

Guest Speaker Bob Kauflin

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Date: 28 February 2021

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[0 : 00] The following message was given at a Sunday celebration at Trinity Grace Church in Athens.! For more information about Trinity Grace, please visit us at TrinityGraceAthens.com.

I want to briefly introduce Bob. You know enough about Bob by now, but I think Bob leads. He's Director of Sovereign Grace Worship.

He's an elder at Sovereign Grace Church of Louisville. But most importantly, he's just a man who loves the church and loves to see it built up. And that's what our friendship over.

Now, yeah, 18 years, I first saw Bob lead 19 years ago and and have had a wonderful friendship with him.

So let's just open our Bibles and prepare our hearts to receive from the Lord. So come on. All right. Can you hear me? You can. And you have had Julie been mentioned yet.

[0 : 59] I'm here with my wife, Julie. It's all right. The most the best thing about me is Julie. Let me just be clear on that. Oh, it's such a joy to be with you.

I bring you greetings from Sovereign Grace Church of Louisville. Anybody been to Louisville? Well, six people. That's great. It's a great city. We moved there eight years ago and I served there with CJ Mahaney and Jeff Perswell and Gary Ricucci.

Some of you might know the other pastors. And Julie and I have been part of two church plants. And this just being here is so great. It just reminds us of how thrilling this season is.

I mean, there are challenges and stuff, but it's just so great to see a new scripture proclaiming, gospel-centered, spirit-empowered, servant-hearted church take root in a community.

And that's what's happening. You may not be able to see it. If this is your first church plant, maybe, yeah, it's another church, but God's doing something here that could affect generations.

[2 : 02] And it's just so good to see it at this stage. We think of you all and pray for you regularly in Louisville. And thank God that we...

And I was so blessed to hear you praying for Jordan and Lauren this morning. A couple... And Josh and Sabrina, for now they're going over... Josh and Sabrina have gone over to Ethiopia. I'm talking fast because I have a limited amount of time. And Jordan and Lauren are heading over there to help Michael and Canon Granger plant that church in Addis Ababa.

But what a... How... I was so moved. Oh, they did. Okay, great. Okay, wow. Just... We are so blessed. This is more... If you don't know much about... How many of you are kind of new to Sovereign Grace?

Just that curiosity. Yeah, okay. It's a few. All right, yeah. Just... We're just... We call ourselves a denomination. I can never get used to that word. I've been part of Sovereign Grace for 40 years.

And I just think of us as a family of churches. What binds us together is a confession of faith, for sure, and a commitment to a common mission.

[3 : 04] And we share your heart. Even though you may not know us, like up in Louisville, we feel so partnered with you here. And we're in the same region for Sovereign Grace, so that's kind of cool, too.

But we thank God for you and know that He's doing a work for His glory here. And you're a part of it. So I pray that what I share today helps towards that end.

You're already in Psalm 40, so I'm just going to start with an illustration. At the start of World War II, General Douglas MacArthur was a revered and dearly loved American leader in the Philippines.

I'm just going to raise this up a little bit. But shortly after the attack on Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941, he had to leave the Philippines.

He was forced with his wife, Jean, and his four-year-old son, Arthur, to flee to Australia. When he arrived, shortly after he arrived, he declared in a press statement, I shall return.

[4 : 08] And he repeated that phrase often and in public for a full two and a half years. During that two and a half years, the Filipinos experienced horrifying brutality from the Japanese army, including the infamous Bataan Death March, which took places.

It was a six-day trek of 65 miles that resulted in the death of nearly 10,000 men. In October of 1944, MacArthur finally made good on his promise and led the invasion of the Philippine island of Leyte.

And that day, he declared in a radio public broadcast from the field, People of the Philippines, I have returned.

You just imagine how significant that felt. And four months later, Allied forces recaptured the Bataan Peninsula, and Manila was liberated shortly after that.

It's a powerful story of a promise of deliverance fulfilled. Sadly, though, only one-third of the men MacArthur left behind survived to see his return.

[5 : 24] And he said, I'm a little late, but we finally came. Waiting for humans to deliver us has its drawbacks.

