

Main Idea: In Psalm 131 we see the anatomy of a pilgrim that pleases God, and specifically we learn from the psalmist’s example how to prepare ourselves to worship the Lord.

The Setting: Psalms 120-134 are called Pilgrim Songs or Psalms of Ascent.

1. The Jews used these psalms as they traveled to worship in Jerusalem.
  2. Jesus used these psalms as He traveled to the cross.
  3. We should use these psalms as we travel through life, for we are pilgrims.
- I. We see the pilgrim’s heart (1a).
    - A. He understands the danger of pride.
    - B. He is pursuing humility by God’s grace.
  - II. We see the pilgrim’s eyes (1b).
    - A. He doesn’t have a puffed up view of himself.
    - B. It’s hard to look down your nose when you make it a practice to look up.
  - III. We see the pilgrim’s concern (1c).
    - A. He’s not pursuing personal greatness.
    - B. He’s pursuing the greatness of another.
  - IV. We see the pilgrim’s soul (2).
    - A. He took steps to quiet his soul.
    - B. He took steps to become like a weaned child.
      1. I am like a weaned child when I want the Lord, not because of what He gives me, but because of who He is.
      2. I am like a weaned child when I can rest in the Lord no matter what’s happening around me.
      3. I am like a weaned child when my greatest joy is my Father’s smile.
  - V. We see the pilgrim’s invitation (3).
    - A. He urges others to do what he’s doing.
    - B. He wants others to experience what he’s experiencing.
- Make It Personal: Let’s remind ourselves two things every day...
1. Let’s remember who we are. We are *pilgrims*.
  2. Let’s remember where we are going. We are heading *home* to see our *Savior*.

We are pilgrims.

I know. We hear the term “pilgrim” and we’re prone to think about some fellow wearing a black hat and eating turkey with the Indians at the first Thanksgiving. I’m not talking about that particular use of the term pilgrim.

The word “pilgrim” is a great word, in fact, a very biblical word, and we need to use it more often, as well as some other words that go with it. Like *sojourner*, *stranger*, even *alien*. Those are some words the Bible uses to capture our identity, brothers and sisters. As the people of God, we live in this world, but we are not *of* it. We are *pilgrims*.

By definition, the term “pilgrim” means, “a person who journeys to a sacred place for religious reasons.” That’s who we are. We are people who are on a journey to a sacred place—ultimately, to the new heavens and new earth. And we are going there for *religious reasons*—the One who is making the new heavens and new earth is the God who saved us from our sins and He has a purpose for us in this brief life to make Him known to others.

We are pilgrims, and we get into trouble when we forget it and start living like belong to this world and this world is all that matters.

God’s people have always been pilgrims. Abraham was a traveling pilgrim. Isaac was. Jacob was. Even the Jews in the Promised Land were still pilgrims. Three times a year they did pilgrimages and took trips to Jerusalem for worship.

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\*\*Note: This is an unedited manuscript of a message preached at Wheelersburg Baptist Church. It is provided to prompt your continued reflection on the practical truths of the Word of God.

If you think about it, a lot of our older songs pick up on this theme. They talk about traveling to Beulah land, and crossing the River Jordan to the other side. Three hundred years ago Isaac Watts offered this reminder, “We’re marching to Zion, beautiful, beautiful Zion. We’re marching upward to Zion, the beautiful city of God.”

Of course, no one helped the church grasp this truth more powerfully than John Bunyan. Back in 1678, while in prison for preaching the gospel, Bunyan, a pastor in England, wrote a little book to help his congregation. It’s called *The Pilgrim’s Progress*, and it’s since been translated into more than 200 languages. It’s an allegory in which Bunyan portrays the Christian life as a journey as the main character, Christian, travels from “The City of Destruction” (that’s this world) to the “Celestial City” (that’s heaven). As the story begins, Christian has a great burden of sin on his back. When he sees the cross, the burden rolls away and he’s filled with great joy, but that’s not the end. The journey that follows is filled with great danger and challenges and they don’t end until Christian leaves this world and enters the Celestial City.

