

Psalm 33 • What is Worship?

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Psalm chapter 33 is different from a lot of the Psalms that we've been covering thus far in our study, but there will be more like this one, too. This is one of the Enthronement Psalms, and by that we refer to a Psalm that essentially describes God's majesty and glory and goodness and that sort of thing—which makes this Psalm one of the many important Psalms about worshipping God.

I have no doubt that this song has been used for worship by the people of God for many years in the past; and if there's one area where we could stand to grow as believers, it's in worship.

It would be interesting, wouldn't it, to take a poll among people and just simply ask them: What is worship? What is worship? What defines it? What makes it what it is? How do you worship? How do you express your heart of worship? What exactly is it?

There are a few passages in the Bible where we are given an opportunity to glimpse in heaven and to see the hosts of heaven worshipping the Lord.

One such passage is found in the Book of Revelation. It's in the fourth chapter. I'll put it on the screen for you. It says:

Revelation 4:9-11 (ESV)

*And whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to him who is seated on the throne, who lives forever and ever, the twenty-four elders fall down before him who is seated on the throne and worship him who lives forever and ever. They cast their crowns before the throne, saying,
“Worthy are you, our Lord and God,
to receive glory and honor and power,
for you created all things,
and by your will they existed and were created.”*

And whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to him who is seated on the throne, who lives forever and ever, the twenty-four elders fall down before him who is seated on the throne and worship him who lives forever and ever. (And then check out this next part as it describes their worship. It says:) They cast their crowns before the throne, saying,

*“Worthy are you, our Lord and God,
to receive glory and honor and power,
for you created all things,
and by your will they existed and were created.”*

This is a beautiful passage. Once again, we're getting a chance to do something that we wouldn't have had the opportunity to do were it not for the Word of God—and that is, to glimpse something in the spirit realm that is beyond our visual sight, to see how worship goes on before the very throne of God.

And it says that as these elders burst forth into praise, these four living creatures begin to fall down before the throne of God. I find it interesting, too, that they cast their crowns.

Whatever we've been given in this life, whatever gifts, talents, abilities, resources, or whatever, we're getting a picture of what worship is. We take that which we are, that which we've been given, we cast it down before the Lord, and we say, you gave it. I offer this once again to You. This is Yours, and You are worthy of all the glory and all the honor and all the praise, and so forth. We're reminded that that's what worship is. It's taking our lives and falling down before the Lord.

Have you ever wondered during the first century how the believers worshipped God? I mean, what did their worship look like? What did it sound like? Was it noisy? Was it quiet? Did the people get up and move around? Did they get down on the ground and get on their faces before God? Was it part of their regular gathering as a group like it is for us? Did somebody get up and sing?

We know that hymns were a regular part of Jewish worship. We know that at the Last Supper, Jesus and His disciples sang hymns together. That's recorded for us in the Gospels. We don't really know exactly how the early believers worshipped the Lord and how they went about it.

I'll bet you, if we were able to get a glimpse of it, it would probably be very different from what you and I do. In fact, you go to another country today and witness people worshipping God, and you're going to find a very different mode of worship. Some of it might seem very strange to you and I— maybe even distracting.

Good grief, worship and the methods that we use to worship are different church to church. Some people like to get up and move around. You go to some

churches and you got to be careful, you might just get run into, as somebody is dashing up and down the aisle or something like that.

Here's the problem—and we'll talk more about this as we get into it because we're going to talk about worship tonight. Many of the things that we look at—or I'll just say this: Some of the things that we do when we worship the Lord begins for us to become the definition of worship, and that's what we call worship. We're going to get together, and we're going to worship here at Calvary Chapel. When we say, hey, let's worship the Lord, we know what that usually means.

That means that somebody is going to get up and play some songs, and we're going to sing those lyrics together— hopefully, I mean, that's the goal—to the Lord. We're going to focus on Him. We're going to sing. Who knows? We might clap our hands, raise our hands, whatever. Some people will be seated; some people will be standing. That's what we call worship; and we walk out of here and say, well, worship was okay today, or worship was not so great today, or worship was awesome today, or something like that.

What we're defining really isn't worship. It might have something to do with worship, but it is not the essence of worship. And so, we're going to be talking about some of the things that we do when we worship, but we're going to maintain a perspective here. That perspective is something that we've already established— and that is, that worship, real worship, is offering yourself to the Lord.

