

18 October 2020

To all members of the St James Traditional Services

A Weekly Word of Encouragement: Experiencing God

Psalm 34 – a beautiful psalm of Worship and Witness – read it reflectively. (The lovely hymn “Through all the changing scenes of life” is based on this psalm.)

WORSHIP v.1-10 – Nothing counts like personal experience of God

“Tasting” the Lord (v.8) – not simply a theoretical belief – experiencing God for yourself. Even when afflicted (v.2), we can extol, praise, boast about, glorify and exalt our Lord. Why? Because the Lord answers prayer (v.4-7) and meets our deepest needs (v.9, 10). Those who seek the Lord and call on Him know that He hears, answers, and saves. Trouble, affliction, and heart break (v.2, 6, 17, 18) are part of life for God’s people but the Lord is close to us (v.18); fear and shame (v.4, 5) don’t grip us, because our security and self-worth are found in Him (v.9, 10) for eternity. To “fear the Lord” is not to be frightened or terrified but leads you to seek Him, cry out to Him and take refuge in Him. Fear and love of the Lord are inseparable elements of true worship.

WITNESS v.11-22 – Based on his personal experience of the Lord, David gives general instruction to God’s people.

- Fear the Lord (v.11) – to have your deepest needs met.
- Reflect the Lord’s character in dealing with others (v.12-16).
- Know the Lord’s presence to hear, sustain, and ultimately save (v.17, 18).
- Your eternal destiny is secure – no condemnation for the redeemed of the Lord.
Remember: on the cross Jesus secured “no condemnation” (Romans 8:1) for those who take refuge in Him.

The ultimate good is to know God personally: the ultimate disaster is equally personal – not to see His face (v.15, 16).

Prayer

Lord, You deserve my overflowing worship, but often I feel so discouraged in the circumstances of my life that I fail to see You and experience Your unfailing love. Help me to look to You and know Your love, because without You, life would be unbearable. Thank You that even in my darkest times, You are there: present, understanding, loving. Restore to me the joy of being Yours. Amen.

Remember

- keep praying daily
- keep reading God's Word
- keep in touch with one another. St James is open for Holy Communion every Wednesday at 10am (with pre-registration required through the office), and I am only a phone call away: 0438 455 493.

With Christian love,
Robert