



Sunday, October 13, 2019
Pastor Doug Schmidt

Intro to Psalm 126

Matthew Henry, commenting on this psalm, wrote, “The beginnings of mercies encourage us to pray for the completion of them. And while we are in this world there will be matter for prayer, even when we are most furnished with matter for praise.” In other words, God has given us abundant reasons to praise Him—having secured our salvation by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone—and yet, we still have need for daily grace, and so we must daily commit to prayer (as this psalmist does) for God to bring His good work to completion in and through us.

So, we must not treat God as though He is like us or presume on Him. He is the only completely free Being and He sees the end from the beginning. So, we need to learn to come to Him earnestly and diligently, but not think that we know better than He does. He will accomplish His purposes in His own good timing. It is for us to continue to be faithful and wait expectantly for Him. And then, when He does accomplish what He has promised, we can give thanks and rejoice as the psalmist does too!

Context

As Pastor Schmidt noted, this is one of the “Psalms of Ascent” (120-134). Many commentators agree that these would have been traveling songs for those making the pilgrimage to Jerusalem each year for the festivals. Many of these songs reflect God’s care for those on a journey and many of them reflect a special focus on the city of Jerusalem. Recognition of God’s provision thus far on the psalmist’s journey and desire for Him to continue or even amplify that provision is a common theme in these psalms. It’s also worth noting that these psalms all express their message by using vivid images from nature and the geography of the land of Israel.

Read and Reflect *(Use this section to write down any thoughts you had on the sermon. Make sure to note any questions you had about something in the passage or in the sermon.)*

Read Psalm 126

“How God Intervenes”

God works in two primary ways:

- 1) God does it all
 - a. Happens suddenly
 - b. Highlights our incapacity
 - c. Results in praise
 - d. This is true of our salvation/justification
- 2) God works in and through us
 - a. Happens gradually/slowly
 - b. Requires our obedience and discipline
 - c. Results in joy
 - d. This is true of our sanctification

Discuss

- 1) Have you ever had an immediate answer to prayer? How did God intervene then?

- 2) What do you think would happen to your disposition toward God if He answered every prayer exactly the way you wanted it in exactly the time frame you wanted? Why would that not be good?

- 3) Are you usually quick or slow to attribute praise to God for things that happen in your life? Why is that?

- 4) Sanctification is a slow process. As Pastor Schmidt said, it is often “two steps forward, one step back.” How do you keep from getting discouraged when it seems especially slow?

- 5) Read Philippians 2:12-13. How have you seen God at work in you as you work out your own salvation?