

Psalm (Quality: Average)

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Preacher: Cottingham, Peter (1947 - 2014)

[0 : 0 0] I love the Lord because he hath heard my voice and my supplications because he hath inclined his ear unto me therefore will I call upon him as long as I live the psalmist had received from his God and gracious help and encouragement to continue in the way even unto the end with the support that he felt that he needed in all times and proving the faithfulness of his God unto him and to record these things with encouragement of those in like felt need and then the Lord's tried and afflicted ones often know what it is to come to the mercy seat to the throne of grace with their voice of supplication those supplications that are before him the voice of one that knows what it is to cry and perhaps to cry again it may be like Jeremiah then there is the felt sense of the shutting out of their prayer but the Lord graciously appeared for him and in the hymn that we have just been singing it's brought back different memories perhaps I just share a few of them with you and I mentioned to our friend in the vestry before the service then

I went to this particular place the place is now closed and house of God and there resting upon my spirit there was a portion in Psalm 23 but I was going to that place where a few gathered quite a large chapel meeting out in the school room which was nicely fitted out for it but the minister's vestry rather unkempt and in different ways and I suppose I was feeling upon my own spirit the weight and burden of the ministry and the solemnity of it and I found it really saddened in my spirit and said to the Lord Lord is there any life in this place spiritual life I felt that weight of oppression resting upon me oh well as I went into the service and waited for the first hymn the hymn that we've just been singing given out there I and it could not be any more upon the subject then I felt that the Lord rebuked me lovingly rebuked me at that time for unbelief for doubting his word and then I think of after that place had closed one of those that attended there he was drawn near to the end of life's journey another place I was preaching and he said to me a few weeks later do you remember your text at the last time you were here and he felt it was then anointing for his burial all his life and the years had been so great he could not say that he'd had anything to really trust and hope in did not want to hope in trust in just in being found in the house of God and in his upbringing and who his others were in the family his brothers and like he wanted the foundation and the Lord was pleased to grant it to him yes it meant burden and exercise of his soul that the Lord had placed upon him and what was it the Lord is faithful yes the Lord is faithful he's not slack concerning his promises as some men count slackness and so the Lord was pleased to lay upon there those promises and he trusted and believed that the Lord had given to him blessed be his name just a few thoughts then but I believe they're tied up in our text this evening

I love the Lord because he has heard my voice and my supplications we love him because he first loved us and laid down his life for us can we say this sometimes I try to speak of assurance sometimes I try to speak in that way that the Lord's people can only speak as the Lord gives them that grace and that help to speak and they can't speak of themselves no only what the Lord has been pleased to do for them and to give them that gracious hope hope in his grace hope in his love hope in the covenant of his grace hope that their names are written in the Lamb's book of life not that hope that has just a mere vague notion but is resting upon at once the Holy Spirit has been pleased to reveal unto them through the trials those soul trials through their pathway through the way and they can say all the way which the Lord their God hath led them those many years through the wilderness and they've been those times of humbling and those times of proving may they be owned and blessed of the Lord and sanctified to us whatever we're called to pass through then these are in the Lord's hand and also oh then need and do we feel this need of the chastening loving chastening hand of the Lord and his correcting hand then as we're left to ourselves that the Lord would turn us back

I love the Lord because he has heard my voice and my supplications one thing in this way not always is there the answer that we have dishonored not always the answer that we sought for ah blessed be his name not our thoughts or our ways but the Lord's thoughts and ways are they not right are they not much better have we proved this when the Lord has stopped up our way when the Lord has hedged up our path when the Lord has brought us to a halt ah we may feel that there he is gone against us and yet it is not so and he led them forth by the right way I often mention that in the 107th Psalm and of course we realise this that the Lord would not lead by a wrong path but we do not understand it as such in that way no as he led them forth by the right way not their ways but the

Lord's way not according to their reasoning salvation being of grace can never be according to the will and purpose and the reasoning of mankind undeserving sinners blessed and favoured through the sacrifice and the love of Christ Jesus I do wonder how many of the children of Israel in the wilderness that were bitten by those fiery serpents refused to look at the brazen serpent upon the pole it's only just a thought they'd perhaps seen those that were bitten dying before their eyes there was always the natural fear of death and there Moses according to the loving kindness of God made the brazen serpent raised it up upon a pole that all that looked that were bitten smitten by those fiery serpents all that looked upon it that they should live

