

Downtime Praise

“Stewarding the Heart: Taking Time to Praise. Message Magazine’s Online Devotional for Sunday March 3, 2019.

[Listen to “Thoughts in Worship 03.04.2019” on Spreaker.](#)

“I will praise thee, O LORD, with my whole heart; I will shew forth all thy marvellous works. I will be glad and rejoice in thee: I will sing praise to thy name, O thou most High.” (Psalms 9:1, 2).

Not Enough Praise

Whenever we think of something that the Lord has done for us, we should praise Him. I know that I do not praise Him enough, and neither do many others. When we open our eyes in the morning, we should praise Him. Whenever we drink a glass of relatively clean water, we should praise Him.

As we eat our first bite of food, we should praise Him. When we almost have a car accident, but don’t, we should praise Him. And, if we do have an accident and come out alive, we should praise Him.

Make A List. Check It Twice.

The angels in heaven praise Him, and they are sinless. They do not know what it is to have the King of the universe become one of them and die the second death on their behalf, yet they praise Him all day long. If the angels praise Him, how much more should we upon whom the ends of the world are come? If we do not praise Him, inanimate nature will take our place. I do not want the rocks and trees crying out in my place. Make a list of the great things He has done. Go through them one by one, and praise Him.

Now, when you are tempted to feel forsaken of God, remember these words: “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring? O my God, I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest not; and in the night season, and am not silent. But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.” (Psalms 22:1-3).

Welcome to the privilege of becoming faithful stewards of your hearts. Manage responsibly, in Jesus’ name.

Wanted Alive: Shrink Resistant Faith Never Dies

0 For a Faith That Doesn’t Shrink “Wanted Alive” is Message Magazine’s Online Devotional for Sunday, October 14, 2018

[Listen to “Thoughts in Worship 10.14.2018” on Spreaker.](#)

This is devotional thought number 7 in our devotional series titled, “0 For a Faith That Will Not Shrink.”

Psalm 88 (NLT)*

1 O Lord, God of my salvation, I cry out to you by day. I come to you at night.

2 Now hear my prayer; listen to my cry.

3 For my life is full of troubles, and death draws near.

4 I am as good as dead, like a strong man with no strength left.

5 They have left me among the dead, and I lie like a corpse in a grave. I am forgotten, cut off from your care.

6 You have thrown me into the lowest pit, into the darkest depths.

7 Your anger weighs me down; with wave after wave you have engulfed me.

Interlude

8 You have driven my friends away by making me repulsive to them. I am in a trap with no way of escape.

9 My eyes are blinded by my tears. Each day I beg for your help, O Lord; I lift my hands to you for mercy.

10 Are your wonderful deeds of any use to the dead? Do the dead rise up and praise you? Interlude

11 Can those in the grave declare your unfailing love? Can they proclaim your faithfulness in the place of destruction?

12 Can the darkness speak of your wonderful deeds? Can anyone in the land of forgetfulness talk about your righteousness?

13 O Lord, I cry out to you. I will keep on pleading day by day.

14 O Lord, why do you reject me? Why do you turn your face from me?

15 I have been sick and close to death since my youth. I stand helpless and desperate before your terrors.

16 Your fierce anger has overwhelmed me. Your terrors have paralyzed me.

17 They swirl around me like floodwaters all day long. They have engulfed me completely.

18 You have taken away my companions and loved ones. Darkness is my closest friend.

When You Have to Search The Word

Seldom do we quote entire chapters from the Bible, but this time it is appropriate. There are times in each of our lives that we are so depressed, lonely, and in despair, that only God can help us. Friends, as nice as they may be, cannot help us. Loved ones, as caring as they may be, cannot help us. Coworkers, as committed as they may be, cannot help us. When we get so far down in the dumps that death, darkness, and intermittent doubts become commonplace in our thoughts, we have to lay it all on the line and cry out to the One faithful, true, and living God (Blessed be His Name).

