

FBC Service Sunday September 27, 2026, Psalm 34:1-5, 8-9, 15, 21-22

AUTUMN IN THE PSALMS - COME, MAGNIFY THE LORD WITH ME

“Taste and see that the LORD is good.” Psalm 34:8

Introduction — A Praise That Trouble Cannot Silence

Have you ever noticed how easy it is to praise God when everything is going well? When prayer has been answered, the medical report is encouraging, the family is doing well, the bills are paid, and tomorrow looks reasonably secure, **praise seems to come naturally.**

But what about the other days? What about the day when the telephone rings with news we did not want to hear?

What about the season when the answer to prayer seems slow in coming, when the future is uncertain, when our hearts are tired, or when we simply wake up carrying burdens that nobody else can see?

Psalm 34:1 *“I will praise the LORD at all times. I will constantly speak his praises.”*

At all times, David? Do you mean even when life hurts? Even when you are frightened? Even when you don’t know what tomorrow will bring? David says, *“I will praise the LORD at all times.”*

Psalm 34 is not the testimony of a man who never had trouble. It comes out of a difficult and dangerous period in David’s life. He knew fear. He knew pressure. He knew what it was to feel hunted and vulnerable.

Yet out of that experience comes one of the warmest invitations in all the Psalms: *“Come, let us tell of the LORD’s greatness; let us exalt his name together.”*

That is what I want us to do this morning. Not pretend that life is always easy, but remember together that God is always worthy; not deny our troubles, but discover again that the Lord meets His people in them.

Psalm 34 moves from praise, to prayer, to personal experience, to assurance, and finally to refuge.

Praise the Lord at All Times — Psalm 34:1-3

“I will praise the LORD at all times. I will constantly speak his praises. I will boast only in the LORD; let all who are helpless take heart. Come, let us tell of the LORD’s greatness; let us exalt his name together.”

The words that immediately jumps at me are *“at all times.”* David doesn’t say, “I will praise the Lord when everything works out the way I hoped.” **He makes a decision of faith: that praise to God will not be controlled entirely by circumstances.**

There are good times and difficult times in all our lives. **There are mountaintops and valleys.** There are prayers answered quickly and prayers for which we wait. There are days when we understand what God is doing and days when we don’t understand at all. Yet God’s character has not changed.

Praise is not merely our response to good circumstances. Praise is our response to a good God.

David then says, *“I will boast only in the LORD.”* **There’s a wonderful humility in that statement.** He’s not boasting about his strength, wisdom, courage, accomplishments, or ability to survive.

His confidence is in the Lord.

And notice the movement from the singular to the plural. Verse 1 begins, *“I will praise.”* Verse 2 says, *“I will boast.”* But verse 3 says, *“Come...let us exalt his name **together.**”*

Genuine personal praise has a way of becoming contagious.

That is part of what worship is meant to be. We don’t gather on Sunday merely as spectators watching a service take place. **We come as worshippers.** Someone may arrive encouraged; someone else may arrive weary.

Someone may have enjoyed a wonderful week; another may have barely made it through. **Yet together we turn our attention toward the same Lord.**

Sometimes our praise strengthens someone sitting near us. Our singing may remind a discouraged believer that God is still faithful. Our testimony may give courage to someone who is struggling. David says in effect, “I have a reason to praise Him, and I want you to join me.”

Seek the Lord in Every Situation — Psalm 34:4

“I prayed to the LORD, and he answered me. He freed me from all my fears.”

Although verse 4 goes just beyond our opening selection, **it’s the natural bridge into the heart of this Psalm.** David did not merely believe that prayer was a good idea. **He prayed. He sought the Lord.**

There’s a difference between believing that God answers prayer and actually bringing our lives before Him.

Most of us pray intensely when a crisis comes. A diagnosis, an accident, a family emergency, a financial problem, a sudden loss, these things quickly drive us to prayer.

There’s nothing wrong with crisis prayer. God invites us to call upon Him in trouble. But prayer was never intended to be only an emergency number that we dial when life catches fire. **Prayer is meant to be the daily conversation of a child with the Father.**

Seek Him in the crisis, **yes, but also seek Him on the ordinary Tuesday morning.**

Seek Him before the decision. Seek Him when the family needs wisdom. Seek Him when your heart is anxious. Seek Him before you speak. Seek Him when you are tempted. Seek Him when life is going well and gratitude ought to rise from your heart.

