

HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY

Praise the Lord Psalm 33

May 12, 2024

INTRO.: Thank you Jessica for sharing your heart for MOM CO (Mom Community) formerly known as MOPS (Mothers of preschoolers), a wonderful ministry that we host here at First Baptist. As you can see from what Jessica shared, there is a lot that goes into this wonderful ministry. We highly value this ministry. This place is hopping with activity the second and fourth Wednesday morning of the month during the school year. Several years ago, it was recommended by the women of the church that instead of the church giving the women a gift on Mother's Day that we would give a gift to the 3 Crisis Pregnancy Care Centers we support in their honor. (Expectations Women's Center in Lewisburg, Your Loving Choices in Bloomsburg, and PCC Corner of Hope in Shamokin) So, we are doing that again this year. In addition, we are providing an opportunity for any who would like to give above their general giving, to give a gift to the MOPS ministry. You can do that by putting it in an envelope with MOPS written on it or writing MOPS in the memo of your check. Please keep this ministry in your prayers! As I begin this morning, I want to wish every mother a very happy and blessed Mother's Day. It is a wonderful opportunity to celebrate Moms and all they mean to us. We welcome those who may be here this morning as they are visiting their mother. My Mom was a wonderful lady who showed love to me and my 4 sisters in many, many ways. I have a wife who is a wonderful mother and grandmother. Yet, I recognize that for some it is a most difficult day. So difficult for some that they won't come to church on this day. Some have had a difficult relationship with their mother. The experience I had with my mom isn't the one that others have had. For some this day is difficult because you've wanted to be a mom but that hasn't happened yet. Others have had a child die, which is extremely heart wrenching as nobody expects to bury their child. We have Moms in our fellowship that are undergoing some very difficult health challenges. There are single moms who are totally exhausted yet grateful for the opportunity to be a mom. For some this is the first Mother's Day since your mom passed. This is my 9th Mother's Day since my mom went to be with the Lord and I still miss her. I would love for her to see what her grandchildren and great grandchildren are doing and accomplishing and for them to gain from her wisdom. Still others are caring for an aging mom who may or may not remember who you are. My goal this morning is to encourage you, wherever you are in your walk of life. This is a message meant to encourage moms as well as all who are here, listening over the radio, or watching online. To do this we're going to look at Psalm 33 and see why everyone of us can Praise the Lord. Let's read Psalm 33 in unison and see if you can pick out reasons why we can praise the Lord.

Psalm 33 Sing joyfully to the LORD, you righteous; it is fitting for the upright to praise him. Praise the LORD with the harp; make music to him on the ten-stringed lyre. Sing to him a new song; play skillfully, and shout for joy. For the word of the LORD is right and true; he is faithful in all he does. The LORD loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of his unfailing love. By the word of the LORD were the heavens made, their starry host by the breath of his mouth. He gathers the waters of the sea into jars; he puts the deep into storehouses. Let all the earth fear the LORD; let all the people of the world revere him. For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm. The LORD foils the plans of the nations; he thwarts the purposes of the peoples. But the plans of the LORD stand firm forever, the purposes of his heart through all generations. Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD, the people he chose for his inheritance. From heaven the LORD looks down and sees all mankind; from his dwelling place he watches all who live on earth—he who forms the hearts of all, who considers everything they do. No king is saved by the size of his army; no warrior escapes by his great strength. A horse is a vain hope for deliverance; despite all its great strength it cannot save. But the eyes of the LORD are on those who fear him, on those whose hope is in his unfailing love, to deliver them from death and keep them alive in famine. We wait in hope for the LORD; he is our help and our shield. In him our hearts rejoice, for we trust in his holy name. May your unfailing love rest upon us, O LORD, even as we put our hope in you.

INTRODUCTION TO THE PSALM:

Several years ago, I went to the eye doctor and began the journey with progressive lenses. Some of you have experienced what I am about to share. It is something that can come with getting older – yeah!! I needed some help with reading but also when I had to look far away. So, rather than bi-focals they came up with lenses that make it easier when you look down to read and when you look up for distance. The challenge is finding exactly where they adjust correctly. The doctor told me that I would spend my first weeks agreeing with everyone (my head going up and down), and he was right. It involved getting the right place for the right focus. The Psalmist begins by sharing truth that will get us in the right focus. It begins by praising the Lord in the first 3 verses.

James Montgomery Boice: The Psalms have been called "Israel's Hymnbook" because so many of the psalms are nationalistic or individualistic. They are written from Israel's perspective as a nation, or they express the personal defeats, victories, or longings of the writer, such as David. Psalm 33 is different in that it is calling on people everywhere to praise God and thank Him for His universal blessings.

This psalm begins with six commands:

Sing joyfully to the LORD, you righteous; it is fitting for the upright to praise him. Psalm 33:1

Praise the LORD with the harp; **make music** to him on the ten-stringed lyre. Psalm 33:2

Sing to him a new song; **play** skillfully, and **shout** for joy. Psalm 33:3

The commands are to praise the Lord with our voices, instruments, and to even shout! This was not a quiet time of praise. Reminds me of the celebration that they had after the wall of Jerusalem was rebuilt.

