

Blessed Are the Poor

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[0 : 00] For the recording, we're on Psalms 41. We just read verse 1. Blessed is the one who considers the poor. For those who think about the poor and the weak and allow them to make decisions, that's what David has on his mind here.

Because we've been given grace from God. And because of that, we aren't to harden our hearts and think that we're special and above other people. But we've been blessed so that we can take on and pick up the cause of the poor and the weak.

In referring to Christians in this verse, Charles Spurgeon said that they do not toss them a penny and go on their own way, but inquire about their sorrows. They sift out their cause.

They study the best ways for their relief and practically come to their rescue. Such as these have the mark of the divine favor plainly upon them. And as surely the sheep of God's pasture as if they wore a brand upon their foreheads.

So that's what is in view here of those who consider the poor. And really, when we want to think of an example, we can't get one better than Jesus.

[1 : 13] If we think of 2 Corinthians 8, 9, it says, For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you, by his poverty, might become rich.

And then as we look at the second half of verse 1, it says, In the day of trouble, the Lord delivers him. It isn't saying that we won't have troubles or hardships, but rather that God will preserve us and bring us through those hardships.

So we see God helping those who think about and help other people. Right? So that's the foundation. That's our first opening verse for this chapter.

Verses 1, 2, 3 lay out the promises and the blessings that come to those who consider the poor. So we see that those who consider the poor are blessed, but we also see in verse 2 and 3 that there are other blessings that come with it.

The Lord protects him, this is verse 2, and keeps him alive. He is called blessed in the land. You do not give him up to the will of his enemies. The Lord sustains him on his sickbed.

[2 : 28] In his illness, you restore him to full health. It can kind of seem odd at first to be rewarded for caring for the weak or giving to the poor.

It's almost as if I do it so that I get something back. But remember in the New Testament when Jesus was talking to the rich young ruler and he had everything and he comes to Jesus and says, What do I need to do to get into heaven?

And Jesus looked at him and loved him and said to him, You lack one thing. Go and sell all that you have and give to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven and come and follow me.

Although it sounds at first like Jesus is saying if you do these things, it's almost like buying your salvation. It isn't what he's saying. Rather, Jesus is exposing where the young man's heart is.

He seems like a pretty good moral person, but his love for his money is above everything else. And that's what Jesus is bringing out. He's told that he will get treasure in heaven by carrying and giving to the poor.

[3 : 35] Jesus is trying to get us to see that caring for the poor, loving those around us, that's what matters. It's who we love and not the stuff that we love.

We don't hold on to possessions in this life because Jesus has salvation and treasures for us that far exceed those things that we have here. And that's what Jesus is trying to get the rich young ruler, but also us to understand.

So the first part, those first three verses, is the blessings that we get from helping the poor. So David lays that out there. The next section, verses 4 through 9, David is giving us his situation here.

So as for me, this is verse 4, As for me, I said, O Lord, be gracious to me. Heal me, for I have sinned against you. My enemies say of me in malice, When will he die and his name perish? And when one comes to see me, he utters empty words, while his heart gathers iniquity. When he goes out, he tells it abroad. So just to break down a little bit of those verses, in verse 4, it says, O Lord, be gracious to me.

[4 : 47] Heal me, for I have sinned against you. At first, it seems a little odd because he's asking for healing because he's sinned.

I would think when you want grace from somebody, you would say, I've been good or I'm trying to do better and not, I've sinned.

So be gracious to me. But what we see here is David is asking for graciousness because he's broken. He says he's broken. That's why he sins towards the Lord.

It's because of that sin and that brokenness, he needs healing. And so that's why he's asking the Lord to be gracious. And then a little further down in verse 6, And when one comes to me, he utters empty words, while his heart gathers iniquity.

When he goes out, he tells it abroad. So what's happening here, if it doesn't make sense right off the bat, is that people are coming into David in whatever trial and sickness he's going through, and they're just giving him just fluffy, fake words.

[6 : 00] It's not, they don't mean it. They really, behind his back, they hate him. They're like, Oh, King David, we hope you feel better. If there's anything I can do, let me know. I hope you get better soon.

And then they turn around and leave, and they talk about him. They don't even care about his well-being. And that's what we see happening here. Verse 7, All who hate me whisper together about me.

They imagine the worst for me. They say, A deadly thing is poured out on him. He will not rise again from where he lies. Even my close friend in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted his heel against me.

In that verse, we're probably quickly reminded of Jesus' relationship to Judas. Right? Judas acted like a close friend and he ate bread with Jesus.

