

Series: “Learning from the Psalms: How to Put God at the Center of Life”

Main Idea: In the three movements of Psalm 59, we learn from David how to pray when we’re in trouble, even when we’re under attack by those closest to us. We bring three expressions of trust to the Lord.

Suggestions for making the most of this series:

1. Read through the psalms.
 2. Study the background of the particular psalm.
 3. Sing the psalms.
 4. Pray the psalms.
- I. Begin with a cry for help (1-5).
- A. He offers many descriptions of his enemy.
 - B. He brings many requests to God.
 1. David knows what God is like and what God has promised.
 2. David asks because David knows.
 - C. He uses many titles for God.
 1. The variety indicates that God is real.
 2. The pronouns indicate that God is personal.
- II. Continue with both cries and affirmations (6-13).
- A. David asks (6-7).
 1. He wants God to see what the enemy is doing.
 2. He wants God to hear what the enemy is saying.
 - B. David affirms (8-10).
 1. It is one thing to say that God is strong.
 2. It is another thing to say that God is my strength.
 - C. David asks and affirms (11-13).
 1. He doesn’t bring selfish requests to God.
 2. His passion is for the world to know that God reigns.
- III. End with an affirmation of hope (14-17).
- A. The enemy is still growling and howling (14-15).
 - B. David plans on singing (16-17)!
 1. You can tell a lot about a person by noticing *when* they sing.
 2. You can tell a lot about a person by noticing *what* they sing.
 3. You can tell a lot about a person by noticing *why* they sing.
- A Personal Resolve: Sing to the glory of God, no matter what.

We’re continuing our series, “*Learning from the Psalms: How to Put God at the Center of Life.*” We’re in trouble when we marginalize God, when we push Him to the fringes. He deserves to be *at the center* of our lives. The psalms help us put Him there.

Out of 150 psalms, 73 are attributed to David. 2 Samuel 23:1 calls David “Israel’s singer of songs.” Of the psalms attributed to David, 13 (maybe 14) provide a historical setting in the heading. Those are primarily some of the psalms we’re looking at, one per week, taking them chronologically for the most part.² Today we come to Psalm 59.

** 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.

¹ For an earlier treatment of this psalm, see the Psalms of David series and the message preached in 2007.

² Thus far in our series we’ve looked at:

- Psalm 3 - *When Your Son Wants to Kill You*
- Psalm 13 - *When the Pain Will Not Leave*
- Psalm 23 – *When the Lord is Your Shepherd*
- Psalm 51 – *When You Have Sinned*
- Psalm 52 – *When You’ve Been Betrayed*
- Psalm 56 – *When You’re Afraid*
- Psalm 57 – *When You’re Crying in a Cave*

Scripture Reading: Psalm 59

I couldn't tell you how many times it's happened. I walk into a hospital room to visit a patient, begin to talk with them about their physical affliction, and quickly discover there's more than a physical struggle going on. There's the accompanying fear, uncertainty, confusion, and an overall sense of helplessness. Sure, the doctors are doing everything they can to help the material part of the person, but what about the immaterial? What about the soul? That's why I am there, to pray in their behalf to the Great Physician and to administer medicine for the soul from God's Word.

And where specifically in God's Word do I turn? To which of the sixty-six God-inspired books that make up the Bible do I look as I seek to minister help and hope to burdened souls? One book stands out by far. There's a well-worn path to the *Psalms*.

I love the Psalms. You probably do too. The Psalter records for us the prayers of *real* people facing *real* challenges in the *real* world.

The word 'Psalms' comes from a Greek word in the Septuagint meaning "a song sung to the accompaniment of a plucked instrument."³ The Book of Psalms was Israel's songbook. In the Hebrew Bible the title is *tehillim* (meaning 'praises'). The Psalms are "take home" theology. Rather than giving new information about God, the psalmist shows theology in action. The psalms are poetic so they're singable and memorable.

There are three good guidelines for corporate worship music in any day. Our songs should be **theological**, singable, and memorable. We need songs that are rich in theology—if the message shouldn't be preached, it shouldn't be sung. We also need songs that are **singable**—church music isn't meant to entertain us but to help us express ourselves rightly to God. And they should be **memorable**, again, serving as "take home theology" for the people of God.

Before we look at Psalm 59, allow me to offer some suggestions for how to make the most of the Psalms in your personal life.

1. *Read through the psalms.* I encourage you to spend time reading and meditating on the psalms in your devotional time. If you read a psalm a day, you'll make your way through the entire Psalter in about five months.