We'll see more about that, but this Psalm begins with the words:

“Shout for joy in the LORD, O you righteous!” (ESV)

And the key words in that are not “*shout;*” they're “*in the LORD.*” I think sometimes people like to focus on the shout part of it, but there's a reason for our boisterous worship—and that is, we are shouting in the Lord. It's why we're joyful. If you have a New King James—well, here, let me put it on the screen for you. The New King James says this:

Psalm 33:1 (NKJV)

Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous!

Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous!

And I like this because it's putting the emphasis on where our rejoicing is: *“Rejoice in the Lord.”* All right? The point is the reason we're rejoicing that's found in the Lord; because if we're going to try to find it in something else, we're not going to sometimes feel like rejoicing at all because, sometimes, things don't go very well in our lives.

Typically, you got to admit the reason that you and I rejoice is because something good has happened in our lives, whatever it may be. Let's face it, you guys, we're earth dwellers—I mean, that's the fact of the matter—and our focus on a day-to-day basis is almost exclusively on what happens here on earth.

But this Psalm is telling you and I to look up and rejoice in Him. That's a whole different perspective. It means stop thinking about, for a moment, what's going on in your life and the circumstances that surround what's happening in your life, and rejoice in Him. Learn to appreciate the One who is always worthy of your attention and your rejoicing, right?

Let me show you a wonderful quote that I found online. I thought this was great. It says:

To rejoice in temporal comforts is dangerous, to rejoice in self is foolish, to rejoice in sin is fatal, but to rejoice in God is heavenly.
- Spurgeon

To rejoice in temporal comforts (and that's the stuff that goes on in our lives day-to-day; that) is dangerous, to rejoice in self is foolish, to rejoice in sin is fatal, but to rejoice in God is heavenly.

It's a great quote.

But I also want you to notice the second part of this verse. Look again in your Bible with me in verse 1; the second part says:

“Praise befits the upright.”

Or as the New King James says:

“For praise from the upright is beautiful.”

The idea here is that it's appropriate for you and I (and fitting for you and I) to praise our God. It's appropriate. Those who know God—I mean know Him—they know His faithfulness, not just because they've read it somewhere, but

because they've experienced it as well. They've seen the faithfulness of God played out in their lives and in the lives of others; and they know that He is faithful. They have every reason to lift their voice to the Lord, and it is fitting for them to do so because they have experienced His goodness firsthand.

Verse 2:

*“Give thanks to the LORD with the lyre;
make melody to him with the harp of ten strings!
³ Sing to him a new song;
play skillfully on the strings, with loud shouts.”*

We've made the point many times that music, in and of itself, is not worship. It is something that highlights our worship, and it plays a huge role in what can be worship, but it is not worship itself. Otherwise, every Beatles song would be a worship song. Music itself is not worship. Music is undoubtedly a gift from God—the ability to write music, to compose it and so forth.

And we've known for a long time that music has the ability to bring out all kinds of emotions. Music can be very emotional. I don't know if you've ever noticed, if you're watching a movie, if you just listen to the music—sometimes we're so wrapped up in what's going on, but listen to the music, you can tell whether there's something that's lighthearted going on in the movie or whether there's something dramatic and maybe even tragic or scary that's about to happen. All based on the music. I mean, what do you think of when you hear ta-da-da-ta-da-da, da, right? You know exactly what's going on; that's not a fun time in the movie, right? That's when Darth Vader's on the rise and he's about to hurt somebody.

Music sets the stage. It elicits emotions, and we know that. We've always known that. I love music for that reason, but that's exactly why music can be a problem when it comes to worship. I love music and I love musical worship, but that's one of the reasons why music can be a problem: because sometimes, we get an emotional reaction out of the music rather than having a spiritual connection with God.

Because the music was big and exciting and emotional, we walk out of worship that day going, whoa, worship was awesome, and we had all kinds of feelings, and I had goosebumps, and oh man, it was whoa! But then that wasn't worship at all. We got an emotional rush because the music was amazing; and we have to be careful because if we're drawn in to an emotional experience, then we're going to come back for an emotional—

Do you guys understand that emotions can be addicting? I mean, having an emotional rush can be very addictive— I mean, whether we're addicted to the emotion of romance or fright. Some people love to just watch scary movies because of the emotional—just being scared silly, or something like that, and watching a horror movie or something like that; and then there's the Hallmark Channel, which gives us a whole new addiction, right? And so, emotions are addictive and music brings out incredible emotions.