But waiting for the Lord to deliver us doesn't have any. And that's what I'm going to be talking about. Waiting for the Lord.

Because only the Lord has the power and the character and the track record to fully carry out his promises. Psalm 40 is a psalm about waiting. And after 2020, I think we're all more familiar with waiting than we really had ever hoped we would be.

You know, waiting to live life again. Waiting for a vaccine. Waiting for this whole thing to be over. Waiting for a stimulus check. Maybe waiting for a job.

But Psalm 40 isn't just about waiting. It's about learning to wait well. And that's what we want to do. That's what God wants us to do. It's about celebrating God's character and faithfulness, even as we're waiting to be delivered again.

[6 : 33] And God has used this psalm more times than I can count in my life to remind me of this truth. I was going to sum up what I want to share this morning. It'd be this.

God's faithfulness to deliver us from trials in the past enables us to praise him through trials in the present. God's faithfulness to deliver us through trials in the past enables us to praise him through trials in the present.

Being delivered from any trial is a great feeling. But that feeling is often overshadowed by the fact that being delivered from one trial doesn't mean you don't have more trials waiting. And the longing and pain and discouragement and the darkness that accompany the new trials completely overshadows the joy you had and be delivered from some previous trial.

But here's what Psalm 40 is going to help us see. The trials we're currently experiencing, I trust that in this room, a lot of us are going through different trials.

I don't know what they are, but God certainly does. Those trials aren't meant to destroy us or even discourage us. They're meant to direct our thoughts to the only one worthy of our trust.

[7 : 55] And may God's spirit direct our hearts to him as we read and study this Psalm this morning. Psalm 40. This is the word of God. This is the most important thing I'll say this morning. So listen up.

I waited patiently for the Lord. He inclined to me and heard my cry. He drew me up from the pit of destruction, out of miry bog, set my feet upon a rock, making my steps secure.

He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God. Many will see in fear and put their trust in the Lord. Blessed is the man who makes the Lord his trust, who does not turn to the proud, to those who go astray after a lie.

You have multiplied, O Lord my God, your wondrous deeds and your thoughts toward us. None can compare with you. I will proclaim and tell of them, yet they are more than can be told.

In sacrifice and offering you have not delighted, but you have given me an open ear. Burnt offering and sin offering you have not required. Then I said, behold, I have come.

[9 : 18] In the scroll of the book, it is written of me. I delight to do your will. Oh my God, your law is within my heart. I have told the glad news of deliverance in the great congregation.

Behold, I have not restrained my lips. As you know, O Lord, I have not hidden your deliverance within my heart. I have spoken of your faithfulness and your salvation.

I have not concealed your steadfast love and your faithfulness from the great congregation. As for you, O Lord, you have not restrained your mercy from me.

Your steadfast love and your faithfulness will ever preserve me. For evils have encompassed me beyond number. My iniquities have overtaken me and I cannot see.

They are more than the hairs of my head. My heart fails me. Be pleased, O Lord, to deliver me. O Lord, make haste to help me. That those be put to shame and disappointed altogether who seek to snatch away my life.

[10 : 27] Let those be turned back and brought to dishonor who delight in my hurt. Let those be appalled because of their shame who say to me, Aha! Aha!

But may all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you. May those who love your salvation say continually, Great is the Lord.

As for me, I am poor and needy. But the Lord takes thought from me. You are my help and my deliverer.

Do not delay. Oh, my God. Okay, we are going to look at Psalm 40 in three sections.

Deliverance remembered. Deliverance responded to and deliverance anticipated. Here is the first section. Deliverance remembered. Verses 1-5. He begins, I waited patiently for the Lord.

[11 : 32] He inclined to me and heard my cry. He drew me up from the pit of destruction out of their miry bog and set my feet upon a rock, making my steps secure. Literally, the psalm begins, Waiting? I waited.

He wasn't just sitting around kind of just doing nothing. He was expectant. It was an expectant waiting. It wasn't inactivity, distraction.

He wasn't just holding on. It was trusting that God knew what was happening and was doing something about it. David looked to his own resources and came up with nothing.

So he placed his hope for deliverance fully on the Lord. And he talks about being drawn up from the pit of destruction and the miry bog.

