

THROUGH THE BIBLE STUDY

PSALMS 137-143

The Hebrews built a Temple of gold, and stone, and splendor. They worshipped God inside the Temple. But the Hebrews also wrote the Psalms – for they were not content to worship God in a Temple...

The Psalms seek to transform all existence into a Temple. Their goal is to discover God in every circumstance of life, and in every emotion of the soul. Philip Yancey writes of the Psalms, “They contain the anguished journals of people who want to believe in a loving, gracious, faithful God while the world keeps falling apart around them..”

Robert Frost once said poets have “A lover’s quarrel with the world.”

That’s a great way to understand the psalms. It’s a book of poems that lays bear the struggle between faith and life. The psalms are poetry, and the goal of most poems isn’t logic – it’s more empathy and catharsis.

Author, Kathleen Norris, comments, “The Psalms do not theologize. One reason for this is that the psalms are poetry, and poetry’s function is not to explain but to offer images and stories that resonate with our lives.”

This is what we’ll find in the psalms we’ll study tonight. The authors find themselves in a wide array of situations - but wherever they go, and whatever they do - they find God in the midst of their mess.

In **PSALM ONE HUNDRED THIRTY-SEVEN** the anonymous psalmist sings the blues. He's in Babylon, but not because he wants to be.

A few years earlier, the summer of 586 BC to be exact, the Babylonians sacked the city of Jerusalem, and took the Jews to Babylon into exile.

It was in the ancient land of Babel, along the banks of the Euphrates River, that one of the Jews in lock-up - picked up his harp and played it like BB King and Muddy Waters. He started singing the blues.

“By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down...” During their captivity in Babylon the Jews developed the habit of gathering by the river.

Throughout their history whenever Jews are displaced from their homeland they gravitate toward and gather together by the river.

In Acts 16:13 the Jews in Philippi gathered at the riverside.

In Babylon the Hebrews gathered on the riverbank. We're told, **“Yea, we wept when we remembered Zion.”** Around 1700 years earlier, God led Abraham and his family from Babylon – the land of idols – to a land flowing with milk and honey. Yet once in the land, Abraham's descendents also fell for idols - so God sent them back to Babel - to the birthplace of idolatry.

Sadly, sin reversed everything God had done for the Jews. Now the Jews are sitting by the Euphrates River, weeping over all they've lost.

For centuries the Jews tried to have it both ways...

They benefited from the blessings of the land God had given them, while flirting with the pleasures of sin. The Jews put honey on their forbidden fruit and washed it down with a big glass of milk.

But Jesus said, “**No man can serve two masters.**” There comes a day when everyone decides - *will you serve God or your idolatrous desires?*

I’ve heard it said, “**The human heart is an idol factory.**” Man was made to worship, and if he rejects God, he creates alternatives to satisfy his inclination – *sports teams, hobbies, careers, virtual worlds, drugs...*

Yet to cure His people of idolatry God sends them to the land of idolatry where they’re allowed to taste the accompanying pain of their sin.

It’s been said, “**Life is full of splinters, that we don't feel until we begin to slide backwards.**” When the Hebrews backslid from God, they started to feel the splinters you pick up from disobedience, and stubbornness.

Imagine a Jew in Jerusalem – everyday he sees and walks by the Temple. The place of true worship was the center of national life. The worship of God dominated the skyline, as well as your daily routine.

But now you’re in Babylon, and the cityscape is filled with ziggurats (astrological towers). You’re surrounded by idolatrous temples. Occult symbols are everywhere. You feel defiled. It’s a dark, dark place.

The 70 years the Jews spent in Babylonian captivity caused them to miss the glory of God - the Temple, priests, sacrifices,

feasts, psalms...

Rather than sing *Hallelujah*, they *hung up their harps*. According to verse 2, “**We hung our harps upon the willows in the midst of it.**” Their reason to sing – and inspiration to play – was snuffed out in Babel.

Sometimes you don’t realize you’re backsliding until you feel a few splinters. The captivity woke up the Jews to the consequences of sin.

The Babylonian captivity was a divine time-out.

God reminded the Jews how much they missed Him and His blessings. It’s been said, “**We don’t really love a thing until we realize it can be lost.**”

It’s interesting the Jews who returned from Babylon were never again tempted with idolatry. They sinned in other ways, but not with idols.

