

Invitation. Psalm 34:8-10

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[0:00] It is a joy to be back with you again. I've been looking forward to this all week long. I'm thankful that we could come back.

And I'm looking forward to coming back next week. But especially tonight, opening up God's Word with you. Psalm 34. A shorter section than we looked at last week, but rich, just so incredibly rich with the truth of who God is and what it looks like to seek the Lord.

And in the notes that everyone's been given, verse 8 is kind of the theme, if you will.

The running theme through this section in this series. So let's read Psalm 34. And I'll be honest with you, I really like getting a running start.

So I'm actually going to start in verse 1 and read through verse 10. And then just for context sake. I will bless the Lord at all times. His praise shall continually be in my mouth.

[1:37] My soul makes its boast in the Lord. Let the humble hear and be glad. Oh, magnify the Lord with me and let us exalt His name together. I sought the Lord and He answered me and delivered me from all my fears.

Those who look to Him are radiant and their faces shall never be ashamed. This poor man cried. And the Lord heard him and saved him out of all his troubles.

The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear Him and delivers them. Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good. Blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him.

Oh, fear the Lord, you His saints, for those who fear Him have no lack. The young lions suffer want and hunger, but those who seek the Lord lack no good thing.

So tonight, we really dig in. Taste and see, fear and seek. Taste and see, fear and seek.

[2:43] So I think about this command, taste and see. It made me think about the fact that we had dinner together tonight, right? Now, it smells wonderful.

The food looked great. Because of significant dietary restrictions I have, I can't eat it. So for me, I come in, and my experience is smell and guess.

That's what I can do. Smell and guess. God does not want us to smell and guess. He wants us to taste and see.

He wants us, He calls upon us to experience His goodness. To ingest it. To imbibe it.

To experience it. And observe. To find out for ourselves. Remember, David is on the run. That's the setting for all of this.

[3:45] The historical setting. David is on the run from Saul. He's on the run from the Philistines. He is surrounded by enemies. He is, frankly, in trouble from every earthly perspective.

King David, not yet king, is in trouble. But David realizes, even in the midst of his circumstances, that God is preserving him.

God is protecting him. God is meeting his need. God is delivering him. And David gets so excited that he calls to the congregation, to one and all, oh, taste! Basically, David is saying, I have experienced the goodness of God, and I want you to experience that goodness, to taste.

Experience his goodness. Now, how do we taste? How do we experience the goodness of God?

How do we do that? Well, like I said, smell and guess doesn't really work.

You can smell and you can say, oh, man, that looks great. That smells good. I can only, I can guess that tastes great. The soup tonight, I saw it look, oh, that looked delicious.

[5:01] Man, it looks so good. If we smell and guess with God, we miss something. And I bring it down to that point because the second line of verse 8, parallel to the first line, really tells us how do we taste and see?

How do we experience the goodness of God? The second line, blessed is the man who, what? What does it say there? Who takes refuge or trusts in him.

Okay, so taste and see that the Lord is good. Good is parallel with blessed and takes refuge is parallel with taste and see.

So how do we go about tasting, experiencing the goodness of God? We take refuge. We trust him. You see, that requires a commitment. That requires us actually stepping forward and trusting God for the things God has promised.

Does that make sense? Right? You can't smell and guess with God. You actually have to experience God's deliverance. We do that by trusting him, by taking refuge in him.

[6:19] So how do you taste? You take refuge. You trust. Well, how is the Lord good? Taste and see that the Lord is good. We find that he is indeed our refuge.

In verse 7, we looked at this last week. Verse 7, the angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him and delivers them. There is deliverance in God.

Verse 8, take refuge in him. Why? Because he is a refuge. God is our refuge.

In 1 Peter 1, verse 5, it talks about how those of us who put our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ are kept for salvation unto that day.

And it's looking ahead to the very end. But that idea of kept in 1 Peter 1, verse 5, is that God garrisons our hearts through supernatural faith.