[9 : 34] I wonder how many refused to look well only those that were sensible then that death coursed through their veins only those that are brought to realise that because of their sinned that they have sinned against a holy holy holy God and the just condemnation would fall upon them then they would be brought by the Lord we see this it is the power of the Holy Spirit bringing the sinners to that place we've been trying to speak those gospel invitations this afternoon then there they are to the sick to the poor and needy they are to those as it was in this way look ye sinners look and live as Moses lifted up raised up brought up before the people then serpent in the wilderness even so must the

Son oh the Son of God be lifted up let me just turn to end for a moment it's such a beautiful word in that way and then the Lord Jesus Christ was speaking of life life eternal life and there what do we find oh the love of Christ unto sinners and as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness even so must the Son of Man be lifted up that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have eternal life I love the Lord because he has heard my voice and my supplications we've often spoken of the publican's prayer and spoken of it carefully and reverently in this way it is a prayer that will not be worn out it is a prayer that will be answered when it comes from the broken heart and the contrite spirit when it comes in reality as

Jesus spoke of it of one that went up to the temple to pray as he stood afar off and could not so much as lift his eyes up unto heaven but smote upon his breast saying God be merciful to me a sinner he did not feel himself to be worthy to be found in the house of God you feel like that sometimes not worthy to be found amongst the Lord's people they might say well why not what's wrong and you would have to say you do not know what a sinner I am you do not know what goes on within me Jesus was not afraid to touch the lepers I will be thou clean he was the friend of publicans and sinners he was the friend of those who were poor and afflicted oh we only have to think of what Simon the Pharisee said in his heart this man if he were a prophet would know what manner of woman this is that toucheth him the Lord knew and still in our day the Lord knows the Lord knows the hearts of each one am I made a real

Christian am I washed in the Redeemer's blood Lord do I know those truths that I hear so often that I read of but oh is there this there is that desire and that longing yes let us have it in the words of Peter Lord thou knowest all things thou knowest that I love thee my love might be cold and faint that love might deny thee oh Lord and then love might be found sometimes hot and sometimes cold in my breast but Lord thou knowest all things thou knowest that I love thee and oh how the Lord Jesus Christ so seemed to want it with Peter to reinforce that point with him and the third time Peter was offended in this Lord thou knowest all things thou knowest that I love thee feed my lambs feed my sheep feed my sheep and we just think there of that command that the

Lord gave to Peter then the sheep might be fed m and going to bed on the Saturday night and no word at all and waking up in the night and still seeking there might be word given for the next day but nothing waking up in the morning nothing how could I go and preach well I've known this many many times since then it was in the early days of going forth in the ministry I've tried and troubled until the Lord laid it upon my spirit this very subject the sheep to be fed and there the minister's duty thus to feed the flock of

[15 : 55] God and there I thought it was rather strange there was few that were gathered and I was speaking that way that the minister's responsibility but it turned out there was one there it was the local vicar from the church of England I didn't know I didn't know much about the people at all because of their rearrangement services and he ventured into one of our chapels and so I thought afterwards well perhaps the Lord intended it for him I do not know I love the Lord because he has heard my voice and my supplications have you known what this is when the Lord has heard and answered your prayer you come up to the house of God you have been in soul trouble and in soul need and you have desired and sought for a portion for your soul and there's been nothing the Bible has been a closed book to you the hymn book has been a closed book to you you felt the sky is as brass it's there it beats down upon your head and there is no hope at all and there you say

I will go and sit down under the juniper tree and say Lord it is enough I'm no better my fathers and request that you might die and say Lord that I might know the worst of it but I ought to come to the house of God and there the Lord knows all about you and there he puts it in the upon the spirit of the Lord's servant to come and to walk and to go up and down in your case in your heart in your trials and in your tribulations and to show forth then the Lord delivers the Lord graciously appears and it is all to his honour and all to his glory because he has heard my voice yes he has heard your voice and your supplication your voice is one like that sparrow alone upon the housetop that there you feel yourself to be in such a way and in such a path and yet the Lord has heard that voice have you heard the voice of a sparrow cheeping alone upon the housetop very repetitive and almost we might say it's a sort of a mournful lonely sight as all creatures are of the

Lord of the creator and are you not worth more than all those sparrows two sparrows or just one a soul redeemed by the precious blood of Christ loved with an everlasting love oh the worth before almighty God because his dear son laid down his life for such and that covenant can never be broken can never fail and can never come short with those that are exercised thereby there is this question am I amongst the redeemed of the Lord am I made a real Christian washed in the redeemer's blood well we know that the