In verse 11, the psalmist poses a serious question. He asked if dead people can proclaim God's faithfulness. He was telling God that the trials he was experiencing could very well lead to death, but he was of more value to God alive than dead. The dead cannot praise God.

I find this intriguing. It would seem to me that most desponding people would welcome death. Death, in those circumstances, would seem to be a welcomed rest. But the psalmist found death to be out of the question. Despite his weakness and repeated questionings, the psalmist continued to cry unto the Lord. He never gave up. David never stopped communicating with the Creator. He carried all of his fears, tears, doubts, and difficulties to God. That is the epitome of faith. Refusing to give up even in our darkest hour is what faith is all about.

Decision Point

If we are to develop a shrink-resistant faith that will not fail when tested,

we must decide, that no matter how hard things get, we will not let go of our connection to our faithful God.

Tired of Getting Torn Up? Turn on the Light

“Sing Unto the Lord a New Song: Meditations From the Book of Psalms.” Light up your life to avoid life’s disasters. Message Magazine’s Online Devotional for Thursday, July 26, 2018

[Listen to “Thoughts in Worship 07.26.2018” on Spreaker.](#)

“NUN. Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, And a light unto my path.” (Psalm 119:105).

Stubborn and in the Dark

The reason some you keep bumping into stuff in the night is because you refuse to switch on the light. You’ve been there before. You were in a rush to use the bathroom, or raid the fridge in the middle of the night. You did not switch on the light and then it happened. You bucked your toe on that steel fire truck your toddler left in the middle of the floor earlier that day. I don’t know if it would have hurt as badly if you expected it or not, but it certainly did when you didn’t realize it was there. Simple solution – switch on the lights!

Truth is, many of us can attest that we run our heads, knees, toes, and other spiritual body parts into immovable objects because we love darkness, and refuse to switch on the Scripture lights. We know that the Bible is there to enlighten our pathways, but somehow fear that it will expose our evil, and thus we inexplicably shun the light. And we have the scars to prove it.

When You’re Ready

Do you want to stop injuring yourself in your times of darkness? I do. Switch on the light. Ask God to teach you how to dwell in the light, even as He is in the light; and if your deeds are evil, repent. It’s just that simple. God is ready, willing, and available to shed some light on any situation, if you are willing to travel the path that the light reveals.

Sing unto the Lord a new song. Celebrate the light of God and His Word, which reveals the pathway to everlasting life.

Your New Song, the One with Honest, Prayerful, Trusting Lyrics

Sing Unto the Lord a New Song: Meditations From the Book of Psalms. Message Magazine’s Online Devotional for Tuesday, July 10, 2018

[Listen to “Thoughts in Worship 07.10.2018” on Spreaker.](#)

“A Psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his son. Lord, How are they increased that trouble me! Many are they that rise up against me. Many there be which say of my soul, There is no help for him in God. Selah. But thou, O

Lord, art a shield for me; My glory, and the lifter up of mine head. I cried unto the Lord with my voice, And he heard me out of his holy hill. Selah. I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the Lord sustained me. I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people, That have set themselves against me round about. Arise, O Lord; save me, O my God: For thou hast smitten all mine enemies upon the cheek bone; Thou hast broken the teeth of the ungodly. Salvation belongeth unto the Lord: Thy blessing is upon thy people. Selah” (Psalm 3).

Hard Times

How is your prayer life? Be honest; it’s just us two here. When you are facing trials, some of which are a result of your past mistakes, and others because people seem to just have it in for you; what do you do? When the deep night of agony breaks forth into the morning light, what is your testimony? King David had it rough at times. Some of his trials were carryover consequences from his forbidden liaison with Bathsheba. She was the former wife of Uriah, the faithful soldier the King David sent to premature death. The king had learned how to pour out his heart to God. He knew how to repent and struggle through difficulties.

What David Knew For Sure

He knew God had not forsaken him. He knew that even though his enemies, some of whom came from his own household conspired against him, but would not prevail because he entrusted his all to God. He knew that if he could continue to trust God, cry out to him for salvation and strength, that he would thwart the wicked plans of David’s enemies. Therefore, he could stand tall, keep his head held high, and trust that God would bring the richest blessings upon David and God’s people at the time they needed them.

