

The LORD Will Not Forsake

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Preacher: Ray Park

[0 : 00] All right, Psalm 94. Understand, O dullest of the people, fools, when will you be wise?

He who planted the ear, does he not hear? He who formed the eye, does he not see? He who disciplines the nations, does he not rebuke? He who teaches man knowledge, the Lord, knows the thoughts of man, that they are but a breath.

Blessed is the man whom you discipline, O Lord, and whom you teach out of your law, to give him rest from days of trouble, until a pit is dug for the wicked. For the Lord will not forsake his people, he will not abandon his heritage, for justice will return to the righteous, and all the upright in heart will follow it.

Who rises up for me against the wicked? Who stands up for me against evildoers? If the Lord had not been my help, my soul would soon have lived in the land of silence. When I thought my foot slips, your steadfast love, O Lord, held me up.

When the cares of my heart are many, your consolations cheer my soul. Can wicked rulers be allied with you? Those who frame injustice by statute. They band together against the life of the righteous and condemn the innocent to death.

[1 : 33] But the Lord has become my stronghold and my God, the rock of my refuge. He will bring back on them their iniquity and wipe them out for their wickedness. The Lord our God will wipe them out.

I think some of you guys know I enjoy watching instant karma videos. I know. So these are videos of everyday people going through normal experiences and doing something that's wrong or unjust. And then soon after, you see instant karma happen upon them. So there's the video of the guy. It's like a dash cam video on a highway. This guy on a motorcycle speeds up some car.

Obviously, they have been in some altercation. The guy sticks out his leg and kicks the car. And this makes him go off balance. And he falls. So there's that one. There are numerous videos of people stopped at red lights.

And some guy is like, I'm just going to go. And he speeds through the red light. And then out of nowhere, you see lights turn on. And the cop pulls him over. So it's like they're very satisfying.

[2 : 40] Because you see the justice happen right after. But it would be the opposite if nothing happened. Like the guy in the motorcycle kicks a huge at the end of the door and just drives away.

Or you see all these people running red lights. And they don't get pulled over. They just keep going. So that is not satisfying. That's really frustrating. And that's infuriating because something wrong is happening.

And you want justice. So that's where we are with this passage. Psalm 94. And it brings up the question of what do we do when we see injustice in the world?

Of things that are much more wrong than running red lights. What we see in this psalm is that it's a prayer of trust in God in the midst of an evil world.

Right? Trust that God sees and God will judge this evil world. It's broken up into three sections. So there's verses 1 through 7 with the psalmist crying out to God.

[3 : 40] And then there's verses 8 through 15 that acknowledges God's character. And then verses 16 through 23 about how we can trust God. So let's look at the first section.

Verses 1 through 7. Here we see the psalmist asking God to shine forth and to rise up. And God is characterized as the God of vengeance and justice. What's happening here?

I mean, why is the psalmist crying out to God? He sees evil people are succeeding. Evil people aren't getting their due. The wicked and the proud are happy. The arrogant and the evil are boasting.

They're killing vulnerable people. And beyond these crimes against their fellow man, they're transgressing against God by saying, like, God doesn't see us.

He's not going to do anything. Right? So that's the situation here. We've probably seen these kinds of things, like, have had firsthand experience with them. I mean, I just think back about my life of very common experiences in the classroom where you see somebody just, like, during a test sneaking, like, peeking over someone's shoulder and, like, acing the test.

[4 : 49] Right? Or, like, coworkers who steal ideas or steal work from other people. And they're the people who get raises and promotions. And it seems like nothing bad is happening.

Right? There's no justice. So how can this happen if God is sovereign? They don't fear God. They don't even feel any remorse.

But they feel proud, like they've gotten away with it. So when this happens, the psalmist is crying out to God. He's asking God to shine forth. So that's a quick lesson for us. You know, when times get difficult in these situations, instead of disconnecting from God, saying, God, I'm just going to forget about you because you're not here, he cries out to him.

Right? So we can imitate that. So in the second section, verses 8 through 15, we see that the psalmist speaks about who God is, so his character.

What about God's character? He affirms that God sees and hears and that God knows everything. And he punishes. And so he rebukes those who think that God doesn't see and hear.

