

LESSONS LEARNED

Tuesday, March 13

Reading: Psalm 34

Psalm 34 8 Taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the one who takes refuge in him. 9 Fear the LORD, you his holy people, for those who fear him lack nothing.

David wrote this psalm under strange circumstances. He had just fled from the palace where King Saul tried to kill him. To save his life, David went to hide with the Philistines where he was recognized as the one who had killed their champion Goliath and won many victories for Israel against them. In order to escape, David pretended to be a madman so they would let him go unharmed (1 Samuel 21:10-15). David had learned his lesson. He would trust in God and not in his own devices.

What lessons had David learned? First, he learned to PRAISE the Lord (34:1-3). Not only would he continually praise God but he encouraged others to join him. We are never in a better state of mind to receive God's lessons than when we are praising Him!

Next David learned to SEEK the Lord (34:4-6, 10). The Hebrew word for "sought" is most often used for seeking God in prayer. We need a strong prayer life in order to grow. The word "look" implies an intensity and focus to our prayers. In humility, we must cry out to God continually.

Third, David learned to FEAR the Lord (34:7-9). David had learned that trusting in self brings fear. But fearing the Lord brings safety. We must always have a holy reverence for the majesty and glory of God. Fearing the Lord means not taking Him for granted. Fearing God means a lifestyle of worshipping Him, not just running to Him when we have a problem. Fearing God means having a holy awe for who He is!

Fourth, David learned to LIVE for the Lord (34:11-14). A life that is focused on God will also be focused on good. Our walk with God will be expressed in our words and actions. We are not seeking and fearing God when we live anyway we please. Our lives must display His character and His ways.

Finally, David learned to LEAN on the Lord (34:15-22). The Lord never promised believers an easy life. In fact, Jesus promised just the opposite (John 16:33). This psalm reminds us that living for the Lord will bring troubles, broken hearts, and crushed spirits (v. 17-19). But the Lord sees and hears (v. 15-17)! The Lord delivers (v. 17, 19)! The Lord saves, protects, and rescues (v. 18, 20-22)! He is close to those who are hurting and humble their hearts before Him (v. 18). We can lean on the Lord knowing He cares for us and has a purpose in the pain we are going through.

Pablo Casals was considered the greatest cellist to ever live. When he was 95 years old he was asked why he continued to practice 6 hours a day. He answered, "Because I think I'm making progress."¹

The old cellist makes a good point. We must always be "practicing" our faith. We must always be growing to be more like the Lord. Are you learning your lessons well?

¹ <http://ministry127.com/resources/illustration/continually-growing>