Bunyan got it right. The Christian is a pilgrim.

And lest we think this is just an outdated Puritan concept, let me give you some Bible verses. Peter says in 1 Peter 1:17, “Since you call on a Father who judges each man’s work impartially, live your lives as **strangers** here in reverent fear [KJV says ‘pass the time of your sojourning here in fear’].” In 1 Peter 2:11 we read, “Dear friends, I urge you, as **aliens and strangers** in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul.” The KJV says “strangers and pilgrims.”<sup>1</sup>

Hebrews 11:13 says, “All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance. And they admitted that they were **aliens and strangers** on earth.”

I’ve been preaching messages this Fall on passages and truths the Lord has been working into my heart during my summer sabbatical break. I’m calling this series, “Post Sabbatical Reflections.” One message was about pain from Psalm 13. One was about making the most of gospel opportunities from Ephesians 5:16. Last week it was about our incredible Trinitarian resources from 2 Corinthians 13:14. Today I want us to think together about something the Lord has been working in my heart. This truth. *We are pilgrims.*

The passage He has put on my heart is both a section of the Psalms and a particular Psalm. The section is called The Psalms of Ascents, that’s Psalm 120-134, and in particular Psalm 131.

I’ve been meditating on Psalm 131 since a year ago August, and I’ve found such help from it that I’ve been sharing it with hurting people in all kinds of situations, and God has used it to help them, and now I want to share it with you for your edification.

I’ve also been considering doing some teaching on the Psalms of Ascents for quite a while. The second Sunday of our sabbatical we were worshipping in a church in Colorado that my wife found in the Yellow Pages, and that Sunday the pastor was in the middle of a series on the Psalms of Ascent. It encouraged and confirmed for me the value of investing some time here. So we’ll do a little overview of the whole section, then focus our attention on one of the psalms. Maybe down the road we’ll look at others. Why do we need these psalms? Because they remind us that *we are pilgrims.*

The Setting: Psalms 120-134 are called Pilgrim Songs or Psalms of Ascent.

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<sup>1</sup> The word “alien” is the Greek *paroikos*, which some translate “sojourner.”

If you'll look at the heading over Psalm 131, you'll notice it's called "A Song of Ascents." That's the same heading you'll see over fifteen psalms, from Psalm 120 to Psalm 134. This section of the Psalms is known variously as the "Songs of Ascents," "Song of Degrees," or "Gradual Psalms." The Jewish Mishnah says there's a connection between these fifteen songs and the fifteen steps in the temple where the Levites sang these songs of ascents.<sup>2</sup> More likely, however, is that...

1. *The Jews used these psalms as they traveled to worship in Jerusalem.* In Old Testament times, the Jews were responsible to go up to Jerusalem three times a year for annual feasts and holy days. When they did, they literally ascended because Jerusalem is on a higher elevation than most of the rest of the country. That's where these *songs of ascent*, or *pilgrim songs*, came in. The Jews sang them and prayed them as they journeyed up to the temple.

We're going to look at one of the psalms towards the end of the collection, but I want us to scan the whole package for a moment. I want you to think about the word *pilgrim* for that's exactly what the Jews were for century after century. Three times a year, year after year, decade after decade, century after century, the Jews traveled on pilgrimages from their homes to worship in God's temple in Jerusalem. And as they did, they prayed these prayer-songs together.

Just imagine a man leaving Nazareth in Galilee, walking out of his house, and starting his 65 mile trek south to God's House. He heads down the road, his wife and children with him, probably caravanning with a few other families from Nazareth, and he begins to pray...