2. *Study the background of the particular psalm.* If it's a psalm of David, you'll find the backdrop of David's life 1 and 2 Samuel.

3. *Sing the psalms.* Remember, the psalms were written to be sung. The Psalter was Israel's songbook. Jesus sang the psalms.⁴ I have put a little tune to several verses from the psalms and have experienced great joy and help from singing them to the Lord in my personal times of worship. I encourage you to do the same, to use music to help you memorize and meditate on the psalms.

4. *Pray the psalms.* The book of Psalms was also Israel's prayer-book. David and others wrote the psalms and then taught them to the people of God to be used as individual and congregational prayers. Sometimes, quite frankly, you just don't know what to say to God. The psalms are God-inspired help, tutors to assist us in putting tangled thoughts into meaningful words. So I encourage you to pray the psalms. Allow the language of David and others to guide you in your conversations with God.

Let's turn our attention now to Psalm 59. As we begin notice the superscription:

³ Definition taken from *Walk Thru the Bible Ministries* publication, "First Light: The Psalms," p. 5.

⁴ See Matt. 26:30 where Jesus and the disciples concluded Passover by singing, probably the Hallel Psalms, Psalms 115-118.

“For the director of music.” David wrote this song, but he gave it to Israel’s song-leader so that the rest of God’s people might learn and sing it. They sang it *“To the tune of ‘Do Not Destroy,’*” the same tune used with Psalms 57, 58, & 75. It’s a psalm *“Of David,”* one of his earliest inspired songs. It’s *“a miktam,”* a musical term which we’ll comment on later. And finally, the historical setting is given: *“When Saul had sent men to watch David’s house in order to kill him.”*

You’ll find the record of that event and the background of this psalm in 1 Samuel. God gave David a promise in 1 Samuel 16 that he was to be Israel’s next king. Samuel anointed David, and the Holy Spirit came upon him (16:13). In chapter 17 David slew the giant Goliath and began to serve as a high ranking officer in Saul’s army in chapter 18.

But due to David’s successes, Saul became jealous (18:8). Twice he tried to pin David to the wall with his javelin. After that he offered his daughter to David if he would kill 100 Philistines, hoping David would be killed in the process. But David was successful and Michal became his bride. In chapter 19 Saul told his son, Jonathan, to kill David, but he refused, and in fact, the two became dear friends.

Saul was furious. One night he sent men under the cover of darkness to surround David’s house. What happened prompted David to pen this psalm. According to the heading, Saul ordered his men to *watch* David’s house, not invade it and potentially hurt his daughter, Michal. The soldiers’ orders were to wait until morning and then kill David after he left the house.

But Michal warned David, *“If you don’t run for your life, tomorrow you will be killed (1 Sam. 19:11).”* She helped David escape through a window and also bought David some time by setting up a decoy. As it turned out, David would be on the run for the next several years of his life.

That’s the backdrop of Psalm 59. David’s own father-in-law was trying to kill him.

Have you ever had family members upset with you, perhaps *attack* you? What’s the God-honoring way to respond when that happens? In Psalm 59 the Spirit of God uses David to show us how to put God at the center of our lives when we’re in trouble, even when we’re under attack by those closest to us. The psalm involves three movements which show us that we need to bring **three expressions of trust** to the Lord.

I. Begin with a cry for help (1-5).

*“Deliver me from my enemies, O God; protect me from those who rise up against me. Deliver me from evildoers and save me from bloodthirsty men. See how they lie in wait for me! Fierce men conspire against me for no offense or sin of mine, O LORD. I have done no wrong, yet they are ready to attack me. Arise to help me; look on my plight! O LORD God Almighty, the God of Israel, rouse yourself to punish all the nations; show no mercy to wicked traitors. *Selah*”*

David puts it right on the table before the Lord. He’s under attack, outnumbered, and unless God does something, he’s not going to see the light of day again. And so he turns to the only One who can make a difference.

This is David’s first expression of trust. Rather than running from the Lord, he runs to Him. He cries out to Him. This is faith in action, where faith begins.

Three things stand out to me as I ponder David’s cry for help.

A. He offers many descriptions of his enemy. He refers to them in verse 1 as his *enemies* (note it's plural) and *those who rise against me* (once again, plural), in verse 2 as *evildoers* (these fellows aren't interested in justice) and *bloodthirsty men* (these guys aren't merely full of hot air, but are intent to kill), and in verse 3 as *fierce men* (this is no blown out of proportion problem for David, for his enemy is real and deadly). In verse 5 David broadens his description and calls on God to take action against *all the nations* and *wicked traitors*.