But in the end, we know that he betrayed him. So we have, the first section is blessings and promises to those who help the poor and the needy, who consider them, who do something about them.

[7 : 14] And then after that, we see David giving us a picture of the situation he's in. And then verse 10, we have David's request. So you're kind of getting the flow of what's going on with this psalm. David's kind of setting it up.

And it comes up to this verse as he makes his request. But you, O Lord, be gracious to me and raise me up that I may repay them. This is one of those sections where it sounds like there's some Christian revenge going on.

And almost David is saying it's okay to show revenge towards people. But we have to keep in mind that this is the Old Testament and we're talking about King David. John Calvin, which I thought was really good, he pointed out that David was not as one of the common people, but a king appointed by God.

And invested with authority. And it is not from an impulse of flesh, but in virtue of the nature of his office that he is led to denounce against his enemies the punishment that they merited.

Basically what he's saying, the office that God set up as king comes with reverence and authority. And when people act against it, it makes sense that they are judged and punished for that.

[8 : 29] So it's a little different than us taking vengeance on someone else. The vengeance that we take is by showing how God takes care of us, right?

In times of illness or a trial that we're going through. We get to show them that God helps us keep our faith and makes us stronger and brings us through those trials.

And that's what we proclaim about God. That's the revenge that we're showing back on them. So it's not like physical revenge that we're acting out on those people. But it's still revenge nonetheless. Because those are enemies. There are people who wanted to see you fail and yet they see that God comes behind us and lifts us up. And then we come to the last section of this chapter.

So we have the blessings and the promise that come with those who consider and love the poor. Then we have David's condition where he's going through this trial.

[9 : 29] He gives, he states his request and then through that the Lord is answering that request. So these last three verses is God, is David, saying how he trusts the Lord and also thanking God for delivering him through this.

So verse 11 is, by this I know that you delight in me. My enemy will not shout in triumph over me. So you start to get the idea that that Dave is being brought up out of his sickness and out of the trial that he's going through.

Also take note here when he says that my enemy will not shout in triumph over me. He's not saying that we're not going to have any enemies, just rather that there are no troubles that God can't help us triumph over.

So there will be trials, there will be sickness, there will be fill in the blank, but we have a God that brings us through that. Verse 12, you have upheld me because of my iniquity, or you have upheld me because of my integrity, not quite the same thing, and set me in your presence forever. Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting. Amen and amen. So it's kind of cool. In the beginning of this psalm, verse 1, we see that the blessing is coming from God to those who consider the poor.

[10 : 55] In this last verse, we see the blessing going back up to God after we have been blessed and taken care of by him. So, you okay?

So, we should, like David, be able to express gratitude and praise to God who has extended grace to us. So, what is the point of this psalm for us?

Hopefully, so far in what we've looked at, it has been an encouragement to see how David has held on to some of these truths. And we can easily see how this psalm, in so many ways, points to Jesus.

Just to give you a quick rundown of what came out of those verses. Jesus cared for the poor. That was not only the earthly poor, but the spiritually poor. Jesus cared for them.

Angels ministered to him when he was weak in the desert. That comes out in verse 3. His enemies hated him. They plotted against him. They wanted to kill him, like what was happening with David.

[12 : 05] We talked about how Judas, one of his close friends, betrayed him. That was talked about in verse 9. He was crucified and God raised him up. We see that in verse 10.

God delighted in him, verse 11. And he was upheld because of his integrity and perfectness. And now he sits in the presence of God forever.

And we see that brought out in verse 12. So it's really cool. There's a lot of connections that we can see between David and ultimately what we see taking place in Jesus. But, and that's good, but like how do, how do we connect with this psalm?

How does this psalm help us where we are? If we consider the poor, if we help the weak, if we, if we give to the needy, then will God reward us?

Right? So if we help those around us, does that mean God's going to give to me? And that is partly true. Only the order of it is wrong. God has considered and loved us, us being the poor and needy.

[13 : 10] He has given us grace. He's given us forgiveness. He's given us salvation. And it's because of that that we should consider those around us in need. Both from an earthly standpoint, so if you're able to help those in need with money or with food or with your giving of your time, then we do that.

But also from an eternal standpoint, and that is sharing the gospel. So I'll just say that again in case it was a little distracting. He's given us grace and forgiveness and salvation.

And because of that, we should consider those around us in need. Both earthly and spiritual by sharing the gospel. So that's what I think is what we can really get out of this psalm.

Not to mention all the other encouraging points that were brought out, but just seeing that God is looking for us, his people, to share his love with a world that's poor in so many different ways.

And we have that ability. So... That's it. You can want to...