

CHRISTIAN WORKER

"We are workers together with Him..." (2 Corinthians 6:1)

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A PSALM FOR WHEN I'M ANGRY (PSALM 37)

Garrett English

In case of an emergency where help is needed beyond what you can provide, one would call the appropriate phone number (e.g. 9-1-1). What about a spiritual emergency? When tempted to stir up wrath quickly or to remain in anger, the writers of the psalms have taught us we should call on God! Anytime emotions overwhelm us we should seek God's help, especially in times when anger rises like a tidal wave. Numerous psalms would help us in this struggle, but one stands out to me: Psalm 37. The thirty-seventh psalm can help us when we are tempted to become angry quickly or if we are tempted to be indignant in an unrighteous way.

What does this psalm tell us to do when we are angry?

First, this psalmist calls us to remember the fruits of anger. He says, "Do not fret, it only causes harm", warning us that anger often leads to harmful things, either for your own soul, the souls of others, or both (v. 8). Note the psalmist's use of "only" shows there is **one** expected result of being short-fused: harm. Uncontrolled anger and those who are quick to anger will end up causing great harm! The word harm is used for both physical and spiritual harm, and our own experiences likely tell us that physical harm is often a result of uncontrolled anger (1 Sam. 26:21, 1 Chron. 16:22). However, it is most important to understand the spiritual harm that anger causes for our souls and the souls of those around us when we are angry (1 Kings 16:25, Jer. 7:26).

Secondly, this psalmist desires for us to remember the commands of God when we are angry. He says to "depart from evil and do good" (v. 27). Good is defined by God in His Word. Good is obeying His Word and avoiding what God designated as evil. He reminds us that anger can cloud

our judgment causing us to forget God's word! When we are angry, let us go to God's Word. Let us notice the psalmist's command to "dwell in the land". What had God told Israel about the land they were in? It belonged to them, not their enemies. Essentially, he is telling them to look back to the words of God who promised them this land and how they were given it if they remained obedient. If they would go back to doing good, God would give them the land again. For us, the application is to dwell in the land is to remain walking

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FROM THE EDITOR:

...FOR WHEN I'M THANKFUL (PSALM 103)

Ross Haffner

Gratitude stands as one of Scripture's most vital yet frequently neglected themes. Psalm 103 opens with a stirring thought: "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name! Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits." These words encourage us to intentionally direct our hearts toward thankfulness to God for every blessing He has poured out. When we cultivate this thankful heart, we find the ability to focus on His gifts rather than drift into the habit of ungrateful complaining.

Why do we so often emphasize the negative even when affirming something good? A friend compliments a truck, and the reply comes, "Yeah, it's barely chugging along." Someone admires a dress, only to hear, "Oh, this old thing? I want something more trendy." A sermon is praised, yet the preacher responds, "It was awful—I couldn't get in a good flow." Such responses reveal how easily we take for granted the very things for which we ought to give thanks. I'm thankful to have a vehicle, nice clothes, and to have the ability to preach. Other's compliments show that I ought to respond in a grateful way instead of turning to the negative.

Life for the unthankful person often hardens into bitterness. By contrast, a soul that echoes gratitude remains soft toward God and open to His goodness. True thankfulness flows from genuine faith. Those who refuse to believe can never fully give thanks. Romans 1:20-21 declares that although God's invisible attributes are clearly seen in creation, people "did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened." Every good and perfect gift comes from above, from the Father of lights (Jas. 1:17). If we withhold thanks, do we truly believe that all good things come from His hand? A poor response to God usually signals a poor faith in God. Jesus illustrated this truth in the healing of the ten lepers (Luke 17:11-19). All ten were cleansed, and surely all felt relief. Yet only one returned to glorify God with thanksgiving. "Where are the nine?" the Lord asked. One of life's great tragedies occurs

when a Christian, through weakened faith, becomes unthankful toward the God who has redeemed him.

The psalmist's call reaches deeper still: "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and **all that is within me.**" Praise must rise from the depths of our being. We are to abound more and more in the Christian life, offering God everything we are and have because He is worthy (1 Thess. 4:1). Having been crucified with Christ, we live no longer for ourselves but for the One who loved us (Gal. 2:20).

"Think" and "thank" share the same Anglo-Saxon root. The things we deliberately think about will affect our thankfulness. We thank God for Bibles, for the building where we meet, for teachers, song leaders, and fellow believers. We thank Him for forgiveness, redemption, the knowledge of truth, and His unfailing mercy and grace. However, we too easily remember the large gifts while overlooking the small everyday mercies we take for granted. In private prayer we can move beyond generalities—"Thank You for our Christian family"—and name specific brothers and sisters and why we are thankful for them.

