

# **“LET US EXALT HIS NAME WITH LOYALTY”**

**Text: Psalm 34:3**

**Sermon by the Rev. Arthur Rich**

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It is said that the words of Psalm 34 meant a great deal to the early Christian martyrs. As they faced death in the arena, their lips would move with the words, "I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth... a magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together."

In the spirit of this Psalm, Thomas Ken wrote,

"Praise God from whom all blessings flow,  
Praise Him, creatures here below,  
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host,  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."

David has been called the honorary president of the 'Fellowship of Praise'. I like to think of him as the great conductor of the orchestra of praise. Each instrument in the orchestra is enriched by the cooperation of the others. "Let us exalt His name together. My own thanksgiving is quickened when I join in the praise given by others. How thrilling it is to note some of the testimonies of thanksgiving given in this Psalm.

1. Once I was burdened with fears. I sought the Lord. I put my whole soul into the search. What was the result? He heard me. My seeking met His response. He delivered me. I was rescued just as if snatched from the mouth of some wild beast. He gave me complete freedom. He delivered me from all my fears.

2. Things were so dark for me. Again I looked to God. With gracious love He brought to my darkened soul a benediction of light. Before I was cheerless and depressed. I was losing heart. Then, when I looked up to Him, my life was lit up. The gloom and the depression disappeared. From then on I had nothing to be ashamed of, but much for which I had to adore Him.

3. What a wretched, poor man I was, I had so many troubles. It seemed to me that I was pushed into a corner. I was in a tight place. Again God heard me. He opened a way out of the tight place. The door that once seemed so fast closed, miraculously swung wide for me.

The, Psalmist seems to be saying, in the light of all He has done for us, let us exalt His name together.

Let us ask three questions:

- 1. WHEN SHALL WE EXALT HIS NAME**
- 2. WHY SHALL WE EXALT HIS NAME?**
- 3. HOW SHALL WE EXALT HIS NAME?**

First: **WHEN SHALL WE EXALT HIS NAME?**

"I will bless the Lord at all times." (verse 1.)

Take a lesson from the birds. The bird sings when the sky is clear. The bird also sings when the sky is dark. A poet has expressed this beautifully –

"Be like the bird, when on frail branches balanced, a moment sets and sings,  
He feels them tremble, but he sings unshaken, knowing that he has wings."

Do the branches of your life ever shake? Keep singing!

David knew what it was to sin at all times. Two words seem to characterize his life.

**(1) Hounded.**

In his lifetime he was hounded by the jealousy of saul, and then he was hounded by the rebellion of his son, Absalom.

**(2) Happy.**

Hounded but happy. Some of the happiest, most joyful and trustful psalms were written by David when he was the most painfully aware that he was being hounded.

Turn to Paul and Silas in the New Testament. From a prison there arose songs of praise. Even in Philippi's prison they exalted the name of the Lord. When Paul was in a Roman prison, he penned the matchless words, "Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say, rejoice" Note that word 'always'. Paul felt that joy, in all circumstances and under all trials should be the mood of the Christian.

Paul always rejoiced in the Lord. He constantly reminded himself that his new life was to be lived in the power of the Lord. There were times that he failed because he depended on himself, and not on the Lord. Even then, when he failed, he forgot his failure as he recommitted himself for God to renew His work in Paul's life. Joyfully, he would dismiss his failure in the joy of a new commitment, and thus the past became a spur to achievement with God in the future.

Paul also rejoiced as he felt the power of the Holy Spirit in his life. It is interesting to note that Paul once said: "Be not drunk with wine, but be filled with the Spirit." (Eph.5:20) When troubles come, some men turn to drink. Why do men indulge in alcohol? It is not primarily because it is a matter of taste sensation. Many an alcoholic abhors the taste of the whiskey he craves. Often, he turns to drink as an effort to escape the sorrows of the world. Paul reminds t that there is another filling. "Be filled with the spirit." Thereby we are empowered not to make a futile effort to escape our problems. The drunk still has his problems when he recovers from his hangover. In the power of the Spirit we meet our problems. We overcome them and we rejoice as we whisper with Paul, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." (Phi. 4:13)

Yes, in all of life, let us exalt His name.

