

Gamma 26

Study 9

Praying Our Fears: A Study of Psalm 3

1. **Describe the two levels of fear David experienced in Psalm 3, providing an example for each.**

David's fear in Psalm 3 occurred within the context of fleeing from his son Absalom, a crisis that was notably "self-inflicted trouble" due to his past sins of adultery and the murder of Bathsheba's husband.

He experienced physical fear, like Absalom and his men trying to kill him, and spiritual fear, where people said there was "no salvation for him in God," attacking his identity and calling.

2. **How do worldly approaches to fear differ from Christian approaches**

Worldly approaches to fear are often characterised by a denial of God's reality.

This can involve looking inwards for solutions, such as through meditation or certain forms of Buddhism, where individuals seek answers within themselves rather than from a divine source.

In contrast, Christian approaches to fear are rooted in acting on the reality that there is a God.

When facing fear, Christians are encouraged to "look upwards" to God, acknowledging His existence and power, rather than solely relying on internal resources or denying the gravity of their circumstances.

3. **Reflection Question - Have you experienced fear in your Christian walk? How did you deal with that fear?**

4. List three negative consequences of suppressing emotions.

Suppressing emotions can lead to:

- High blood pressure.
- Physical illnesses.
- Emotional instability.

These consequences demonstrate that adopting a stoic attitude, or a "stiff upper lip," leads to detrimental effects on both physical and mental well-being.

Instead of suppression, the advocated Christian method is to "pray our emotions".

5. Explain how God acts as a "shield" for believers, distinguishing it from preventing all attacks.

God acts as a "shield" for believers, as expressed in Psalm 3:3: "But you, Lord, are a shield around me". Crucially, the concept of God as a shield does not mean that He prevents all attacks or "stops the arrows" from coming towards the believer.

Instead, like a Roman soldier's shield that protects him as he advances into battle, God's shield provides security and protection within His love, ensuring that challenges cannot separate believers from the love of God.

It allows believers to move forward confidently even amidst dangers.

6. Share if you have experienced this "shield" from God in dealing with your fear.

7. How did the video define "glory" and identify David's initial misplaced sources of glory?

"Glory" is difficult to define fully, likening it to trying to describe beauty versus a simple object like a basketball. However, it is fundamentally understood as "the infinite beauty and greatness of God's manifold perfections". The Hebrew word for glory, "kabod," conveys concepts of weightiness, honour, and splendour.

David initially placed his glory in his empire, his people, his reputation, and his family, which led to devastation when these were threatened.

8. Why is it crucial for believers to "shift their glory" to God, and what are the benefits of doing so?

Shifting glory to God means appreciating His inherent greatness and finding our worth in Him, rather than in finite things.

With God as one's glory, external conditions become irrelevant because "the Lord will be your everlasting light" and "your days of mourning shall be ended".

The early church in Acts 4 serves as an example: facing persecution and imprisonment of their leaders, they focused on the "Sovereign Lord" and His predetermined plan, which enabled them to be "filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness."

9. According to the Psalm, what was the immediate result for David after crying out to the Lord regarding his fears?

After crying out to the Lord, David found peace; he was able to lie down and sleep, and then woke up, knowing that the Lord sustained him despite his overwhelming troubles.

Takeaway

We are more accustomed to the world's approach in dealing with fear due to our fallen nature. That often causes us to take unnecessary and counterproductive "solutions" that more often not useful in dealing with fear.

Instead, looking to the Cross, we see the beauty, justice, and steadfastness of God, which we can trust and rest in His deliverance in His time, as King David did.