[7:24] It's this idea of encamps around. God, so when we trust God, we take him at his word, believe his promises, resting in him and him alone, he garrisons us, provisions us, meets the need that we have to do his will.

Now, David is literally, like I said, on the run. He literally has refuge in mind. He is in literal need of physical refuge from actual enemies who are seeking to kill him.

David has actual refuge in mind. But we understand that refuge can point to other ways in which we need to find our refuge in God. Think about all the ways that people try to preserve themselves or try to protect themselves or try to find satisfaction in this life.

And Christians can do it too. When faced with a trial, when faced with an uncertainty, when faced with discouragement, what do we do?

We tend to run to all the same kinds of things that our world does. And maybe by God's grace, because we've been separated from the world, we don't go to the extremes that they go to, but we still tend in our flesh to reach for those things that make us feel better.

[8:54] Am I wrong? I don't think so. I don't think I'm alone in that. That temptation. Well, how do we take, how do you take refuge? How do you rest in God?

How do you delight in God? That's the question. That's the challenge.

The first thing we have to remember is God is good. Do we believe that when we're in the middle of a challenge? God is good. Do we take the time to meditate upon the goodness of God?

All the ways that God has been good to His people. The Psalms are full of recitation and meditation upon the goodness of God to His people throughout history.

Throughout Israel's history. how He took care of them. And the psalmist looking at that past says, you know, God made promise to us.

[9:50] He brought us into covenant with Him. And we've seen how He fulfilled that so I can trust Him now. Verse 8, O taste and see that the Lord, all capitals, remember we talked about this last week and I know you already knew it at that point.

Yahweh, the covenant making, covenant keeping God of Israel. trusting in Him. He made covenant. He made promises and He's kept them. Can we trust God to continue to keep His promises?

Even when it feels like life is failing us. Can we trust that God will keep His promises? Do we trust that God keeps His promises? That God will provision us?

God will meet our need. taste and see that God is good. Remember what Jesus said when someone called Him good.

Why do you call me good? Only the Lord is good. Right? He is good. Everything God does is right. Are we tempted to believe sometimes that what God has allowed is not right?

[11:02] I think of Job. Right? Job who was called a blameless man in his generation. Job who was who God bragged about to Satan.

Have you considered my servant Job? Who is blameless and righteous? I mean, Job was a genuinely good man. When Job was faced with the loss of everything he held dear, what did Job start doing?

He started second guessing God. Right? Job's faith for all that he was a patient man and a godly man even Job's faith struggled a little bit and he would say things like if I could just if someone would just show me the way to the courtroom of God I would present my case and he would see that I'm right.

See, we're tempted we're tempted at times to doubt God's rightness God's goodness. but our challenge is to taste to just commit yourself to following God and notice second line of verse 8 blessed blessed now the term the idea of blessed is not necessarily happy I don't know how many translations we have represented here some translations might use the term happy but this isn't about happiness in terms of emotion this is about a state or a condition think about it this way what did Jesus say in Matthew chapter 5 blessed are the poor in spirit blessed are those who mourn mourn!

right? Jesus pronounced blessing over people who did not feel happy so the issue of blessed isn't happy per se the issue of blessed is you are in a good condition a good position a good state of being if you're trusting if you're resting in God if you're finding your refuge in Him so taste and see He is our refuge verses 9 and 10 fear and seek look at verse 9 oh fear another command fear the Lord you His saints or holy ones is the idea for those who fear Him have no lack what's really interesting is that in the Hebrew the word fear is at the beginning and the end of the verse verse 9 begins and ends with the word fear emphasizing the right response to God verse 9 is about fearing God we brought this up last week fear of the