David says, *“He answered me.”* That does not mean that God always answers in exactly the manner or timetable we prescribe.

Sometimes the Lord changes the circumstances. **Sometimes He changes us in the circumstances.**

Sometimes the answer is deliverance; sometimes it’s grace to endure; sometimes it’s wisdom, peace, courage, patience, or a door that opens only after a season of waiting.

Then David says, *“He freed me from all my fears.”* Notice that he speaks about fear as well as danger. God cares not only about what is happening **around us** but also about what is happening **within us**.

There are moments when the greatest battle is the battle inside, the imagined tomorrow, the unanswered question, **the “what if,”** the restless mind. David’s testimony is that he sought the Lord and discovered that fear did not have to have the final word.

When fear begins to speak loudly, prayer turns our attention toward the One who is greater than what frightens us.

Taste and See That the Lord Is Good — Psalm 34:8-9

“Taste and see that the LORD is good. Oh, the joys of those who take refuge in him! Fear the LORD, you his godly people, for those who fear him will have all they need.”

These may be the best-known words in Psalm 34, and they are wonderfully personal. David doesn’t simply say, “Hear that the Lord is good,” or “Read that the Lord is good.” **He says, “Taste and see.”**

There are some things another person cannot experience for you.

Someone can describe honey, but eventually you have to taste it.

Someone can describe a beautiful piece of music, but eventually you have to hear it.

Someone can tell you about the beauty of a sunset, but there’s nothing quite like standing there and seeing it for yourself.

David has been telling us what God has done for him, but now he turns to us and says, **“Don’t merely take my word for it. Come and discover His goodness for yourself.”**

That is one of the great truths of the Christian life. We can learn from the faith of others. We can be encouraged by their testimonies.

We can listen to sermons, read Scripture, sing hymns, and hear stories of answered prayer. **But ultimately God invites us into a personal relationship of trust with Him.**

You can look back over your own life and say, **“I have tasted His goodness.”** You remember a prayer He answered. A door He opened. Strength He gave when you thought you had none left.

The Lord gave you comfort in grief. Provision at the right moment. Forgiveness when you failed. Guidance when you did not know which way to turn.

And above all, the believer can point to Jesus Christ. At the cross we see the goodness and grace of God displayed with breathtaking clarity. In Jesus we receive forgiveness, reconciliation, new life, and the promise that we belong to Him.

The goodness of God does not mean that every chapter of life feels good. It means that through every chapter, the character of God remains trustworthy. **So David says, “Taste and see.”**

Christianity is so much more than knowing facts about Jesus. **It’s knowing Him, trusting Him, walking with Him,** receiving His grace, and discovering His faithfulness personally.

Remember: God Sees You and Hears You — Psalm 34:15

“The eyes of the LORD watch over those who do right; his ears are open to their cries for help.”

There are two beautiful pictures in this verse: the eyes of the Lord and the ears of the Lord. His eyes are upon His people, and His ears are open to their cries.

Have you ever wondered, “Does anybody really know what I’m carrying?”

We can be surrounded by people and still carry private burdens. There are things we don’t put into words. There are concerns that follow us home. There are nights when the mind refuses to switch off.

Psalm 34 says: God sees. God knows. God hears.

He sees the hospital room. He sees the grieving home. He sees the person lying awake in the middle of the night. He sees the family carrying a burden few others understand. He sees the person who quietly comes to church with a smile while inwardly fighting discouragement.

But He also sees the ordinary faithfulness that nobody applauds. The Christian who keeps praying, the Christian who keeps serving, the Christian who keeps forgiving, keeps trusting, keeps showing kindness, keeps opening their Bible, keeps turning up, and keeps walking with God.

We live in a world of billions of people, yet Scripture never presents God as overwhelmed by humanity. Jesus taught that our heavenly Father knows us with astonishing personal care.

We’re never lost in the crowd to Him. **And His ears are open to our cry.** Sometimes our prayers are eloquent; sometimes they are little more than “Lord, help me.”

The Lord does not require polished language before He listens.

The cry of a trusting heart always reaches Him.

You may feel unnoticed by others, **but you’re not unnoticed by God.** You may feel unheard by others, but you’re not unheard by God.

