**Psalm 34 I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise *shall* continually *be* in my mouth. 2 My soul shall make its boast in the Lord; The humble shall hear *of it* and be glad. 3Oh, magnify the Lord with me, And let us exalt His name together. 4I sought the Lord, and He heard me, And delivered me from all my fears. 5They looked to Him and were radiant, And their faces were not ashamed. 6This poor man cried out, and the Lord heard *him, And* saved him out of all his troubles. 7 The angel of the Lord encamps all around those who fear Him, And delivers them. 8Oh, taste and see that the Lord *is* good; Blessed *is* the man *who* trusts in Him! 9Oh, fear the Lord, you His saints! *There is* no want to those who fear Him. 10The young lions lack and suffer hunger; But those who seek the Lord shall not lack any good *thing.* 11Come, you children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord. 12Who *is* the man *who* desires life, And loves *many* days, that he may see good? 13 Keep your tongue from evil, And your lips from speaking deceit. 14Depart from evil and do good; Seek peace and pursue it. 15The eyes of the Lord *are* on the righteous, And His ears are *open* to their cry. 16The face of the Lord is against those who do evil, To cut off the remembrance of them from the earth. 17*The righteous* cry out, and the Lord hears, And delivers them out of all their troubles. 18 The Lord is near to those who have a broken heart, And saves such as have a contrite spirit. 19 Many are the afflictions of the righteous, But the Lord delivers him out of them all. 20He guards all his bones; Not one of them is broken. 21Evil shall slay the wicked, And those who hate the righteous shall be condemned. 22The Lord redeems the soul of His servants, And none of those who trust in Him shall be condemned.**

God has not forgotten the righteous. We need to feel encouraged this morning! We need to feel hopeful! God has not forgotten the righteous. Romans 3:10 says - *There is none righteous, no, not one.* How do we become righteous? If none are righteous, who then can be saved? 2 Corinthians 5:21 gives us that clear answer - *For He (God) made Him (Jesus) who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him (Jesus).*We stand in righteousness through the blood of Jesus Christ and the ones who stand in the blood have nothing to fear- there will be afflictions, there will be trials, there will be tribulations, but the Lord will deliver the righteous from them all. God has not forgotten the righteous - Can we get excited about that this morning?

Let’s look at some specific verses this morning – verse 4 *I sought the Lord, and He heard me, And delivered me from all my fears.* We talked about this last week – the wise person seeking the rock, digging deep, placing all hope on that foundation has nothing to fear from the storms of life that will come. In our verse, we see an outcome of that work – God delivered me from all my fears! The righteous seek Jesus! And God delivers them from all their fears.

Verse 7 says *The angel of the Lord encamps all around those who fear Him, And delivers them.* Proverbs 18:10 says *The name of the Lord is a strong tower; The righteous run to it and are safe.* The righteous stay in the camp of the Lord, where an angel protects and delivers. In these days, many leave the camp and pursue their appetites – pursue the world – they blame God because the protecting angel didn’t go along like a dog on a leash. God is clear. Those who fear the Lord are in the camp protected.

Who is the man, the woman who desires life? Verses 13 & 14 *Keep your tongue from evil, And your lips from speaking deceit. Depart from evil and do good; Seek peace and pursue it.* Do you hear the action there? Keep, depart, do, seek, pursue! No consumption Christianity here! This is God’s people pursuing God! In Matthew 16:25 Jesus says - *For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.* The righteous lose self in favor of Jesus and find eternal life there. Years ago, Donnie and Marie Osmond sang about – I’m a little bit country and he’s a little bit rock & roll. We cannot be a little bit spirit and a little bit self. God says we cannot serve two masters. We must seek first the Kingdom of God and all the rest will be added.

Verse 15 says *The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, And His ears are open to their cry.* Remember, we become righteous through Jesus! James 5:16 says in part *The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.* In order for God to hear, we must first come to Jesus and believe on His name. The scripture tells of a man named Elijah, who was like us, who shut off the rain for 3 ½ years through earnest prayer. The effective, fervent prayer – The Greek word for this is Energeo… that should sound familiar! We take our English word energy from it. The energetic, active prayer of a holy person avails much when it is in keeping with God’s will. What is God’s will? John 3:16 *For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.* Are we praying for God Will or our will? The righteous man and woman isn’t praying for a return to yesterday, but for God’s will tomorrow. Listen to our scripture, verse 17- *The righteous cry out, and the Lord hears, And delivers them out of all their troubles.*

Verse 19 *Many are the afflictions of the righteous, But the Lord delivers him out of them all.* God will handle the wicked – verses 21 & 22 *Evil shall slay the wicked, And those who hate the righteous shall be condemned. The Lord redeems the soul of His servants, And none of those who trust in Him shall be condemned.*

This week, let’s look at how we’re praying. Are we praying as Christ or as self? Are we seeking comfort of yesterday or the promise of tomorrow? Are we looking to Jesus, understanding that we are in this world, but not of this world? Is our prayer for our brothers and sisters of every nation and not just this nation? Evil shall slay the wicked, but God redeems the righteous. In these days, God is calling us to take our eyes off the world and place them back on Him. Are we praying for God to prepare the soil of hearts to receive His Seed? Are we praying that we might be the sowers of seed in this new soil? Are we willing to work in the fields that are white unto the harvest? We will have afflictions, but God will deliver us through them all. May we be fervent, energetic, effective in our prayers, focused more on the Coming of Jesus than the Comfort of our situation. Focused more on the saving of souls than the serving of self.