## **Second: WHY EXALT HIS NAME?**

There are so many things that the Psalmist mentions in this great Psalm which should make us anxious to exalt His name. Let me mention three of them

### **1. GOD'S GOODNESS**

Said the psalmist, "O taste and see that the Lord is good." (v.8) David would have us realize that the Lord is originally, essentially, unchangeably, supremely good. I feel at loss to express how good He is.

Think of the goodness of His nature. God is love and God is good. Even Jeremiah indicated that the divine goodness and love "shall come and flow together." (Jer~ 31:12-14) Think of the goodness of His attributes. His condescending grace was manifested toward us when we were unworthy of His love. Think of His goodness in dealing with man. How gracious that He would enter into a covenant with man anew, after man had broken the first covenant. It is the covenant of peace, of love, of life and of hope. All of His promises were confirmed by the death of Christ and sealed with His blood.

### **2. GOD'S THOUGHTFULNESS**

"The young lions do lack and suffer hunger; but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing." (v.10) Certain men are like the lions, and they are like kings over others. We would assume that they had everything in life going their way. God's word makes it clear that they do lack the real values of life. God is so thoughtful that He has promised that those who are His children will have what they need. There is no lack to those who seek the Lord.

### **3. GOD'S FAITHFULNESS**

"The Lord redeemeth the soul of His servants; and none of them that trust in Him shall be desolate." (v.22)

Our God is a faithful God. The ancient Romans had many gods, but their gods were so fickle. They were so afraid that other nations might entice their gods away from them, that they would not mention their gods in public. There were marble images of their gods, which were actually chained to prevent them from leaving them and going to another place. But our true and living God is so faithful. He says, "I will never leave them nor forsake them."

## THIRD: HOW TO EXALT HIS NAME?

Let us exalt His name with loyalty. David said, "I love the Lord." Did he stop with this declaration? Many Baptists stop with an affirmation of love to their God, but David, in the same Psalm in which he declared his love for God, (psalm 116) went on to raise a question, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me?" (v.12) It seems to me that the answer David gave his own question indicates how we can exalt His name.

There are three phrases found in the 116th Psalm, which stand out in my thinking. Let me give them in this order, "I will call upon the name of the Lord"; "I will pay my vows unto the Lord now", and "I will take the cup of salvation." These three phrases suggest:

- 1. LOYAL PRAYING**
- 2. LOYAL PAYING**
- 3. LOYAL SAYING**

**1. LOYAL PRAYING:** "I will call upon the name of the Lord." True prayer is praise. How do we exalt the name of the Lord? With loyalty! The true prayer is an expression of the heart's gratitude. You will not pray until you truly appreciate all that God has done for you. Do not withhold from Him the one thing you can give. Not to pray and to praise Almighty God is to be disloyal to heaven's greatest Giver.

When you pray, remember your personal salvation. As the Psalmist did, remember that the Lord has "dealt bountifully with thee" (v&7). Remember with gratitude your pious parentage. "I am the son of 1;thine handmaid," (v.16) Do you praise God sufficiently for that Christian home of yours, the godly parents that He provided for so many of us. Remember with gratitude your prolonged life, and then even remember that He has promised you a peaceful death. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints," (v.15)

**2. LOYAL PAYING:** This is another way that we can exalt His name with loyalty. "I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all His people." (v.14)

The Psalmist links praying with paying. Don't you try to divorce the two. Don't try to remember God in praying and then rob Him in not paying Him what belongs to Him. The two component parts of true religion are receiving and rendering. "What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me?" The tragedy of many a Christian life is that there is a receiving, without a corresponding rendering, unto the Lord.

I cannot understand people who are not willing to commit themselves with a pledge to support God's program. They will promise everyone but God. They will promise to pay their telephone bill, their light bill, and other economic commitments. They will promise to pay the bank for the loans they received. They will promise to pay for the car in which they ride, but they will shy away from any pledge to support God's work.

