

Singing God's Law

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[0 : 00] Let's turn for a short time now this evening to Psalm 119 and verse 54 in particular. Psalm 119 in the book of Psalms and verse 54.

Few statutes have been my songs in the house of my sojourn. This is a text that came strongly to my mind during a funeral service for the late Donald Mackay, elder at Park Free Church.

Many of you will have known Donald as a man of great dignity and Christian character. And we were told by his minister at the end of the funeral service that this verse had been very prominently with Donald in the days leading up to his death.

Your statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage. Or as he would have known it better himself in his native language.

Beat dostatien mu shawl anandhaich mu chursht. And these verses, that verse itself, was of course something which the late Donald Mackay came to appreciate in his own Christian experience.

[1 : 34] And you can tell a lot about a man by his relationship, or a woman, by the relationship to the law of God. We can tell a lot about ourselves by what our attitude is and our relationship with the statutes, the laws, the commands of God.

The law of God contains all of these different elements. These words are used in Psalm 119, as you well know, to describe different facets of the word of God.

Sometimes the focus is simply on the word, and that's what's used. Then, as in this verse, it's the word statutes, which means a rule, or something that's given as a set principle of life.

Other times you have the word precepts, other times testimonies, other times commands. But they are all aspects of the word of God.

And the verse that we have before us that was significant to Mr. Mackay is a verse that speaks specifically about statutes. That aspect of God's word where the emphasis is particularly on rules or commands.

[2 : 53] And perhaps as we begin our study this evening, that could be a question that you ask yourself and I ask myself. What is my attitude to the law of God?

What is my relationship to God's statutes? What do I think of his rules? What is my own view and attitude to the rules of God?

How do I react to them? Am I resistant to them? Do I like them or dislike them? Is it my concern in life to live in accordance with them?

Or do I try and avoid them? There are many people tonight who would not be able to or not want to sing the statutes of God.

But that is what the psalmist is saying. Your statutes have been my songs or my music in the house of my pilgrimage. There are many millions of people around us in our own nation today who would actually celebrate in song if the statutes of God were eradicated from our human life.

- [4 : 03] If they were done away with, it would be a cause of celebration. But for the psalmist it is the opposite. He celebrates the fact that he knows them.
- That he has been given them. That he lives by them. That they are precious to him. That he knows their meaning and their purpose. Your statutes have been my songs in the house of my sojourning.
- We can tell a lot about ourselves by asking the simple question. What do I think of God's laws? And you can tell a lot about a society.
- About any government. About any particular emphasis in people who rule, whether in our own country or elsewhere. You have only got to ask the question.
- What do they make of the law, of the standards of God, of the statutes of God? And that tells you what their priority is. Whether it is indeed to live for God or by God's standard or not.
- [5 : 11] Well here is the sandstone. And he is saying, your statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage. There is an emphasis first of all on singing.
- That itself is an important emphasis. We will look at that briefly. There is an emphasis secondly on singing God's statutes.
- Not just singing his promises. Or singing other aspects of his word. But singing his statutes in particular. They have been my songs. They have been my music.
- I have been singing your statutes. The psalmist is saying. In the house of my pilgrimage. So there is an emphasis on singing. And on singing God's statutes. And thirdly.
- There is an emphasis on singing God's statutes. As a pilgrim. As a traveller. As somebody for whom this world is not home.
- [6 : 05] But for whom this world and now life in it. Is that journey towards home. A pilgrimage. Singing of God's statutes. Let's look at these three very briefly.
- There is an emphasis first of all on singing. Your statutes have been my songs. And all the way through the Bible. It is made clear to us.
- That singing forms an important and integral part of the worship of God. And indeed you could say that music. And singing as it is part of music.
- Is itself a gift from God. That doesn't mean that music is always used in a way that is praising of God.
- There is much around of ungodly music. Or music turned to ungodly ends and uses. And I am not just saying this for the benefit of young people.
- [7 : 08] Older people too. Listen to different kinds of music. And appreciate different kinds of music. Music like everything else can be used in a way that is directed against God.
- Against the gospel of God. Against the standard that God himself sets out in his word. Standard of language. If you look at a list of songs that are available in the charts.
- And you look at a list of them to download from different websites. Whether it is iTunes or wherever. You will find a considerable number of these tracks.
- Have a little red box on them. With the word explicit content. Christians are listening to that. Young people's souls are imbibing that sort of language.
- That sort of music. If it is something that contains what is essentially ungodly in the form of words.
- [8 : 15] In terms of what we call bad language. Or filthy language. Then it is not for our Christian souls. That is not the kind of feeding that our souls require.
- Not only that. But you know very well the kind of videos. That accompany many of these songs. It is virtually impossible nowadays to produce a song for the charts without a video.

