to God, he could never have become a partaker of incorruptibility. For it was incumbent upon the Mediator between God and men, by His relationship to both, to bring both to friendship and concord, and present man to God, while He revealed God to man.¹

IV. He protects us

- a. VERSE 7
- b. I was in a car accident many years ago. We were on our way to a pro-wrestling event in Atlanta. It happened in what seemed like less than a second. The person that hit me was probably going around 50-60 mph. Just a few inches difference of where I was hit – it could have been the end of my life.
- c. God is always doing 10,000 things at once, and you may know of three of them.

John Piper

¹ Elliot Ritzema, [*300 Quotations for Preachers from the Early Church*](#), Pastorum Series (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2013).

- d. It's not just the life-threatening circumstances that God may be protecting you from.
 - i. Could be a broken heart.
 - ii. Emotional pain and suffering.
 - iii. Temptations to sin.
 - iv. The inclination of pride.
- e. Trust in the work of God to bring peace into our lives.