We have no idea what those are. Pit of destruction. You know, he wasn't like stuck in the mud. His chariot wasn't stuck in the mud. We don't have no idea what it is. What he was saying.

[12 : 28] That's good. Because we can put our own pit of destruction in there. We can put our own miry bog in there. Anything we're waiting to be delivered from right now, that's our pit of destruction.

That's our miry bog. And David was waiting to be delivered and his time of waiting came to an end. God delivered him. And the result, his response, was a song.

He said, verse 3, he put a new song in my mouth. Song of praise to our God. And the Bible talks about a new song. It's not talking about necessarily a new song that was written.

It's saying that it's a fresh response to a fresh demonstration of God's power and mercy. So it might be an old song sung in a new way.

So for us, it might look like a couple who's been trying to have a child for six years. Negative test after negative test after negative test.

[13 : 31] And then one morning, it's positive. It's like being trapped in a recurring sin for years.

And then through prayer and counsel and God's word, one day you wake up and you realize, you know what? I don't struggle with that anymore. It's like, wow. This is so great.

It's about having a hip or a joint replaced. It's been causing you chronic pain for years. And all of a sudden, you don't experience that pain anymore. And you know, what do you want to do after that?

You want to sing. Let's sing. You don't even have to have a good voice. You might sing like Walt or something. Walt has a great voice. I'm just kidding. When we're delivered, old songs have new relevance.

Ponder anew what the Almighty can do. And you're thinking, yeah, what he can do is make me pregnant. That's what he can do. After all these years, that's what he can do.

[14 : 36] My song when enemies surround me. There may have been some people who've just been causing you all kinds of trouble. And all of a sudden, the Lord does something to them. He moves them away.

You know, they stop talking. But you just realize, I'm delivered. No power of hell. No scheme of man can ever pluck me from his hand.

And you're thinking, yeah, that's true. That's just what happened. It's hard not to sing when you've been delivered. And here's what we need to remember.

That's God's plan. He wants us to sing. Because he wants other people to hear about his power and kindness in our life. He wants others to know about it.

It's not just for our own sake that God delivers us. He delivers us so other people will know how great he is. So that's what David says. He says, many will see and fear, verse 3, and put their trust in the Lord.

[15 : 36] They'll sing their own new song. So my deliverance results in other people saying, yeah, the Lord can do that. And then, as he reflects on what God has done, he turns it into an admonition.

He gives us counsel in verse 4. He says, blessed is the man who makes the Lord his trust, who does not turn to the proud, to those who go astray after a lie.

When David needed help, he could have turned to his own resources. David was no wimp. I mean, he dealt with wolves as a shepherd.

He had defeated Goliath. He had led armies. It wasn't like he had no resources in himself. But he didn't trust in himself. He waited patiently for the Lord.

He walked in humility and trusted God. He's going to deliver him. So he turns to us and says, hey, be humble. Trust the Lord.

[16 : 37] Don't be proud. You'll be blessed because blessed is the man who makes the Lord his trust. Blessed fundamentally means happy to experience well-being.

And David's saying, look, you want to be happy? Don't pursue the things that you think are going to fulfill you. Trust the Lord. That is what will make you blessed. That is what will make you happy.

Because there's another path we can walk down that won't make us happy. And that's trusting something else to deliver us. It's the path of the proud.

It's the path of those who are wise in their own eyes and who say, you know what? I can handle this. I can do this on my own. And you know, we, in America, we tend to pride self-sufficiency.

It's like, yeah, you do it yourself. Yeah. God doesn't value self-sufficiency. In fact, he poses it. And so if we want to be happy and blessed, we're not going to do what the proud do.

[17 : 34] They go astray after a lie. And that word literally means idols. They follow idols and say, hey, you deliver us. And our culture and our media is always feeding us those lies about what can deliver us.

What is it right now? Science will save us. Education will deliver us. A vaccine will fix what's wrong with us.

Not against vaccines. But it's not the ultimate place we put our hope. More money will make everything right. Political power is the answer. We can save ourselves.

God says you cannot save yourself. And David's saying, make the Lord your trust. Not that stuff. It's not that God doesn't use means.