Consistency builds the habit. An illustration from West Africa might help: the miracle berry, or taste berry, alters a person's perception so that even sour fruit becomes sweet for hours afterward. When the heart is filled with gratitude, nothing seems too unpleasant or overbearing. Thankfulness does not remove struggles, yet it enables us to bear them in a Christian manner. A sorrowful heart can sweeten its grief with gratitude. A burdened soul can lighten its load by singing God's praises. The disappointed can dispel heartache by making others grateful for them. The sick can grow strong in spirit, thanking God for spiritual health. Have we shown our appreciation to God for all He has done? Let us never forget the greatest gift—the salvation provided through Christ. May our souls continually echo with thankful praise.

CW



... FOR WHEN I'M LONELY (PSALM 25)

Carl McCann

"Loneliness is a symptom of our mental, emotional, physical and spiritual separation from God, and we can only truly remedy this pathology by seeking Him."

(Source unknown)

In no way am I a medical professional, but I am a human being created in the image of God (Gen. 1:26-27), and I have experienced times of loneliness. This topic can be rather confusing because often I am alone but not lonely. At other times, I am surrounded by people but still aware of how isolated I feel. While I may never completely solve this dilemma, I am confident that I am never truly alone because God has promised never to leave me or forsake me (Heb. 13:5). The word "forsake" contains the ideas of "to abandon, leave helpless, or to desert." How thankful we should be for God's promises! To help us deal appropriately with periods of loneliness, this article will briefly consider Psalm 25:16-20.

Up to this point in the Psalm, David has given no indication of struggle. He has offered prayers to God, seeking His help in various areas of life (v. 1-7). He has praised God (v. 8-15), and now the section we will consider is a return to prayer (v. 16-22).

Verse 16 begins with David petitioning God to turn toward him and show him great favor because he felt desolate—alone and seemingly without support—which left him feeling poor, weak, or needy. David was experiencing a period of loneliness and was pleading with God to see him. How often are we

like David? In our loneliness, we want someone to truly see and understand our situation. Thankfully, God never fails to see and understand us, much better than we ever could (Ps. 139). He reassures us that He is a "refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble" (Ps. 46:1).

Further, verse 17 stresses David's view of his situation. Loneliness was causing David to feel as though everything was building and growing larger against him. His stress level was elevated, and he needed relief. Do we not find ourselves in the same proverbial boat? Loneliness causes stress, and stress can affect our perspective. When stress levels are high, do we see a way out? Are we prone to blow things out of proportion? Like David, we benefit when we ask God to take over and help us overcome our struggles and trials in life (1 Pet. 5:7).

Thirdly, verse 18 points to unrepentant sin, which produces loneliness. Sin produces shame, embarrassment, and a desire to hide ourselves from God and others (Gen. 3:8). So, for the third time, David seeks God's forgiveness (Ps. 25:7, 11). Sin is the great separator (Isa. 59:1-2), and separation produces loneliness. There is no greater loneliness than being alienated from God because of sin. God desires fellowship with us (1 John 1:3), knowing that it is not good for man to be alone (Gen. 2:18). David was miserable and in need of spiritual assistance. God was, and is, the remedy to his misery. God never tires of us coming to Him and is always ready to forgive our sins, freeing us from isolation

(1 John 1:9).

In the fourth place, adversaries promote loneliness (v. 19). David's reality was that he had many enemies, and they were intent on doing him great harm. David withstood Goliath and the Philistines, King Saul, and his own son Absalom, just to name a few. David expressed, "O Lord, how my adversaries have increased! Many are rising up against me" (Ps. 3:1). Relief could and should have been sought, and once again, God is the source of relief (Ps. 18:1-3).

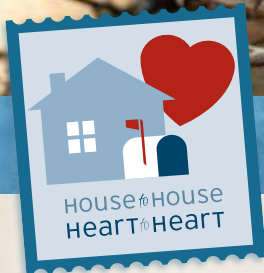
Lastly, David seeks deliverance (v. 19). David was a man after God's own heart (Acts 13:22), yet he had many enemies. David rightly asks God to keep watch over his soul and to rescue him. Even though loneliness was seizing David, he still had great confidence and hope that God could and would deliver him. Brethren, do we possess this type of confidence, truly believing that God can deliver us from loneliness and our enemies?