The Babylonian captivity cured the Jews of idolatry once and for all.

The psalmist continues in verse 3, “**For there (in Babylon) those who carried us away captive asked of us a song, and those who plundered us requested mirth, saying, "Sing us one of the songs of Zion!"**”

Even today, the Hebrews are a musical people. They’re renown for their psalms and signing and dancing. Their captors wanted to be entertained.

But how can you make merry when you’ve sinned and let God down? A song from the lips is disingenuous when there’s an ache in your heart.

The Jews answer their captors in verse 4, “How shall we sing the LORD's song in a foreign land? If I forget you, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget its skill! If I do not remember you, let my tongue cling to the roof of my mouth - if I do not exalt Jerusalem above my chief joy.”

Commentator, William Heslop summed up Psalm 139 in a single sentence, “Wickedness is always followed by weeping.”

God’s presence was the psalmist’s “chief joy.” He’d rather gargle with superglue than live a part from God and feign joy and celebration.

Verse 7 “Remember, O LORD, against the sons of Edom the day of Jerusalem, who said, "Raze it, raze it, to its very foundation!" Jerusalem was sacked July 18, 586 BC. And the invaders proved to be savages.

The Babylonians burned the city, raped the Jewish women, and through their children from windows so their heads would burst on the streets.

And all the while God’s people suffered the Edomites - their neighbors to the south - were cheering on the Babylonians. Raze it, ravage it...

Here the psalmist prays for God to judge the callous Edomites.

“O daughter of Babylon, who are to be destroyed, happy the one who repays you as you have served us! Happy the one who takes and dashes your little ones against the rock!” The psalmist is seeking justice.

This man lives under the Law. All he knows is an eye for an eye. He asks God to return the brutality of the Babylonians on their own heads.

As Christians we've become privy to mercy and grace. We were enemies of God, yet He chose to forgive us and show us love.

The psalmist lived under the laws of retribution (eye for eye) – but in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus provides us a higher standard. He tells us to love our enemies, and turn the other cheek. We need to reflect grace.

Here's another thought... Not only does the psalmist know only justice, we shouldn't minimize what he's endured. Put yourself in Jewish shoes...

One author writes, "Those who find fault with the psalmist are those who have never seen their Temple burned, their city ruined, their wives ravished, and their children's heads dashed against the rocks; they might not be so *velvet-mouthed* if they had suffered in this fashion."

I'm not sure any of us know how we'd react in these kinds of circumstances until we're actually thrust into the situation.

PSALM ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-EIGHT

"I will praise You with my whole heart; before the gods I will sing praises to You. I will worship toward Your holy temple, and praise Your name for Your lovingkindness and Your truth..." Notice, David praises God for His "lovingkindness" and "truth." "Lovingkindness" is the OT term for "grace."

In the NT, John 1:17, tells us, "The Law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ."

David lived under the Law, but he seems to have had a New Covenant mindset. He enjoyed NC blessings. He trusted in love he hadn't earned or deserved – *grace*.

David was a man ahead of his time. He had a renaissance faith.

And pay attention to the incredible statement David makes next in verse 2, “**For You have magnified Your word above all Your name.**” To the Hebrews nothing was more significant than God's name.

The Third Commandment prohibited taking the name of God in vain. In Leviticus 24 a man was stoned to death for blaspheming God's name.

Later in their history the Jews so revered the name of the Lord they became afraid to pronounce His name. There came a point when the Jews refused to even write God's full name - only the consonants.

Today, we've lost God's Hebrew name. Its written YHWH. The vowels for another of God's names, Lord, or **Adonai**, are used – which creates, “**Yahweh.**” But the real name has been lost.

Here's the point, only one item was revered more highly by the Jews than *God's name* – and that was *God's Word*. As David tells us in verse 2, **God has magnified His Word even above His name.**

And if God exalts His Word so supremely, let us never be guilty of its neglect. Taking heed to the Scriptures needs to be our top priority!

Several years ago, I received a letter from a church member. It was one of those encouraging notes a pastor keeps, and pulls out on difficult days. It read, “Thank you for teaching God’s Word and not a lot of other stuff.”

There’s a quote in Halley’s Bible Handbook I agree with wholeheartedly. It reads, “A church that does not enthrone the Bible in the lives of its people is false to its mission.” If God magnifies His Word above His name, then we can’t possibly esteem it too highly?

