

Series: Psalms

Title: Christ Teaches Us to Look

Text: Psalm 34: 4-8

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In Psalm 34 we have the words written by David when God had delivered him from the hand of his enemies to the cave Adullam. This Psalm declares what David taught his brethren when they came to him in the cave Adullam.

But as with all the Psalms, we look to Christ. These are the words of Christ to his people now that God has raised him from the hand of his enemies to God's right hand. This is what Christ teaches his brethren when God draws us to him. In the first four verse, we heard Christ teach us to glory only in Jehovah, our triune God. This time, in verses 5-8,

Subject: "Christ Teaches Us to Look."

Divisions: He begins by showing what God did for our brethren in the past who looked to the LORD God—**Psalm 34: 5: They looked unto him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed. 6: This poor man cried, and the LORD heard *him*, and saved him out of all his troubles.** Then Christ declares the main point of his message to his people—**Psalm 34: 7: The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.** Lastly, Christ gives the most important exhortation and promise that we will ever hear—**Psalm 34: 8: O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him.**

Proposition: All who look to the triune God, trusting, believing on Christ, shall be saved.

Christ Jesus is the Prophet, Priest and King who teaches all his people as he does in this Psalm. His message to his people is "*Salvation is of the Lord.*" Christ's message when he walked this earth is his message to us from God's right hand. It is the same message he declares to us in this Psalm,

John 10:9: I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved,...

You and I who already believe may think we do not need to be taught this over and over again. But we are mistaken if we think that. Faithful preaching is not preaching new things. Faithful preaching is *putting believers in remembrance* of things they already know.

1 Timothy 4: 6: If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.

2 Peter 1: 12: Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know *them*, and be established in the present truth. 13: Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance;

Philippians 3:1: To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe.

So once again, I am here to put you in remembrance of what many already know. It is not enough to merely have a knowledge of Christ. All who believe on the triune God by believing on Christ Jesus the Son of God and confessing him shall be saved.

FAITHFUL WITNESSES OF THE PAST

Psalm 34: 5: They looked unto him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed. 6: This poor man cried, and the LORD heard *him*, and saved him out of all his troubles.

It is helpful to encourage us to believe on Christ by seeing those in the past who believed on God to save them. So our Lord Jesus beings by giving us faithful witnesses of the past.

First, our great Prophet, Priest and King gives us the example of humble believers from the past. He said in verse, “*the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad.*” Speaking of those humbled by God’s grace, he said, “*They looked unto him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed.*”

“*They looked*”—Christ declared to Nicodemus using the brazen serpent that eternal life is given freely to sinners who look to Christ and him crucified. (Nu 21: 4-9; Jn 3: 14-18) Salvation is not by works of righteousness we have done nor by merely sorrowing over our sin. Salvation—eternal life—is given to those who look to Christ. Augustus Toplady wrote:

Could my tears forever flow,
Could my zeal no languor know.
These for sin could not atone
Thou must save, and Thou alone:
In my hand no price I bring,
Simply to Thy cross I cling.

Our Savior declares that we must actually look. We must actually believe on Christ.

Isaiah 45:22: Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else.

Hebrews 12:1: 1: Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, 2: Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

When these humble believers from the past looked to the LORD—“*they were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed.*” When God gave them light, they looked and they were lightened. They were given the light of life. As the margin says “they flowed together” or were made one with Christ like the vine and the branch. And by being given the Light of Christ “*their faces were not ashamed.*”

All who look to Christ the Light are enlightened by Christ the Light.

Psalm 18:28: For thou wilt light my candle: the LORD my God will enlighten my darkness.

The margin says they “flow together.” All who look to Christ are made one with Christ and flow together with Christ like the sap from the vine to the branches. Christ becomes our Life. Christ has entered in giving us life and making us look. And when we look to Christ we are given more light.

Psalm 36:9: For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light.

Therefore, *their faces were not ashamed*. All who are made to behold the Light of Christ, are no longer ashamed to trust the Lord. They are not ashamed before men to confess Christ. And they shall never be put to shame for trusting Christ.

Romans 10: 10: For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness;

The Light of Christ which lightens the face of a man is when the Spirit of God purges our conscience to know that the righteousness of Christ is our Righteousness. That is when a man is made willing to confess Christ.