Is this your testimony? Do you cry out to the Lord when you’re in trouble? Do you, like David, recount the many times God has come through for you in the past? Here’s the blessing: no matter how hard things get, even if some of the difficulty is self-imposed if you turn your entire heart over to God, and trust Him, He will restore you, and rain eternal showers of blessing upon your life. For this, we should all be grateful.

Sound of Refreshing Restoration

Sing unto the Lord a new song. Celebrate the blessedness of recounting the many times God has come through for you in the past, and know He is ready, willing, and available to do it again.

Vain Kings and Kingdoms Meet The Rod

“Sing Unto the Lord a New Song: Meditations From the Book of Psalms” Message Magazine’s Online Devotional for Monday, July 9, 2018

[Listen to “Thoughts in Worship 07.09.2018” on Spreaker.](#)

“Why do the heathen rage, And the people imagine 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 bands asunder, And cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh:

The Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, And vex them in his sore displeasure.

Yet have I set my king Upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; This day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, And I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, And the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: Be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, And rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, And ye perish from the way, When his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him" (Psalm 2).

Human Arrogance At its Peak

Why do nations who have no desire to trust God create commotion and plot against liberty and justice in vain? Can they be self-deceived into believing they can prevail against Jesus and His eternal kingdom? Why do they think pride, wickedness, lust, racism, misogyny, and greed will continue forever? Even God is amazed by human arrogance and disregard for His holiness. Be that as it may, if you are one of God's people, you can rejoice in the fact that God has exalted Jesus to His rightful position. He sits upon the throne of the universe. At just the right time, after all nations have attempted, with futility, to rule the world, compel the population to live according to unholy paradigms, seek to erect false systems of worship to overcorrect the mess they have made, Jesus will return.

Praise and Trust That Name!

After the first two phases of God's judgment are complete, every knee will bow, and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is the Lord. For this we have all been waiting. God our Father will get all the praise due His holy name for giving us such a valuable gift, in the Person and work of Jesus Christ!

Sing unto the Lord a new song. Celebrate the blessedness of putting all your trust in the Son of God!

Meditative State

Message Magazine's Online Devotional for Monday, March 6, 2017

[Listen to "Thoughts in Worship 03.06.2017" on Spreaker.](#)

"God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands..." (Acts 17:24).

