

# The Lord Cares For His People

Psalm 34

## **MEMORY VERSE**

PSALM 34:8

“Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the man who trusts in Him!”

## **WHAT YOU WILL NEED:**

A dry-erase board and a dry-erase marker.

A paper plate for each child, yellow and brown construction paper, scissors, a glue stick, a marker, a hole punch and string.

A soda or ketchup bottle, a small balloon, vinegar, baking soda and a teaspoon.

## **ATTENTION GETTER!**

### **The Name Game**

Play this game as children arrive. You will need a dry-erase board and dry-erase marker. Divide the class into two teams (three if the class is larger). On the board, draw two columns (or one for each team). Before starting, read Psalm 34:3 emphasizing, “Let us exalt His name together.” The children will take turns thinking of as many names for God as they can. The team that comes up with the most names wins.

Say “go” and allow each team to take a turn. If some of the children get stuck, tell them you can give them one “freebie” like shepherd, comforter, deliverer, alpha, or omega. Keep playing until it is worship time. This is their opportunity to exalt the name of the Lord!

## LESSON TIME!

Psalm 34 is authored by David. It was written after David, fearful for his life, acted like he had lost his mind in front of the Philistine king and, as a result, was released. During this time, King Saul and his army were chasing David through the wilderness. David learned to rely on God. He expresses his deep gratitude for God's character and presence and invites others join in his worship as well!

### PSALM 34:1-3

I will bless the LORD at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth.

My soul shall make its boast in the LORD; the humble shall hear of it and be glad.

Oh, magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt His name together.

David is determined to bless and praise the Lord. How often will he bless the Lord? David declares, "At all times...continually." David will praise God for all He has done and what He will do. "Continually" would mean through every circumstance and in every trial, in the brightest day and darkest night. Note: God's praise is both in his heart and in his mouth.

How important do you suppose worshipping the Lord is? Should it occur just on Sundays, at church, or should worship be a part of our every day life? David worshipped the Lord "all of the time." The Bible calls David a man after God's own heart. May we learn, as David, to worship God at all times.

David made his boast in the Lord. What things do you boast about? As he boasted about God, he probably spoke of His tender love and care for his people, the way He so desires a relationship with us and

reveals Himself to us, and much more. If we boast about ourselves, usually it makes no one else happy—maybe jealous or annoyed. But, when David made his boast in the glories of the Lord, the humble heard—those who also looked to God for their strength and help—and were made glad! Their rejoicing with David would have been sweet fellowship indeed.

Do you know what “magnify” is? Well, have you ever used a magnifying glass? It makes things look bigger! When we talk about God’s greatness to others, we take the focus off ourselves and the things of this world and put the focus on God where it should be—for He is good and worthy of our continual praise. **God will help us when problems come.**

#### PSALM 34:4-7

**I sought the LORD, and He heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.**

**They looked to Him and were radiant, and their faces were not ashamed.**

**This poor man cried out, and the LORD heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles.**

**The angel of the LORD encamps all around those who fear Him, and delivers them.**

When we call out to God, asking for His help, we need to know that He hears us! God delivered David from all of his fears. Fear can torment a person and hold him in terrible bondage. Faith and fear are mutually exclusive. Let’s look at God. As we focus our attention on Him and not our own situation and powerlessness, our faith will once again flourish, and we will not be ashamed (verse 5). Consider a dancer: A dancer “spots” when doing turns so they do not get dizzy and lose their balance. They fix their eyes

on one spot and keep their eyes there, and it keeps them from falling. Just as when we keep our eyes on Jesus, He keeps balanced; we do not fall. **God will help us when problems come.**

As we look to Him, our faces will be radiant. There is nothing as beautiful as a person who has yielded his or her life to Jesus. Those who are His have faces that shine and eyes that sparkle with His love and grace. They have an unexplainable beauty about them.

The poor man cries, and the Lord hears and saves him out of all his troubles. Remember, God knows when we are suffering and He hears the prayers of those who need Him. There may be no else who will hear or help; but God will help us in our times of need. He is our Heavenly Father. **God will help us when problems come.**

It is comforting to know that the LORD “encamps” around us. He is always with us wherever we go. (See Hebrews 13:5.) He will always protect us and help us.

### PSALM 34:8-10

**Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the man who trusts in Him!**

**Oh, fear the LORD, you His saints! There is no want to those who fear Him.**

**The young lions lack and suffer hunger; but those who seek the LORD shall not lack any good thing.**

Do you love to taste something that is very good and wonderful? What about cookies or chocolate ice cream? We all love such yummy foods. Here David encourages us to “taste and see that the LORD is good.” David seeks to help us understand through our senses—specifically, the sense of taste--how wonderfully sweet our

Lord is. No matter how good someone tells you that something tastes, you will never know how good it is until you actually taste it yourself. No matter how good someone tells you God is, you must experience His goodness for yourself. You cannot go on someone else's experience; you need to taste it for yourself.

Why are we blessed when we trust God? We are blessed because, God will never let us down! And, those who reverence the Lord will not lack any good thing. Young lions are fierce, cunning and strong; yet, often their hunger is not satisfied. Yet, despite our frailty, we who reverence God will be satisfied—we will not lack any good thing. (Note: Not everything is “good” for us. God does not respond to our greed or promise we will be without trouble. For trouble, causing us to draw near to God, can often be “good” for us!)