And certainly many of the videos that you see. Not that I go into it very much. But those I do see. Really you can see very quickly. That many of them are very unsuitable.

Not just for children and young people's minds. But for any minds. Because they are characterized by immodesty.

By suggestiveness sexually. By all kinds of different bodily gyrations. Which distinctly and clearly present a message of an ungodly lifestyle.

[9 : 22] Now we have to take note of these things. These are the kind of things that the world is absorbed with. These are the kind of things that are common everyday experiences for people.

And for young people especially. Who stick an iPod on and put it into their ears. That is what they listen to. We have an alternative to that.

God has given us an alternative to that. God is saying to us in his word. In Paul's letters to the Colossians and to the Ephesians. Let your speech be always with grace.

Seasoned with salt. That it may minister good to those who hear you. It doesn't just say be careful what you say. It also says be careful what you hear.

What you listen to. Your speech. Your language. Has to be wholesome. Has to be in accordance with other aspects of God's truth.

[10 : 26] Coarse speech. Speech that is unbecoming of a Christian. And the standards of God. For the Christian.

That must be distinctly put aside. Avoid it. Even if it is the standard of the vast majority of people. What you and I have to say.

As we said at the beginning. What is my attitude to the law of God? What is my view of the word of God? Am I really listening to what God is saying. About what I am letting into my soul.

About what is affecting my mind. My thinking. My attitude. My outlook on life. Here is the psalmist saying.

That he has the statutes of God. As his songs. Now we are saying. A little bit of emphasis on that. More than I intended to. But I think it is important to understand these things. Music is a gift from God.

[11 : 24] But sadly. It is distorted and abused. Like many other gifts from God. However the fact that it is distorted.

And that it is misused. And applied to wrong ends. And becomes part of an ungodly lifestyle or image. Does not mean that music itself. That music per se.

That music itself. As music. Is wrong. Or bad for you. We are not talking about. Different types of music.

The distinction is between. The kind of use that we make of it. The kind of language that is used in it. And what is according to God's standard.

So the psalmist is saying. This is a gift from God. But he is now using it for God. It is a gift. For God. Why has God given us music? Why has God given us the gift of singing especially?

[12 : 24] It is for the same reason. And to the same ends. That he has given us everything else that is good. To glorify his name. Music fits into the end.

And the purpose for which you and I were created. What is your chief end? Why have you been created? Why do we exist? Why did God create us? To glorify him.

And to enjoy him. That is why. And to glorify him means. That we use all the gifts he has given us. In a way that is pleasing and acceptable to him.

And you notice here. The emphasis especially is on songs. Or on singing. Your statutes have been my songs. Now singing is important as we said.

Not just as an exercise in itself. But as part of the worship of God. And what we have to say immediately. It is not about your quality of voice.

[13 : 21] Not everybody has. What you might say is a good musical voice. But everybody is commanded to sing. When the Lord commands his people to sing.

He doesn't just say to an audience of his people. Or to a congregation of his people. Those of you who have a good voice. Praise my name. Sing my praises.

He addresses this to every single one of us. And the psalmist here is saying. Your statutes have been my songs. He doesn't claim.

We don't know what kind of voice he had. He doesn't claim that he had good voice. We don't really know for sure. Maybe he didn't have much of a voice at all. But he knew the music of praise. And he used the music of praise.

And he engaged in the music of praise. Throughout the course of his life. The important thing. Is not that we have a good voice. That we are able to use for God. But that he has given us the gift of singing his praises.

[14 : 21] To join together or to sing by ourselves. In a way that sings. If not with a good voice. Then especially with the understanding.

That really is the most important thing. In the emphasis of the Bible. If you go to the lecture of 1 Corinthians 14. And verse 15. Where Paul is talking about prayer.

And how it is important to be understood. And not just to speak in a language that nobody can understand. Which some in Corinth were then doing. But he went on to say. I will also sing with the mind.