An interesting thought in closing: David uses the word "ashamed" in verse 20. Hebrew sources cite one meaning of this word as "disappointed." David does not want to be disappointed, and there is no reason to be disappointed in God if only we will trust and obey Him. Loneliness is real, and if we are not careful, it can and will affect every aspect

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CW

...FOR WHEN I'M CELEBRATING (PSALM 100)

Kris Groda

“**T**o everything there is a season, A time for every purpose under heaven: (Eccles. 3:1). The Bible addresses every aspect of our life and for many of life's events, it seems there is a Psalm that can be appropriately applied. Solomon said there was a time to laugh, dance, and embrace (Eccles. 3:4-5). We celebrate people and their accomplishments. We celebrate birthdays, anniversaries, graduations, baby showers and retirement. We celebrate our nation every Fourth of July and other national holidays such as New Year's Day and Labor Day. Those end-of-the-year holidays like Thanksgiving and Christmas bring families together while acknowledging the bountiful blessings God has bestowed upon us all year. Even the American funeral culture has shifted and now we emphasize a “celebration of life”. But for our purposes, there isn't anything that we celebrate that doesn't need God at the center of it all, getting all the glory.

The Old Testament Jewish folks had many reasons to celebrate as evidenced by their several feast days throughout the year. In Luke 15, Jesus taught us to celebrate spiritual victories when He told the parables of the lost sheep, the lost coin and the lost son. When the lost are found, there is always a celebration.

We are not sure about the impetus for Psalm 100, but it is a Hebrew song of praise in consideration of the Lord's faithfulness to His people.

Here are some things we learn from Psalm 100:

1. Sing aloud to God (v.1-2). The lyrics insist that “come before His presence with singing”. As such we are to “make a joyful shout” and the we “serve the Lord with gladness. Notice the mood. We are His singers and God is our song!
2. Be reminded that God is our Creator and we are His creation (v.3). Sometimes we forget Who is in charge. “The Lord, He is God” and “it is He

who has made us, and not we ourselves”. It is “in Him” that “we live and move and have our being” (Acts 17:28). When we celebrate, let us humble ourselves before the mighty hand of God (1 Pet. 5:6).

3. God is our Shepherd and we are His sheep (v.3). We are His people. We are the sheep of His pasture. Peter would remind us that we are a “chosen people” and a people for “God own possession” (1 Pet. 2:9). We are God's property and anything we celebrate is a good and perfect gift that comes from God, the Father of lights (Jas. 1:17). Therefore, give God the glory as His people.
4. God is the Blessed One and we are blessed by Him (v.3-4). We are to “bless His name” and “be thankful” as we come into His courts with praise. Jesus taught gratitude in Luke 17:17 by calling out the one Samaritan who had been healed of his leprosy and returned to thank Jesus. Paul taught us to “give thanks always for all things” (Eph.5:20). When we celebrate, don't forget to say, “thank you” to God. Among the things for which we should appreciate God, the Psalmist highlights the enduring nature of His goodness, mercy and truth to all generations. Remember this when we celebrate our families.

Psalm 100 addresses our need to remember our identity in God, and to remember God in our work and service under the sun, in our blessings, and in our families. We might even go as far as to include remembering God in our trials and difficult circumstances by remembering that “the Lord is good” (Ps. 100:5). Paul said, “Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me” (2 Cor. 12:9). Christians ought always to remember God in every aspect of life, and the times when we are celebrating are no exception.

CW

...FOR WHEN I'M OVERWHELMED (PSALM 61)

Bryce Mayfield

Picture this with me: You are in the cabin of a cruise ship. You have gone to sleep for the night and all is well. Suddenly, you are startled awake by the jolt of the ship and emergency sirens. The vessel has slammed into a reef. Because you are in one of the lower levels of the ship, water has

already made its way to your room. The door is pinned shut, you feel the water flowing through the cracks, and as it steadily rises, panic sets in. There is no evident way of escape. The water reaches your neck, you prepare to take your last breath, the thought of drowning becomes an ever-present reality...