Psalm 120—"I call on the LORD in my distress and he answers me (1)." It's not easy living in this sin-cursed world, so we need to do a lot of calling on the Lord. "Woe to me that I dwell in Meshech, that I live among the tents of Kedar! Too long have I lived among those who hate peace. I am a man of peace; but when I speak, they are for war (5-7)." In our vernacular, "Lord, it's a dog-eat-dog-world where I live. I sure am looking forward to going to Your House."

Psalm 121—"I lift up my eyes to the hills— where does my help come from? My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth (1-2)." He means that *literally*. He is lifting his eyes *to the hills*, to the hill in Jerusalem. That's where this pilgrim is heading because that's where he knows he will find true help.

Psalm 122—"I rejoiced with those who said to me [to other pilgrims], 'Let us go to the house of the LORD.' Our feet are standing in your gates, O Jerusalem (1-2)." Now the pilgrim has arrived. He's in the beloved city of God.

Psalm 123—"I lift up my eyes to you, to you whose throne is in heaven. As the eyes of slaves look to the hand of their master, as the eyes of a maid look to the hand of her mistress, so our eyes look to the LORD our God, till he shows us his mercy (1-2)." That's what this pilgrim needs from God, *mercy*. 'Have mercy on us, O LORD, have mercy on us, for we have endured much contempt (3)." It's brutal out in the real world, Lord, but being with You right now makes all the difference!

Psalm 124—"If the LORD had not been on our side— let Israel say— if the LORD had not been on our side when men attacked us, when their anger flared against us, they would have swallowed us alive...(1-3)." But the Lord *is* on our side. You came through Lord! And I'm here today to say, "Praise be to the LORD, who has not let us be torn by their teeth (6)."

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<sup>2</sup> Willem A. VanGemeren, *Psalms*, p. 769.

Psalm 125—“Those who trust in the LORD are like Mount Zion...As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the LORD surrounds his people both now and forevermore (1-2).”

Psalm 126—“When the LORD brought back the captives to Zion [referring to Jerusalem], we were like men who dreamed. Our mouths were filled with laughter, our tongues with songs of joy. Then it was said among the nations, ‘The LORD has done great things for them.’ The LORD has done great things for us, and we are filled with joy (1-3).”

In Psalm 127 the pilgrim reflects on how only the Lord alone can build a successful family. In Psalm 128 he also reflects on God’s blessing of children and grandchildren. In Psalm 129 he talks honestly about people who hate Zion and how to deal with them. In Psalm 130, about the blessing of forgiveness. In Psalm 131, about having a heart like a weaned child. In Psalm 132, he remembers David and the covenant the Lord made with David and His people. In Psalm 133 he affirms how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity, “like the dew of Hermon falling on Mount Zion.” And in Psalm 134 he offers a final word to those who minister in the temple.

So there you get a flavor of the Pilgrim Psalms. The Jews would pray and sing these psalms as they traveled the miles and days it took to get from their homes to God’s House. These Psalms did two basic things for them. One, they helped these pilgrims “get the world out of their souls.” And two, they helped these pilgrims prepare to meaningfully meet with and worship their God.

May I offer a candid observation? If we don’t spend time doing what the Pilgrim Songs urge us to do, then we won’t worship God as He deserves when we gather corporately at this place of worship. If we don’t carve out time to pray and get the world out of our souls, and if we don’t prepare our hearts so we’re ready to meet with God, then we will not worship Him as we ought and as He deserves.

Worship does not happen just because we enter into a place of worship, whether it was a temple, or today a church sanctuary, or even the place where you have your daily quiet time. Worship takes preparation. That’s what the Pilgrim Songs teach us.

Here’s something to think about...

2. *Jesus used these psalms as He traveled to the cross.* Jesus made many trips to Jerusalem, for He kept the Law and did it perfectly. So He too was a pilgrim, and that meant that He too prayed these prayers as He journeyed to Jerusalem. And then, of course, one time He cried out, “I lift up my eyes to the hills. Where does my help come from?” And He knew there would be no help, not on Friday, for He would be forsaken as He bore the sin of His people. The help would come when His Father raised Him from the dead.