Or sing with the understanding. In other words. Our singing has to be itself. As it is part of our worship especially. It has to be something that is understood.

And understandable. It is not just to be a noise. It is to be a use of the voice.

[15 : 17] In a way that sings with understanding. I think that brings also into consideration. The way that the psalmist here himself. Throughout this very psalm.

Is talking about the importance. Of the understanding. Far more important. For you and for me. Even if you don't have much of a singing voice at all. To engage in the praise of God.

With the understanding of God's truth in your heart. Sing with the understanding. Because to everybody who comes to know the Lord.

He gives them a song. He plants the new song. Of salvation in their hearts. And he doesn't give you that new song.

So that you don't sing it. But so that you'll express it. So that you'll join together with others. To express that same praise of God.

[16 : 14] Look at verses 104 to 119. Number five of the psalm here. For example. Through your precepts. I get understanding. Therefore I hate every false way.

Your word is a lamp to my feet. And a light to my path. In other words. To sing with the understanding. Means that you're singing praise to God.

Out of an understanding. That he's given you. Of his ways. Of who he is. Of your relationship with him. Of such important foundational things.

As forgiveness of sin. The hope of eternal life. The companionship of God. Every single benefit that comes to you in Christ.

Is a benefit to sing about. A benefit. A benefit. A benefit for which we must praise God. And we do it with the understanding. With an understanding of.

[17 : 14] The benefits that are ours. In the salvation of God. In other words. Our minds. As our mind is.

Enlightened by the statutes. By the word of God. Our mind. Feeds our voice. And on the other hand.

Our voice expresses. What's in our mind. The enlightened mind. Feeds the voice of praise. The voice of praise. Expresses. What's in the enlightened mind.

Isn't it a marvelous thing. That God. Has actually given us. The ability. And again. I have to emphasize. It's not about. Good voices.

Primarily. What a great thing it is. That God has given us. The means of expressing. His praise. In a way.

[18 : 09] That can sing. About. Such things. As our faith. And our sorrows. And our hopes. And our aspirations.

And that is one of the great things. About the Psalms themselves. That you're singing all these things. You're not just expressing them. If you just read the book of Psalms. What a great thing that is in itself.

To read the book of Psalms. And all that it contains. In these Psalms. Of the experience of the Psalmist. The ups and downs of life. The difficulties. The trials.

The glories. The triumphs as well. It's great to read that. It's great to read that. And to go back. And read them again. And again. You can never stop doing that. You can never have enough of that.

But in addition to that. God has given us. The gift of singing them. And the gift of singing. These sorrows. And these joys. And singing these difficulties.

[19 : 08] And these triumphs. Because the singing. The singing. Is part of the worship of God. Through which we express. His praise.

Through our experience. It's a gift. From God. It's a gift. For God. But what the Psalmist is saying.

Here is. Secondly. Not just about singing. But it's singing. God's statutes. We've said already. What God's statutes are. I remember when I was young.

And hearing this word statutes. I confused it with the word statutes. And I had a bit of difficulty. Until I came to understand. What this word was. That it wasn't the same as a statute.

That it's a statute. And that the statutes of God. Are his laws. His commands. That form part of his word.

[20 : 06] And you notice here he's saying. That he is singing. These statutes. Of God. And it's interesting isn't it. That on each side of this verse.

You've got an expression of. How he himself is moved. With indignation. With a holy. Sorrow. And with a holy anger. Indeed. Because of the wicked.

He says. Who forsake your law. Now you see. Somebody. Who's got a good relationship. And a proper relationship. With the law of God. Who values the law of God.

Somebody who appreciates. The law of God. Somebody who really sings. The statutes of God. Is not going to be happy. When these laws of God. Are abused. By other people.

And when you and I. Tonight sing. The statutes of God. Are we at the same time. Sorrowing over the fact. That they are. Being so abused.

[21 : 01] By so many people. This blessing. Has fallen to me. That I have kept.

Your precepts. Rivers of water. Run from my eyes. When I see. How the wicked. Despise. Your laws.

Have we really cried. Have we really sorrowed. Over the state of our nation. Over the plans of our governments.

Over the despising of God's laws. In that. Has it moved our hearts. Whatever petitions. We may have signed. This is far more important.