This is what it feels like to be overwhelmed. While the story above is merely fiction, the feeling of being overwhelmed is all too true for most. We may not drown in water, but the stress from our bills, relationships, work, sin, and the “busyness” of our lives often leave us gasping for air with very little sign of rescue. How can I conquer such an intense and very real emotion? If God is the “God of all comfort” (2 Cor. 1:3), His Word can present us a solution. So, let us turn to Him to seek His Wisdom. Here are four tips from Psalm 61 for when I’m feeling overwhelmed:

When I’m overwhelmed, I need to pray. As Psalm 61 begins, David says, “Hear my cry, O God; Give heed to my prayer.” The first place David turned to in this Psalm was his God. Have you seen a child who has been hurt? What is the first thing they do? They cry for mom or dad. As a child runs to their parents seeking comfort, we too ought to run to our heavenly Father in our time of need. When the bills pile up, we could pray, “Feed me with the food that is my portion...” (Prov. 30:7-9). When our calendars have so many colors on them that want to set them on fire, we could pray, “Lord, help me to redeem the time You have graciously given me” (Eph. 5:15-17). The point is, the first thing I should do when I’m feeling overwhelmed is take those worries to God in prayer.

When I’m overwhelmed, I need to reflect. As you continue to read through Psalm 61, notice the phrase “You have...” used 3 times (Ps. 61:3,5). Each time, this phrase is connected to something God has done for David in the past. David reflects on the protection he’s received from enemies (v. 3), the listening ear of God (v. 5a), and the inheritance he has received as one who fears God (v. 5b). David is reflecting on the past knowing what God can do for him in the present. This means, when the waters rise for you and I, we ought to think about the ways God has blessed us. Practically, this is thanksgiving. Keep a journal of all the ways God has blessed you, no matter how big or small a blessing may seem. When you start to feel overwhelmed, return to that journal and remember the Giver of all things that are good (James 1:17)

When I’m overwhelmed, I need to anticipate. As we continue to work through Psalm 61, note a transition found in verse 6. David moves his words from the past tense (“You have”) to the future tense (“You will”). After reflection on what God did for him in the past, he now anticipates what God will do for him in the future. Did you know that God has made hundreds of promises to His people throughout His Word? Eternal life is one of those promises (1 John 2:25). So, when I’m feeling overwhelmed, I ought to seek out the promises

God makes to us in His Word and anticipate them to come. This changes our perspective from the struggles of now to the blessings of later.

When I’m overwhelmed, I need to sing. The final tip from Psalm 61 can be found in verse 8. As David concludes this Psalm, he is now singing praises to God. He has gone from praying, crying out to God, to praising the great name of the Lord. Singing can help us overcome the feeling of being overwhelmed. So, sing. Go to worship services and praise the Lord. Sing with your family during your devotional times. When you struggle, choose to sing. That’s what Paul and Silas did (Acts 16:25).

The water reaches your neck, you prepare to take your last breath, the thought of drowning becomes an ever present reality... then the glass window breaks and you make your escape to the surface filling your lungs with oxygen and your heart with relief. Brothers, sisters, and friends, being overwhelmed is a real emotion that we can struggle with. If we handle it God’s way, we too can escape the rising waters and find relief in Him. When you struggle, do not forget to pray to your Father in heaven, reflect on His blessings, anticipate His promises, and sing praises to Him. In doing these things, we allow the God of all comfort to rescue us.

CW

...FOR WHEN I’M DEPRESSED (PSALM 42)

K. Todd Crayton

Depression does not feel like a cozy blanket. It is not warm; it is a ship’s anchor—dragging, dulling, making even the simple act of breathing feel like heavy labor. What does faith look like when our feelings refuse to cooperate? It looks like choosing focus, quiet endurance, and remembering that God’s presence is never canceled out by the storm.

Strength in Spiritual Memory

It is difficult to maintain perspective when bills stack up, family pressures mount, and spiritual peace seems miles away. Do we surrender to anxiety, or redirect our minds toward truth and steady purpose? Galatians 6:9 states, “And let us not grow weary in well doing...”

When weariness sets in, memory becomes vital medicine. Think back to gospel meetings, Bible study, and moments when simple obedience brought encouragement. Remind

yourself: your Heavenly Father knows exactly what you need. As the loving Shepherd, He cares for you no matter what this life throws at you—Psalm 23 anchors our weary hearts with the intimate declaration that the Lord is our shepherd.

The Courage of Small Steps

Endurance is rarely dramatic. Sometimes it is a deep breath to slow an anxious mind, or gentle exercise to reset the body. Sometimes it is merely sitting up in bed—a small accomplishment that becomes a faithful first step toward standing up. Changing the atmosphere can be as simple as walking or opening the curtains to let sunlight flood a dark room. Hope reawakens what felt closed, and our faith lives vibrantly because He lives.

Still, the frustration of the mind is real. Hopelessness can feel normal, but feelings of worthlessness are heavy dangers rather than badges of faith. How comforting it is to read 1 John 3:20: “For if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart...” Elijah hid from threats, David cried out in anguish, and Job sat in deep despair. Sorrow is a shared human experience, and faith carries us through.