Nehemiah 12:27 At the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem, the Levites were sought out from where they lived and were brought to Jerusalem to celebrate joyfully the dedication with songs of thanksgiving and with the music of cymbals, harps and lyres.

Or how about the description of praise in Psalm 150.

Psalm 150 Praise the LORD. Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in his mighty heavens. **2** Praise him for his acts of power; praise him for his surpassing greatness. **3** Praise him with the sounding of the trumpet, praise him with the harp and lyre, **4** praise him with tambourine and dancing, praise him with the strings and flute, **5** praise him with the clash of cymbals, praise him with resounding cymbals. **6** Let everything that has breath praise the LORD. Praise the LORD.

Verse 3 encourages us to sing a *new song* to God. What does the psalmist mean?

James Montgomery Boice: Every praise song should emerge from a fresh awareness of God's grace.

H.C. Leupold: "The new song is one which springs freshly from a thankful and rejoicing heart.

P.C. Craige calls it "the ever-new freshness of the praise of God."

Steven Lawson: A *new song* is one directed toward God as opposed to an old song sung before a person's commitment of faith to God. An old song was a Canaanite song that would be worldly, meaningless, earthly, and man-centered, reflecting the heart of the writer. But a *new song* was heavenly, eternal, God-centered, and reflective of a redeemed heart. Every song of praise should emerge from a renewed heart that brings a new awareness of God's grace.

As you and I continue to walk with God on a daily basis we should have a better and deeper picture of God's grace for which we can ever praise Him. Since His mercies are new every day (Lamentations 3:23) so should our praise be new and fresh every day.

After commanding us to praise the Lord he gives the reasons why this should be a characteristic of a child of God. There are four things I would like to point out for all of us, including the mothers that are being celebrated today. Let us praise the Lord for:

HIS WORD

v. 4-9

Psalm 33:4-5 For the word of the LORD is **right and true**; he is **faithful** in all he does. The LORD loves **righteousness** and **justice**; the earth is full of his **unfailing love**.

You and I can count on God's Word being truth! He is faithful, dependable in ALL He does and says. Look at what these verses say about God: His word is right and true; He is faithful in all He does; He loves righteousness and justice; His love is unfailing. This is so unlike me! As you and I pick up this book (picture of a Bible) we can trust what it says. We can base our life on the Word of God.

Little children are often taught this song:

I have a book it teaches me everything that I know

And in this book it shows me how I need to grow

In my life, I read it every single day

It is the truth, it is my life, and it's my way

It is how God speaks to me

The B-I-B-L-E, yeah that's the book for me
I stand alone on the word of God
The B-I-B-L-E

Sometimes my friends they sing a different song
And I'm not sure if they're right or if they're wrong
So I go and get this book off of the shelf
And learn from God the Creator of Life Himself
It is his letter to me

Psalm 33:6–7 By the word of the LORD were the heavens made, their starry host by the breath of his mouth. **7** He gathers the waters of the sea into jars; he puts the deep into storehouses.

What does this remind you of? How about our series in Genesis? In Genesis 1 the phrase, *God said* is repeated 8 times. What did God have to do to create? He spoke! We read here that God created the *starry host* by the *breath of his mouth*. Melissa Ward (Jonathan & Melissa are our missionaries in Canada) posted these pictures of the Northern Lights taken from their back deck. AMAZING!!

None of us can speak anything into existence, but God spoke, and *it was so*. The psalmist tells us the response we should have to this truth.

Psalm 33:8–9 Let all the earth fear the LORD; let all the people of the world revere him. For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm.

Isn't it wonderful that we can know what God says is true! We can't say that about anyone else. With the Word of God and the Holy Spirit residing within us we have what we need to live godly lives.

2 Timothy 3:16–17 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Let us praise the Lord for His Word,

HIS PLAN

v. 10-11

Psalm 33:10–11 The LORD foils the plans of the nations; he thwarts the purposes of the peoples. **11** But the plans of the LORD stand firm forever, the purposes of his heart through all generations.

Nothing or no one can thwart the plans of God. He is absolutely sovereign and answerable to no one. We can trust that God has a plan for our lives. Even in the midst of challenges, heartbreaking events and circumstances, and even tragedy you and I can trust God. The question is, "Am I willing to submit myself to the will and plan of God?"

Man can brag and boast about what he's going to do, but this is the direction the Word of God gives.

James 4:13–15 Now listen, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money." Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. Instead, you ought to say, "If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that."

Proverbs 19:21 Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the LORD's purpose that prevails.

Romans 8:28–30 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.

When things seem to be going crazy in our lives, we can trust that God has a plan. Nations have come and gone but the plans of the Lord stand firm! When you and I make plans there is almost always a backup plan. God does not need a backup plan. Isn't it good to know that God has a plan and a purpose when it comes to our children? Isn't it good to

know that I can commit them to the Lord and allow Him to work in their lives through His Word, people, and circumstances?