In many respects. That our heart. Is turned to grief. When we see what is going on. That's what the psalmist would have said.

[22 : 03] That's what he's saying here. Hot indignation. Seizes me. I weep over this. It grieves me. When your laws. Are forsaken. When the wicked.

Despise them. And for himself. He's saying. In contrast to that. Your statutes. Have been. My songs. It'd be an interesting.

Survey. Wouldn't it. To go through. The streets of Stornoway itself. And stop people. And ask them. Would you be happy to sing. The commandments of God.

How many people would say. Enthusiastically. Yes. Of course I would. You would want. To. You would hope. That many people. Would say that. But would they. Well some would.

Undoubtedly. Thankfully. But others would say. Sing the commandments of God. I wish they were just. Done away with. We don't need. These kind of religious things.

[23 : 04] Anymore. They're just harmful. They spoil things. They do damage. To human lives.

Well here's a man. Who knows differently. And you and I know differently too. Because he's singing God's laws. That doesn't mean. He's setting the laws of God.

To music. Though that would be possible. Indeed. It's not at all. Unbiblical. To do that. But. What he's talking about here is. Singing the laws of God.

In the sense that. He has come to appreciate. The content of them. The purpose of them. The benefits that he has from them. The place that they have in his life. What he has received from them.

For example. When he says that. He's now praising God. For his laws. Because. During his suffering. He was taught. These laws of God. And taught.

[23 : 58] The benefits of them. Now of course. We have to be careful. Because. Our salvation. Is not based on our obedience. In keeping God's laws.

We're not given righteousness. From God. Because we're able. Perfectly. Or even to a certain degree. To keep God's laws.

It's not by works. Of the law. By our obedience. To God's laws. That we come to be justified. We're justified. By faith. In Christ. Who himself.

Kept God's law. Perfectly. For us. It's not required of us. That we keep God's law. Perfectly. In order to be saved. In order to actually be.

At least to be justified. Be accounted righteous. With God. But it's those. Who are accounted righteous. With God. Who have come to know.

[24 : 52] Forgiveness of sin. And justification. Which means. God placing them. In a right relation. With himself. And forgiving their sin. And accounting them. As righteous. It's those people.

Who know the Lord. Who are converted. Who have come. To a living relationship. With God. These are the people. Who value God's law. Who don't go along.

With the idea. That now that I'm a Christian. I don't need the law of God. It's no place in my life. Christ has kept the law for me. Why should I think about the law of God?

Well because. It is expressing. The standard of God. For a way of life. We don't depend on keeping it. In order to be right with God.

But being right with God. We benefit from it. Because it expresses to us. The mind of God. The standard of God. The character of God.

[25 : 48] The requirements of God. And that's what the psalmist has come to appreciate. Your statutes have been my songs.

He has used the statutes of God in a way that praises God. Because he has come to realize that. Without these statutes.

As he says later on in the psalm. Without them that he would have actually perished. Except. He said. I should have perished.

Except that your commandment. Showed me the way. And gave me the teaching. And the understanding. That I required. That's how it must be.

For ourselves too. That we appreciate the content of God's law. You see a lot of people. Will say to us today. The commands of God.

[26 : 47] Just damaged you. It's time we just did away with them. And I know I've said this so often. And you've heard this so often. But it's such a current topic. In our own society. In our own.

In the thinking of our people. That it would be far better. Just to take the likes of the commandments of God. Out of human thinking. And human practice altogether.

And just get rid of them. What would be put in their place. Is another thing. But the fact is. Ask the question.

Why has God given us his laws? Why were human beings. Even in a state of perfection. When Adam was created. Why was he given a law by God?

He was given a law by God. Because God said to him. Of all the trees of the garden. You may freely eat. But of the tree of the knowledge of good and even.

[27 : 45] You may not eat. For in the day that you eat of it. You will surely die. Even in perfection. In Eden. Before there was any sin. God gave a law.

To the human beings he had created. Laws are good for us. God's law especially. Is good for us.

It is God's law that. Gives us a definite shape. To life. If you look at a family that lives. Without any laws or regulations.

Look at the children brought up. In families that don't have laws. Or don't have any firm commands. Or rules in the house. I don't need to tell you what they are like.

Whatever the children are like. One thing is true. They have no sense of security. They have no basis for security. Things change from day to day.

