

## Sermon Notes for Reflection and Discussion: Psalm 34

### **Introduction**

Steven set the stage for us by explaining that at the time Psalm 34 was written, David had slain Goliath, King Saul had become jealous of David, and wanted to kill him. David fled to Gath, which was in enemy territory and the king of Gath also wanted to kill David. Fearing for his life, David pretended to be insane and the king of Gath sent him away. David fled and found refuge in a cave. People came to encourage him, but the reality was he had a target on his back. (See 1 Samuel 19-22 for the full story.)

### **1 – Being Pursued by an Enemy**

David was truly between a rock and a hard place. What is the significance of David being hidden in a cave?

Recall a time when an enemy was after you; maybe a person, a disease, or Satan, the enemy of our souls. Who did you turn to for help?

### **2 – Making a Wise Decision**

Right off the bat in verse 1 of the Psalm, David makes a critical decision “to bless the Lord at all times,” despite being at his lowest point. Steven noted that praise is rehearsal for heaven and David is saying he’s going to start praising (blessing) now. What enables him to make that choice? What do you suppose that says about his relationship with God?

How likely is it that you would make the same decision if you were in serious trouble?

### **3 – Keeping God Bigger Than Your Circumstances**

Steven encouraged us to tell our problems how big our God is rather than telling our problems to God and to see that victory comes when we praise the Lord.

How do you remind yourself of the bigness, the might, and the goodness of God? How can you encourage others in your life to do the same, especially if they are struggling?

### **4 – Trusting the God Who Comes Down**

We serve a God who sees, hears, knows, and acts. In Exodus 3:7-8, the Lord says to Moses, “I have surely seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters. I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey ...”

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In Psalm 34:4-7, David recounts how God heard and delivered him out of all his troubles. What are some other examples in Scripture of God seeing, hearing, knowing, and acting on behalf of his people?

In what ways have you witnessed him doing those things for others or for yourself?

### **5 – Believing God’s Promises to the Righteous**

We can trust God and praise him because of his goodness and faithfulness. He is our provider, rescuer, and so worthy of praise, we would do well to develop a “lifestyle of praise.” In verses 7-22, David compares God’s protection and provision for the righteous with his approach to the wicked and declares in verse 19, “Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all.”

How would you describe the steps people take from being saved to solidly believing that God delivers us into something good; that he redeems the life of his servants (v.22)?

In what areas of your life do you want to grow in your trust that God is always faithful to the righteous?

### **Scripture Passage:**

**Of David, when he changed his behavior before Abimelech, so that he drove him out, and he went away.**

<sup>1</sup> I will bless the LORD at all times;  
his praise shall continually be in my mouth.

<sup>2</sup> My soul makes its boast in the LORD;  
let the humble hear and be glad.

<sup>3</sup> Oh, magnify the LORD with me,  
and let us exalt his name together!

<sup>4</sup> I sought the LORD, and he answered me  
and delivered me from all my fears.

<sup>5</sup> Those who look to him are radiant,  
and their faces shall never be ashamed.

<sup>6</sup> This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him  
and saved him out of all his troubles.

<sup>7</sup> The angel of the LORD encamps  
around those who fear him, and delivers them.

<sup>8</sup> Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good!  
Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him!

- <sup>9</sup> Oh, fear the LORD, you his saints,  
for those who fear him have no lack!
- <sup>10</sup> The young lions suffer want and hunger;  
but those who seek the LORD lack no good thing.
- <sup>11</sup> Come, O children, listen to me;  
I will teach you the fear of the LORD.
- <sup>12</sup> What man is there who desires life  
and loves many days, that he may see good?
- <sup>13</sup> Keep your tongue from evil  
and your lips from speaking deceit.
- <sup>14</sup> Turn away from evil and do good;  
seek peace and pursue it.
- <sup>15</sup> The eyes of the LORD are toward the righteous  
and his ears toward their cry.
- <sup>16</sup> The face of the LORD is against those who do evil,  
to cut off the memory of them from the earth.
- <sup>17</sup> When the righteous cry for help, the LORD hears  
and delivers them out of all their troubles.
- <sup>18</sup> The LORD is near to the brokenhearted  
and saves the crushed in spirit.
- <sup>19</sup> Many are the afflictions of the righteous,  
but the LORD delivers him out of them all.
- <sup>20</sup> He keeps all his bones;  
not one of them is broken.
- <sup>21</sup> Affliction will slay the wicked,  
and those who hate the righteous will be condemned.
- <sup>22</sup> The LORD redeems the life of his servants;  
none of those who take refuge in him will be condemned.

**Steven's Sermon:**