And we live this side of the cross. Is there benefit for us? Yes.

3. *We should use these psalms as we travel through life, for we are pilgrims.* We need reminders that we’re going somewhere, and until we get there we need help getting the world out of our souls and getting ready to meet with God.

But moving your feet isn’t enough. You can go to Jerusalem three times a year and not please God—lots of Jews did that. And you can go to church three times a week and miss it too. Even moving your lips isn’t enough. Just mouthing the words of these psalms doesn’t get it. Preparing to meet God must go deeper. That’s what Psalm 131 is all about. In Psalm 131 we see the heart of a pilgrim that pleases God. It’s a very short psalm, only three verses, but in it the psalmist (the heading says “of David”) opens his soul and lets us see what’s happening, by God’s grace, inside the God-pleasing pilgrim.

Listen to him in Psalm 131: “A song of ascents. Of David. My heart is not proud, O LORD, my eyes are not haughty; I do not concern myself with great matters or things too wonderful for me. But I have stilled and quieted my soul; like a weaned child with its mother, like a weaned child is my soul within me. O Israel, put your hope in the LORD both now and forevermore.”

When we look at this pilgrim, five things stand out.

### I. We see the pilgrim’s heart (1a).

Verse 1, “My heart is not proud, O LORD.” Who is talking here? Again, the heading says, “Of David.” Does that mean that David wrote it, or that someone else is expressing what David would say, or simply that it’s a royal psalm, or something else? I’m not sure. Again, whoever is writing this is doing so for good of his fellow pilgrims. That’s why the Holy Spirit inspired and preserved these words in the Pilgrim Songs.

*My heart is not proud, O LORD.* What a stunning thing to tell God! Can you say that? *My heart isn’t proud.* I can’t say that. I struggle with pride every day. In fact it’s an hour by hour, moment by moment battle, and just when I’m feeling pretty safe about it, pride raises its ugly head.

The traffic light changes and I get stuck for another cycle, and I become upset. Why? At the core, it’s pride. I think my time is so important that I deserve *not* to have to wait at traffic signals.

Or when I get upset because my computer locks up, or a person cuts me off in traffic, or somebody doesn’t recognize me with the warmth I think I deserve, or when somebody hurts my feelings...at the heart level, my problem is pride.

I don’t think this pilgrim is saying *My heart is not proud, O LORD* in the ultimate sense. No one who’s walked on planet earth other than Christ Himself could say that. Why is he saying it then? For two reasons...

**A. He understands the danger of pride.** The word “proud” is the Hebrew *gabah* which means literally “to be tall, to be high, to be in an elevated position.” In Isaiah 3:16 we find the word, “The LORD says, ‘The women of Zion are haughty [*gabah*], walking along with outstretched necks, flirting with their eyes, tripping along with mincing steps, with ornaments jingling on their ankles.’”

Think of the definition again. Pride means literally “to be high.” That’s what happens when we get offended. Our chins fly upward, maybe not outwardly, but surely in our hearts.

Again, I don’t know if David is the author of this psalm, but David understood the challenge of pride. Remember the time he and his men helped Nabal by protecting Nabal’s sheep, but later when David asked for a favor in return, Nabal snubbed him? Remember David’s response? “Put on your swords!” he told his men in 1 Samuel 25:13. The text doesn’t mention his non-verbals, but my guess is David had thrown his head back and was holding it pretty high at this moment. Thankfully, Abigail stepped in and kept him from tarnishing his godly reputation by foolishly shedding blood.

Friends, dealing with pride starts with recognizing the problem. Like the psalmist did in Psalm 131. *My heart is not proud, O LORD.* Why isn’t his heart proud? Because...

**B. He is pursuing humility by God’s grace.** My heart isn’t proud. It has been. It still would be. But it’s not right now. Why not? Because something’s been happening in his heart.