[28 : 46] As far as their values go. As far as the basis of. On which their life is founded. Is concerned. But when you have. A life that has the laws of God.

And appreciates the law of God. That's a life that's secure. You know right from wrong. You know what's good and what's wrong. And what's evil. And what is beneficial.

You know what's pleasing to God. And what is not. It gives you. That security. And that's why it's important.

To have the law of God. In our life. And he's singing. Of that as he says. Your laws. Your statutes. Have been. My songs.

The purpose for which God gave them. He appreciates that. The benefits he's had for them. He appreciates that. The comforts he's got from. The law of God. Guiding him. And teaching him.

[29 : 42] And giving him understanding. He appreciates that. And in his appreciation. He sings. He sings. The statutes. Of God. That means of course.

That our experience. Of God. Is a crucial thing. We only come to appreciate. The law of God. When we have God.

As our savior. We can know. The law of God. Accusing us. We will hardly praise him. For that. During the time.

It happens. But when you come. Into the liberty. That Christ. Gives his people. When you come. To give your life. To him. And to know the benefit.

Of him being your Lord. When you know. Forgiveness. And acceptance. With God. Through Christ. Then you see. The benefit. Of the laws of God.

[30 : 42] And you sing. The statutes. Of the Lord. Finally. They're singing. God's statutes. As a pilgrim. Because what he's saying. Is. Your statutes.

Have been my songs. In the house. Of my sojourning. Or my pilgrimage. Now there's. A frequent reference. To this. Of course. In the Bible. But also. In this very psalm. Look for example.

At verse 19. Of the psalm. And you'll find that. The psalmist. Is expressing. Himself there. I am a sojourner. On the earth. Hide not.

Your commandments. From me. You see. Combining again. Together there. The fact that he's a pilgrim. That he's a sojourner. He's passing through. In this life. But he wants.

The commandments. Of God. To be made clear. To him. Because. That's what guides him. On his way. And here he's saying. Your statutes. Have been my song. In the house. Of my pilgrimage.

[31 : 36] Or my sojourning. By that he means. Our life. This side of death. The house. Of my pilgrimage. My present journey. In other words.

Here's a man. Who understands. Who understands. Who understands. Who understands. Who understands. Who understands. That his life. Does not end. In the grave. Who understands.

That he needs. To prepare. For another world. A better world. A bigger world. A man. Who understands. The issues. Of life. And death. And the importance.

Of God's commands. In relation. To that. Here is a man. Who knows. That he is going home. But he is not there yet. He is like a man.

On holiday. He is like someone. Living in B&B's. Or hotels. He is there. For a set time. But he is not going. To call it home. He is a pilgrim.

[32 : 34] He is on a journey. He is on the way home. To be with God. Home. Is the place. Of many mansions.

The inheritance. God has. For his people. Or in the words. Of Psalm 23. The house. Of the Lord. This he says. Is the house. Of my pilgrimage.

My present life. It is a house. Through which. I am just. Traveling. Or in which. I am living. For a short time. But the Lord's house. Is my home.

Goodness. And mercy. Shall follow me. All the days. Of my life. And in the house. Of the Lord. I shall dwell. Forever. And that is what Jesus said.

To his disciples. How do we feel. In this world. What is our view.

[33 : 35] Of this house. Of our pilgrimage. Are you or I. Living tonight. As if it was our home. Have we become. So attached to it. That.

We wouldn't want. To leave it at all. Is it the most important. Place of. Residence. For us. Do we put away. From us.

The fact. That it's not. Our home. That we're only here. For a short time. Are we looking forward. To going home. Are we saying.

Like the psalmist. I'm a pilgrim lord. I'm a sojourner. On the earth. Please don't hide. Your loss. From me. Guide me. Through this life. Bring me safely home.

It's all too easy. To forget. The dimensions. Of eternity. When you're caught up.

[34 : 29] In the dimensions. Of the house. Of our pilgrimage. But it's a serious mistake. Many people do it. And live an eternity.

Of regret. Many people live. As if this world. Is their only place. Of residence. And they live for it. And then they discover.

At the end of their journey. Actually it was just. A little bit of traveling. On the way to eternity. That's what Thomas Chalmers.

Came to understand. A preacher of the gospel. And he wasn't even converted. He gave. Beautiful.

A moral. Sermons. Sermons. To his. To his flock. But he came to realize. It didn't really change their lives. In any way.