Romans 10: 10:...and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. 11: For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

Confession does not mean that we have to stand up and make a confession. It means we will not be ashamed to tell men or to declare his word to men.

A great many preachers will tell you privately that they believe the doctrine of election, predestination, and particular redemption but they will not preach Christ publicly. It is because they are ashamed. They do not believe on Christ.

It is in a man's face that we see when a man is ashamed. His face turns red with the blush of shame. But those who actually look to Christ are never ashamed! Instead we are given the light of life, the light of righteousness and holiness and joy and peace and comfort and confidence in Christ.

Isaiah 45:16: They shall be ashamed, and also confounded, all of them: they shall go to confusion together that are makers of idols. 17: But Israel shall be saved in the LORD with an everlasting salvation: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end.

Brethren, go home and read Hebrews 11 and see all those believers from the past who looked to Christ. You will see that they were all given Light, all made one with Christ and not one was ashamed to confess Christ and not one who confessed Christ were put to shame for trusting him.

Then, better than all past witnesses, Christ uses himself for the example—*“This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles.”* Christ is the Son of God, the second person in the holy trinity; equal with God the Father and God the Son. But he humbled himself, took flesh like unto his brethren, and under the law he served God in perfect obedience, even unto the death of the cross to make us righteous and holy in him. As he suffered, he cried to the Father and he was heard.

Hebrews 5: 1: For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things *pertaining* to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins:

And pertaining to men,

Hebrews 5: 2: Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity. 3: And by reason hereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins. 4: And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as *was* Aaron. 5: So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee. 6: As he saith also in another *place*, Thou *art* a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. 7: Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death,...

As Man, Christ made himself servant to God to work out perfect holy heart-obedience to God for his people. He served God to establish his people in perfect righteousness before his law. Therefore, he was entirely dependent upon God as he bore our sins then bore our curse to justify his people from our sins. So we see him praying and making supplications to God just like you and I do—except he did so without sin, perfectly.

In the Garden of Gethsemane, he said, *“My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death...And he...fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him.” “He offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death.”*

On the cross, he looked to the Father, praying—*“My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring? O my God, I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest not; and in the night season, and am not silent. But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel. Our fathers trusted in thee: they trusted, and thou didst deliver them. They cried unto thee, and were delivered: they trusted in thee, and were not confounded. But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people.”* [In our Psalm he says of himself, *“This poor man cried”*—this afflicted, sin-bearing, God-forsaken, man-forsaken man, cried.] *I was cast upon thee from the womb: thou art my God from my mother’s belly. Be not far from me; for trouble is near; for there is none to help.”* (Ps 22: 1-10)

Hebrews 5: 7:...and was heard in that he feared; 8: Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; 9: And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;

Having perfected obedience, wisdom, holiness, righteousness, redemption for his people, having perfected glorifying God to the highest, God heard him and raised him from the grave to God’s right hand and Christ is the Author of Eternal Salvation. He is the maker of Salvation and he is all salvation unto all that cast all their care on him.

Oh what faithfulness we see in Christ! As the High Priest faithful to God and his people even unto the death of the cross we see his faithfulness as God who heard him raised him. In our Psalm, we see his faithfulness to teach us that he is faithful, to make us unashamed and bring his redeemed to cast all our care on him! We see his faithfulness to all who ever looked to him in that he saved all our brethren of the past.

THE MAIN POINT

Psalm 34: 7: The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.

This is the gospel, the point of Christ’s message in our Psalm. Our God has many created angels sent forth to protect those that fear him and deliver them.

Hebrews 1:14: Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

But THE Angel of the LORD is Christ Jesus the Son of God! He is the Angel of God's presence, the Angel of the covenant, the Captain of our salvation, the Leader and Commander of his people. Christ is the Angel who was with Moses and the children of Israel in the wilderness.

Exodus 23: 20: Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. 21: Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions [not let them go unchastised]: for my name *is* in him. 22: But if thou shalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I speak; then I will be an enemy unto thine enemies, and

an adversary unto thine adversaries. 23: For mine Angel shall go before thee, and bring thee in unto the Amorites, and the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Canaanites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites: and I will cut them off.”