[13:54] Lord is always the right response to God always like mark that down in every situation in every setting in every tribulation in every thing fear of the Lord is always the right response to God fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom so we want to respond rightly wisely to the problems that faces as David is doing here he's saying fear God fear Him now fear will take different forms in different situations that's why it's sometimes hard to pin down the theological concept of the fear of the Lord sometimes fear is revealed in worship and awe and reverence sometimes fear is manifested in obedience the idea of obedience is emphasized other times fear really does apply to terror over judgment and for the person caught in sin that's a good kind of fear to have right and sometimes the concepts are mangled remember at the foot of Mount

Sinai the Israelites had just gotten there they had left Egypt just a little while before Moses leads them to the foot of Mount Sinai you remember what happened at the top of Mount Sinai the God revealed himself in his glory and so the top of Mount Sinai looks like a massive furnace on fire there's lightning right there's thunder the ground is shaking and God tells Moses to tell the people don't let anyone approach even the foot of the mountain and if anyone does shoot them with an arrow you know why shoot them with an arrow because if you go get them to bring them back and execute them you've approached too far too closely as well right so just shoot them with an arrow leave their body there he told the people of Israel you guys cleanse yourself you guys refrain from certain relationships in preparation for meeting God who is thundering from the top of Mount Sinai and the people of Israel were so terrified of what

God was revealing of himself at the top of Mount Sinai that they said to Moses Moses if God keeps speaking to us in this thunder we're going to die so you go Moses I think it's hilarious Moses were terrified of listening to God so you go and whatever God tells you Moses you tell us and we will do and God said to Moses and through Moses to the second generation of Israelites in Deuteronomy chapter 5 he said to Moses of the Israelites oh that they always had such a heart to fear me so with the Israelites at the foot of Mount Sinai they literally were afraid of him but it motivated them and moved them to promise obedience now we understand they didn't do very well with that but it motivated all and it motivated obedience other times fearing the

Lord points to trust that's why verse 8 can talk about taking refuge in him verse 9 can talk about fearing him and at first that almost seems like they don't go together I'm supposed to trust him and be afraid of him well that's not the idea of fear it's that fear of God motivates me to trust him because I recognize he's creator I recognize he's bigger than me I recognize that he has made promises and I don't dare not trust him for those promises one of the things that we've my wife and I have taught our children it's almost become like a litany for us at times we would tell our children something or promise them something or say we're going to do something and then we keep our own counsel about when and how we were going to do that and then later on one of the children would say hey daddy you said that you were going to do or daddy what are we going to do about or and my phrase my children what would we always say just just trust me right or my wife and I would

both say just trust us now we're not perfectly trustworthy as parents but we're trying to instill in our children we've made you a promise just trust us as far as the fulfillment of that goes right and so in teaching our children to rightly reverence us as God taught our children to honor their father and mother

God says you fear me trust me just trust me right don't question me just trust me I said you could come to me I said you could flee to me for help just trust me so my fear of God moves me to flee to him for help because he said you come here you need help my child you come here don't go anywhere else come here right so God loves us so much that he commands us to flee to him for refuge right he doesn't just offer the option I love you so if you feel like you need it come here no he says I love you you need me come here right that's how good our God is so fear of the Lord moves us then to trust him just like verse 8 says oh fear the Lord you his holy ones those who put your trust in him from our New Testament perspective those who trusted in Christ you are saints you are holy ones you're set apart to

[19:55] God oh fear the Lord you his saints for those who fear him have no lack this isn't about manipulating God or earning something well I need this so I'm going to fear God it's like a tit for tat like I'm paying God for something that's not the idea the idea is this is giving to God what he is due reverence obedience and trust and he deserves to be sought after that's what we see in verse 10 I'm going to come to that in just a but he deserves to be and obeyed and trusted and his response to those who treat him that way his response to his children who show that their children by revering obeying and trusting him is that he provides for them he meets the need and so that's what we have verse 10 verse 10 is the backup for verse 9 what do you mean those who fear him have no lack verse 10 the young lions suffer want and hunger but those who seek the Lord lack no good thing now what's what's that example about well you think of think of lions think of the idea of young lions if anything should have the resources within itself to get all the food it needs you would picture a young lion right very powerful fast energetic the young lion can bring down its prey he's saying yeah someone or something may seem to have all the resources to provide for its own needs and yet sometimes they find that they don't have enough but those who seek the Lord have no lack at all they don't lack now I want to point something out here look in verse 8 through 10 look at the verbs taste take refuge fear fear seek that's not five different verbs that's all just five different ways of speaking of the same thing of what resting in

