

# Columbus Street church of Christ

## Sunday Bulletin

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## When Things Get Tough the Tough – Bless the Lord Always –

David became an enemy of king Saul because the king knew that the LORD was with David, and that David was highly esteemed (1 Sam. 18:28-30). Saul erringly viewed David as a rival to the throne and sought to kill David. From there David fled for fear of Saul and eventually came into Gath where the servants of king Achish recognized David and said, “*Is this not David the king of the land. . .*”? David being very much afraid, changed his behavior before them, pretended madness (1 Sam. 21:10-15).

Psalm 34 is David’s tribute to God for his deliverance from Saul and Achish. Here David is blessing and praising God even while experiencing adversity and death. What we learn from David is that no matter how unfavorable, unpleasant, horrible, or life-threatening our current situation is, God is always there, therefore, we must in turn bless and praise Him always.

**Bless the Lord at all Times:** “*I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth*” (Psalm 34:1-2). The focus here is “*at all time...continually*”: That is to say that we do this not only when we experience good times, but as David is our example, he determined to praise the Lord always, in times of fortune and peace and in times of severe adversity. So then, when should we praise and bless Him?

**Praise God in Prosperity:** Did you know that prosperity presents a hazard to the soul of the righteous? Members of the Columbus Street congregation have heard the wisdom of Agur many times, “*Remove falsehood and lies far from me; Give me neither poverty nor riches—Feed me with the food allotted to me; 9 Lest I be full and deny You, and say, “Who is the Lord?” Or lest I be poor and steal, and profane the name of my God.*” (Prov. 30:8-9). Having too much prosperity threatens us in that we forget the one who provides. Danger because we turn from God, begin to rely on self and deny Him who does provide all our needs.”

Do you remember in Deuteronomy 6 the warning from Moses to the people concerning their impending entrance into the land God promised to their fathers? They would receive “*large and beautiful cities*” (v.10), “*houses full of all good things*”, “*hewn-out wells*” “*vineyards and olive trees*”, (v.11). All these things they did not lift a finger to build, dig, plow or plant. Then Moses warned, “. . . *when you have eaten and are full—<sup>12</sup> then beware, lest you forget the Lord who brought you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage*” (v.11b, 12).

In our day, this warning is monumental in proportion because we, in this land, are blessed and overly prosperous. The daily affairs of the good life weaken us. How many times have you asked someone, how are you, only to hear, “I’m livin’ the dream!”. Many today, if we are honest, would

# Knowing & Doing God's Will

Proverbs 11:14

admit the cares of this world methodically root out any time for us to praise God, but not just the cares, but the fact that we have everything we ever need. Like God through Moses warned, this leaves us forgetting Him who provides for all our needs. I personally have fasted for days at a time, but I have never gone a day in my life without food on the table because my family could not feed me. I always had shoes, a coat for winter, and a warm bed too. We had an air-conditioned car, air-conditioned house and a color television. So many have so little but of all the people in the world we should lead the march to praise God, for we have been so blessed. Let's lead the procession and offer continual praise to His name!

**Praise God in Poverty:** A paradox is a situation or statement that “is a logically self-contradictory statement or a statement that runs contrary to one's expectation.” It is a paradox that the poor of this world often have the ability to praise God more than the rich. We are rich, and often struggle to bless and praise Him always in all things. But having been rich, would we be able to praise God if we suddenly became poor? The poor of this world learn to depend upon and trust in God, rather than in riches, simply because—they don't have riches. Having so little in this life may just be the thing that produces in them a genuine yearning for heaven.

We know the Macedonians really impressed Paul because he wrote, *“<sup>1</sup> Moreover, brethren, we make known to you the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia: <sup>2</sup> that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded in the riches of their liberality. <sup>3</sup> For I bear witness that according to their ability, yes, and beyond their ability, they were freely willing, <sup>4</sup> imploring us with much urgency <sup>[a]</sup> that we would receive the gift and the fellowship of the ministering to the saints. <sup>5</sup> And not only as we had hoped, but they first gave themselves to the Lord, and then to us by the will of God.”* (2 Cor. 8:1-5).

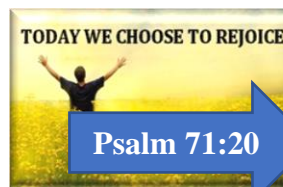
As Proverbs 30 and 9 stated earlier indicates, the poor are tempted to steal and profane the name of the Lord. The poor of this world can develop habits of greed, the same as rich people can. Paul wrote, *“But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition”* (1 Tim. 6:9). Thinking again of David, he was determined to praise God even in the days of poverty.