Faith Does Not Mean a Trouble-Free Life Psalm 34:17-19

“The LORD hears his people when they call to him for help. He rescues them from all their troubles. The LORD is close to the brokenhearted; he rescues those whose spirits are crushed. The righteous person faces many troubles, but the LORD comes to the rescue each time.”

These verses keep Psalm 34 wonderfully honest. David does not offer shallow optimism. He doesn’t say that if we trust God enough, trouble will disappear from our lives.

In fact, verse 19 says something startling: “The righteous person faces many troubles.” The Bible never promises Christians exemption from the realities of a fallen world.

Believers become sick. Believers grieve. Believers experience disappointment. Believers have family struggles. Believers sometimes feel afraid. Believers walk through valleys they never expected to enter.

The promise is not the absence of trouble. **The promise is the presence and faithfulness of God in our trouble.**

And verse 18 may be one of the tenderest statements in the Psalm: *“The LORD is close to the brokenhearted.”* **When the heart breaks, God does not back away. He draws near.**

There are experiences in life for which no cleverly crafted sentence is adequate. Sometimes there’s no quick explanation. **But there’s a Presence. The Lord is close.**

We don’t praise Him because life is always good. We praise Him because God is always good — even when life is hard.

That’s why Christian praise can exist alongside tears. It’s why a believer can grieve and still hope. It’s why we can say, “I don’t understand this chapter, but I know the Author. I don’t know what tomorrow holds, but I know the One who holds me.”

Take Refuge in the Lord — Psalm 34:21-22

“Calamity will surely destroy the wicked, and those who hate the righteous will be punished. But the LORD will redeem those who serve him. No one who takes refuge in him will be condemned.”

Psalm 34 finally brings us to the word **“refuge.”** **David has praised. David has prayed. David has testified. David has invited us to taste and see.** Now he asks us to place our confidence in the Lord.

A refuge is not merely something we admire from a distance. **A refuge is somewhere we go.** When the storm comes, **you enter it.** When danger threatens, **you take shelter there.**

Our life experience tells us it’s possible to know that God is a refuge and yet still try to carry everything ourselves. David’s invitation is more personal: **take refuge in Him.**

Bring Him the fear. Bring Him the unanswered question. Bring Him the grief. Bring Him the decision. Bring Him the sin that needs forgiveness. Bring Him the future you cannot control.

And for believers in Jesus, the fullest meaning of refuge is found in Jesus Christ. We don’t stand before God trusting our own goodness or religious accomplishments. We take refuge in Christ, in His finished work on the Cross, His grace, His death and resurrection.

The closing promise is magnificent: *“The LORD will redeem those who serve him.”* The Psalm that began with praise ends with redemption.

Conclusion — Come and Discover His Goodness

Let’s gather the movement of Psalm 34 into three invitations.

First: *“Come, let us exalt his name together.”* Maybe you came today carrying something heavy. Praise does not require you to deny the burden. It invites you to remember that your burden is not bigger than your God.

Second: *“Taste and see that the LORD is good.”* Don’t live only on somebody else’s testimony. Seek Him. Trust Him. Walk with Him. Discover His goodness in the ordinary days as well as in the extraordinary ones.

Third: *“Take refuge in him.”* There are some things you cannot control and some burdens you were never meant to carry alone. **Place yourself again into the hands of the Lord.**

Perhaps some of us need to say today, “Lord, I’ve been looking at the trouble more than I’ve been looking at You.”

Perhaps others need to say, “Lord, I’ve been praying only when I reach the end of myself. **Teach me to seek You every day.**”

Perhaps someone needs to discover for the first time that the goodness of God has a name — **Jesus.**

David began with a decision: *“I will praise the LORD at all times.”* He could say that not because every circumstance was good, but because through his circumstances he had discovered that the Lord was good.

So when the sun is shining — **praise Him.**

When clouds gather — **seek Him.**

When prayer is answered — **thank Him.**

When you’re still waiting — **trust Him.**

When your heart is broken — **remember that He is near.**

When you are afraid — **take refuge in Him.**

And when God has carried you through, do what David did. Don’t keep the testimony to yourself. Turn to somebody else and say:

“Come, let us tell of the LORD’s greatness; let us exalt his name together.”

May that be the testimony of our hearts and the song of our church both now and forever:

“I will praise the LORD at all times.”