Lord heard the prayer of the thief upon the cross and the publican's prayer and Peter's prayer as he sank and others that we could mention those times when the Lord has heard your voice and your supplications and he has made known unto you that he has heard it the answer may be denied the answer might be a refusal but blessed be his name it will always be the right answer at the right time in the right way and in the right place now when we consider this words here or the combination of voice and supplications I think we can say it means that our whole being is wrapped up in it and it is not just of a passing moment but it is of that burden and spirit and how have we been brought to this place how has it been laid upon our spirit that it must be our in this way our all is bound up in it by the

Lord in his gracious merciful dealings with us do you remember when you first prayed and I mean when you prayed as a sinner before the Lord you remember that time oh and you had to plead and plead and plead again there was something very real there was this that was your all of you your whole being was bound up in this a concern that as a sinner under the holy law of almighty God you found and knew what it was to be condemned I love the Lord what do we see in this then we see that he has sat such upon a rock he has set them free from the prison he has lifted them out of the dungeon he has brought them to to perhaps not to see clearly and

[22 : 17] I would seek to come into the needs of each one you may not see this clearly I speak to those that are redeemed by the precious blood of Christ you know this now I will speak and say this to you I desire myself to know it more I trust there is a little hope I trust there is a little knowledge yes as I preach these things but oh that I might know you say that is how I want to be then full assurance and then witness that seal in my soul that Christ is my redeemer that he suffered bled and died for my sins then they are washed in the redeemer's blood I love the Lord why then is there this love because he first loved us how is that love made manifest that he first loved us that he laid down his life for sinners such as we voice and supplications it seems to suggest to me so everything you say but is that right yes may there first of all be praise and thanks giving unto the

Lord may there be also confession and repentance before the Lord may there be the seeking of the pardon of every sin but may there also be the seeking for guidance for direction for providential help for preserving mercies for the Lord to be with us in every step of the way unto the end of life's journey that we may praise his name while here below and praise it more in heaven above oh to praise his name oh the number of times when I have to in thinking of this speak of those that opening verse there give thanks unto the Lord for he is good for his mercy endureth forever let the redeemed of the Lord say so whom he hath redeemed out of the hand of the enemy and gathered them and he will gather them

I love the Lord because he has heard my voice Baal did not hear the voice of his prophets as they called upon him all that time and perhaps he's in a far country a long journey perhaps he's asleep all mighty they cut themselves with those knives he didn't hear them the Lord servant Elijah drew near repaired that altar built it up dig that trench about it poured on those barrells of water there to show unto them that the Lord God omnipotent reigneth and he heard and heareth the voice of his people I love the

Lord because he has heard my voice and my supplications not only then did the fire come down from heaven to consume the whole sacrifice but the word and the water the dust and the water leaked out there was no doubt about it there before the people that they had to say the Lord he is the God he then went up the Lord servant Elijah then went up into that mount toward the sea and sent his servant yes he had said in that way behold there is the sign of the abundance of rain he went up by faith yes we read in the new testament there was by faith then he prayed and the heavens were shut up there was no rain or dew upon the earth and then he prayed again and the

Lord graciously appeared his servant came went and looked over the sea come back there was nothing go again seven times what did he see on the seventh a little cloud as it were unto a man's hand up get thee down there is the sound of the abundance of rain I love the Lord because he has heard my voice and my supplications and then but a short time afterwards Lord I am no better than my fathers he wanted to die sat down under the juniper tree he was weighed down he was cast down he was in distress yes there he gone in the strength of the

[28 : 07] Lord stood up before all those that mocked the God of Israel and not only the wicked king but Jezebel and wicked wife gave that pronouncement of death upon him and he fled for his life I am no better than my father's take away now my life I love the Lord because he has heard my voice and my supplications the Lord heard his voice and supplications and the Lord delivered him blessed be his name he delivered him from the snare he delivered him from self destruction the Lord did not take away his life the Lord did not answer that prayer as his servant desired what did the

Lord do he charged him and woke him and he and there was this that was provided the food and the water and twice it was done he went in the strength of that meat and that drink those forty days and nights of the world and still he came to the house to the mount of God and there the Lord appeared to him and gave him that fresh anointing he must yet continue oh how the Lord servants well I can only speak as from my own experience there are those times when they're brought to the hand and they need the fresh anointing they need the Lord in all things and not only for the Lord to help them but for the Lord to take that word and to bless it unto souls they have to say Lord they know us what has been prayed for Lord they know us what has been prayed for this evening and and how to take thy word and make it a blessing unto souls