Verse 3 continues, “In the day when I cried out, You answered me, and made me bold with strength in my soul. 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. Though the LORD is on high, yet He regards the lowly; but the proud He knows from afar.” It doesn’t matter your race, gender, economic status, education... even your college football affiliation – God will listen to your prayer. The only exception is the proud person.

The psalmist tells us that God is far from the proud. *Which might create a problem for Florida Gator fans, but only God knows the heart.*

“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...”

Here’s the reason God allows us to walk in “the midst of trouble” – the Lord is perfecting us. He’s not just *protecting*

us, God is perfecting us.

A muscle gets stronger only if it's met with resistance. The same is true with faith. A faith that never encounters opposition never fully develops.

And as parents we should take a cue from the model parent, God.

Too many Christian parents today are so afraid of the world and its temptations their top priority for their kids is their protection. Yet know this is not God's goal. God desires *perfection* – not just *protection*.

Parents want to keep their kids in a Christian bubble – insulated from trials, tests, and temptations. They home school their kids. They play baseball in the church league. They can't run in the neighborhood.

We've met parents, who are so overly-protective, they're afraid to let their kid attend a youth function or a church retreat. Hey, such a parent may be *protecting* their kid, but they're definitely not *perfecting* him.

Let your kids feel the stress of the storm – *not all the time, not without monitoring their progress, not without open lines of open communication* – but let them experience some outside stress and they'll sink deeper roots.

He closes, “Your mercy, O LORD, endures forever; do not forsake the works of Your hands.” In other words, “*Lord, keep up the good work!*”

PSALM ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-NINE is a favorite

psalm.

If the Billboard Top 40 had been around at the time, Psalm 139 would have stay at number 1 for weeks. Of all the psalms, 139, possesses some of the deepest devotion. It's probably the psalms' most beautiful ballad.

It speaks of God's **omniscience** (He's all-knowing), **omnipresence** (He's everywhere at once), and **omnipotence** (He's all-powerful). One author pens, "Language utterly fails me in the exposition of this psalm."

The psalm begins, "O LORD, You have searched me and known me."

The Hebrew word translated "search" means "to pierce through." You'll hear someone say, "Wow, he can see right thru me" – that's the sense.

The Greeks philosophers said, "Know Thyself" – to the Greeks the key to enlightenment was introspection. Turn inward. Focus on yourself.

This is the assumption of modern psychologist as well.

Yet here's the problem – I'm destined for much confusion if my goal is to know myself. I might as well face it that I'm a bundle of contradictions. Not all my motivations are pure. Feelings and flirtations come and go.

Real wisdom is not trying to understand myself, but knowing that God has me pegged. Ask Him to search and sort out your inner life. He will.

Verse 2 "You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thought afar off. You comprehend my path

and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways.”

God understands my **movements, motives, meditations,** and **manners**. In short, God knows me inside and out.

“For there is not a word on my tongue, but behold, O LORD, You know it altogether.” Have you ever had a word on the tip of your tongue, you couldn’t conjure up when you needed it. God knows what it was!

“You have hedged me behind and before, and laid Your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain it.”

It’s a good feeling to know someone empathizes with our struggles. You can be sure when no one else seems to understand God knows.

Verse 7 “Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? If I ascend into heaven, You are there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there Your hand shall lead me, and Your right hand shall hold me.” Apparently, God gets around...

Ascend as high as heaven - *descend* as low as hell – and there you’ll find God! The psalmist says there’s no escaping the presence of God.

Ask Jonah, he’ll tell you. The reluctant prophet tried to run from God’s calling, but he found God in the belly of a whale somewhere out at Sea. God is in all places - at all times - at the same time. He’s omnipresent.

It reminds me of the pastor who tried to help reform a little

boy who had a reputation for thievery. First, he wanted to test his Bible knowledge.

The pastor asked, “Johnny, where is God?” Johnny shrugged. He asked again, “Johnny, where is God?” The boy stayed silent.

The pastor, irritated the boy wouldn’t even talk, shouted, “JOHNNY, WHERE IS GOD?” Johnny jumps up, runs home, races to his room, and locks the door. Of course, his mom wants to know what’s wrong?