## **Lion Masks**

For this craft, you will need a paper plate for each child, yellow and brown construction paper, scissors, a glue stick, a marker, a hole punch, and a string. In Psalm 34:10, we are told that the young lions who are fast and strong still lack and suffer hunger. We cannot rely on our own strength; we need to rely upon the Lion of the tribe of Judah, which is another name for Jesus. Let's remember to always trust in Him for everything.

Cut out several small strips of yellow and brown construction paper approximately 1/2"x 2 1/2". Each child will need a mixture of 25 - 30 strips. Once the children have the strips, have them glue them to the outer rim of the paper plate. This will constitute the lion's mane. Next cut out triangle shapes out of brown construction paper. Glue these onto the paper plate to make the lion's ears. With a black marker, draw a nose and a mouth on for the lion. With other colors, decorate or color the mask to make it look more like a lion. Cut out holes for eyes.

Next, take a hole punch and punch a hole on both sides of the mask. Tie a piece of string to one end and measure each child's head so the mask will fit snugly. Tie the other end of the string to the other end of the mask.

### PSALM 34:11-14

Come, you children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the LORD.

Who is the man who desires life, and loves many days, that he may see good?

Keep your tongue from evil, and your lips from speaking deceit.

Depart from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it.

David encourages children to come and listen as he teaches the fear (reverence) of the LORD. The basis for all wisdom is the fear of the Lord. How good and important it is to listen to wisdom when we are young. God wants our lives to be full and blessed. If we will only listen to wise counsel and obey the Lord, we will be kept from a lot of problems and heartache as we travel through life. **God will help us when problems come.**

In verse 12, he asks a question which he himself answers in verse 13. He asks, "Do you want a long, good life?" Of course we do! Then, "Keep your tongue from evil, and your lips from speaking deceit." He tells us to guard with careful diligence that dangerous part of our body, the tongue. In James we read, tell us, "Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindles. And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity; so is the tongue among our members that it defiles the

whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature, and it is set on the fire of hell... But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison” (James 3:5 and 8).

We should never spew out poison (bad words, bad attitudes, mean sayings to people). Deceit, also translated as guile, is defined as, “treachery, cunning, craftiness.” If we are to be godly people, we must avoid deceit. Someone who lives in deceit and guile lives in constant fear of being discovered and suffering the consequences.

Next, he tells us to “depart from evil and do good”: to turn away from sin (run from it) and do good works. We are not only to take our hands off of evil, but also to get away from it. We need to set a distance between temptation and ourselves. As we flee evil, we need to put our time and energy into doing good. If we are busy doing good, we will have no time to be doing evil!

We are to “seek peace and pursue it.” Pursue is defined as, “To follow in an effort to overtake; chase; to follow.” So, we are to take our energy and turn from evil, do good works, and follow after peace. Consider what Paul tells us in Romans 14:19, “Let us, therefore, follow after the things which make for peace, and things with which one may edify another.”

### PSALM 34:15-22

The eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their cry.

The face of the LORD is against those who do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.

The righteous cry out, and the LORD hears, and delivers them out of all their troubles.

The LORD is near to those who have a broken heart, and saves such as have a contrite spirit.

Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the LORD delivers him out of them all.

He guards all his bones; not one of them is broken.

Evil shall slay the wicked, and those who hate the righteous shall be condemned.

The LORD redeems the soul of His servants, and none of those who trust in Him shall be condemned.

Being God's child does not mean that we will never have any problems. The Bible tells us, "Many are the afflictions of the righteous." Psalm 119:71 says, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes." A servant of the Lord may have many problems, but "the Lord delivers him out of them all." There is an end to our problems, a joyful end. Not everything may be "fixed" here on earth. Some "deliverance" will be in Heaven. But, we can be confident God hears our prayers and indeed will work His work of deliverance on our behalf.

God protects us. Nothing can happen to us that has not carefully gone through the screen of His loving care and will work His good purposes in our lives. Note, verse 20 was prophetically fulfilled as Jesus hung on the cross (John 19:33-37).

Those who hate righteousness and hate righteous people will reap the tragic consequences of their choices. We all must choose. How foolish not to choose the way of the Lord when you consider His great love for us and good desires towards us! Though evil will slay the wicked, the Lord will redeem the soul of His servants!—We are bought and brought back to God with the price of the precious blood of Jesus.

Let's remember the next time the next time we are faced with a difficult time that we can trust in the Lord "always." God cares for His people. He hears us when we cry out to Him and will help us in our need. God will help us when problems come. If you have never asked Jesus to come into your life, why not "taste and see that the Lord is good!"

## **The Big Blow Up**

For this activity, you will need a soda or ketchup bottle, a small balloon, vinegar, baking soda and a teaspoon. God will help those who trust in Him. We cannot see God with our eyes, but we can see what He does in our lives.

Pour one inch of vinegar into the bottle. Put 2 teaspoons of baking soda into the balloon. Stretch the open end of the balloon over the top of the bottle. Let the soda fall into the vinegar. Watch the balloon blow up.

The gas that fills the balloon is invisible. We cannot see the gas, but we can see it at work. God is there for us and helps us. Even though we cannot see Him, we see the things He does!

## **PRAYER**

Lead the children in a prayer of commitment to trust in the Lord and remember to bless the Lord at all times for His goodness! If there are any children who have not yet responded to the Gospel, give them opportunity.