

The fear of the Lord isn't merely an inward attitude, but apparently it has some outward actions!

ii. Promise (15-22)

LIVE THE STORY

The Gospel is intended to be learned and lived in community. The following questions are designed for use in our Community Groups as an aid to growth in the Gospel and Community.

- Do you think it is safe to assume that we naturally know how to pray? How would you answer this biblically?
- Hallesby suggests that you go to the book of Psalms “to expand your view of God.” In what ways has the Psalms already expanded your view of God?
- How do each of the two “personal” psalms involve others in the prayer? What does this say about the relational nature of prayer?
- In 142:4-6, the psalmist describes his desperate neediness and weakness. Why is there a big difference between a groveling *I am a worm* approach vs an *I am desperate, helpless, & needy*?
- How does Psalm 34 describe what the fulfillment of Psalm 142:7 might look like?
- What deliverance(s) or rescue has the Lord given in answer to your prayer that brought such joy that you gladly gave Him praise and thanksgiving from your heart expressed with passion outwardly? Does it still affect you today?
- What are the invitations to trust in the Lord which the psalmist gives to others in the community of saints? Why do you think the invitation to fear the Lord leads to instruction about what the fear of the Lord looks like?

The Psalms and Prayer

Jerry Cisar — April 17, 2016

Text: Psalm 142, 34

Introduction

A. The Psalms model prayer and worship for us.

Athanasius: *“Most of Scripture speaks to us; the Psalms speak for us.”*

i. The psalms restrict and expand our language for prayer.

ii. O. Hallesby suggests you begin reading the Book of Psalms to expand your view of God.

B. Paul instructs us, *“I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people....”* (1Ti 2:1)

I. An Exemplary Entreaty (Psalm 142)

Goldingay: *“These convictions that the psalm assumes are not ones Christians often assume about prayer.”*

A. 1-2 Sets out his intent...

B. 3-4 Now the psalmist engages God directly...

- i. **“You yourself know my path...”**

- ii. He knows that God knows, but the purpose of his prayer is to make sure God notices.

C. 5-6 *“I have no one or nothing else! You are all I have.”*

- i. His central request (142:6).

- ii. He calls on God to respond because of his desperate need... his weakness.

God meets us in our weakness, not in our strength. He comforts those who mourn, not those who live above desperation. God does not answer the prayers of people from a particular ethnic group, but of the needy. He shows pity and compassion.

iii. **What is our greatest need from God?**

D. v7 A Commitment to Respond to God

II. Thanksgiving and Invitation (Psalm 34)

A. Psalm 34 describes what it would look like for someone to fulfill Psalm 142:7.

Even our individual prayers have the congregation in view. This psalm is individual because he is giving thanks for what God has done for him rather than for all of them as a group, but he is telling the congregation what that means for them.

B. 1-3 He is boldly giving praise and thanksgiving to God and inviting the rest of the assembly to join in.

i. Mouth and body are involved in worship.

ii. v2 This outward worship is truly coming from the heart.

C. 4-8 explain why the psalmist is giving thanks and why it should matter to others.

i. 4 & 6 explain why the psalmist is giving thanks:

ii. 5 & 7 He gives them reasons why those listening should trust in the Lord also

iii. v8 is an invitation to all of us.

D. 9-10 **Invitation:** Fear Him; **Promise:** Have no lack!

E. 11-22 Invitation and promise are each are expanded upon.

i. Invitation (11-14)