Johnny answered her, “The folks at the church have lost God, and they think I stole Him.” God is not lost, or stolen. He’s in this room tonight. He’ll be with you on the job tomorrow. God is everywhere at all times.

“If I say, “Surely the darkness shall fall on me, “Even the night shall be light about me; indeed, the darkness shall not hide from You, but the night shines as the day; the darkness and the light are both alike to You.”

Most crimes are committed at night – under the veil of darkness. But the night can’t hide you from God. Nothing goes undetected by God.

A sin done under the cover of darkness – and a brazen sin committed in broad daylight - is one in the same to God. He sees and knows all.

It reminds me of the elderly fellow who was prescribed a hearing aid.

When he came in for a check-up, his doctor said, “I bet your family is happy to know you can hear again?” The old man chuckled. “I haven’t told them yet. I’ve just been listening

and I've changed my will twice!"

Nothing gets spoken behind God's back that He doesn't hear.

Verse 13, "For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb." The Hebrew word "covered" means "to weave or embroider." David knew that even while in-utero the Lord knitted him together, and fashioned him according to God's design.

Modern obstetrics has learned much about the development of a child in a mother's womb. We're awed by God's genius in human reproduction.

At the moment the microscopic sperm and egg unite all the ingredients are in place for a fully functioning, viable human. From conception nothing else gets added. All that's needed now is time and nutrients. It takes a fertilized egg just 266 days to grow into a 7½ pound bubbly baby!

Understand how quickly the unborn baby grows...

At 2 weeks there's a discernible heartbeat.

At 43 days the baby has detectable brain waves.

At 6½ weeks the unborn baby starts moving.

At 9 weeks the baby has a unique set of fingerprints – its sex can be determined – its kidneys are fully formed and functioning.

At just 12 weeks all the body's organs are in operation. The baby can cry. All the above occurs in the first trimester of a mom's pregnancy.

David knew he was fashioned by a divine plan. And this is

why I'm convinced both biblically and medically, that abortion as a means of birth control is nothing less than the murder of another human.

Verse 14, "I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvelous are Your works, and that my soul knows very well."

We could spend a long time discussing the intricacies of the human body. What makes possible functions like sight, hearing, and language?

We're ignorant of so much - and the rest we take for granted. We need to acknowledge that we are fearfully and wonderfully made by God!

Verse 15, "My frame was not hidden from You, when I was made in secret, and skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth."

The phrases "in secret" and "the lowest parts of the earth" is another way of denoting the sacredness and mystery of a mother's womb.

"Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, the days fashioned for me, when as yet there were none of them." When did God consider David a living, human being?

At birth?... At viability?... No, before that! God considers us human from the moment of conception! God maps out our life long before we're born!

Just because you don't see the baby through skin and amniotic fluid it doesn't mean you can kill it. Just because you

can't see its limbs doesn't mean you can take a suction tube and vacuum them into a wastebasket.

God sees what happens even “in the lower parts of the earth.”

Verse 17 “How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God!

How great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they would be more in number than the sand...” When I go to the beach, I sit down, pick up a handful of sand, let it pour slowly through my fingers. I recall verse 18.

God's thoughts toward me are more than the innumerable grains of sand along the world's shoreline. *God must really love us!*

Apparently God loves us so much He can't keep us out of His mind.

The psalmist adds, “When I awake, I am still with You...”

A man once asked the great missionary Hudson Taylor, if there was ever a moment when He was not conscious of abiding in Jesus.

Taylor responded, “While sleeping last night, did I cease to abide in your home because I was unconscious of the fact? We should never be conscious of NOT abiding in Christ.” I like this! It's not that faith always sees itself connected to Jesus – faith never sees itself disconnected.

Even while we're asleep we're still with Jesus.

Verse 19 “Oh, that You would slay the wicked, O God!” David has defended the innocent, but now he attacks the

wicked.

He asks God to mete out justice on evil men.

“Depart from me, therefore, you bloodthirsty men. For they speak against You wickedly; Your enemies take Your name in vain.

Do I not hate them, O LORD, who hate You? And do I not loathe those who rise up against You? I hate them with perfect hatred; I count them my enemies.” David considers *God’s enemies His enemies*. He hates those who hate God. It’s an expression of David’s love and loyalty to God.