But we have to remember again: Music is supposed to be a vehicle to get us there. The psalmist here tells us to use it as a vehicle. He says to us here: Use these instruments, play on the 10-string lyre, get out the harp. We know that David (I don't know, this Psalm is unattributed; we don't know exactly who wrote it, but if it was David, David knew what it was to play the harp. He was a warrior and yet he also played the harp. Interesting kind of a paradox, isn't it? But he) knew what it was to worship God with music.

Music is wonderful, and we will continue to use it here at Calvary Chapel when we are worshiping the Lord, but we will also be careful to understand that worship can happen if there's no music at all. I'm waiting for that one Sunday when the electricity goes out. (It hasn't happened yet. I think we've come close a few times, but) I'm waiting for that Sunday when all of the musical instruments can't be plugged in and we are just here, our hearts and God.

When I was a fairly young believer, Sue and I were living up in Montana, and we had a really nice church building that we lived in, or worshipped in, and the music was always wonderful there. They had really talented musicians, and I loved worship. But I was asked during the week to go drive about an hour east of where we were living to this little, tiny town in Montana and to conduct a Bible study there. I reluctantly agreed to do it.

And then when I got there— in fact, that was on Sunday night that I was doing it; I just remembered. I remembered why I didn't really want to do it: because our fellowship back then had a Sunday morning service and a Sunday evening service, and I had to miss the Sunday evening service to go and do this little Bible study in this little town.

Well, the very first time I got there, I had no idea what to expect. I didn't know where we were going to meet. I didn't know who was going to show up. I didn't know anything. They just said there's this group of people and they were driving in to go to church with us on Sunday morning. (We were going to send somebody out on Sunday evening to minister to them right there.)

And so, I got there and I found out they were meeting in an abandoned John Deere implement building that had not been cleaned up; and it still smelled like they had just, maybe, dropped the oil on a tractor recently. It was cold by that time, and so they heated this place with an old fuel oil stove that belched smoke when they fired it up. And we were sitting on planks of wood— I kid you not; I'm not trying to make it sound worse than it was— we were sitting on planks of wood that rested on stumps. Somebody caught, took some stumps, and put them on this concrete floor, and put up a board over it. And that's what we sat on. I remember there was these bare light bulbs.

And I remember getting in there going, what have I gotten myself into? I was really having myself a little pity party about all my friends and everybody else who's back at church in a really nice building with our nice padded seats and wonderful music.

Then we started getting into worship in the Word with these people, and something amazing happened. God showed up in a John Deere implement building that stunk with people sitting on uncomfortable pieces of wood with an old stove belching smoke into the room and a bare light bulb lighting the place.

It was the most amazing thing I ever experienced in my life because we started worshipping God. There wasn't any fancy musician; there was just the hearts of God's people who were in love with Him and wanted to come before Him and honor Him with their lives. I was overwhelmed with the most beautiful, sweet sense of God's presence that I don't know that I'd ever experienced up to that point.

And let me tell you something: My pity party went out the window because I realized on that day some very important things about worship—and that is, that it has nothing to do with the seats or the smell or the temperature. It had to do with the heart, which is a spiritual connection.

And then I remembered something that Jesus said to us in the Gospel of John, let me put this on the screen for you. He said:

John 4:23-24 (ESV)

The hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. God is spirit and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.

But the hour is coming, (in fact, he says) and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.

You know what's interesting about that passage? There's not a word there spoken about music. Now again, the psalmist is encouraging us to play skillfully on the musical instruments that are there; but again, that's the vehicle. That's the vehicle. It is not the worship. It's the vehicle to get us there, and that's what we have to remember, right?

And it's not the emotion that comes from the music, either. I'm not saying that emotions are bad. They're God-given, and they're what make us feel like human beings. But when emotions become the goal, that's when we miss the point of worship, because as the apostle Paul told us—let me show you Romans 12:1:

Romans 12:1 (ESV)

I appeal to you. Therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God to present your bodies, who you are as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

I appeal to you. Therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God to present your bodies, who you are as a living sacrifice. It's a holy sacrifice; it's an acceptable sacrifice to God. (And here's the other thing about it: It is) your spiritual worship. To lay yourself before the Lord, and to say, I am Yours.

That is your spiritual act of worship. I am Yours. I am not my own. I am Yours. I give myself to You. Now, that doesn't take any music at all. We love when music helps get us there, but it has to happen in the heart.