## **Praise God in Adversity:**

Without question all of mankind, both the rich and the poor face adversities at some point in their lives.

Facing adversity can cause

one to become bitter, cause resentment, and as in the case of Jeremiah whose ministry, in the worldly sense, was unpopular and in his eyes a failure. *“<sup>7</sup> O Lord, You <sup>[b]</sup> induced me, and I was persuaded; You are stronger than I, and have prevailed. I am <sup>[c]</sup> in derision daily; Everyone mocks me. <sup>8</sup> For when I spoke, I cried out; I shouted, “Violence and plunder!” because the word of the Lord was made to me a reproach and a derision daily”* (Jer. 20:7-8), and he said, *“Cursed be the day in which I was born! Let the day not be blessed in which my mother bore me!”* (v.14). Ouch!



*“You, who have shown me great and severe troubles, shall revive me again, and bring me up again from the depths of the earth.”*

Sometimes burdens are heavy and hard to bear nevertheless both David and Jeremiah resolved to praise God even in the face of adversity. Think of David's troubles, think of Jeremiah.

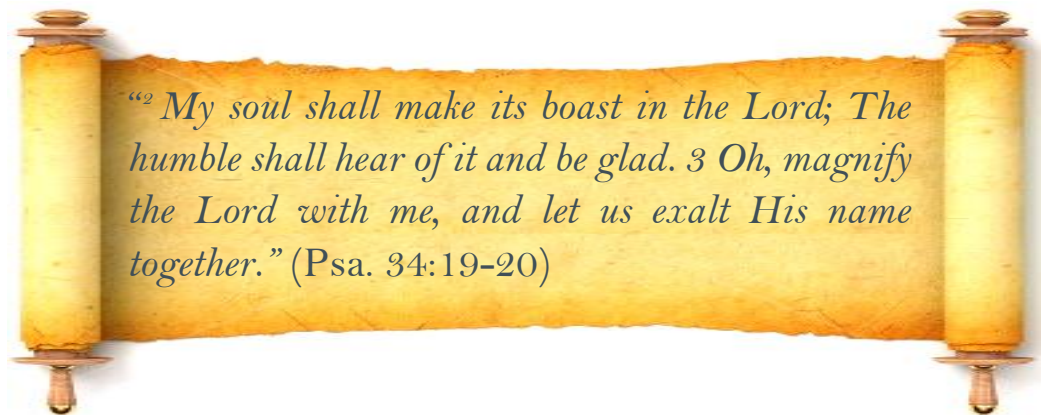
Still, David praised God for his deliverance and is able to say, *"<sup>2</sup> My soul shall make its boast in the Lord; The humble shall hear of it and be glad. <sup>3</sup> Oh, magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together"* (Ps. 34:19-20).

**Praise God in Sickness:** Benjamin Franklin said, "in this world nothing can be said to be certain, except death and taxes". But as popular as that is, it is not true. This is one other thing that is certain, that cannot be avoided and that is sickness. All the more reason to learn to praise the Lord when it does come. Paul pleaded with the Lord three times to remove the thorn in the flesh (2 Cor. 12:1-8), and the Lord refused saying, *"My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness"* (v.9). Paul accepted this and understood the thorn in the flesh was good for his soul, to keep him humble, *"... lest I should be exalted above measure. . ."* (v.7). Therefore, Paul resolved, *"... Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. <sup>10</sup> Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong."* (vs.9b-10). Paul could praise God in sickness just as certainly as when he was in good health.

There are times and circumstances which make it difficult to bow the knee before our omniscient God. Times when pain, or sorrow, or loss make us want to say, "Lord stop the pain, Lord why must I go through this, Lord save me"? But we know that our Father knows what is best, thus we continue to worship and serve Him, even when it is hard. This is the spirit all Christians must cultivate. Truly, suffering builds character (Romans 5:3-5).

In Love

David Scarpino



## Welcome One and All!

**Our faithful Creator** is worthy to be praised in this assembly. All praise to Him who reigns above in majesty supreme! He gave His Son to die, for all mankind, that He might redeem all. Our blessed Redeemer suffered and died for our sins and is now risen and sitting at the right hand of God as only Head of the church. Let us offer the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, knowing that He is the author of eternal salvation to all those who obey Him (Hebrews 5:9). *"Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory!"* (Isaiah 6:3)

*“Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.”*

**(James 1:12)**

### **What Jesus Said I Must Do to Be Saved?**

1. Hear the gospel-----John 6:45
2. Believe the gospel-----John 8:24
3. Repent of sins-----Luke 13:3
4. Confess Christ-----Matthew 10:32
5. Be baptized-----Mark 16:16
6. Remain faithful until death -----Matthew 10:22