Of course, God would tell us as Christians to express our love for Him a little differently. We need to love our enemies – fight evil with good.

“Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my anxieties; and see if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.” David finishes the way he began.

He asks God to search his motives – turn over a few stones. Dave doubts his own sincerity. He never forgets he’s capable of hypocrisy.

David asks God to purge him and purify him. He knows he needs to be fumigated with truthfulness and humility from time to time. All believers need regular course corrections, and God is faithful to provide them.

PSALM ONE HUNDRED AND FORTY – just 11 more to go. Psalm 140-143 were all written by David in difficult circumstances.

The backdrop for these psalms could've been while David was on the run from King Saul - or at the height of his son's Absalom's rebellion

Verse 1 "Deliver me, O LORD, from evil men; preserve me from violent men, who plan evil things in their hearts; they continually gather together for war. They sharpen their tongues like a serpent; the poison of asps is under their lips. **Selah** A snake's tongue is a sensor. He sticks out his tongue to pick up scents and vibrations. He smells with his tongue.

David's enemies are sniffing him out. They're going in for the kill.

When a poisonous asp bites its victim, the muscle in its upper jaw squeezes the venom from nearby glands through the snake's hollow fangs. His teeth act like hypodermic needles...

David's enemies sharpen their teeth to inject their poison.

Verse 4 "Keep me, O LORD, from the hands of the wicked; preserve me from violent men, who have purposed to make my steps stumble.

The proud have hidden a snare for me, and cords; they have spread a net by the wayside; they have set traps for me. **Selah**. I said to the LORD: "You are my God; hear the voice of my supplications, O LORD.

O GOD the Lord, the strength of my salvation, You have covered my head in the day of battle. Do not grant, O LORD, the desires of the wicked; do not further his wicked scheme, lest they be exalted. **Selah**

Verse 10 “As for the head of those who surround me, let the evil of their lips cover them; let burning coals fall upon them; let them be cast into the fire, into deep pits, that they rise not up again.” Paul mentions heaping hot coals on the heads of his enemies in Romans 12:20. He writes...

“If your enemy hungers, feed him; if he thirsts, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head.” We heap coals on our enemies and torment them by responding to their evil with God’s good.

“Let not a slanderer be established in the earth; let evil hunt the violent man to overthrow him.” I know that the LORD will maintain the cause of the afflicted, and justice for the poor. Surely the righteous shall give thanks to Your name; the upright shall dwell in Your presence.”

PSALM ONE HUNDRED AND FORTY-ONE begins, “LORD, I cry out to You; make haste to me! Give ear to my voice when I cry out to You.”

I love David’s simple and sincere approach to prayer. He just cries out to God. No flowery or embellished speech – just an anguished cry.

A man named *Jim* use to have an interesting approach to prayer.

He would pray, “Hello Jesus, this is Jim!” A friend was with Jim when he died, and he reported Jim’s last words. He said to his buddy, “Jesus just came, and do you know what He said to me?” “Hello Jim, this is Jesus!”

Our tendency is to make prayer far more complicated than

need-be.

“Let my prayer be set before You as incense, the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice. Set a guard, O LORD, over my mouth; keep watch over the door of my lips.” Here’s a prayer we all should pray!

Watch what you say! Put a sentinel – an armed guard - at the gate of your mouth. Once a word leaves your lips you can never get it back.

In Psalm 140 David worries about his enemy’s lying tongue. In Psalm 141 his concern is his own tongue. *Slander* and *slips* can be a problem.

“Do not incline my heart to any evil thing, to practice wicked works with men who work iniquity; and do not let me eat of their delicacies.”

There were men waiting on David to make a rash or harsh comment that they could use against him. Hang him with his own words.

This was the Pharisees approach to Jesus. They threw tricky questions at Him in hopes of catching Jesus in a slip of the lip.

And if this was the tactic of evil men in 1000 BC and 30 AD – then how much more is it a strategy in the information age of constant recording and permanent playbacks on the internet. We should never leave our bedroom in the morning until we post a guard by our mouth – and by our keyboard.

Verse 5 “Let the righteous strike me; it shall be a kindness. And let him rebuke me; it shall be as excellent oil; let my head

not refuse it.”

Here’s what made David great, and a man after God’s own heart. He was not too proud to receive the rebuke of the righteous. He welcomed constructive criticism from faithful and godly brothers.