But it's not our ultimate hope. Those things are not our ultimate hope. God is. Make the Lord your trust. And David drives that point home in the next verse as he speaks directly to the Lord and reminds us there's no one like him.

[18 : 46] And often the reason we trust other things is because we don't know how good and powerful the Lord really is. So we look to other things. So in verse 5 he says, You've multiplied, O Lord my God, your wondrous deeds and your thoughts toward us.

None can compare with you. I will proclaim and tell of them, yet there are more than can be told. A number of places in the Psalms they use these extreme ways of saying things and just say, you know, there's no way you're going to really understand this.

No way you're going to get to the end of this. I'll proclaim and tell of them, yet there are more than can be told. God's wondrous deeds in our lives aren't random acts of kindness.

It's not like he's just throwing them out indiscriminately. And he's not. They're rooted in his thoughts for us, which are his plans for our lives. You've multiplied the Lord my God, your wondrous deeds and your plans for us.

And God just doesn't add them up. His wondrous deeds aren't, well, here's one. Here's another. Here's another. No, he multiplied them.

[20 : 01] Here's one. Here's five more. Here's 25. Here's 125. I've been thinking about this for a long time. Here's 625.

Who is like this? David goes, no one compares with you. Who is like this? Who is constantly thinking of ways to bless us? Anybody you know?

I mean, I have people come to mind, but they're not like the Lord. The Lord's always thinking of ways to bless us, encourage us. Who is constantly thinking of ways to sustain us and deliver us?

You know, as parents, Julie and I had dreams for our kids. We have six kids, expecting grandkids number 20 and 21. Yes. This year. You know, we thought of our kids. We thought, what hobbies would they enjoy?

What sports would they be involved in? What instrument they would play besides the piano? What kind of person would they marry? What would they do for a living?

[21 : 00] We love thinking about their future. Multiply that exponentially and you have God's plans. Like, before your parents even met, he thought through who they would be, where you would be, where you would be, your hair color, exactly how tall you'd be, what your voice would sound like, your strengths and your weakness.

He planned when you would first roll over. He planned when you would first roll over. When you take your first step. And he knew what your first word would be. His wondrous deeds include him choosing us and calling us and opening our hearts to the gospel.

And justifying us and adopting us into his family and changing us into the likeness of his son and making sure that his love and mercy would follow us all our days until we see him face to face.

And that's just some of them. None can compare with him. Do you understand why David says that? None can compare with him. I love what Charles Spurgeon says about this.

How sweet to be outdone, overcome, and overwhelmed by the astonishing grace of the Lord our God. And that's what should be happening to us.

[22 : 30] I've used that verse so many times to encourage my soul. You have multiplied, O Lord my God, your wondrous deeds and your thoughts toward us. None can compare with you. I will proclaim and tell of them.

Yet they are more than can be told. Want a good memory verse? That's a great memory verse. When we can't see any possible way out of our present situation, God is multiplying his wondrous deeds and your thoughts toward us.

So, how should we respond to this kind of love and mercy and power? Well, the next five verses, David tells us. Deliverance responded to.

Just looked at deliverance remembered. Now, deliverance responded to. Verses 6 and 10. 6 through 10. After a time of victory or deliverance, the Israelites would typically have responded with some kind of sacrifice.

You know, it just seemed right. God delivered us. We should offer some kind of sacrifice. Maybe a thank offering to express gratefulness. Maybe a free will offering in response to a value made or a burnt offering to express commitment to God.

[23 : 33] What kind of sacrifice would God want when he answers our prayers for rescue? Here's what David says in verse 6. In sacrifice and offering, you have not delighted, but you have given me an open ear.

Burnt offering and sin offering you have not required. Now, to a person in the Old Testament, that would sound really strange. Wait a minute, wait a minute. Didn't God say he wanted sacrifices and now he doesn't?

Is he changing his mind? Is he moving the target? No, no, no. God ordained the sacrificial system as a gracious way of drawing near to him without our being consumed by his holiness.

But the sacrifices weren't the main concern. They weren't the end. He wants our hearts and he wants our obedience. And public displays of devotion are important.

