

# WELL WORN PAGES

THE VERSES WE RETURN TO AGAIN AND AGAIN

Nine Cries from a Grieving Heart

Psalm 86



# Key Question

Why are Psalms like this one critical to our Christian walk?

- They **model** biblical language
  - Helpful language to employ (raw honesty, desperate need, God's truth)
  - Dangerous language to avoid (angry, foolishly accusatory, bitter)

# Key Question

Why are Psalms like this one critical to our Christian walk?

- They **guide** my grieving
  - *“Keep back Your servant from presumptuous sins”* (Psalm 19:13)

# Key Question

Why are Psalms like this one critical to our Christian walk?

- They **refocus** my distracted gaze back on the only object worthy of my attention

**The psalms “teach us to speak with earnestness, to open the heart and pour out what lies on the bottom of it. They instruct us to speak earnestly amid storms and winds of every kind.”**

Martin Luther

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# Key Question

Why are Psalms like this one critical to our Christian walk?

- They help me **minister** to the grieving
  - Could you bear with David’s grieving?  
Would you?
  - Can you accept a “weak amen”?

**“How blessed is the thought that in  
condescension no less than in  
majesty God is infinite.”**

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# Focus Principle

God purposes to grant good gifts through a grieving process that He, Himself, graciously guides.



# 1. Hear Me! (v 1)

- Psalm 6:1-3 – broken **emotions**, broken **praise**, broken **syntax**
- Psalm 13:1-2; 35:17; 90:13; 102:1-2
- *Key Thought: Nothing like the **silence** of God in the face of distress brings the **sinking** feeling of **despair** (Psalm 77:7-9).*

**“Earnest, importunate prayer will be heard. For a while God may seem to disregard our cries, but in His own good time He will show Himself gracious.”**

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## 2. Save Me! (v 2)

- Psalm 61:1-2a
- Psalm 69:1-21 – fourteen adjectives of grief
  - overwhelmed, desperate, weary, accused, needy, shamed, alienated, humbled, mocked, waiting, longing, troubled, alone, taunted
- *Key Thought: My heart and mind must seek God's **solutions**, not their own (Psalm 69:13).*

**“Although we may be free from all criminality in a given matter, which has been made the occasion of trouble to us, yet in our past lives there has been so much that was hateful to God, that it is always safe and right that we should rest the whole weight of our plea on mercy alone.”**

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# 3. Be Merciful to Me! (v 3)

- Psalm 10:17
- Psalm 34:18
- Psalm 69:29, 33
  - prisoners (His **captive** people)
- *Key Thought:* “We are **beggars**. This is true.” (Martin Luther) (Psalm 70:5; 109:22)

**“Our poverty and misery furnish a fit  
occasion for the display of God’s  
rich mercy.”**

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## 4. Grant Me **Joy!** (v 4)

- Psalm 16:9-11; 30:5; 51:8

“Yahweh is a God who **delivers**, not a God who **preserves** His people from ever experiencing **hardship** in general and His anger in particular.” (Craig Broyles)

- **Key Thought:** *I am **secure**, at **rest**, and **joyful** to the degree that my **gaze** is **fixed** on Christ (Psalm 16:8a, 9a).*

**“When all goes wrong outwardly and inwardly, when foes beset and cares betide, we must be sad; we cannot rejoice till God appears.”**

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## 5. Answer Me! (vv 6-10)

- Psalm 10:1; Psalm 62:5-8
- Psalm 65:1 The very act of **waiting** exhibits **respect** for and **reliance** on God.
- **Key Thought:** *Feelings of fear, hopelessness, or emptiness should not be **disdained** or **disregarded**, for they can compel me to seek my **courage**, **hope**, **fulfillment** in God (Psalm 46:10)*

**“ . . . Whether in temporal or spiritual affairs our distress prevails, our hope is in God alone.”**

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## 6. **Teach Me Your Way!** (v 11a)

- Psalm 66:10-20
- Psalm 73:1-16, 21
- *Key Thought: Resolution is achieved, not by **deliverance** from outward **circumstances**, but by **reliance** on and **satisfaction** in God (Psalm 73:17, 23-28).*

**“God, who made me, can teach me; I  
am not beyond His reach; I am not  
beyond His skill . . . foolish as I am,  
He can make me wise . . .**

**God alone and God only can do  
this.”**

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# 7. Strengthen Me! (v 16)

- Psalm 61:1-4
- Psalm 73:23-26
  - “And I have asked that when your **faith** isn't **strong**, you will know and experience that God's **hold** on **you** is **stronger**.”
- **Key Thought:** *Divine **persistence** stems not from our **unwavering loyalty**, but God's (Psalm 73:26).*

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**“All our hope and all our confidence  
must ultimately rest on the known  
nature of God revealed in Holy  
Scripture.”**

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## 8. Give Me A Sign! (v 17)

- A signal (lit. or fig.), as a **flag, beacon, monument, omen, prodigy, evidence**
- Psalm 57:7-11- **General** revelation
- Psalm 130:5-7 - **Special** revelation
- **Key Thought:** *Whether or not **circumstances** change, our **understanding** and **expectation** can.*

**“Without divine guidance and divine teaching we shall never know anything nor do anything aright. We cannot therefore be too urgent in our prayers for special grace and special enlightening at all times.”**

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## 9. Give Me An **Undivided Heart!** (vv 11b-15)

- Psalm 19:12-14 - **deceitfulness, presumption**
- Psalm 78:17-20 – **integrity, fidelity, wholeness, soundness**
- ***Key Thought:** We are guilty of **idolatry** when we use God to accomplish **our ends**, no matter how **noble** they may appear to be (Psalm 78:17-20).*

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**“Join all the purposes, resolutions,  
and affections of my heart together,  
to fear and glorify Thy name.”**

Clarke

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# Application

1. Trust is an action that can occur only when **something** we **value** is at **stake** (Psalm 56:3).

**I will recognize God's purpose in touching what is dear to me.**

2. I am **sowing** habits of **trust** and **praise** that will bear **fruit** long into the future (Psalm 71:17-18).

**I will rigorously cultivate trust and praise in my heart.**

# Application

3. Any alternative to **implicit trust** is chasing after the **wind** (Psalm 94:17).

**I will ruthlessly reject any substitute for God.**

# Application

4. I **choose** my **focus** (Psalm 57:7).

**I will regularly recalibrate my vision.**

5. God reaches **down** to the humble (Psalm 103:8-14).

**I will reach up to God.**

# Application

6. My **voice** can swell a **chorus** that **sings** God's **praise**; I can join a **procession** that will end at the **throne room** of God (Psalm 103:1-2, 19-22).

**I will raise my voice in praise.**

# Application

*I Asked the Lord That I Might Grow; My Silent Prayer;  
Come, Ye Disconsolate; Song of Surrender*

*It Is Well; Still, My Soul Be Still; What God Ordains is  
Always Good; Be Still; Merciful God*

*A Mighty Fortress; Mercies Anew; His Robes for  
Mine; O Great God; The Perfect Wisdom of Our God;  
O God, My Joy*

*Hallelujah Chorus; Worthy is the Lamb That Was  
Slain; Our Sovereign God*

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# Application

7. Cling to the **Suffering Servant** (Psalm 22).

**I will refuse to let go of God.**

- He suffered: we will suffer, too.
- He was tested: we will be tested, too.
- He triumphed: we can triumph, too.
- He glorified His Father: we can glorify our Father, too.



**“As we should never begin a work without prayer to God, so we should never close our labors in any enterprise without thanking Him who has sustained us. It is very seemly that God’s servants should abound in His praise . . . .”**

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