This is a mark of maturity. Are you willing to receive criticism? It’s been said, “The trouble with most of us is that we would rather be ruined by praise than saved by criticism.” We all should be open to correction.

David can handle a rebuke from a righteous man, but the destructive criticism of wicked men angers him... “For still my prayer is against the deeds of the wicked. Their judges are overthrown by the sides of the cliff, and they hear my words, for they are sweet. Our bones are scattered at the mouth of the grave, as when one plows and breaks up the earth.

But my eyes are upon You, O GOD the Lord; in You I take refuge; do not leave my soul destitute. Keep me from the snares they have laid for me, and from the traps of the workers of iniquity.

Let the wicked fall into their own nets, while I escape safely.”

While he was a fugitive, and on the run from Saul, David lived for a time in two caves - the Cave of Adullam was near his hometown of Bethlehem and the cave at En-Gedi was in oasis bordering on the Dead Sea.

PSALM ONE HUNDRED AND FORTY-TWO could’ve been written in either situation. It fits the circumstances of both situations.

Verse 1 “I cry out to the LORD with my voice; with my voice to the LORD I make my supplication. I pour out my complaint before Him; I declare before Him my trouble.” I’ll be honest, at times I get tired of hearing certain people complain, but that’s not the Lord’s attitude.

He encourages us to pour out complaints, and declare our trouble!

“When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then You knew my path. In the way in which I walk they have secretly set a snare for me.

Look on my right hand and see, for there is no one who acknowledges me; refuge has failed me; no one cares for my soul.” What a terrible feeling David experiences - no one cares. It’s as if he’s on his own.

But there’s one place He can turn! “I cried out to You, O LORD: I said, “You are my refuge, my portion in the land of the living. Attend to my cry, for I am brought very low; deliver me from my persecutors, for they are stronger than I. Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise Your name; the righteous shall surround me, for You shall deal bountifully with me.”

Even in the midst of trouble, always put your hope in the Lord.

PSALM ONE HUNDRED AND FORTY-THREE

“Hear my prayer, O LORD, give ear to my supplications! In Your faithfulness answer me, and in Your righteousness. Do not enter into judgment with Your servant, for in Your sight

no one living is righteous.” We’ve all sinned against God. None of us can survive God’s judgment. If He’s counting strokes, we’re all over par. We need grace.

“For the enemy has persecuted my soul; he has crushed my life to the ground; he has made me dwell in darkness, like those who have long been dead. Therefore my spirit is overwhelmed within me; my heart within me is distressed.” David doesn’t know what to do. He’s overwhelmed.

“I remember the days of old; I meditate on all Your works; I muse on the work of Your hands. I spread out my hands to You; my soul longs for You like a thirsty land. Selah. Answer me speedily, O LORD; my spirit fails! Do not hide Your face from me, lest I be like those who go down into the pit.”

He’s overwhelmed. He doesn’t know what to do, so he reverts back to default setting. David does what’s habitual – what he’s always done. He spends time with God. He meditates and muses and longs for God.

And this is what he needed to do all along. Here David is the recipient of good spiritual habits – godly disciplines – that were worked into his life from his youth. When he doesn’t know what to do, He does what He’s always done – He turns instinctively to God for His help and comfort.

Which begs the question - “What’s your default mode?” For some of us a reset would be a disaster. It’s never too late to build on healthy habits?

Verse 8 “Cause me to hear Your lovingkindness in the morning, for in You do I trust; cause me to know the way in which I should walk, for I lift up my soul to You.” I love the

psalmist's request, "cause me to know the way in which I should walk." He's asking God to reveal His will. David's confidence is more in God's ability to speak, than his ability to hear!

"Deliver me, O LORD, from my enemies; in You I take shelter. Teach me to do Your will, for You are my God; Your Spirit is good. Lead me in the land of uprightness. Revive me, O LORD, for Your name's sake!

For Your righteousness' sake bring my soul out of trouble."
I love Psalm 143. David is praying, "God, hear me, answer me, cause me, deliver me, teach me, lead me, revive me... Do Your work in me!"

In the last verse David prays for God to do His work in his enemies.

A work of a different sort, verse 12 "In Your mercy cut off my enemies, and destroy all those who afflict my soul; for I am Your servant."