But without the heart, they're worthless. They don't mean anything. God's not impressed. Jesus spoke a number of times about that. You know, you do things publicly, but it means nothing.

[24 : 49] And that's what the unusual phrase, you have given me an open ear, is saying. David's saying, I stand ready to hear whatever you're going to say, Lord.

I'm ready to do it. In Hebrews, that verse is quoted. You have given me an open ear, open ears, translated as a body you have prepared for me.

It's making clear that God opening our ears is meant to be more than simply listening to what God says.

It implies that we respond with our bodies, that we're going to fully obey whatever's on God's heart. And so in response to God rescuing him, David has an open ear to the Lord's commands.

He wants a relationship rooted in God's promises and completed in his obedience. So he continues, verse 7. Then I said, behold, I have come.

[25 : 49] In the scroll of the book, it is written of me. I delight to do your will. Oh, my God, your law is within my heart. What's that phrase, in the scroll of the book, it is written of me mean?

Well, two things. First, David recognizes that as the king, he's accountable to God's law. He submits to its authority.

In the scroll of the book, it's written of me. Second, he knows that God has sovereignly appointed him to do good works. He's confident God is wisely governing his life.

So he says, I delight to do your will, oh, my God. And that's the normal response. When God saves us from something, he delivers from something, we want to do what he's saying.

We want to obey him. We want to follow his commands. And you see that a lot in the Psalms. It's not just, you know, God, you delivered me. Now I'm going to go do whatever I want. That's not the attitude of the psalmist.

[26 : 50] That's not the attitude God's looking for. And a lot of times that's how we think. Just get me out of here and I can just, you know, finally do what I want. That's not why God delivers us.

He delivers us so we can walk in obedience to him. Like in Psalm 27, verse 11, he says, teach me your way, oh, Lord, and lead me on a level path because of my enemies. It's like in the midst of, you know, battling the people around me, I just want to obey you.

I just want to follow your will. I want to do what you want me to do. God delivers us so that we might love him with our whole heart, soul, mind, and strength.

He's looking not only for grateful lips, but grateful lives. That being said, what we say isn't unimportant.

And that's what we learn in verse, starting in verse 9. You know, verses 7 and 8, he says, I'm going to obey you. I want to do what you say. I want to follow your commands. But then in verse 9, he says this, I have told the glad news of deliverance of the great congregation.

[28 : 01] Behold, I have not restrained my lips, as you know, oh, Lord. I have not had your deliverance within my heart. I have spoken of your faithfulness and salvation.

I have not concealed your steadfast love and your faithfulness from the great congregation. I love what one commentator says about this passage. It's E.W.

Hengstenberg. I really don't know who that is, but this is a great comment on this passage. It may seem, on a superficial observation, as if David used here too many words.

But they will judge quite otherwise who understand the natural coldness of the human heart, its lukewarmness in the praise of God, its forgetfulness and unthankfulness, and the inclination of the lazy mouth to silence.

Brothers and sisters, a lot of us have lazy mouths. So one of the reasons we gather is to encourage us not to have lazy mouths.

[29 : 04] But when God set you free from something, when he's delivered you from something, when, you know, you were waiting for money to come in and it came in, or you're waiting for somebody to be healed and they get healed, or you're waiting for some provision in some way and it comes, you know, a lot of times we just move right on.

We just, we have lazy mouths. I find that really easy to do, to move on from an unexpected financial blessing, resolving a tense relationship, completing a difficult task that at one point I thought I could never even make it through, and then I find myself on the other side.

Like as soon as that's through, I move on to thinking about the next problem. I don't even, I don't even think about it.

Rather than taking the time for gratefulness and adoration, I move right to grumbling and anxiety again. It's like, oh, the Lord is so patient.

And whenever we do that, whenever we don't tell the glad news of deliverance and the great congregation and other people, we're robbing God of glory, which he deserves. And we're also keeping others from seeing his character, who he is.

[30 : 27] So Alan Ross in his commentary on the psalm says, divine intervention without the response of declarative praise destroys God's design.

God has plans for his people and those plans provide amazing acts on their behalf. Through it all, God desires expressions of praise and thanksgiving, because praise will edify and change others.