This raises the question, "What nations is David talking about? I thought he was being attacked by a dozen or so of Saul's men around his house."

Perhaps he's thinking about the Philistines, with whom the Israelites were at war at this time. More likely, however, is that the psalm David wrote out of his experience with Saul's men was later edited and expanded for use in Israel's corporate worship.

The term in the superscription, 'a *miktam*,' seems to indicate that this personal psalm of David had been edited for corporate use in Israel. "That is why it is called *Miktam*," observes Eric Lane, "which probably means 'inscribed' and therefore 'recorded.'"⁵ The phrase, "For the director of music," would also suggest this. David would not have put his psalm into the hands of the *director of music* in Israel until many years later when he was king, at which time he was facing a much bigger enemy than Saul's men, namely *the surrounding nations*.⁶

In other words, the lessons David learned when attacked by Saul's men apply to other situations in which other enemies are attacking. And not only for David, but also for the rest of God's people. The Holy Spirit put this psalm in the Bible for our good, too!

B. He brings many requests to God. And I mean *many*! Notice them: *deliver me, protect me*, that is, put me out of their reach (verse 1), *deliver me, save me* (verse 2), *see how they lie in wait* (verse 3), *arise, look* (verse 4), *rouse yourself, show no mercy* (verse 5), *do not kill them, make them wander, bring them down* (verse 11), *let them be caught in their pride* (verse 12), *consume them in wrath* (verse 13).

I count some fifteen requests that David brings to God in this psalm. It's almost as if David is telling God what to do, not simply asking, but *insisting*. For example, in verse 3 it's as if David is instructing God to do what he is doing, to look out the window and *see* his enemy hiding in the dark, just waiting to strike. *Look God! Don't you see those guys over there in the shadows?*

Of course, He sees. David knows that God is omniscient. But that doesn't stop him from pointing out what he sees to God.

Are you seeing problems in your life, my friend? Then tell God about them. Tell Him what you see. He's pleased when His people bring their concerns to Him.

David did what Hebrews 4:16 exhorts us to do. "Let us therefore come *boldly* unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need (KJV)." How do you explain David's boldness in this prayer? It's attributed to this.

1. *David knows what God is like and what God has promised.* Therefore...
2. *David asks because David knows.* His boldness in asking is linked to His knowledge of God.

Suppose my grandson was visiting us, and one night he was awakened by a noise outside his bedroom window. He pulled the blinds back and peeked out, and there

⁵ Eric Lane, *Psalms 1-89*, p. 267.

⁶ Observation by Lane, p. 266.

behind the shrubs he noticed two shadowy figures with butcher knives in their hands and scarves covering their faces. Which of the following scenarios would best represent his response?

Would he come timidly into my room and say, “Papa, excuse me. I hate to wake you up, but there’s a situation, uh, it may be nothing, but then again, well, I’m not sure. Oh, I’m so sorry to bother you. I know you’ve got more important things to think about, but, well anyway, there are two strange looking guys outside my window and would it be possible for you to come and, well, maybe look out my window and if you think it’s necessary, ask those two men to leave?”?

Or... “Papa!!! Come here! I need you right now! There’s somebody trying to hurt me! Get rid of them! Hurry!”

No question about which scenario, right? What would prompt my grandson to speak so boldly to me? It’s because he knows me. He knows that I love him and have his welfare on my mind. He *asks* because he *knows*.

So this raises the question. What did David know about God that enabled him to pray with such childlike confidence? We find the answer by noting, thirdly...

C. He uses many titles for God. David refers to God in nine different ways in this psalm. He calls Him: **God** in verses 1, 13, & 17 (*Elohim*), **LORD** in verses 3 & 8 (*Yahweh*, the covenant name of God revealed to Moses at the burning bush, meaning, “I am who I am”), **LORD God Almighty** in verse 5 (*Elohim Sabaoth*, also translated ‘the God of hosts,’ pointing out that the armies of God are ready to do His bidding), also in verse 5, the **God of Israel** (*Elohi Israel*, a name which emphasizes that the great Creator God has entered into a special and personal relationship with the elect nation of Israel).

There’s more. David calls Him **my Strength** in verses 9 & 17, **my Fortress** in verses 9, 16, & 17, **O Lord our shield** in verse 11, **my refuge** in verse 16, and **my loving God** in verses 10 & 17. What do we learn from these many titles?