God looks like trusting in God that's what it looks like taste and see take refuge fear fear and seek this is how God's people relate to him and they're all just I don't want to say they're opposite sides of the same coin because this is like a five sided coin and I don't know what that is but they're all part and parcel of the same thing is the idea right we say as Christians repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ but what does believe look!

it taking God at His word tasting and seeing that He's good it looks like taking refuge in Him it looks like reverencing trusting and obeying Him it looks like seeking after Him by the way the idea of seeking pursuing Him as though there is nothing else in this world worth pursuing I'm afraid that in our American Western Christianity we tend to view God we tend to view Jesus as that which was provided to meet a need and almost as though we're doing God a favor if we take God at His word and we miss the fact that God is worth everything and He deserves to be sought after He is the chief good Hebrews chapter 11 without faith it is impossible to please

Him and He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him God is a rewarder of those who seek Him if my seeking is after God and He rewards those who seek Him what is the reward that He offers Himself Himself you see we tend to think in terms forgive me the broad brush I don't know all of you right but I'm just thinking in terms of the way American comfortable Christianity tends to look like we want salvation from hell and thanks Jesus for the get out of hell free card I'll see you in heaven where genuine faith says I seek Him with everything I have He is my reward He's the one I want

He's the one I'm after now I know it's like when will that guy shut up I'm sorry I'm sorry we're getting there alright so what do we do with this promise those who seek the Lord lack no good thing and yet sometimes we feel like I have sought the Lord and I can't get the thing that I think I need what do I do with that right I mean that's a nice promise and a beautiful psalm but what what do I do with that I want to point a few things Lord Jesus instruction in prayer in Matthew chapter 6 so as we end let's move into the New Testament so if you go with me into Matthew 6 a few passages

[25:43] I want to share with you we won't take forever at this see preachers always say that we're almost done and then we go for another another while Matthew 6 so you know the Lord's prayer right verse 9 pray then like this our father in heaven hallowed be your name your kingdom come your will be done on earth as it is in heaven notice first of all the very first things that Jesus taught his disciples to pray had nothing to do with their own need right you see that okay that's going to come back we're going back to that then verse 11 12 and 13 give us this day our daily bread forgive us our debts and lead us not into temptation I know I'm paraphrasing all right so we pray and we trust God for necessities Jesus taught us to pray for the things we need but he taught us to pray for the things we need in the context of first desiring and praying for things related to

God's own nature and the praise he deserves and his kingdom and will and my reason for bringing that up is then look at the end of Matthew 6 verse 25 okay and we know this fairly well as well therefore I tell you do not be anxious about your life what you will eat or what you will drink nor about your body what you put on is not life more than food and the body more than clothing look at the birds of the air they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns and yet your heavenly father feeds them are you not of more!

value! and! view by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life and why are you anxious about clothing consider the lilies of the field how they grow they neither toil nor spin yet I tell you even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these but if God so clothes the grass of the field which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven will he not much more clothe you oh you of little faith therefore do not be anxious saying what shall we eat or what shall we drink or what shall we wear for the Gentiles seek after all these things and your heavenly father knows that you need them all but seek first the kingdom of God in his righteousness and all these things will be added to you therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow for tomorrow will be anxious for itself sufficient for the day is its own trouble so David says in psalm 34 verse 10 those who seek the Lord will lack no good thing you notice the priority there seeking the