Now you'll notice again that the psalmist mentions the harp and the lyre. I want you to know—and I'm sure you do—that they're not listed here because they're specially anointed instruments. They were just the instruments of the day. They mention other instruments in other Psalms, like the cymbals and other things are mentioned. But once again, the instruments aren't the focus. God is the focus, right?

I don't know how many of you are old enough to remember or were believers back in the day. I remember actually, even though I wasn't really walking with the Lord, but I remember when Jesus music was making inroads to where I was living. Remember, I grew up in Minnesota, which is right in the middle of the United States—which means anything that happened that was big always

happened on the coasts, and it took years to get into Minnesota. It wasn't until the 70s that Jesus music was making its way to Minnesota, right? It happened in the 60s out on the coasts, but we were late.

And I remember the controversy that surrounded Jesus Music; it was all about instruments, and there were a lot of Church leaders who were very vocal about certain instruments being allowed in church. In fact, I remember them (things like drums and guitar) being called the tools of the devil because they were the instruments of Rock and Roll. Of course, it was kind of an overreaction to Rock and Roll and the lifestyle that went along with it, which should be probably spoken against. But the point is, it was just this huge overreaction because it missed the point of what worship is. That has nothing to do with the instrument; it has to do with the heart.

Moving on. Verses 4 and 5 in your Bible.

*For the word of the LORD is upright,
and all his work is done in faithfulness.
⁵ He loves righteousness and justice;
the earth is full of the steadfast love of the LORD.*

Two verses there. I want you to notice there were four things about which we praise and worship the Lord. Look in those verses again:

Verse 4, he says: His Word is upright; His deeds are faithful; all that He does is faithful. And then in verse 5, we see that He loves righteousness and justice. He also speaks of the fact that the earth is literally overflowing—full to overflowing with the steadfast love of the Lord.

What's he doing here now? These are the things we sing about. These are the things that we speak to magnify the Lord in worship.

Do you guys remember that passage we looked at in Revelation at the very beginning? What did those four creatures do? They started speaking about God. They started talking about things that magnified Him, that glorified Him, and so forth. That's what the psalmist is now doing, and these are the things that we need to be focusing on in our worship.

Sue and I had breakfast with another Calvary Chapel pastor a few months ago. (That was in June because we were just coming back from our anniversary trip, and we were over in Idaho Falls, right?) We were talking about worship—and this particular pastor in the past was a worship leader, so we had some really

good talk about what was going on with worship songs these days and stuff like that. We were talking about some of the worship stuff that's coming out these days (some of the songs that are coming out), and he said something that really caught both Sue and I, as far as understanding what we liked and what we didn't like about some of the worship songs.

He said, when my worship leader comes to me and has a new song that he wants to do in church, I ask him, well, let me ask you a question. Does this song magnify the Lord or does it just bemoan our human condition? Because I don't want to sit around and sing songs that bemoan the human condition: O God, I'm such a sinner. I'm rotten to the core. The focus is all wrong. The focus in worship is on Him, magnifying Him, speaking of Him.

Your Word is faithful— or Your Word is upright; Your deeds are faithful. Isn't that what he's saying here? You love righteousness and justice. He says, *“The earth is filled with your steadfast love.”*

What am I doing? It's all the focus up here. Get it off me; get it off you. Let's get it on Him, right? Let's focus on Him, the wonderful things that we can talk about the glory of the Lord. These are things that deserve what we're seeing here in these verses 4 and 5; they deserve our thoughtful reflection. What's being said here? Why is it being said? Why does this bring glory to the Lord? And so forth. In fact, I encourage you to mark these verses in your Bible, meditate on them, and allow the Lord to enlarge your appreciation for these things as an act of worship—I should say, an expression of worship.

Verse 6 says:

*“By the word of the LORD the heavens were made,
and by the breath of his mouth all their host.
⁷ He gathers the waters of the sea as a heap;
he puts the deeps in storehouses.
⁸ Let all the earth fear the LORD;
let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him!”*

I really appreciated the song we sang tonight that Jordan let us in. For I stand in awe of you. This is exactly what the psalmist is talking about.

And it says in verse 9:

*“For he spoke, and it came to be (speaking of how creation came about);
he commanded, and it stood firm.”*

This is another common theme in our worship; and you'll notice how many worship songs that we have that speak of God in creation because it's a huge deal. We talk a lot about it. The psalmist talks a lot about it. This is where we step back, and we look at all that He has done, all that He has created, and we speak of just the magnitude of the glory and the awesomeness of how things work. Have you ever stopped to do that?