What's that? "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord," says James 4:10, "and he will lift you up." We don't get rid of pride by being passive. We must pursue humility, recognizing it's a gift of God's grace that comes to us through the merit of the One who humbled Himself for us, Jesus the Christ.

Psalm 138:6 says, "Though the Lord is on high, he looks upon the lowly, but the proud he knows from afar." If you want to be close to God, my fellow pilgrim, you must deal with the pride in your heart and by God's grace be pursuing humility.

I'm reminded of a story I heard John Street tell about a young lady who had a so-called low self-esteem problem. John met with this college student to provide biblical counsel, and she told him she hated herself. What was interesting was what happened right after their session. They went to the college cafeteria and John watched the girl head to the salad bar. He watched as she began picking through the cherry tomatoes one by one, holding them up for inspection, discarding the bad ones, and selecting only the best for herself.

John's observation was so insightful. Even a person who says she hates herself, like this girl did, actually has a very high view of herself and believes she deserves better. That's why she's so upset with her life. If she really hated herself, she wouldn't care if no one liked her. The reason it bothers her so much is because she is totally consumed with herself, just like every person born on planet earth is from birth.

We all enter God's world wanting to be made much of, and we're not satisfied unless we get what we want, and keep getting what we want. Our problem is pride, and our desperate need is for a Savior to rescue us from it.

Friends, how can we make much of God in our Sunday worship when the truth is, we've been ticked off all week long about traffic lights and cherry tomatoes? We'll never worship God rightly if we've been consumed with ourselves. No, we need to stop and ask the Lord for the pilgrim's heart, so we can say, "My heart is not proud, O Lord."

## II. We see the pilgrim's eyes (1b).

What's true of his eyes? He tells the Lord in the next phrase in verse 1, "My eyes are not haughty." The word "haughty" is the Hebrew *ramu* which also means "to be high, exalted, and elevated." Or in this verb form, "to lift high, to raise up, to elevate."

The psalmist says, "I don't do that. I don't lift up and elevate my eyes." If a person does that, what does it indicate? Been around anybody this week that lifted up and rolled their eyes at you? It's says tons, doesn't it? "You're an idiot, and if you would just listen to me everything would be fine in this world!"

Teens, I hope you don't do that with your parents. For that matter, parents, I hope you don't do that with your teens.

If the heart is proud, it will show up in the eyes. We look at the world through our eyes. We take in information through our eyes. We make assessments through our eyes. A person with haughty eyes has a proud heart that reveals itself through the eye-gate in a judgmental, critical, and even boastful spirit.

That's not me, Lord, says this pilgrim. It's not that I'm not prone to do that, for I'm a sinner, but by your mercy and gracious help, *my eyes are not haughty*.

We could put it this way concerning this pilgrim...

**A. He doesn't have a puffed up view of himself.** If you have haughty eyes, that's why. You're impressed with your own significance. You think your opinion is better than others. And if that's in your heart, it's going to show up in your eye at some point, that *look*, that self-inflated, haughty *look*.

Again, when the psalmist tells the Lord, “My eyes are not haughty,” I don’t think he’s saying he doesn’t struggle with this problem. We all do. But he’s been dealing with it on this pilgrimage—no more excuses.

Know this, my friend...

**B. It’s hard to look down your nose when you make it a practice to look up.**

It’s true. People who spend much time on their knees looking up to the God of heaven aren’t the kind of people who look down their noses on others.

I want you to think about something. Where is this pilgrim heading? To Jerusalem, right? Is that significant? Yes! He’s going to the place where God has provided a remedy for proud hearts and haughty looks. He doesn’t tell the pilgrim to compensate for those sins with a bunch of good works. No. He tells the sinful pilgrim to go to the House of God and confess his sins to God and to put his trust for the removal of those sins in a blood sacrifice. Remember, this Jewish pilgrim is heading to the temple to offer a blood sacrifice as prescribed by God for the remission of his sins, in the hope that one day, God Himself would provide another Lamb as a final sacrifice.