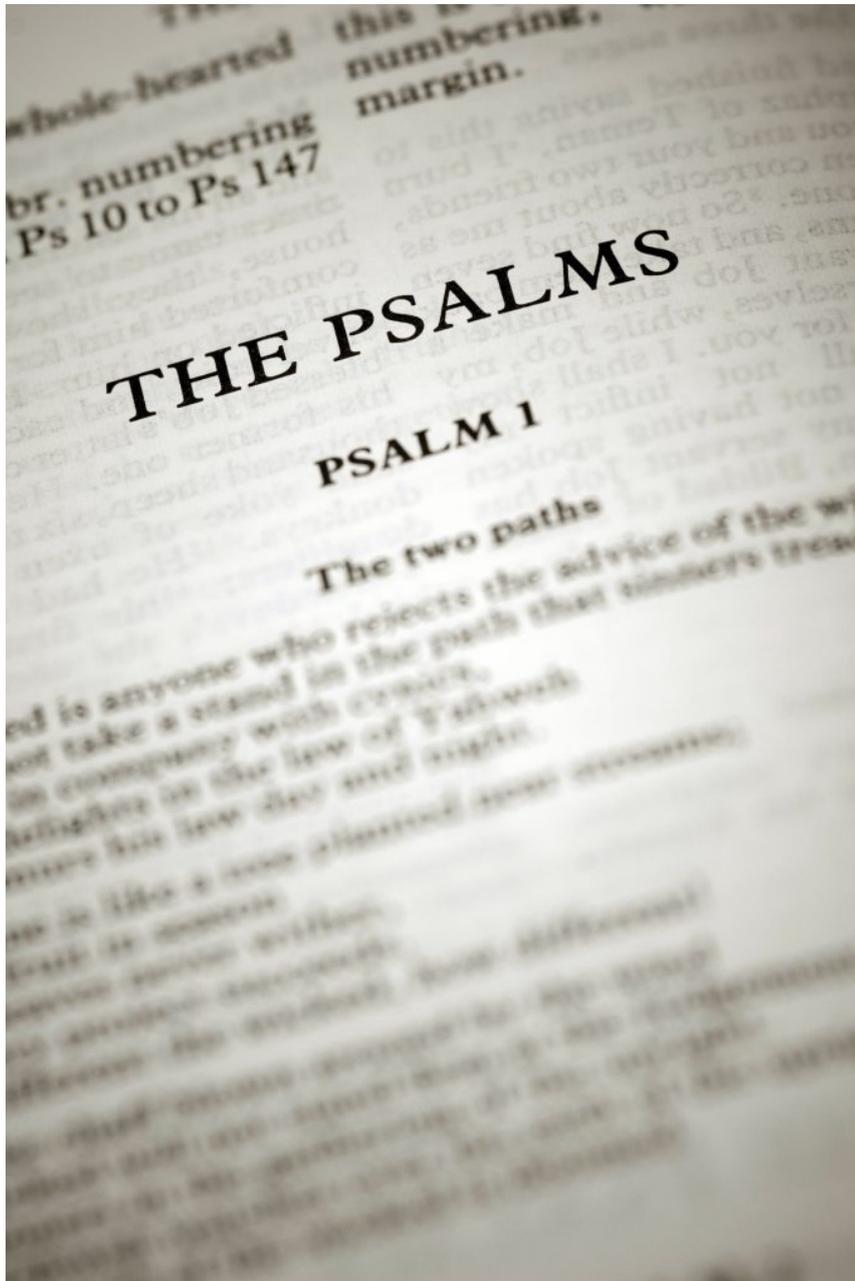
Will the True and living God please stand up?

Often people get a misconception about "God" when He is reduced to whatever we feel He should be. For instance, I was having a conversation with a new friend whose regular practice is to "meditate."

Great start, right? I asked him to describe this due to the context of our conversation. He and his training mates enter their designated space and quiet their minds, empty their minds, and focus on their breathing. My new friend has recently chosen to join the Christian faith. I told him we

meditate differently. Biblical meditation has a higher focus. He interrupted and said, "God, right?" I said, "Well, yes, but it's more detailed than that."

Communion With The God of Creation



the psalms biblical scripture starting with the first chapter

To simply say you are meditating upon God is so general and leaves us open to too many wild, spiritual problems. To make a long story short, I told Him that we direct our focus upon the Word of God like David described here: "Blessed is the man That walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor standeth in the way of sinners, Nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; And in his law doth he meditate day and night" (Psalm 1:1–2).

Our focus in meditation is God, to be sure, but His Word clarifies our focus. Instead of emptying our minds, which leaves the mind open to deception,

Christians fill our minds with the holy Word as the God of creation draws our attention into communion with Him. Upon His Word do we meditate.

Did you notice what happened here? I identified the one whom King David referenced, which is the same God of our theme text—the One who made the world and all that is therein. He is the Creator of heaven and earth. He is the One who cannot be contained by a temple. He is the One who loves us and gave us life through the blood of Jesus Christ. He is the only true and living God.

Submitting To The Living God

So many times we worship gods of our own devising. Some worship the god of pride. Some worship the god of self-pleasing. Some worship the gods of fighting arts. Some worship the gods of lust, overwork, and intemperance. But when the true and living God comes into our lives, if we submit to Him, we become His dwelling place and we focus our lives and thoughts upon Him. The Bible says, “For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s” (1 Corinthians 6:20).

I am so glad God gives us the privilege to speak to Him in prayer and hear from Him in His Word. Let the true and living God stand up in your life, and you will not regret it.