

How many have ever asked for more time to do all that you need to do? We are all very busy – with work, hobbies and other responsibilities – like walking dogs – but let's not go there, because that in a way is self inflicted. I look at someone like Jack, and with all that he does, I wonder how he ever had time to work! The Beatles sang “Eight Days a Week” and some of us wish we had eight days a week to accomplish all that we needed to – but the point is that God has given us all the same amount of time each day, each week, etc.

Sometimes, however, we are so busy being busy that we fail to stop, as it were, and smell the roses. As Christians, sometimes we are so busy that we neglect to praise God for his goodness and faithfulness to us. Let's face, we all have difficulties and problems in our lives, but we also have times of great blessing and joy.

As we have been seeing in our Tuesday Evening Bible Study, where we are currently looking at the life of David, we find that his life was full of peaks and valleys – and we will see more, as we continue with his life.

One of the things that David did so well – remember that he was a musician – was to compose Psalms that were to be used in worship. In fact, if you look at the beginning of the Psalms in some Bibles, it will say, “The Psalms of David” even though he did not write them all. We generally read a Psalm each week as part of our worship, but there are other churches that sing them. In fact, there are some churches that exclusively sing Psalms – no other hymns.

There are different types of Psalms, but many are Psalms or Songs of Praise, such as that which we recited a few minutes ago – Psalm 138 – so I ask that you turn with me there. It is a short Psalm so I would like to read it again and then we'll spend a few minutes looking at it. (READ).

We see initially in verse 1, David's intent: *“I will praise You with my whole heart; Before the gods I will sing praises to You. I will worship toward Your holy temple,...”*

David's relationship with God is such that he can only praise him with his whole heart – and this is part of his worship. From the depths of his being he praises God.

Now a note of explanation for the next phrase is due here. *Before the gods I will sing praises to You.* I will tell you that this is a difficult phrase. Roman Catholic's have interpreted this to say that there are angels that intercede with God on man's behalf. But there is no scriptural proof of this.

Another interpretation is that which says that what David is saying is that *Elohim* – his God – is the only one to be praised. The most probably interpretation is that David is referring to human judges. That same word *Elohim* is used of human judges elsewhere in the Old Testament Scriptures. As always, our best method of interpretation is comparing scripture with scripture.

And so David is saying that he will praise God before humanity. Another note concerns the next phrase: *I will worship toward Your holy temple,...* The Temple has not yet been built, so he is probably referring to the Tabernacle that God had instructed Moses to construct after the Exodus from Egypt.

Then David tells us why we will praise God – *“And praise Your name For Your lovingkindness and Your truth; For You have magnified Your word above all Your name.”*

Our God is a merciful God – and for that we should praise Him. Our God is a God of truth – and for that we should praise Him. Our God is a God whose word can be trusted and for that we should praise Him.

Remember, it is our God who has saved us through the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. As we read in Titus 3:5,6: “*not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior,*”

And those important words of the Apostle Paul in his 2<sup>nd</sup> letter to Timothy – 2 Timothy 3:16-17: “*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.*” All reasons that we should praise God.

As he continues, he gives us another reason as to why we should praise God – 3 “*In the day when I cried out, You answered me, And made me bold with strength in my soul.*”

David is no doubt referring to prior time in his life when he was in distress and called out to God and God answered his prayer. This is one thing that we can be sure of – God answers prayers. He may not answer them in the way that we want them answered – but He answers them. I like to tell people that there are generally three answers to our prayers – yes, no and wait.

David continues: 138:4,5: “*All the kings of the earth shall praise You, O Lord, When they hear the words of Your mouth. Yes, they shall sing of the ways of the Lord, For great is the glory of the Lord.*”

Here David is basically saying that his praise alone is not enough because of the greatness of God. We know that everyone does not worship the Lord. All we need to do is look around us and see that this true. But this is not the way that it will always be.

Philippians 2:9-11 in talking about the Lord Jesus Christ says: “*Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*”

And in Revelation 21:24 we read: “*And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it.*”

Then David continues: 138:6: “*Though the Lord is on high, Yet He regards the lowly; But the proud He knows from afar.*” James 4:6 says: “*But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: “God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.”* As one commentator says: Infinitely great as God is, he regards even the lowest and most inconsiderable part of his creation; but the humble and afflicted man attracts his notice particularly. And He holds the proud in derision.

And his concluding words show David’s complete trust and faith in God – and another reason why he praises him: 138:7,8: “*Though I walk in the midst of trouble, You will revive me; You will stretch out Your hand Against the wrath of my enemies, And Your right hand will save me. The Lord will perfect that which concerns me; Your mercy, O Lord, endures forever; Do not forsake the works of Your hands.*”

The Lord's protection for His people is a common theme throughout the Psalms. We saw it last week in the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm: *"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, for thou art with me. Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."*

And then there is Psalms 3, another Psalm of David: *"Lord, how they have increased who trouble me! Many are they who rise up against me. Many are they who say of me, "There is no help for him in God." But You, O Lord, are a shield for me, My glory and the One who lifts up my head. I cried to the Lord with my voice, And He heard me from His holy hill. I lay down and slept; I awoke, for the Lord sustained me. I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people Who have set themselves against me all around. Arise, O Lord; Save me, O my God! For You have struck all my enemies on the cheekbone; You have broken the teeth of the ungodly. Salvation belongs to the Lord. Your blessing is upon Your people."*

These are all reasons that we praise God. So, as we think about all the blessings that we have received from God – the salvation of our souls, the privilege of prayer and worship, fellowship with Him and other believers – let us remember always to praise the Lord. Let us take time to thank God for all that He is and all that He has done for us – and to praise Him with our whole heart.