III. We see the pilgrim’s concern (1c).

He concludes verse 1, “I do not concern myself with great matters or things too wonderful for me.” Or as the ESV says, “I do not occupy myself with things too great and too marvelous for me.”

What is it that matters to this pilgrim? What’s his biggest concern in life? A healthy family? Name recognition in the community? Business success? He’s pretty specific. He tells the Lord, first...

**A. He’s not pursuing personal greatness.** “I do not concern myself with great matters.” Interesting choice of words, *great matters*. Brings to mind what the prophet Jeremiah told his associate Baruch in Jeremiah 45:5, “Should you then seek *great things for yourself*? Seek them not. For I will bring disaster on all people, declares the LORD, but wherever you go I will let you escape with your life.”

And then the phrase, “things too wonderful for me.” I’m not after those things either. As you may recall, that’s where Job got into trouble. The Lord asked him in Job 42:3, “Who is this that obscures my counsel without knowledge?” And Job replied, “Surely I spoke of things I did not understand, *things too wonderful for me* to know.”

It’s one thing to live for God when things are happening, I mean things you can *see*, like *big* things, *obvious* things, things that make you feel important and significant.

*I’m not doing that*, says this pilgrim. Again, my hunch is he was, but God’s been dealing with him. No more. He’s not pursuing personal greatness. Rather...

**B. He’s pursuing the greatness of another.** You see, the refusal to pursue great things isn’t a call for mediocrity. It’s not great things the pilgrim is refusing. It’s great things *for himself*. He’s all about doing great things for the God who saved him, as we’ll see in a moment, but he’s refusing to keep spinning his wheels in the pursuit of personal greatness.

I’ll be honest with you. This hits me right where I live. As a pastor I want to see great things happen in this church, but the question is why. Is it about God’s greatness or my own? This is a question I need to ask myself every day, and so do you as you assess your family, and your job, and every other pursuit. Whose greatness are we pursuing? This is the pilgrim’s concern. *I do not concern myself with great matters or things too wonderful for me.*

We've looked at his heart, his eyes, and his concern. Now we see something else that's hidden to the naked eye.

#### IV. We see the pilgrim's soul (2).

Verse 2, "But I have stilled and quieted my soul; like a weaned child with its mother, like a weaned child is my soul within me." Any time you see a phrase repeated in the Psalms, it's like putting it in bold print. That's one of ways the Jews emphasized something in Hebrew poetry. *Like a weaned child. Like a weaned child.* That's what my soul is like with You, Lord, *like a weaned child with its mother.*

Let's think carefully about this, and it will help us prepare our souls for meaningful worship. Notice two things.

**A. He took steps to quiet his soul.** He uses two different verbs. First, "I have stilled my soul." The ESV says "I have calmed my soul." The verb means "to make smooth," that is, "to make a surface flat as opposed to wavy and bumpy;" it connotes the idea of calmness. It can mean "to wait patiently," "be still, be quiet, i.e., remain or stay in one place and not make motions or sounds as one waits for a future anticipated (hopeful?) event."<sup>3</sup>

Then he says, "I have quieted my soul." A related, yet different verb. The Hebrew is *damam* and means "to be silent, to not make sounds, to be still, to cease an activity, to rest, to wait."

We're not used to doing that, to just be still and quiet. We have to turn on music or the television or be talking to somebody. But the psalmist shut off everything so that he might tune in something far better. He says he took steps to quiet his soul.

How do you do that? It's not just a matter of turning off the external stimuli. You can sit in a sound proof room with a screaming soul. So how do you still and quiet your soul? I think the pilgrim tells how. He says...

