

Lenten Devotional April 5, 2022

Scripture

Psalm 34

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

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

3 O magnify the LORD with me,
and let us exalt his name together.

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

5 Look to him, and be radiant;
so your faces shall never be ashamed.

6 This poor soul cried, and was heard by the LORD,
and was saved from every trouble.

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

8 O taste and see that the LORD is good;
happy are those who take refuge in him.

9 O fear the LORD, you his holy ones,
for those who fear him have no want.

10 The young lions suffer want and hunger,
but those who seek the LORD lack no good thing.

11 Come, O children, listen to me;
I will teach you the fear of the LORD.

12 Which of you desires life,
and covets many days to enjoy good?

13 Keep your tongue from evil,
and your lips from speaking deceit.

14 Depart from evil, and do good;
seek peace, and pursue it.

15 The eyes of the LORD are on the righteous,
and his ears are open to their cry.

16 The face of the LORD is against evildoers,
to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.

17 When the righteous cry for help, the LORD hears,
and rescues them from all their troubles.

18 The LORD is near to the brokenhearted,
and saves the crushed in spirit.

19 Many are the afflictions of the righteous,
but the LORD rescues them from them all.

20 He keeps all their bones;

not one of them will be broken.

21 Evil brings death to the wicked,
and those who hate the righteous will be condemned.

22 The LORD redeems the life of his servants;
none of those who take refuge in him will be condemned.

Devotional

The Rev. Colin Pritchard '18

In a season of protracted challenge, it can be hard to bless the Lord at all times. It is false to claim no anxiety or an absence of wanting the world to be different. The poetry of the Psalm may not have the specific application we may wish for on the days when we don't know what to do next. While precision may be lacking, wisdom is abundant.

What would it look like to magnify and exalt the Lord together, seeking the presence of the holy? Would it bring deliverance from all our fears? Or at least a step back from hopelessness? We can do that.

What would it look like to cast our eyes toward our Savior? Perhaps it would bring radiant faces reflecting love and security. In these times of downcast glances and worried looks, we can be shining lights. Let us do that.

The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit. As the body of Christ, we can choose to do the same. May it be so.

Perhaps all we need to do to bless the Lord this day, and to choose hope for ourselves, is to praise, shine, and serve.

Prayer

In times of trouble, O Lord, our souls cry out. In each and every hour, O Lord, you hear our cries. In this hour, O Lord, hear us once again. Draw our eyes upward, our feet forward, and our hearts toward your sure and certain hope. Release the fears of those burdened in spirit and guide the steps of those who have an opportunity to shine. Amen.