1. *The variety indicates that God is real.* You can tell a lot about a person’s spiritual condition by listening to what they say when they pray. Some people are like a broken record, they always pray the same words, the same clichés, the same, the same, the same. They could write down everything they say to God on a 3x5 card.

Perhaps you’re in that rut. The solution? Learn from David. Get to know God better. Learn and meditate on His names in the Bible. And His attributes, and His accomplishments. When your knowledge of God is growing, it shows.

James Boice is right. “When we can pray, ‘Lord God, Lord of hosts, God of Israel, my God,’ we have said a great deal and have a powerful argument.”⁷

2. *The pronouns indicate that God is personal.* Hear David. You are *my* strength, *my* fortress, *my* refuge, and *my* loving God. God is not only real to David, but He is *personal*.

This shows up so vividly in the reason David offers God for why He should deliver him. Verse 4 again, “I have done no wrong, yet they are ready to attack me. Arise to help me; look on my plight!” David wasn’t perfect and he isn’t claiming sinlessness. He’s not talking about his innocence before God but his innocence before Saul, his enemy.

That’s an important distinction as James Boice explains, “If you are innocent of wrongdoing before other people, then you can appeal to God bravely with confidence. If

⁷ James Boice, *Psalms: Volume 2*, p. 490.

you are guilty of wrongdoing, then you cannot pray boldly and you will appear before God convicted of sin rather than vindicated and assured.”⁸

So answer this. Are you innocent before other people? Can you truly say with David, “I have done no wrong”? Jesus later taught that if in the very act of bringing a gift to God we remember that our brother has something against us, we are to *go and be reconciled to our brother* and then give our gift to God (Matt. 5:24). If you feel like your prayer life is short-circuited, here’s the first breaker box circuit to check. Are there people in your life that you’ve wronged, that you’ve hurt by some sinful action? Then stop praying, go, and make things right with that person through humble confession. Then you can start praying again, and you’ll notice a huge difference!

“If I regard iniquity in my heart,” says Psalm 66:18, “the Lord will not hear me.” When there’s no power in our praying, look here first. Is there sin that I need to confess?

Selah. We’re not sure what ‘selah’ means (at the end of verses 5 & 13), but, “The word *selah*...may have marked a crescendo in the music, the end of a refrain, or a dramatic pause to highlight what had just been said.”⁹ So ends the first movement of David’s psalm. David begins with a cry for help.

I need to point out how the psalm is going to *end*. In the third movement David is going to end with an *affirmation of hope* after beginning with *a cry for help*. How did he get from *crying to affirming*? How will we move from crying out to God about the problem outside our window, to affirming our confidence that God does see and will act? We find the answer in the second movement of David’s prayer. First, begin with a cry for help. Second...

II. Continue with both cries and affirmations (6-13).

In the second part of his prayer, David goes back and forth, from crying out to God for help, to affirming that God will help. He asks, then affirms, then asks, and then affirms again. In other words, by God’s grace he went through a process in the middle part of the psalm. This is how praying works when we’re in trouble.

A. David asks (6-7). “They return at evening, snarling like dogs, and prowl about the city. See what they spew from their mouths—they spew out swords from their lips, and they say, ‘Who can hear us?’”

Apparently David didn’t leave the house that first morning, so his enemy left with no prize for their efforts. But now it’s the following evening and they’re back. David likens them to a pack of wild dogs who “sleep by day and emerge at night ravenous for anything edible.”¹⁰ Keep in mind that in ancient Israel dogs were not typically family pets, but either worked with sheep or ran wild. “‘Dog’ became a term of contempt used of Gentiles or Israelites who behaved like Gentiles.”¹¹

Notice David’s request in verse 7. “*See!*” he says to God.

1. *He wants God to see what the enemy is doing.* Look at them, God! They’re like a pack of dogs out there, snarling and prowling! In addition...

⁸ James Boice, p. 490.

⁹ *Daily Walk*, Vol. 30, Number 6, June 2007, p. 17.

¹⁰ Eric Lane, *Psalms 1-89*, p. 266.

¹¹ Lane, p. 266.

2. *He wants God to hear what the enemy is saying.* “Who can hear us?” they mocked. In other words, “That guy inside is dead meat and there’s nobody within ten miles who can hear us, let alone stop us.”

So David asks. Then, after asking...