**B. He took steps to become like a weaned child.** What's a *weaned* child? We find the word in Hosea 1:8, "After she had weaned Lo-Ruhamah, Gomer had another son." We see the word a couple of times in 1 Samuel 1:23 in a conversation between Elkanah and his wife, Hannah, "'Do what seems best to you. Stay here until you have weaned him; only may the LORD make good his word.' So the woman stayed at home and nursed her son until she had weaned him."

So a weaned child is a little guy or gal. He's not an infant, but he's off his mother's milk. He's been weaned. When does that happen? It varies for children, but somewhere around a year or so a baby stops taking its mothers milk and begins to take in solid food.

Now think about this. Prior to weaning, that little child is consumed with *getting*. He or she wants what momma has to offer. But once weaned, something begins to change, and the psalmist picks up on that.

That's what I have done with my soul, Lord. I have stilled and quieted it so that now I am like a weaned child with its mother. That's the way my soul is with You, like a weaned child with its mother.

What's that mean in practical terms? Let me mention three things.

1. *I am like a weaned child when I want the Lord, not because of what He gives me, but because of who He is.* Again, a pre-weaned child wants its mother because

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<sup>3</sup> Swanson, J. (1997). *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains : Hebrew (Old Testament)* (electronic ed.). Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc.



of what it gets from her. Milk. A changed diaper. A warm blanket. More milk. Another changed diaper. Remove the blanket. Momma, you exist to give me what I want.

And then she weans the child. And the child begins to understand something. She's not just a supply of goods. She's a person who loves me and who desires my love.

My dear friend, I am like a weaned child when I want the Lord, not because of what He gives me (the good family, the good job, the grades I want at school, the good health, etc), but because of who He is. And the real indicator is, how do you treat Him when doesn't give you those things, or when He gives them to you and chooses to take them away, which He does as a wise Father. Is He enough for you?

2. *I am like a weaned child when I can rest in the Lord no matter what's happening around me.* I remember watching my daughters when they were little in their mother's arms. It didn't matter if it was storming outside, or snowing, or if CNN was talking about Operation Desert Storm. They were totally content because they trusted in the arms of the one holding them.

Do you trust the arms of Your heavenly Father? My friend, I don't know why you're going through the storm you may be in, but I do know about another storm. I know that God sent His own Son, Jesus, to the cross, and He poured out the fury of His wrath on His own Son because He loved you so much. The moment you put your trust in His Son and His finished work on the cross and in His victorious resurrection, God became your Father. And now what I know is this. If He would give His Son for you and me, we can trust Him fully with our lives, no matter what's happening all around us.

3. *I am like a weaned child when my greatest joy is my Father's smile.* Jesus said in Matthew 18:3, "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven." It's not complicated. If you want to enter God's kingdom, you just need the simple faith of a child. But there's something else about kids I love. They live to see their parent's smile. They want to know that Dad and Mom are pleased.

Beloved, this is the pilgrim's greatest delight. He lives to see the smile of his heavenly Father. In the end, nothing matters more.

I love how this pilgrim ends his little psalm. We've seen his heart, his eyes, his concern, and his soul. Now he turns outward in verse 3, "O Israel, put your hope in the Lord both now and forevermore." That brings us to point 5...

#### V. We see the pilgrim's invitation (3).

What's he doing in verse 3?

**A. He urges others to do what he's doing.** "O Israel." That's his people. "Put your hope in the LORD." That's what he's doing. Being like a weaned child. Hoping in the Lord. Those are the same thing. He's put his total trust in the Lord, and now he urges his friends and neighbors to do the same. Why? Because...

**B. He wants others to experience what he's experiencing.** Challenges, yes. And the joys of living as a weaned child with God! The pilgrim's life! Come, my friend, it's your turn. Put *your* hope in the Lord both now and forevermore!

Make It Personal: Let's remind ourselves two things every day...

1. *Let's remember who we are. We are **pilgrims**.*
2. *Let's remember where we are going. We are heading **home** to see our **Savior**.*