Light for the Darkest Roads

For many, depression feels like walking through a valley with no end in sight. But for Christians, the Bible offers a light that does not dismiss pain, yet illuminates the path ahead. When David cried out in Psalm 42:5, “Why, my soul, are you downcast?” it did not demonstrate weak faith; it taught us that even the most faithful servants bring their raw anguish directly to God.

The Promise of Healing

Every Christian faces trials, but God has promised a way through them, around them, and over them (1 Cor. 10:13). Recognizing that truth removes the stigma surrounding mental health. Healing often requires both spiritual devotion and practical care, combining hope in God with sound professional wisdom. Depression is real, faith is real, and help is real.

Where does hope anchor itself? In the unchanging promises of God. Isaiah 41:10 strengthens us: “Do not fear, for I am with you... I will strengthen you and help you.” When our emotions argue that no one understands, these promises stand firm, shifting our focus from hopelessness toward trust.

The Lifeline of Prayer

Prayer is never optional when life feels soul-crushing; it is a vital lifeline. Philippians 4:6-7 teaches that dwelling on things

that are pure, true, and lovely brings a peace that surpasses understanding. Singing hymns, reading Scripture, and sharing hurts with a wise friend create mental space for God’s comfort to enter.

Faith also refuses to be sedentary. Scripture returns to the theme of fellowship: “Carry each other’s burdens” (Gal. 6:2). Healing rarely happens in isolation—sharing struggles with mature friends, ministers, or counselors opens the door for encouragement, and Proverbs 11:14 reminds us that victory comes through many advisers. Seeking biblical wisdom does not cancel professional care; it complements it.

Stay on the Journey

The journey through depression rarely happens overnight. It is a pilgrimage of small steps in the light—one step, then another—as the beloved hymn declares: “How beautiful it is to walk in the steps of the Savior.” God remains near to the brokenhearted (Ps. 34:18). Hold tightly to His promises. Engage in heartfelt prayer. Seek wise counsel. And keep walking—step by step through the valley of despair—until joy comes in the morning.

CW

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in the light where no one can take us from the Lord’s hand (1 John 1:7-9, John 10:28-29). The psalmist also commands the listener to “commit your way to Him”. When we are angry, let us recall we made a commitment to abiding in God’s Words—not just one time nor for just one day, but every day of our lives.

Finally, when we are angry, the psalmist instructs us to remember God’s Faithfulness in saying, “Trust in the LORD” and “Delight yourself in the LORD” (v. 3-4). When we put our trust in God, we are not trusting our emotions—our anger – to lead us in the right way nor are we trusting ourselves. The psalmist reminds us to shift our focus to the promises of God upon His faithful people. The Israelites would have been reminded of the blessings of following God, and so we also should “feed on His faithfulness” as we take the psalmists’ desires to heart (Deut. 28:1-14).

When we remember the fruits of anger, the words of God, and the faithfulness of God, we can help our anger subside and strive to produce the fruit of the Spirit. This psalm reminds us that those who faithfully follow God—in this case, those who control their anger – He will preserve and deliver from the evil ones who will be “cut off” in the end (v. 9, 38).

CW



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From the Director's Desk



Trent Kennedy
Director
SWSBS

In August we hit the ground running! SWSBS welcomed eleven new students and twelve returning students to Austin. Over the course of the year, we will continue to build knowledge, character, and habits in these Christians. Our second year class will focus their attention this quarter on various Bible texts. Over the course of this second year, practical classes in preaching, teaching, evangelism, and counseling will be woven into their studies to prepare them for the work that lies ahead. Our first year students take introductory classes to help them with reading, writing, study, and work as Bible students. They are introduced to both the Old Testament and New Testament and get foundational classes in both.

These students will adjust to classes five days per week. They will be integrated into the Southwest congregation. They will learn about thank you letters and word processing and chores and interpersonal communication and sermon outlines and much more. Why? What is the purpose? Well, our aim is that these students will be formed more and more into the image of Jesus. The power of the gospel in their heads will produce conviction in their hearts and will make its way into their hands of diligent service. We will do our imperfect best to model this for our students.

When a student graduates, if he has committed himself, through attention and effort, to everything we are doing at SWSBS, he will leave with the head of an exegete, the heart of a missionary, and the hands of a servant. He will seek to understand deeply Scripture in his own mind and explain it simply. He will see souls in the individuals around him and know the gospel's power to save. And, he will be a tireless worker in the Kingdom willing to do any job any time anywhere.

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