B. David affirms (8-10). Verse 8—“But you, O LORD, laugh at them; you scoff at all those nations.”

Imagine you’re standing by a tiny ant hill. You look down at the minuscule creatures below scurrying about and you get curious. So you take a magnifying glass and stoop down to take a better look at the little ants. How would you respond if you saw this? One of the ants shaking his puny little fist at you, spitting at you, and yelling, “I don’t like you! I’m going to kill you!”

Would you be afraid? No. You would *laugh*.

Dear friends, our enemies do not intimidate God. As David affirms, the Lord scoffs at blaspheming nations who are but a drop in a bucket to Him (Isaiah 40:15). He laughs at them (see Psalm 2:1-4). It’s this fact about God that led David to make this affirmation.

Verses 9-10—“O my Strength, I watch for you; you, O God, are my fortress, my loving God. God will go before me and will let me gloat over those who slander me.” David’s house had become a death-trap rather than a refuge. But even then, David knew he had a fortress, God Himself.¹² *You are my fortress!*

Allow me to make an important distinction...

1. *It is one thing to say that God is strong.* But...

2. *It is another thing to say that God is my strength.* Pharaoh admitted God was strong, but Moses could say that God was his strength. Listen to David...

O—that word indicates this is David’s heartfelt conviction. *My*—that word indicates this is personal. *Strength*—that word indicates David has experienced God’s power before. God is real to David. He makes a difference in his life, not by eliminating problems but by overcoming them.

And so for us. God manifests His reality to us, not by giving us flowery beds of ease, but by giving us opportunities to say, “O...my...strength!” Are you facing trouble right now? If you know Christ as Savior, this can be your affirmation, “**O**—this is my conviction. **My**—this is very personal. **Strength**—I have experienced Your power before and I know You will be what I need you to be right now too.”

Then notice what happens in verses 11-13. Watch how once again...

C. David asks and affirms (11-13). He asks in verse 11, “But do not kill them, O Lord our shield, or my people will forget.” How ironic. David’s enemies want to kill him, but he asks God *not* to kill them, not yet anyway.

What then does he want God to do with his enemies? Notice the end of verse 11, “In your might make them wander about, and bring them down.” In other words, don’t kill them quickly or Your people will forget You, Lord. Maximize this trial, Lord, for the good of Your people.

Verses 12-13—“For the sins of their mouths, for the words of their lips, let them be caught in their pride. For the curses and lies they utter, consume them in wrath, consume them till they are no more. Then it will be known to the ends of the earth that God rules over Jacob. *Selah*”

¹² Observation by D. Kidner, p. 211.

Every see a little boy take a fly and pull off its wings? Why do boys do that? My hunch is, it's sort of a power thing. I'm in control of you. I can make you squirm.

Is that what David's doing with this prayer? Make them squirm, Lord! No. If you want to see his heart, look again at that final statement in verse 13. It's a window into David's heart, his motivation for praying this prayer.

"Then it will be known to the ends of the earth *that God rules over Jacob.*" Those are almost the very words David spoke before he slew Goliath in 1 Samuel 17:46, "This day the LORD will hand you over to me, and I'll strike you down and cut off your head...and *the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel.*"

Know this about David. He's not like the little boy that likes to see creatures suffer.

1. *He doesn't bring selfish requests to God.* That's not why he's asking God to kill his enemies but do it slowly.

2. *His passion is for the world to know that God reigns.* Did you catch the title of the tune in the heading? "Do Not Destroy." What matters most to David is God's reputation. He doesn't want God to kill his enemy all at once but gradually so His people will see it and learn from it. To put it another way, David is asking God to do with his enemy what he believes will bring God the most glory and His people the most good.

"This says something important about evil," observes James Boice, "and God's willingness to let evildoers survive for a time. For some this is an offense, even a reason for disbelieving God: 'If there is a God, why would he permit such things to happen?' Here is the answer. God allows evil to flourish for a time so that we might learn from it. We can see that evil is short-lived. We can learn that sin carries the seeds of its own destruction in itself. We can know that judgment does come upon the wicked in the end. If God did not permit evil, we would never learn any of this and would not grow by it."¹³

This brings us to the end of David's prayer. How do we make God central when we're facing trouble? We begin with a cry for help. Then we continue with both cries and affirmations. Then we...

III. End with an affirmation of hope (14-17).

David ends his song by contrasting what his enemy is doing and what he plans to do. Notice first his enemy in verses 14-15, "They return at evening, snarling¹⁴ like dogs, and prowl about the city. They wander about for food and howl if not satisfied." What's the enemy doing?

