

A Sinner's Prayer for Grace

Psalm 90:15–16

Psalm 90:11–12 Make us glad according to the days *in which* You have afflicted us, the years *in which* we have seen evil. Let Your work appear to Your servants, and Your glory to their children.¹

As a believer in our glorious and merciful God, you must—

Preview Outline:

1. Cry Out for the Lord's Grace in Life (v. 15)
2. Cry Out to see the Lord's Glory on Display (v. 16)

The first truth that we must consider about crying out to God is that must—

1. Cry Out for the Lord's Grace in Life

Ever since the fall of mankind all of creation has been groaning (Rom. 8:22). The earth is under the *just* curse of God (Gen. 3:15). Of course the wrath of God is just on sinners (Rom. 3:23). As we have asked over and over again, “When will things be right again?” The ultimate answer is this: when Christ comes again to destroy sin and death once and for all (see the book of Revelation). In the mean time, we battle the effects of sin daily.

“*Make us glad*” — This phrase is interesting. This is one word (Heb. נַחַם) and used in this context it carries with it the idea that God is the one who makes us to be glad/rejoice. However, if you are paying close attention to how this psalm is put together you will notice that this appeal seems to contrast what the rest of the Psalm has said up to this point. Moses has described God as the One whose wrath is great towards sin (vv. 3, 7–11). If God has a great fury towards sinners for their sins against Him, how can He “make us glad” as Moses petitions? After all, Moses does acknowledge that God has “afflicted us” (v. 15b).

God's wrath is unquestionable. There is no way in which a holy God can overlook rebellious, sinful acts of humans. The penalty for sin is death (Rom. 6:23). Pastor Dickson and I both spent a considerable amount of time the last few messages to show you how the Scripture's clearly articulate God's wrath. But this God that Moses writes about and prays to is the God of mercy (Eph. 2:4ff). He will have mercy on whom He will have mercy. Consider the following verses penned by Moses that describe God's merciful nature:

Exodus 15:13 You in Your mercy have led forth the people whom You have redeemed; You have guided *them* in Your strength to Your holy habitation.

Exodus 20:4–6 ⁴“You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness *of anything* that *is* in heaven above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the water under the earth; ⁵ you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the Lord your God, *am* a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the

¹ Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations taken from the New King James Version.

fathers upon the children to the third and fourth *generations* of those who hate Me, ⁶ but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.

Deuteronomy 4:30–31 ³⁰ When you are in distress, and all these things come upon you in the latter days, when you turn to the Lord your God and obey His voice ³¹ (for the Lord your God *is* a merciful God), He will not forsake you nor destroy you, nor forget the covenant of your fathers which He swore to them.

Deuteronomy 7:9 “Therefore know that the Lord your God, He *is* God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy for a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments;

Deuteronomy 13:17–18 ¹⁷ So none of the accursed things shall remain in your hand, that the Lord may turn from the fierceness of His anger and show you mercy, have compassion on you and multiply you, just as He swore to your fathers, ¹⁸ because you have listened to the voice of the Lord your God, to keep all His commandments which I command you today, to do *what is* right in the eyes of the Lord your God.

Yes, the Lord is holy and has a righteous indignation towards sinners who persist in their rebellion. But the Lord is also merciful and slow to anger. He will extend mercy to those who will repent of their sins and turn to Him for salvation.

“according to the days in which You have afflicted us, and the years we have seen evil” — This phrase may seem somewhat confusing. In essence, Moses is petitioning the Lord to grant to him and the people of Israel the same amount of good days as the days of judgment they had experienced. In other words, *Moses asked God for balanced grace*. On the one hand, the Lord judged the people of Israel for their sin. On the other hand, He could just as easily extend grace to them for peaceable days. So Moses appeals to the Lord for just as many joyfully blessed days as judgment days they had received.

Of course we know that God is under no obligation to give us anything—that is what makes grace to amazing! We deserve the judgment of God. But even when we deserved judgment as His enemies Jesus Christ came to die for us (Rom. 5:8). The grace that we have been saved by as Christians is that much sweeter because it was underserved and impossible to earn (Eph. 2:8–9).

Moses not only describes how we should cry out to God for His grace in life, but he also describes who we should—

2. Cry Out to see the Lord’s Glory on Display (v. 16)

Moses essentially describes what ought to be the desire of every believer: to see the glory of God on display through His sovereign acts. The glory of God is the theme of the Bible. God’s glory is on display in His salvation work wrought through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Moses asks for God to display his glory as manifested through His divine works for two groups: (1) to God’s servants (i.e. the ones who were present to see His work in that very moment), and (2) subsequent generations.

“Let Your work appear to Your servants” — Moses and the children of Israel had seen God’s glory on display from one mighty work to the next. They saw God lead them from Egypt (Exod. 1–12). He had provided them with manna from heaven and water from rocks. He had judged them on many different occasions and had shown mercy on others (e.g. Num. 21:1ff). Yet even after seeing these mighty works Moses prays once again for God to display His sovereign works in an unmistakable way for all to see.

“and Your glory to their children” — This, simply, is Moses’ prayer that subsequent generations would see the works of God (i.e. the glory of God) on display. Would that not also be your prayer? Have you prayed that the young people of this generation would see the glory of God in such a way that they could not do any else but praise Him for it? When faced with the glory of God sinful man recognizes his helpless state.

Conclusion

We must cry out to God that He would mercifully grant us joyful days so as to put His works on display for all to see.