Let us praise the Lord for His Word, His Plan and

HIS SIGHT

v. 12-19

Psalms 33:12 Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD, the people he chose for his inheritance.

Who is the writer referring to in this verse? This is written to the nation Israel, His chosen people. The church is not Israel, but we do know how God talks about His children in the New Testament. I am referring to those who have come to faith in Christ.

1 Peter 2:9-10 But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

James Montgomery Boice: God's watchfulness over us: The thought of God looking down on us and watching over us is so strong in this section that a number of scholars have titled it, "God's eye."

What do the following verses tell us about God's sight?

Psalms 33:13-15 From heaven the LORD looks down and sees **all mankind**; from his dwelling place he watches **all** who live on earth— he who forms the hearts of **all**, who considers **everything** they do.

Who can escape God's watchful eye? Nobody! To the unbeliever this should be a troubling and fearful truth.

Hebrews 4:13 **Nothing** in **all** creation is hidden from God's sight. **Everything** is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

What or who are you trusting in today? There is not one person who can save themselves from God's judgment of sin. In verses 16 and 17 the writer reminds all that it isn't the size of the king's army or the strong horse that will save anyone. Nobody will be able to stand against the Lord.

Psalms 33:16-17 No king is saved by the size of his army; no warrior escapes by his great strength. A horse is a vain hope for deliverance; despite all its great strength it cannot save.

To the believer God's watchful eye should be a source of encouragement and comfort. The Psalmist provides the contrast in the next two verses.

Psalms 33:18-19 But the eyes of the LORD are on those who fear him, on those whose hope is in his unfailing love, to deliver them from death and keep them alive in famine.

God delivered Israel over and over again from their enemies. Every follower of Jesus Christ is in a spiritual battle and God is the only hope of victory. How many times has God's hand of protection been on us and we haven't known it because He has spared us from something. I encourage you to read Psalm 139 and be reminded that God's presence will always go with us. How does this help you and me? God NEVER loses track of His children. We NEVER have to wonder if God knows what is going on in our lives. He is sovereign over all of it.

Psalm 139 reminds us, that even if we wanted to, we could never run away from the presence and watch care of God. When that child is sick, He is there. When you have a need, God is there. When there has been an accident God is there. Praise the Lord that He NEVER leaves His children!

Praise the Lord for His Word, His Plan, His Sight, and

HIS LOVE

v. 20-22

Psalms 33:20-22 We wait in hope for the LORD; he is our help and our shield. In him our hearts rejoice, for we trust in his holy name. May your **unfailing love** rest upon us, O LORD, even as we put our hope in you.

The phrase *unfailing love* is used 3 times in this Psalm (v. 5, 18, 22). It is the Hebrew word *hesed* which refers to God's faithful, covenantal love shown to His people.

It is because of all that we have read prior to this that we can trust God, the One who will never leave or forsake His children and the One who will always love us. In fact, He loves His children so much that He will discipline them when they disobey Him.

In Romans 8, the Apostle Paul asks this question, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?"

Romans 8:35–39 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? **36** As it is written: "For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered." **37** No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. **38** For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, **39** neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

In Charles Haddon Spurgeon's *Treasury of David* there is a story credited to Edward Calamy about a young boy who was at sea during a dangerous storm. The passengers were frightened and at their wits' end, but he was not disturbed at all. In fact he was even cheerful. The others asked how he could be cheerful when they seemed in danger of losing their lives. He replied that the pilot of the ship was his father, and he knew his father would take care of him.

When you come to faith in Christ you have a heavenly Father who will love you with an everlasting love. He always cares for His children.

SO WHAT???

May this Psalm encourage you today!

*Have I begun a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ?

*Take some time each day this week to read through Psalm 33 and reflect on the reasons I have to praise the Lord.

*List the reasons I have to praise the Lord and thank Him for those in prayer.

*Do I have a *new song* in my praise to God as I have continued to walk with Him, reading, studying, memorizing, and meditating on His Word?

The Joy of the Lord

It is said that George Frederick Handel composed his amazing musical *The Messiah* in approximately three weeks. It was apparently done at a time when his eyesight was failing and when he was facing the possibility of being imprisoned because of outstanding bills. Handel however kept writing in the midst of these challenges till the masterpiece, which included the majestic, "Hallelujah Chorus," was completed.

Handel later credited the completion of his work to one ingredient: Joy. He was quoted as saying that he felt as if his heart would burst with joy at what he was hearing in his mind. Sure enough, listening either to the entire work of *The Messiah*, or to the "Hallelujah Chorus" brings great joy to one's heart.

Similarly, in the midst of the many challenges he faced, including chains, imprisonment, and slander, the Apostle Paul, filled with the joy that Christ gives, could say, "Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!" (Phil. 4:4). May the joy of the Lord fill your heart today!

