

## Psalm 138

**Read Psalm 138:1-3:** God saved David when he cried for help. This gave David a boldness in his public praise. David made it his business to proclaim God's goodness publicly. David specifically described God's goodness, his lovingkindness, his truth, and his character. David was very demonstrative in his public praise. His first wife was embarrassed at David's public display of thanksgiving. People who are not enthusiastic about God do not feel comfortable about public displays of praise. At some point you will have to side with your reputation or your passion for God.

*Now as the ark of the LORD came into the City of David, Michal, Saul's daughter, looked through a window and saw King David leaping and whirling before the LORD; and she despised him in her heart. So they brought the ark of the LORD, and set it in its place in the midst of the tabernacle that David had erected for it. Then David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the LORD. And when David had finished offering burnt offerings and peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD of hosts. Then he distributed among all the people, among the whole multitude of Israel, both the women and the men, to everyone a loaf of bread, a piece of meat, and a cake of raisins. So all the people departed, everyone to his house. Then David returned to bless his household. And Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and said, "How glorious was the king of Israel today, uncovering himself today in the eyes of the maids of his servants, as one of the base fellows shamelessly uncovers himself!" (2 Samuel 6:16-20)*

How do we *scale* our public praise? Do most thanksgivings and praise end up as non-verbal thoughts as we are driving, or in our quiet time? How big of a deal does it have to be for us to blurt out "Thank You Jesus!"?

I recall being at a church camp one summer as a freshman in High School. There was a group of high-energy Christians that were very outward with their faith. As a less-*enthusiastic* Christian, my first reaction was that they were somehow showing off. At the same time, I knew that they were righter than I was. My heart was in the wrong place.

This last weekend at church there was an altar call; not only for new believers. There was also a call to get more *on the same page* with the Holy Spirit. I have been praying about making more of each day about Jesus. I have been praying

about the subtle unsettled feeling that I am *leaving something on the table*...and that I can be living with a closer fellowship with God. I had no cause to pause to go forward publicly, because I was ready for it.

I have discovered that being born again, and the death to the old nature are not completely in synch. There was a long period of time when I lived as a compromised Christain, fully aware of the license I gave myself to *color outside of the lines*. My walk was a continual source of an afflicted conscience. Eventually, I had to go out and slay some of my old favorite remnant activities; because they would re-grow and dominate like weeds.

David was the first one to strike up the worship music. He was like a poet-warrior. He had been delivered from many near-death situations. In a sense, you could say that he *should have* died many times. I am sure that being brought back from the brink of no return would embolden your faith.

David tells us in verse two that God has *magnified his word above his name*. Jesus is *the Word of God*. He is the entirety of God's promises to men. The Father has put Jesus in front of us as an illustration of his love.

*Then I said, "Behold, I come; In the scroll of the book it is written of me (Psalm 40:7)*

*Therefore, when He came into the world, He said: "Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, But a body You have prepared for Me. In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You had no pleasure. Then I said, 'Behold, I have come— In the volume of the book it is written of Me— To do Your will, O God.' "* (Hebrews 10:5-7)

The Word of God prioritizes the salvation of man. The Bible does not teach every spiritual thing. It is the scarlet thread of salvation woven through both Testaments. The key is finding Jesus hidden in the story.

*...these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name. (John 20:31)*

*Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. And now, O Father, glorify*

*Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was. (John 17:1-5)*

Even the Old Testament Law pointed to the underlying need for Jesus to save us.

*Is the law then against the promises of God? Certainly not! For if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law. But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. (Galatians 3:21-25)*

We have talked about the name of God relating to his character and essence and intentions. This verse is saying that God has prioritized our receiving *the basics of salvation* over knowing all that there is about God's character. In truth we cannot really know him until we are saved anyway.

*But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. (1 Corinthians 2:14)*

These things are interconnected. God leaves breadcrumbs all over scripture with clues. There is not just one defining passage that stands on its own. God hides behind the miraculous; so that only earnest seekers will get to know him. The people who know God the best are those who are obediently continuing-on in his word and in truth.

*Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:31-32)*

*Jesus answered them and said, "My doctrine is not Mine, but His who sent Me. If anyone wills to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or whether I speak on My own authority. (John 7:16-17)*

*"These things I have spoken to you in figurative language; but the time is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figurative language, but I will tell you plainly about the Father. (John 16:25)*

**Read Psalm 138: 4-6:** Do all of the kings of the earth currently praise the name of God? No, they do not. Have all of the kings of the earth ever all praised God? No, they have not. When will they? In the Millennium.

Here are a couple of bonus verses to the *diligent* seeker. This psalm has some information inserted into it about the 1,000-year Millennial Reign. We were talking here about openly praising God; and all that entails...and suddenly the conversation switches to the 1,000 year Millennial Kingdom. We always have to read things in their proper context.

One of the next items on the biblical calendar is the *7 year tribulation*. That will be followed by the *1,000 year millennial reign* with Christ sitting as world king in Jerusalem. The tribulation will be the worst time on earth. Everything will be going violently wrong. Everything in nature, the universe and among men. The millennium will be one of the best times on earth, with total order and peace and blessings. There will be an abrupt transition from the upcoming dark ages to its new Renaissance.

*Why do the nations rage, And the people plot a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying, "Let us break Their bonds in pieces And cast away Their cords from us." He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; The Lord shall hold them in derision. Then He shall speak to them in His wrath, And distress them in His deep displeasure: "Yet I have set My King On My holy hill of Zion." "I will declare the decree: The LORD has said to Me, 'You are My Son, Today I have begotten You. Ask of Me, and I will give You The nations for Your inheritance, And the ends of the earth for Your possession. You shall break them with a rod of iron; you shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel.' " Now therefore, be wise, O kings; Be instructed, you judges of the earth. Serve the LORD with fear, And rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and you perish in the way, When His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all those who put their trust in Him. (Psalm 2)*

**Read Psalm 138:7-8:** Now David steps back into the present; after daydreaming about the future. Almost every psalm is a combination of this world's curses (upon the writer), interrupted by the realization of God's sovereignty and absolute control from heaven. Every psalm is a dichotomy of this world's outlook and how things look from heaven. They are very different concurrent realities; and yet they coexist. We have to process our daily experiences through *the lens of this world* or *the lens from heaven*.

If we are too focused on what is in front of us, we will become anxious, and jaded, and disappointed. We are on a treadmill with plenty to worry about ahead. God wants us to start savoring the blessings of the past. Basically, Instead, God interrupts human failure with blessings. One thought process interrupts the other default. All of heaven is rejoicing over every move that God makes. Nothing misses God's attention or forethought. The trains are running according to God's schedule; not the posted schedule. That is why true happiness and impossible solutions all come from opening our hearts and minds to heaven.

David states that everything is perfect as it pertains to him. How can he say that if King Saul is trying to kill him? How can he say that if his son Absalom is trying to kill him and overthrow his kingdom? How he say that if he murdered an innocent man; to take his wife from him? At any given time we have our life in the flesh and the life in the Spirit.

*For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin. For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do. If, then, I do what I will not to do, I agree with the law that it is good. But now, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find. For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice. Now if I do what I will not to do, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good. For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin. (Romans 7:14-24)*