Sue and I were just having a conversation this last week, and we were remarking about how clear the air is now for the most part. These fall winds have come in, and it wasn't that long ago we were looking at the sun through smoke filled skies. It was a red sunset every night, and we would walk outside, and it felt like you were in the middle of a campfire because the air was heavy with smoke.

We were talking about where does all that smoke go because the wind blows it, but it's got to go somewhere, right? We were just talking about the—I think it's called the hydrological cycle of how God created things with the earth. All that smoke eventually met up with some clouds that were laden with moisture, and those smoke particles would get caught in those clouds that are laden with water, and eventually those clouds would become so laden that they would rain—the rain would fall upon the earth. And guess what that rain does that's laden with those smoke particles? It fertilizes the ground. Isn't that crazy?

Have you ever gone to a forest where there's been a fire, and all that ash and stuff has fallen and settled into the ground, and then what grows up out of there are some of the most fertile plants and trees? Because (isn't that crazy?) what comes out of the fire is actually used in this whole cycle of nature to fertilize the ground once again so that (what can happen?) new plants and things can grow up, which bring oxygen and clean the air.

It's amazing! I mean, when you think about it, it's amazing! We were talking about it as we were driving along, and I was just kind of going, man, God is so cool that He worked all those things out! It really is an amazing creation! And to think about how intricate and how amazing things are inspires us to be in awe of the God who created it because it's just a reflection of Him, right? You see that beautiful glacier, Mount St. Helens, or a beautiful lake that is crystal clear you can see to the bottom. It's a reflection of Him. He created it, but He exceeds it.

Next, as we continue to worship the Lord, you'll notice that the psalmist focuses on the sovereignty of God. We go from His works in creation to His sovereignty. Look what it says in verse 10:

*“The LORD brings the counsel of the nations to nothing;
he frustrates the plans of the peoples.*

*¹¹ The counsel of the LORD stands forever,
the plans of his heart to all generations.*

*¹² Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD,
the people whom he has chosen as his heritage!”*

Wow, wonderful three verses give us a greatly important reminder for all believers, especially during a time when political voting is on the horizon. We all have— everywhere you drive, you're seeing these little signs in everybody's yard and in front of businesses, and you're probably getting all kinds of mail to build your recycle pile with telling you which way to vote about this, that, or the other thing or which person is going to do the best job, and on and on.

And the Lord reminds us here through the psalmist that it is not the wisdom of men that ultimately prevails. It is the wisdom and the counsel of God. Not only that, but the Lord actually frustrates the wisdom of man, the counsel of man. He frustrates it, right? And it is His plans that endure, not the plans of men. The plans of men may even be praiseworthy to some degree, but ultimately, it is only the plans of God that will endure.

And then he speaks of the great blessing for any nation that makes the Lord their God.

Verse 13. Now he goes from the sovereignty of God to the rule of God. Look what he says:

*“The LORD looks down from heaven;
he sees all the children of man;*

*¹⁴ from where he sits enthroned he looks out
on all the inhabitants of the earth,*

*¹⁵ he who fashions the hearts of them all
and observes all their deeds.”*

What is this saying? God is ruling from heaven; He created the heart of man; He is constantly looking down upon the inhabitants of the earth; and He is watching and observing all that we do.

Let me show you how the writer of Hebrews expressed this:

Hebrews 4:13 (ESV)

...no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

... no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

Think about that verse as it connects to the Psalm here. I wonder, if every one of us had a constant conscious remembrance of what these verses are telling us—and that is, that God is constantly watching, He's observing, and that we must give an account to Him for all that we do—I wonder, I just wonder if it would change some of the things that we've done in our life; and I wonder if we would think twice about it and say, you know what? I'm not going to do that because God's watching, and I know that one day, I'm going to have to give an account for that thing. I'm not going to do that.

I think that's the point of reiterating and restating this sort of a truth. The point is, that's the definition of the fear of the Lord. The fear of the Lord is defined as an understanding that God observes the deeds of man, and He will hold us accountable, and that's why we don't do what we shouldn't do because we fear God. And again, the definition of the fear of the Lord is understanding that He's watching and will hold me accountable.

But the fact of His supreme rule that we've seen in these verses is also the reason we come to Him and say, Lord, You are worthy of my worship. You are the supreme ruler. There is none above You. You are enthroned forever in heaven, and I worship You as part of Your creation.