A. The enemy is still growling and howling (14-15). And why are they growling and howling? Because they're like famished dogs who can't wait to tear into David that very night. And what's David's strategy for dealing with this impending danger?

B. David plans on singing (16-17)! "But I will sing of your strength, in the morning I will sing of your love; for you are my fortress, my refuge in times of trouble. O my Strength, I sing praise to you; you, O God, are my fortress, my loving God."

Amazing! David responded to his trouble with a resolve *to sing*. You can tell a lot about a person by noticing three things about their *singing*.

1. *You can tell a lot about a person by noticing when they sing.* Answer this. When David resolved to sing in verse 16, and when he began to sing his praise to God in verse 17, where was his enemy? Still lurking outside, right? The enemy is still there, just

¹³ James Boice, p. 492.

¹⁴ The word is from the Hebrew word used for the Israelites' 'murmuring' in the wilderness.

like he was back in verse 1 when David was crying. So David's circumstances haven't changed. But David has. Now he's is singing.

When God is the gravitational center of your life, you sing. You sing about Him, and to Him. You sing when you're in trouble. You sing when you get out of trouble.

Do you sing? Do you sing when you're all alone with God, like David did? And do you sing when you assemble with God's people? Remember, that's the reason David gave this psalm to the director of music, so God's people would sing it.

I'm concerned about people who say they know the Lord, but fail to sing His praises. There are three main reasons why people don't sing. One, they *can't*. They can't because they don't really know Him. Dead men don't sing, it's as simple as that.

Two, they do know Him, but have the wrong focus. They see only their problems rather than what He is up to in the midst of their problems.

Or three, they just don't feel like it. And because they live by their feelings rather than by faith, they only sing when they feel like it.

Know this. David didn't feel like singing, not at first, but he did something, something intentional that made a difference. Did you notice that verse 9 is almost identical with verse 17? Only one verb is different. In verse 9 David says, "O my Strength, I *watch* for you." In verse 17 he says, "O my Strength, I *sing praise* to you." In verse 9, he's not singing, not yet, but he's doing something that's preparing him to sing.

He's *watching* for God. In Hebrew the words *watch* and *sing* are identical except for one letter. James Boice comments, "[This] is a way of saying, I suppose, that keeping one's eyes on God is only a stroke away from singing his praises."¹⁵

My friend, if we find it difficult to sing God's praises, the problem could well be that we are not *watching* for God, and therefore we are not *seeing* God work wonders in our lives. If we will start *watching*, we will start *seeing* (for there's plenty to see), and having seen we will start *singing*!

2. *You can tell a lot about a person by noticing what they sing.* What was the subject matter of David's song? Hear him: "But I will sing *of your strength...of your love*. You are my fortress, my refuge in times of trouble." David is singing *about God*, about God's character, God's attributes, and God's accomplishments.

3. *You can tell a lot about a person by noticing why they sing.* Anybody can sing in the good times, but what about when your king and father-in-law is trying to kill you? That's when David sang. And why? Because God was so real to Him. "You are *my fortress*"—he sings because God is in control. And "You are *my loving God*"—he sings because God cares.

What does a businessman do when he nails that big contract? He whistles all the way home. What do fans do when their team wins a nail-biter at the buzzer? They scream hysterically. What does the crowd do when a musician finishes a spectacular performance? They roar for an encore.

When something thrills us, it shows. We respond instinctively, and verbally.

Do we have reason to sing? You tell me. We were once rebels in God's world, guilty criminals on death row, just one breath away from hell's eternal fire. But God in His mercy provided a way out. He sent His beloved only Son into the world and chose to judge His own Son on the cross so that He might pardon us. Then He raised His Son to life, defeating death and breaking the power that held us captive from pleasing Him.

¹⁵ James Boice, p. 493.

He did this, not because we deserved it, nor earned it, but because He is gracious. Now this amazing God freely forgives, pardons, and adopts into His forever family all who will repent of their sins and believe in His Son.

If you have put your trust in Jesus Christ, my friend, God is now your Father, His Son is your Savior, His Spirit is your abiding help, His Word is your guide, His church is your safe haven, and heaven is your future home.

So you tell me. Do we who belong to this God have reason to sing? Oh yes!

A Personal Resolve: Sing to the glory of God, no matter what.

Like David did. And when we're in trouble, we sing this kind of song. First, we *cry for help* to the One who can help. Then we offer *cries and affirmations*. Finally, by His grace, we *affirm our hope*. We know the morning will come, the resurrection morning when we will sing in His presence forever and ever.