Isaiah 63: 9: In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old.

Those that really fear him, those that really obey his voice, Christ is the Angel of God’s presence, who with his heavenly host of angles, always constantly *“encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.”*

Zechariah 9: 8: And I will encamp about mine house because of the army, because of him that passeth by, and because of him that returneth: and no oppressor shall pass through them any more: for now have I seen with mine eyes.

The Targum is an Aramaic interpretation of the Hebrew Bible from around the 1st century AD. In the Targum this verse reads, *“and I will cause my glorious Shechinah to dwell in the house of my sanctuary, and the strength of the arm of my power shall be as a wall of fire round about it.”*

I pray God would give us hearts to understand how true God is encamped about us. Christ and the heavenly host of angels will protect and defend his believing people like a fire round about us. God says *no oppressor shall pass through them anymore:*

- Not the law—Christ fulfilled it and honored it
- Not justice—Christ fully satisfied it
- Not Satan—Christ crushed his head
- Not false prophets
- No governments of this world nor wicked men nor heretics with their heresies
- None shall stop God’s church from assembling to worship him in spirit and in truth.

God says, *“for now have I seen with mine eyes.”* God has seen Christ his Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption. And God is satisfied in him. He will keep us for Christ’s sake, even giving Christ the risen GodMan all power to do so.

He *“encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.”* There are many examples of this in scripture. But one of my favorites is when Elisha’s young servant awoke to see they were surrounded by the enemy. The young servant said, *“Alas, my master! how shall we do? And he answered, Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them. And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.”* (2 Ki 6: 14-15).

Christ entered covenant to save all God’s elect. Christ shed his blood to prepare a place for us. Christ will preserve us to that inheritance and not lose one. He is faithful to him that appointed him! That is why Christ promises his people,

John 10: 27: My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: 28: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any *man* pluck them out of my hand.

THE EXHORTATION

Psalm 34: 8: O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man *that* trusteth in him.

Christ declares the most important exhortation we will ever hear. May he make it his effectual command in our hearts.

We all hear this gospel each week and most of you have a knowledge of the truth. Most everyone here knows the truth that God must regenerate and give life. You know none can come to Christ except the Father draw him. You know repentance and faith are gifts of God. But he does not say, "*blessed is the man that knows doctrine.*" He says, "*blessed is the man that trusteth in him.*"

Happy is the man who actually takes refuge in Christ! It is not enough *to know* God gives light to those that walk in his light, you *must walk* in his light yourself. Do not make excuses that God must give us a heart to read his word. That is true! But I myself and you yourself must pick up the book and taste to see the Lord is gracious!

I was talking to a man about seeking and calling a pastor and supporting him. He said, "Well God is sovereign if he has a pastor for us he will provide him." I said, "Yes but you will have to pick up the phone, schedule the appointment, show up to hear and write the checks. God is not going to do that for you."

It is not enough to know a system of doctrine or enjoy hearing sermons or admire pictures of Christ in old testament scriptures. I myself must actually cast all my care on Christ. I myself must commit to Christ and his work of spreading the gospel. I must sacrifice to support the gospel being preached. I must not be ashamed of him but confess him before men—"Blessed is the man who trusts in him."

So let me end with a word for you who have not yet confessed Christ, "*O taste and see that the LORD is good.*" The happy man actually puts all his trust in the Lord. No one is more worthy of our trust than Christ. Believe on him and you shall have the light of life and joy, peace in Christ and not be ashamed!

For you he has just drawn to cast your care on him, "*As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.*" (1 Pet 2: 2-3) By desire he does not merely mean be thirsty for the Lord and his word. He means taste, drink it up and ask for seconds!

Then for you who have been in the faith for awhile...the same goes for you. We never grow beyond being a baby in our insatiable desire to drink up the Lord and feast upon the pure milk of the word. We must actually do it continually!

May God give us grace to not only believe the Lord is trustworthy but to always taste and put our trust in him and never be ashamed to speak of him before men! Those who truly look to Christ shall be enlightened by his Light and shall not be ashamed! May Christ teach us—may he command us effectually—to look!

Amen!