A vow is a voluntary promise made to God. A vow is an assertion of our spiritual nature. A vow is an acknowledgment of our moral responsibility. A vow is made to Almighty God with entire reliance upon Divine aid in its fulfillment.

The very heart of salvation is "God first". Sin began when self was put first. The essence .of sin is putting self first. Salvation is from sin, basically, salvation is a return to the right relationship to God, to devotion to Him. When a man is truly saved, he will love God with all his heart, mind, soul, and strength. Lift your idea of giving to the church. You are not supporting your Sunday School, or the music program of the church, or supporting your pastor. You are supporting the Lord Jesus Christ in His work. One of the greatest stewards I know once said, "I made up my mind a long time ago, that as long as I had a crust of bread, I would share it with the Lord,"

I never read the story of the widow of Zarephath, found in I Kings, 17, that I do not see an everlasting principle. The prophet asked the widow, who, with her son, was on the verge of starvation, to make him a little cake, and assured her that the oil and the meal would not fail during the time of famine, because he represented God. She believed him and did as he told her. The oil and meal did not fail in that home. When you put God first, He will take care of your needs. I believe that Matthew 6:33 is the New Testament version of this truth.

**3. LOYAL SAYING:** "Let the redeemed of the Lord say so." David said, "I will take the cup of salvation."

What are you saying, when you say "I will take the cup of salvation?" The Arabs say, "If you drink from my cup, or if you eat my bread, or if you taste my salt, then I can never injure you. You are my friend." When you take the cup of salvation, you are saying to the public that you are a loyal friend of Jesus. You are not ashamed to be numbered with the followers of Christ.

When you take the cup of salvation, you are saying to the world, or trust Him. Alexander of Greece was warned by a friend, that his physician was supposed to be seeking to poison him. When the doctor gave him a cup containing medicine, Alexander looked into the face of his physician and then, before drinking it, said, "I drink to share my trust in thee." He trusted his physician who was seeking only his recovery. Let the world know that you trust implicitly your Christ.

How can you take the cup of salvation to others?

First of all, you must have a genuine love for people. You must love people as Jesus loved them. Jesus loved people because He wanted to serve them. Then you must have a life that backs up your witness. You declare your faith best by living it. Edgar Guest said, "I'd rather see a sermon than hear one any day." But even the finest example is not enough. There must be a time when you have a spoken witness. The story is told that Henry Ford purchased a large insurance policy through an agent he hardly knew. One of his dearest friends, who was in the insurance business, asked him, "Why didn't you buy it from me?" The reply of Mr. Ford was brief, but classic - "You never asked me." There are thousands who are outside the fold of Christ simply because those on the inside have never asked them to come in.

Dr. Cranford tells of the college professor who was invited to speak in a nearby church. When he returned, a student asked him, "Did you convert anyone?" The professor replied, "I was too much of a gentleman to ask". Is the doctor less of a gentleman because he asks the patient about his symptoms? Is the stewardess on the plane less of a lady because she asks you "Is your seat belt fastened?" The insurance agent does not think there is anything wrong with asking a prospective client if he needs more insurance - how strange a world we live in - when it is proper to ask a man if he has insurance, but not proper to ask if he has the assurance of eternal life!

The greatest way that God has to reach men in witnessing is through laymen. People expect a clergyman to speak about religious matters. They reason that he is paid to do this. But the layman has nothing to gain except the satisfaction of sharing his faith with someone else. You laymen have the advantage over the preacher. . You are already where the other person is. You are in the shop, in the office, in the plant, in the laboratory. The best way to look upon your vocation is to see it as a channel of service to God, as you make your vocation a daily witness to Christian faith and conduct.

The world is frankly bewildered. It is looking for the answer. If you and I have found Christ, we know the answer. Let others know that you have found the answer. Let others see that the answer, which you have found, has made a difference in your life, in your home. Share with others the cup of your salvation. This is the finest way that I know whereby we can render unto God for all that He has given us.