Lord first then there's no lack what does Jesus teach his disciples seek God's glory hallowed be your name and his kingdom then pray for the things you need but not to worry about the things you need the things you lack because he just teaches them right here God can take care of all of that but you seek first what do he say seek the kingdom of God right in other words you make your pursuit correct God will provide everything needed to make your pursuit successful we tend to get focused on the lack on the need ask God for it and can't figure out why it doesn't always work out the way we think it should work out God says no let's flip that around you seek me first you seek my priorities first you seek my glory first let me tend to to to to do that then in

Matthew chapter seven Jesus teaches his disciples still about praying verse seven ask and it will be given to you wow that's quite a promise seek and you will find that's quite a promise knock and will be open to you oh my goodness Jesus is promising the moon here for everyone who asks receives yeah wow it just sounds like all we gotta do is ask and it's gonna be taken care of but let's keep reading or which one of you if his son asked him for bread will give him a stone if he asked for a fish will give him a serpent if you then who are evil know how I think that's funny know how to give good gifts!

[30:20] how much more so Jesus says you ask for and the father will provide but notice the father's priority in providing for you is to give good things is it possible that sometimes the thing we ask for we think is good isn't actually good right see Jesus uses this example you ask for bread is God going to give you a stone I mean you evil fathers wouldn't do that you ask for a fish is God going to give you a snake you evil fathers wouldn't do that but has it ever occurred to us that sometimes when what we ask we think it's good we might actually be asking for a rock and a snake and God in his kindness and his goodness says no that's that's not healthy that's not good for you I'm going to give you what's good for you but we don't necessarily recognize it as such we have to keep that in mind too 1st

John 5 14 to 15 we won't go there but John the apostle John taught his readers teaches us to pray according to the will of God so we're reminded of that need to pray in a way that reflects that God has a will and we have to submit ourselves to that I also think of Paul in Philippians 3 and 4 where Paul says I am seeking Christ above everything else and that's in Philippians 3 then in Philippians 4 he says I have learned the secret of contentment I know how to I know how to abound and I know how to be dirt poor I know how to feast and how to starve and to do it all to the glory of God I'm reading between the lie and paraphrasing he says how do I do that what is the secret of

contentment I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me my point is sometimes as we those who seek the

Lord will lack no good thing we have to be reminded that we maybe need to temper our understanding and definition of need right Paul was in prison and sometimes starving and he could go God has given me what I need right now and I trust him for that and I can be content with that how was Paul content with having so little because his pursuit was Christ likeness that to him was the greater need than food than getting out of prison Christ likeness goes right back to what our Lord Jesus said you seek first his kingdom but I do want you to go to this passage and with this we are done math or I'm sorry Romans chapter eight this is another familiar one but I like connecting these together the one who seeks the Lord will act no good thing this is the final good thing Romans eight thirty one and following what then shall we say to these things if God is for us who can be against us he who did not spare his own son but gave him up for us all how will he not also with him graciously give us all things who shall bring any charge against God's elect it is God who justifies who is to condemn Christ Jesus is the one who died!

than that who shall separate us from the love of Christ shall tribulation or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword as it is written for your sake we are being killed all the day long we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered no in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who love us for I am sure that neither!

[34 : 47] shame on us when we forget God gave us his son do we really think he's going to withhold anything else we need to live for him to do his will right taste and see that the Lord is good because he has set his eternal love upon us he sent his own son to die on the cross for sinners to be raised again for our justification that all who rest and trust in him all who repent of their sin and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ will be saved and with Christ raised to new life forever and rule and reign with him God gives us himself and his son and then everything else along with it taste and see!

but the Lord is indeed good Father I thank you for this time tonight I thank you for these meditations from your word these reminders of your goodness Lord forgive us for where we have doubted your goodness Lord help us to be all the more convinced and convicted of your goodness and Lord help us to seek you fear you take our refuge in you roll our burdens off upon you because you care for us Lord help us to honor you by trusting you we love you we thank you for your son in whose name we pray amen