I love the Lord why because he has done great things for us whereof we are glad isn't it so and as he has held us up in life to know what it is that when we come therefore that solemn question then how what they do in the swelling of Jordan when we come to that place that we may find indeed are those underneath are those everlasting arms or how we should need this and how we need the Lord and as the years go by we feel that need it more and more but how we should need him in death we shall but it's not to turn aside from that time it comes and will come upon each one of us may not take us unawares may there be then gracious preparation now to come to the second verse because he hath inclined his ear unto me therefore

I call upon him as long as I live because he hath inclined his ear unto me stoop down to hear the sinners cry bend down this word and I think we can say here and the psalmist in speaking in this way feels that diffidence in claiming too much but there he hath inclined what does this suggest to us well it suggests in this way he has bent his ear he has leaned down toward us but oh more than this that he has stooped and Jesus has stooped down to take upon himself our form but without sin that the word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us he hath inclined his ear unto me comes into my mind a blind

Bartimaeus and then there the Lord stopped called him unto him I know we read of those times or that time in particular when the Lord answered her not a word dear woman that came regarding her daughter or the love of mother once she would do for her children and what this woman would do for her daughter no she could not take no she could not take a refusal the disciples said send her away for she'd trouble with us and Jesus and Jesus seemed to speak unkindly to her if we judge it from outward appearances but no it was to establish and to strengthen the faith that brought her in that way be it be it be it be it unto the even as thy world and her daughter was made whole from that very hour truth

[34 : 08] Lord I'm not worthy so as the psalmist then speaking in this way then there he did not feel to be worthy but the Lord inclined drew near unto him it's often that's spoken of there the Lord's people drew near to the mercy seat to the throne of grace but we need the Lord to incline his ear unto us oh and to incline means to there is that acceptance there is that agreement and there is this acceptance through his dear son yes there is given that mediator between man and God the man Christ Jesus yeah because he hath inclined his ear unto me therefore

I call upon him as long as I live no in answers to prayer has the Lord given you that gracious encouragement to continue to press on Lord to whom can we go thou hast the words of eternal life yes indeed and you have to say that mine's an urgent pressing case but oh have there not been those times when that the Lord has given encouragement to come again those answers of prayer in providence perhaps were not without them or are you oh I trust that if there is any at this time you can just walk smoothly on as you have done through life's journey without any real concern with some sort of vague hope that it will be well with you when you come to die that the

Lord this evening will give you such a burden over your sinnership before him such a weight upon your spirit and you'll have to rejoice in this one day that he hath inclined his ear unto you and you'll say therefore however short my days now are left upon this earth therefore will I call upon him as long as I live you save and does this not contradict the word that speaks those that live by faith and not by sight those that live by faith in the Lord's gracious appearing yes but what draws out this God given faith is that there is the sweet encouragement to come to the throne of grace and to the mercy seat wanted the

Lord say I will be inquired of by the house of Israel to do this for them what to deliver them to save them to be gracious unto them earnest prayer wrestling prayer this does speak of prayer Jacob Jacob knew what it was but he knew what it was before and I just venture a few thoughts upon his life you do wonder whether he knew what it was to have sorrow guilt and sorrow over his sin in deceiving his father I wonder if he knew prayer there you say that we do not read of it we're not told it but if there was a spirit of true repentance repentance in his heart and the Lord working in him and for him is it not possible that he had that guilt and sorrow and repentance perhaps not at that time but it may have been in after years but it doesn't matter but over his sin a sinner is brought to true repentance but what we were going to say was this

God gave him a promise that vision that was given to him in the night season banished from home all alone wild beasts around him nothing comfortable to lay upon only the stars of the heaven as his roof stone for his pillow and the Lord appeared to him in that vision in the night a ladder set up to heaven the angels ascending and descending upon it the Lord that stood above and the promise that was given and now he had to plead that promise and how many times he pleaded that promise in the twenty following years until the Lord brought him back to return to his own house and then then his brother he saw coming out oh with those men armed and there those messengers came back what did it mean

[39 : 57] Jacob rightly feared he had to put over the brook all that he had and what do we read and there wrestled a man with him till the breaking of day the Lord blessed and favoured him there but oh what wrestling prayer there was and I just think of that instance that there was the covenant to be brought to naught the covenant that was given to Abraham his grandfather that in thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed the promise of Christ there it seems it should be brought to nothing when God said to Abraham take now thy son thine only son whom thy love is get thee into the land of Moriah offer him there for a sacrifice upon them I shall tell thee of was it to be brought to nothing there but now Isaac must be preserved those things have been spoken of and passed down and the promise that was renewed then with Jacob as we were spoken of at that time when he was left to die and was it after all those years to be brought to nothing behold