And you might not think of yourself as a very emotive person. I know we have different temperaments in here, different personalities. Some people are just like out there, and others of us are more, just kind of quiet.

But when the Lord delivers us, it's like nothing else. And even the most introverted among us have a reason to give the glory to God, to declare, to tell the glad news of deliverance.

That's what's happening on Sunday mornings. I mean, it's one of the things that's happening. We're telling each other, hey, the Lord's a deliverer. Hey, did you forget? The Lord's a deliverer. Well, you go through a hard time. Oh, I'm sorry. Let me feel your pain for a while.

[31 : 39] But hey, the Lord's a deliverer. We're all testament to that. If he can deliver us from our sins, he can deliver us from anything. He can deliver us from anything. Our expressions of praise and thanksgiving for God's steadfast love are meant to encourage and strengthen and change those around us.

Because God's faithfulness to deliver us from trials in the past gives us confidence, enables us to praise him through trials in the present. Now, in the next verse, verse 11, we're taken from responding to God's deliverance, how we should respond, to anticipating it.

This is the third and last section. Deliverance anticipated, verses 11 through 17. David moves from proclamation to prayer. He says, as for you, O Lord, you will not restrain your mercy from me.

Your steadfast love and your faithfulness will ever preserve me. Remember the first time I saw this, David had earlier said, I have not restrained my lips as you know, O Lord.

Well, why was he so like unrestrained in his praise? Why was he so expressive? Why was he so exuberant? Here's the reason. He says, as for you, O Lord, you will not restrain your mercy from me.

[32 : 58] He's not. He's not going to restrain his mercy. There is no sin, no extenuating circumstance, no situation, no failing, no misunderstanding in us that can cause God to hold back his mercy.

He is rich in mercy. Do we understand what it means for God to be rich in mercy, to be unrestrained in his mercy?

Well, I'm going to ask Dane Ortland to help us. He wrote the book *Gentle and Lowly*. He talks about God's mercy, God being rich in mercy. And he says this, it means his mercy is not calculating and cautious like ours.

It is unrestrained, flood-like, sweeping, magnanimous. It means our haunting shame is not a problem for him, but the very thing he loves most to work with.

It means our sins do not cause his love to take a hit. It means on the day when we stand before him quietly, unhurriedly, we will weep with relief, shocked at how impoverished a view of his mercy-rich heart we have.

[34 : 18] He's that merciful. He will not restrain his mercy from us. And that reality enables David to stare his current situation in the face, and it's not good because he needs that mercy now.

Verse 12, evils have encompassed me beyond number. My iniquities have overtaken me. I cannot see. They're more than the hairs of my head. My heart fails me. Doesn't it sound a little bit like David's right back where he started, only that he hasn't been delivered yet?

You know, and this time, his problems are a result of his own sins. You know, my iniquities have overtaken me. It's a pit and a miry bog, and he's partly responsible. Do you ever feel like the Lord can't deliver you because you're to blame?

The Lord loves to deliver us when we're to blame. He really does. Even from pits and bogs of our own making, he loves to deliver us.

So David cries out, verse 13, Be pleased, O Lord, to deliver me. Make haste to help me. Let those be put to shame and disappointed who seek to snatch away my life.

[35 : 24] Let those be turned back and brought to dishonor who delight in my hurt. Let those be appalled because of their shame and say to me, Aha! Aha! You ever have people around you who just are waiting for you to fall? They're just waiting for you to do something wrong because they're going to catch you in it.

And while David owns his current part in the trial, his part in his current trial, he's aware he has enemies. We have enemies, too. You might be thinking of some right now. Or maybe not.

If you don't have enemies right now, there are many people who stand against the advance of the gospel, what we're doing right here. Many people who stand against the health of the church, the authority and sufficiency of God's word, and God himself, and they stand against you.

And those men, enemies may take many forms. Behind them all is one individual, and that would be Satan, the father of lies, and our eternal foe. And we can pray these words at any time for his defeat.

But in verse 16, David turns from his circumstances and what others are saying about him to what we should be saying about the Lord. Verse 16, How can we say great is the Lord continually when life doesn't turn out like we thought it would?