Verse 16, this is a wonderful summary:

*“The king is not saved by his great army;
a warrior is not delivered by his great strength.
¹⁷ The war horse is a false hope for salvation,
and by its great might it cannot rescue.
¹⁸ Behold, the eye of the LORD is on those who fear him,
on those who hope in his steadfast love,
¹⁹ that he may deliver their soul from death
and keep them alive in famine.”*

This is a really interesting passage. If it was written by David, it is particularly interesting as it pertains to the fact that he was a warrior himself, had been

through many battles; and he knew what it was to be strong, to fight battles, and to do it in the power of the Lord.

But what's interesting about this is that they're using terms here that were obviously important to armies back in those days. He talks about the size of your army, the strength of each individual warrior, and the number of horses that you have. Obviously, we don't go into battle with horses anymore, but back in this day, the number of horses that any army had would mean probably the difference between, potentially, victory or defeat. I mean, horses were like nuclear bombs are today. If you have an arsenal of horses, you are a strong nation, right? Here's the problem with being a strong nation: You start putting your trust in your own strength.

The point of what the psalmist is reminding us of here is that ultimate strength, ultimate power, does not come from the things of man, but in fact rests with God—and that's why he talks about the fact that it's not about this. It's not about the size of your army, it's not about the individual strength of your warriors, and it's not about how many horses you can muster for a particular campaign. It is all about the deliverance of the Lord.

And here's the point: God is watching. This is the way I want to—the reason I'm speaking about it this way is because this is consistent with the Word of God. God is actually on the lookout for people like you, who are not looking to your own strength or the strength of man-made implements but are rather trusting in the Lord for their deliverance. He's literally watching, waiting to see what kind of a person you are. Are you the kind of person who's going to trust in man-made deliverance or godly deliverance? Are you going to be trusting in Me to deliver you?

Let me show you the rebuke that God gave to Israel through Isaiah when they began to trust in other things. He said:

Isaiah 31:1 (ESV)

*Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help
and rely on horses,
who trust in chariots because they are many
and in horsemen because they are very strong,
but do not look to the Holy One of Israel
or consult the LORD!*

Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help and rely on horses, who trust in chariots (that was another big element of their warfare) because they are many

and in horsemen because they are very strong, but do not look to the Holy One of Israel or consult the LORD.

And this is a particularly interesting passage in that Egypt is a type of the world. We see it several times throughout the Scriptures. Egypt presents this type and shadow of the world.

So, as God would be speaking this to you and I today, it is: Woe to those who look to the world for their deliverance. Woe to those who trust in all of the things the world can offer as it relates to solving your problems, being delivered from those things, issues, whatever, and do not trust in the Lord their God or consult the Lord even about whatever is going on in their lives.

Lest we get the same rebuke, we need to be careful that we're not trusting in the things of this life.

Verse 20:

*“Our soul waits for the LORD;
he is our help and our shield.
21 For our heart is glad in him,
because we trust in his holy name.”*

This is the voice of the collective believers who are confessing: We have no other deliverer. We have no other way of being delivered than the Lord. It's the cry of faith as the people of God come together, and it's a faith that's very pleasing to the Lord. Without faith, it's impossible to please God, the Bible tells us.

Well, obviously the converse of that is true with faith. Faith is a very pleasing thing. God is pleased by your faith when you trust in Him, and so you can use those two verses in your own prayer time. Just change the plural references there to, my, and, I. Look how it reads: My *“soul waits for the LORD;”* He is my help and my shield for my heart is glad in him. Why? *“...because I trust in His holy name.”*

Isn't that beautiful? What a wonderful way to end your prayers. What a wonderful summary. After you lay out your petitions to God, and then you speak these words of faith, Lord, I trust in You. I'm going to wait for You. Beautiful. The psalmist also confesses gladness of heart because he puts his trust in God.

And then the final verse is, interestingly enough, the only verse of this whole song where a petition is raised to the Lord.

Verse 22 says:

*“Let your steadfast love, O LORD, be upon us,
even as we hope in you.”*

Lord, as we're hoping in You, let Your love rest on us. Here, what's interesting about— you notice the ESV says, “*steadfast love*”— “*Let your steadfast love, O LORD, be upon us.*” The New American Standard Bible says, “*loving kindness.*” The New King James Bible says, “*mercy,*” and the NIV says, “*unfailing love.*”

I looked up the Hebrew word; it encompasses all those things; all of them.

So, whatever it is, Lord, let Your steadfast love, Your loving kindness, Your mercy, and Your unfailing love be upon us because we hope in You.