[35 : 25] They were just nice stories. Or moral precepts. But when he was converted. He then came to realize. The importance of the gospel. And of eternity.

And this is what he said. I had forgotten. He said. Two great dimensions. Before he came to know the Lord. I had forgotten. Two great dimensions. And.

The relationship. Between these dimensions. He was a mathematician. As well as a theologian. I had forgotten. He said. The littleness of time. I had totally forgotten.

The greatness. Of eternity. Dimensions. That's what life's about. The dimension of your present house. Of pilgrimage.

In relation to the. Greater dimension. Of eternity. Here's a man who knows. The relationship between them. Here's a man who says. Your statutes. Have been my songs.

[36 : 21] In the house. Of my pilgrimage. He knew that he wasn't going to be. In this world forever. He knew this world wasn't his home. But while he was in it.

He made sure. That he praised the Lord. For his statutes. That he made the statutes. Of God. His sons. And that of course.

Brings us. Finally to consider. The singing of heaven itself. What is heaven. What is heaven like. Well how can we.

In any way. Say anything about that. We don't know. This side of it. Except that. One or two details. Have been given us. In God's word. As to what it will be like. But the very experience of it.

Is impossible for us. In this life. Though God can give you. A foretaste of it. How precious that is. But among the many things. That it says. It makes it very clear.

[37 : 18] To us. That heaven. Is a place. Of singing. It's a place. That's filled. With music. With the music. Of praise. With the music. Of singing. The new song.

That revelation. Describes as. The new song. That sings. The praises of the lamb. For the way. That he has redeemed. Them to God. And made them kings. And princes.

To God. You don't like singing. You won't like heaven. Heaven is a place.

Filled. With singing. And it will be a place. Of singing. The statutes. Of God. Even more so. Than you're able to. In this life. Because only. When we get to heaven.

Will we then. Really appreciate. How beneficial. The commands. Of God. Were to us. And it's a great thing. Like the psalmist. Here. To sing.

[38 : 18] The statutes. Of God. While you're in the house. Of this pilgrimage. How much. Great it will it be. To sing. With the understanding. Of the glorified mind. That appreciates.

Then in heaven. Why God. Gave us his laws. In this life. They are singing. Says. Revelation.

The new song. And everything. In heaven. In one sense. Will be new. Because it is something. Of an experience. That we've never had before.

And that's why the song. Is new as well. In the sense. That it is. A new beginning. For God's people. And remains new. Forevermore.

For them. And this is what. Isaiah also understood. As he wrote. In that great chapter. In Isaiah. Thirty five. Words that.

[39 : 16] Are so full. Of gospel teaching. And bring us right up. Into. The eternity. Of heaven itself. Where he says. A highway. Shall be there.

And it shall be called. The way. Of holiness. The way. That's. Related. To God's. Standard. God's laws. The unclean. Shall not pass over.

This is the way. Of redemption. The way. Of salvation. The way. That leads us. To him. The unclean. Shall not pass over it. It shall belong. To those who walk. On the way. No lion.

Shall be there. Nor any ravenous beast. Shall come up upon it. They shall not be found there. But the redeemed. Shall walk there. And the ransomed. Of the Lord. Shall return.

And come to Zion. With singing. Everlasting joy. Shall be on their heads. They shall obtain.

[40 : 09] Gladness. And joy. And sorrow. And sighing. Shall flee away. It's a great thing. To be able to sing.

The statutes of God. In the midst of sorrow. But it will be a much greater thing. To sing them. When sorrow. And sighing.

Have fled away. To sing them. Without interruption. Without pain. Without any distortion. To sing them.

As part of. The music. Of heaven. Let's pray. O Lord.

O gracious God. Help us to appreciate. The singing of your praise. Enable us to engage in it with relish. And give us we pray to sing with the understanding.

[41 : 08] To sing with a mind that appreciates your salvation. Enable us to. O Lord. To sing your statutes. To gain an appreciation daily.

Of their purpose. And their benefit to us. Of the way that you have given them to us. For our good. For the shaping of our lives. For instruction.

And for opening our mind. To your own holy character. We ask. O Lord. As we sing your praise. That we might do it increasingly.

With a delight. And appreciation. Of your ways. Hear us now. We pray. For Jesus' sake. Amen.