

## Thanks be to God!

Today we read together from Psalm 63, a psalm written by David in a time of great stress. A time when David had to do without. A time where he was confronted with what he had and what he didn't have. It forced David to think and reflect between needs and wants in life. What is truly necessary for a good life, an improved life?

For there are many things that we can desire that might make our lives better. Relationships, vacations, toys, projects, careers that can improve our quality of life, that can give us a brighter future. In the midst of days of isolation and plans placed on hold, we begin to see the futility in these things. And here in this psalm, David recognizes the one true thing that can improve life. The Lord his God! David recognizes that the steadfast love of God is better than life itself, for he knows that apart from God, there is no life.

[Let's read Psalm 63](#)

Psalm 63 was written by David while he was in the wilderness of Judah. Such circumstances can take an incredible toll on someone. Physically, it's exhausting. Water is difficult to find under the hot sun. It's a harsh and inhospitable place. Everywhere you look, it's dry, it's arid, it's dusty. Little to no plants or shade can be found, for it's a land of drought. But the landscape around David cast an unrefreshing image of his inner self, his soul. Here he was, apart from the people of God, away from the dwelling place of God, being pursued by wicked men who do not follow the will of God. He was ostracized, unable to worship the Lord in his sanctuary, unable to worship God together with his brothers and sisters, unable to call upon God in a quiet and peaceful place.

For the desert is a far cry from the bountiful Garden the Lord had placed man into. Had mankind not turned his back on the Lord in sinful rebellion, hunger and thirst would not have been a reality. Even more so, man could experience the presence of God, even as Adam did when he walked with the Lord. Yet we have turned from God, the Creator of all things, the one

who gives life, and so we experience sin, and death has entered the world through sin. Hunger and thirst exist both physically for our bodies when they are cut off from access to food and water, and spiritually for our souls, when they are cut off from access to God.

But thanks be to God! He did not leave us in our rebellion. He has enabled a plan that allows fellowship with him once more. David knows this to be true, and he lifts up his voice in this psalm with a simple confession of faith, "Oh God, you are my God." Even despite the trials and circumstances of his life, even despite being in a dry and weary place, seemingly abandoned by God, David acknowledges that he still has a God, the majestic God who created heaven and earth, and all life.

This simple confession provides the basis for this entire psalm. God, the one who has made all things, the one who upholds all things, the one who is majestic and capable of great things, even giving life, is the one who is his God. That's why he can speak so powerfully of seeking the Lord, of thirsting for him, of fainting for him. David knows that even in the wilderness, even in a dry and weary place that is physically taxing, he is able to call upon God as his God. Even when his own body longs for food and water, yet David recognizes that it is more important to long for the Lord.

For what a help our God has been! He provided abundantly for his people long ago, he provided abundantly to David even in the wilderness. He could return to Israel, to rule the people of God as their king, and to have a son who would succeed him, that his line could continue under the shadow of God's wings until Christ Jesus was born.

Christ came with the same message that he placed upon David's lips so long before. "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst." Rather than hungering and thirsting, the follower of this King Jesus will be satisfied with the richness of heaven, believing in the one whom God has sent.

And while he performed so great a miracle like providing bread and fish to thousands of people, the true miracle was that he came with food that endures to eternal life. The richness of life can only be found in the bread of God, the one who comes down from heaven and gives

life to the world. With that message, Christ Jesus came to do the will of his Father, that the souls of sinful man could be cleansed and be satisfied with the richness of heaven.

Do you know the richness of life that God alone provides? The disciples asked Jesus, "Sir, give us this bread always." They yearned to be satisfied. They longed to receive the gift of God. The will of the Father is that everyone who believes in the Son shall have eternal life, and Christ will raise them victorious when he returns on the clouds of heaven. There is no life outside of him, there is no eternity of blessed communion apart from believing in Jesus Christ.

Christ recognized that many came to him looking for another sign. They sought after him because they had eaten their fill of the loaves. Just as some might read the words of David and think, "How can he say that lovingkindness is better than life itself? How can he compare his soul to the real hunger and thirst our bodies can actually experience?" Yet David knew that true life, true richness is not found in mere food, but in his God. True comfort could only be found in the shadow of his wings, true joy can only be sung to the honour and glory of God, true life can only be lived when God's right hand upholds you.

The third part of the psalm turns our attention away from the soul of the singer. The beginning spoke of longing for the Lord, yearning for him, and singing praises to God for his steadfast love. The middle brings beautiful imagery of the richness of God, of meditating and reflecting and recounting all of God's goodness, from his protection to his shelter. Now David rises with confidence, steadfast in his firm faith of what God is accomplishing for his people.

For David was anointed king, and he was given the promise that his line would endure forever. He himself could not bring justice to the land, but there was one who could truly rejoice in God. David as King could only rejoice because another, more perfect King than he was coming. And Christ Jesus did come, and he did defeat sin and Satan, handing them over to their own destruction, which is guaranteed with his victory on the cross.

Because he came, not to do his will, but the will of his Father, he would lose none of those whom the Father has given to him. He has promised that he will raise us on the last day victorious! Those who swear by the Lord, who give honour to him shall be greatly exalted!

Everyone who deceives themselves about who God is, whose mouths are filled with lies, they shall be silenced, and compelled to kneel before the victorious Christ.

Take comfort therefore, in knowing that your future is secure, if you believe in him. For though it may seem at times that the enemies of God are running rampant, though it seems that this world is a dry and weary place, though it seems as if the church is faltering like a wanderer thirsting in the desert, still the promise of God stands firm. His enemies, our enemies, will go down into the depths of the earth, doomed to destruction, even as we rejoice in Christ our Lord, reigning together with him as kings and queens forever.

May the knowledge and assurance of this gospel give you the comfort, the strength, the life to carry forward in your daily walk with God. By the power of his Spirit, he is willing and able to give you what you need as you struggle against your own nature, against the influence of the world, and against the evil one. Recognize his grace and steadfast love, coming to know him more truly in his Word. Yearn for the God of your salvation as your portion, the one who provides you with a real life! Thank you for listening!