[36 : 44] How do we do that? When our plans are obliterated and our future is filled with more questions than answers. Because our joy doesn't come from getting our specific prayers answered or our specific questions answered.

It comes from knowing that God has revealed in the past who he is through his past deliverances, and he doesn't change. He doesn't change. God's faithfulness to deliver some trials in the past enables us to praise him through trials in the present.

We may not know what wondrous thoughts the Lord has for us right now, but we can be sure he's always writing new chapters and new stories and giving us fresh reasons to declare that he is a God of steadfast love and faithfulness.

So we can say continually, great is the Lord. Pastor Christopher Ash wisely reminds us, we praise not because the present is easy, but because the future is glory.

David concludes his prayer. As he concludes his prayer, we find him anticipating deliverance once again. As for me, I am poor and needy.

[37 : 59] But, but, the Lord takes thought for me. That's all we need to know. The Lord takes thought for me.

You are my help and my deliverer. Do not delay, oh my God. Praising God's character and faithfulness doesn't automatically remove our trials. Things might look exactly like they did, but our perspective changes.

And with fresh conviction, we can say, yeah, I am poor and needy, but, this changes everything. The Lord takes thought for me.

And his thoughts are not random, or passing, or questionable. They are intentional, permanent, and good.

We may not know what his thoughts for us right now are, but we know that they are good. And that's why we can say, continually, great is the Lord.

[38 : 58] Now, I would only guess that there are some of us who are so discouraged, so immersed in our pain, or lost right now, you've been waiting so long for the Lord to deliver you, that none of this is helpful.

Because I can't even remember any deliverances in the past. Well, we have a deliverance to look back to that David could only point to.

And he does that in the middle of this psalm, verses 6 through 8. So we're going to go back there. God led the writer of Hebrews to quote these verses and put them in the mouth of Jesus, speaking of his incarnation.

He says, in Hebrews 10, 5 through 7, Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for me.

In burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure. Then I said, Behold, I have come to do your will, O God, as it is written of me in the scroll of the book. You know, David wanted to walk in God's ways.

[40 : 04] David wanted to obey his commandments. But he failed. He was immoral. He was an adulterer. He was a liar. He was a murderer. And we'll fail too.

But David points us to the Savior who one day would say with us, I am poor and needy. And he is the only one who can truly say, Behold, I have come in the scroll of the book.

It is written of me. I delight to do your will. O my God, your law is within my heart. It was written of him in the scroll of the book over and over and over that he would be a descendant of David, born to a virgin in Bethlehem.

God's law was within his heart as he healed the sick, freed the captives, and even as he was betrayed for 30 pieces of silver. He delighted to do God's will as he was crucified with criminals, forsaken by God, and pierced for our transgressions and crushed for our iniquities.

And it was written that he would be buried in a rich man's tomb and rise from the dead. Jesus has done what no sacrifice could do and because of his perfect humility and obedience whenever we struggle to feel God's love in our present trials, we can look back to Calvary where God's love was fully on display and his delivering us from our sin and his wrath was fully achieved.

[41 : 40] Because Jesus delighted in doing his Father's will perfectly, we can be sure that when we fail to do that will as we will even today, we are never out of his sight, never away from his presence, and never absent from his God.

We can be certain that in the midst of interminable waits and wanderings and losses and longings and disappointments and delays, God is setting the stage for a mind-boggling, joy-expanding, never-ending celebration around his table at the marriage supper of the Lamb!

where all sin and all pain and all death and all waiting will be over. And more than anything else on earth, more than anything we can imagine, that's something worth waiting for.

And that's what we're doing. Father, we pray that you would seal these words in our hearts, the words of David in Psalm 40, that we would have confidence that as you have delivered us in the past, you will deliver us again in the future because of your great mercy, because of what Jesus has done, and we thank you for it.

May we declare continually, great is the Lord. Amen. Let's stand together. You've been listening to a message at a Sunday celebration at Trinity Grace Church in Athens.

[43 : 19] For more information about Trinity Grace, please visit us at trinitygraceathens.com Thank you so much,