I am with thee in all the way we're in thou guys so have you longed for such a promise as that as the Lord fulfilled it in your pathway behold I am with thee and will not leave thee to hold up to protect and to preserve even unto the end oh how needful and necessary there is but was that covenant the promise of Christ again to be brought to nothing and his brother came out and so he had to wrestle yes and we think again of the early church praying for Peter that was in prison now yes as there are those that saw to see how Peter was fast held between those four quarternians of soldiers but there came that night an angel the angel of the lord set him free the chains that fell off from his hands and the doors that were opened until he came out and into into the city into the street and from one street to another and the angel of the lord left him

Peter came to himself and realised that it was not a dream but the lord had delivered him because he hath inclined his ear unto me the early church then that was prayed prayed without ceasing for the deliverance of Peter and Peter's prayers were heard oh that we may know what that deliverance is the time is drawing to a close and if the lord would not have me to speak anymore so be it I love the lord because he hath heard my voice what trust there is here what sweet and blessed trust there is in the lord because he is faithful he is faithful it is us that are not that rebel that turn aside that die he is faithful because he hath inclined his ear unto me therefore will I call upon him as long as I live the psalmist was given this gracious encouragement to trust and believe that the lord would be with him to the end oh that the lord might give to you and to

I such hope that the lord will be with us to the end for if the lord is not how solemn the issue will be we need him oh how we need the lord but are we conscious of this need is it really that burden of our soul do we know what it is as we've been trying to say regarding the my voice and my supplications we've only briefly mentioned it but the whole being the whole soul that is bound up in this way to know what it is to pray with I'm always going to say body mind and spirit and sometimes it is so and you say my prayers of times I feel them to be vain repetition and Satan says unto you there is nothing fresh or new in it vain repetition well the prayer that we have spoken of the publican's prayer there is no vain repetition there and there will not be if it is your only play and I just remind you of our

Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in the garden of Gethsemane father if it be possible let this cup pass from me nevertheless not my will but thine be done and the agony that he sweated as it were great drops of blood to the grave the agony of his soul there and the beginning of his sufferings in that garden and he came back and he found those disciples asleep and he went away again and prayed the same words the Lord knows your heart and mine the sorrows and the needs the burdens and the cares he knows how to touch the right place he is that wise physician that knows how to touch the place to give the medicine and to grant the healing balm you understand what I mean do you not he knows how to come to the very place we think sometimes when we use this illustration there's something we're not well or we have the ache or the pain whatever it might be and there there are the suggestions oh it must be this or it must be that and investigations made and oh how there might be the medical profession might be going down the wrong track but the

[47 : 14] Lord knows the complaints of each one and how to heal them blessed be his name do we not see in his word all the different ways that Jesus healed those that were brought unto him or those that he came unto and oh he heals the broken hearted may the Lord bless his own word amen amen amen a h Let's conclude by singing hymn number 571 to the tune of Warsaw 563.

Hymn number 571 Behold with wandering eyes the servant of the Lord. On wings of love he flies, his counsels to unfold.

He comes, he comes with truth and grace, and Zion shall behold his face. Hymn number 571 Hymn number 571 THE END

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The End The End The End Oh, he brave and before his whole, he those two vain men.

Gracious and ever-merciful Lord God, we ask for thy blessing.

[55 : 49] Upon thine own words, upon burdened, exercised souls, know that it might be that word
that is spoken, go in peace.

For the Lord God of Israel has heard thy petition, be it unto thee even as thou wilt. Lord,
we think of how Hannah was misunderstood.

And hence it was eventually revealed unto Eli. The Lord grant thee thy petition that thou
hast asked of him.

And that time came when she had to return and say, For this child I prayed. I am the
woman that stood before thee.

For this child I prayed. O Lord, it was out of the abundance of the sorrow of her heart. And
then there thou didst hear her petition.

[56 : 52] Hear the cries of each one we do beseech thee. Do watch over us as we journey home.
Take us to our homes in peace and safety. And Lord, especially in the wintry weather.

O that we might ever be kept in our journeys. And Lord, be with us through life's journey
even unto the end.

O that we might be found right at last. Our only hope is in Christ and Christ alone. Do
pardon me beseech thee our every sin and all that has been spoken of me.

Bless the people that gather here in this course of truth. And each one has been found
here this evening. As we ask it all for Jesus' sake. And may the grace of the Lord Jesus
Christ, the love of God the Father, Amen.