[5 : 56] And he gives the rhetorical questions of, you know, God who created the ears and the eyes. Of course he hears and sees. Right?

It's kind of stupid to think that he wouldn't. So God sees and hears. He punishes. He also disciplines his people. Right? He teaches. He trains up. Proverbs 9.10 says, The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.

So it's God who teaches us and gives us wisdom to fear him. And finally, it says that God is faithful to his people. Verse 14 says, For the Lord will not forsake his people.

He will not abandon his heritage. That can be how we feel at times. But the psalmist is confirming that, you know, God is faithful to us. So this is a verse that we can cling to.

We can marinate on when we feel abandoned or feel lost. That God doesn't forsake us. Yeah, so in the second section, we have these takeaways, right?

[6 : 56] God sees. God disciplines. God is faithful. In the third section, it gets more personal for the psalmist. He talks about his own trust in God, how he will trust in God. He talks about how God has been his help.

He recounts how God is the one who has saved him. And, you know, this is useful for us. It's, you know, in our community group, we've talked about how it's helpful to remember the past times that God has helped us when times are tough.

Even if we can't see how God will save us in the current situation, we can think back about previous times and know that God's going to figure out a way. And we read how God will, quote, bring back on them their iniquity and wipe them out for their wickedness, right?

So God's going to be fully just. He's going to take vengeance. This might sound harsh, but I think this is really satisfying. To know that God will judge evil in the world.

Because if not, our options are really bad options, right? We can, we might be tempted to take justice into our own hands and just kind of burn with vengeance, right? We might resign ourselves to think that justice will never be served and be hopeless.

[8 : 09] We might actually give into the temptation of pursuing evil ourselves. Like, we're going to get away with it. So why not just give into it, right? Get ahead in the world.

But no, God is just and he does administer justice so we can be at peace. We can trust him. It can be hard when we see wrong in the world to cry out to God, to recount his character, to trust him.

So why might we not respond with faith in God? We might disagree with God, with his plans, with his system. His timing is too slow. And we want justice now.

Maybe his response is too lenient, right? He's being too nice to people. He doesn't bring down the hammer. Carolyn talks about how sometimes she wishes, you guys know like the staple button?

Like, oh, that was easy, like that commercial. She wishes she had like a similar button, except it's like a bomb that explodes people, right? As a way to like very quickly bring justice down on people. But God is lenient, right?

[9 : 15] God is merciful. You know, I think underneath those temptations, there are the thoughts, the false thoughts of maybe we know better than God, right?

Our timing is better or our judgment is better. Or that it's better if we control our life instead of God controlling circumstances, which, you know, aren't true, right?

I think even now, if I'm tempted to think about how it's better for me to control life, I'm reminded of my limitations. Because being a new parent, I'm so tired all the time, and I need to sleep like all the time, right?

Even the reminder that I need to sleep, and God neither sleeps nor slumbers, right, is a good reminder. He's all-powerful, and he's sovereign. So, I mean, I think about just to dig deeper into this part of God being lenient and God being merciful.

There's a verse in Ezekiel that says, Do I take any pleasure in the death of the wicked, declares the sovereign Lord. Rather, am I not pleased when they turn from their ways and live? So, God is just, but his desire is that everyone turns and lives, right?

[10 : 23] That's why he gave us the Lord, so that we have this way. So, when God brings down the hammer, it's not what we deserve, but it's so that Jesus can have already paid that debt, and that we can turn and know God and be free.

So, don't begrudge God for his mercy that saves the world, that saves us and saves others, but embrace it, and embrace it for others, too.

So, that's what the psalm is talking about in terms of takeaways, right? What are some things we can take away from the psalm? We can ask ourselves, when we witness wickedness, how do we react?

Do we cry out to God and remember his character? Or do we try to take things into our own hands? Against who do we wrong? Do we disregard God's mercy? Are we uncompromising and demanding justice?

Or do we remember that we've been forgiven in Christ? So, just an encouragement to, you know, let's remember the gospel and live in step with it for ourselves and for others. Brian, can we sing another song?

[11 : 26] Thank you.