

PRAYING GENUINELY WHEN GOD SEEMS HIDING

A Prayer of a Depressed, Sorrowful, Struggling Believer

Sermon Outline on Psalm 88

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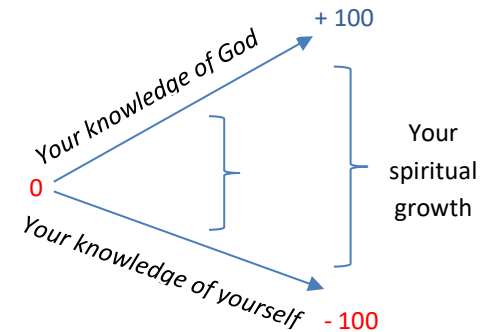
INTRODUCTION: I have been experiencing anxiety/ panic attacks, chest pains, fear of uncertainties, sleep deprivation, feeling weak, and spiritually troubled since I returned here in Louisville, KY.

VERSE-BY-VERSE EXPOSITION:

1. Earnest and urgent (vv 1-2)
 - a. “day and night” praying to God.
 - i. It shows urgency and seriousness about your petition
 1. Illustration (Calling 911 emergency hotline)
 - b. God, I beg, listen to me
 - i. Crying for God’s ear to hear our cry.
 - ii. But God seems silent or ignoring me
2. The reality of pain, troubles, sufferings, grief, sorrow, etc. (vv 3-9)
 - a. Honesty and genuineness of the one who sings this petition
 - b. Full of troubles
 - i. Weak (v 4)
 - ii. The feeling of being ignored (v 5)
 - iii. Blurry and dimmed future with grief (v 9)
3. Questioning God out of fear (10-12)
 - a. “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom” Prov. 1:7
 - b. Expressing their fears
4. In the dark moments of life
 - a. Is God hiding? Where is He?
 - i. God’s silence (v 14)
 - b. Death is near me
 - i. “I have suffered and been close to death” (v 3, 15)
 - c. The feeling of choked with trials and sufferings
 - i. God’s wrath, trials, and terrors are like a flood that drowns a person. (vv 15-17)
 - d. Rejected
 - i. Your friends, family, and neighbors were taken from you or rejected you or left you. (v 18)
 - e. Praying amidst the dark moments of life. (vv 8, 18)
 - i. “darkness is my closest friend.”

Illustration:

The more we know God, the more we know ourselves;
the more we gain knowledge of ourselves, the more we know
who God is.



THREE DIRECTIONS:

God's Sovereignty amidst His Silence

- God the Savior
 - o Praying to God who saves (v 1)
- God is always in control (the Psalmist petitions knowing that God knows everything)
 - o Purposeful sufferings (He is at work in our individual lives)
- God is God even when He is silent
 - o But God works in His silence (the redemptive plan story)

Praying Devotionally and Faithfully

- Regularly (v 1, "day and night"; v 9, "every day"; v 13, "in the morning")
- Honest and Genuine (expressions: crying out (1, 13), stretching out hands (v 9))
- With faithful believers
 - o We realize that we are not alone in this kind of feeling. Even the believers in ancient times knew these feelings. (e.g. Job, David, the Apostles, Early Church, The Early Baptists, the Holocaust, Wars, and even this period).

Our Hope is Christ: Christocentric Psalm

- A taste of Christ's sufferings
 - o We ought to suffer with Christ (1 Peter 4:12-13; Phil. 1:29-30)
- Christ is the hope
 - o His death and resurrection
 - o In His Name (union with Christ)
 - o We pray for his return (second coming of Christ)

Conclusion:

John Gill's Sermon on His Daughter's death, Elizabeth Gill

1. We grieve but with hope unlike the pagans and unbelievers
2. We seek God's mercy and sovereignty
3. We have hope in the resurrection and reunion of all believers
 - a. Death is like sleeping and resting in the arms of Christ then waking up in His presence.

CLOSING PRAYER