When Needs Worry Me

Psalm 86 (v.6  Give ear, O Lord, to my prayer; listen to my plea for grace. 7 In the day of my trouble I call upon you, for you answer me.)

Kelly Clarkson – “Miss Independent” – about a girl who broke free from self-sufficiency:

Miss independent, Miss self-sufficient, Miss keep your distance, Miss unaflraid, Miss out of my way, Miss don’t let a man interfere, no - Miss on her own, Miss almost grown, Miss never let a man help, her off her throne, So, by keeping her heart protected, She’d never ever feel rejected

Self-sufficient = to have no need for outside help; no need for assistance; to have total confidence in your own resources & power; to have no need of anything.

Describes a great # of pastors & people in church – Miss Self Sufficient. (I don’t need God)

It is how believers in Laodicea felt about themselves: “I am rich; I need nothing!”

But God had a different perspective: “you are wretched, poor, blind, and naked.”

I wonder: how would God describe you? Me? New Hope?

Life has a way of getting in the way of self-sufficiency: Mr. Independent gets in head on collision.

Life falls part; Market drops; business fails; teens rebel; marriage fails; don’t get our way...Ps. 86

*We realize: We’re not as independent or invincible as we thought.

I will soon file taxes and will claim “4 Dependents” – a person who relies on another, especially for financial support.

*Our kids depend on us entirely. Younger, they relied on us to change diapers. Older, they rely on us to supply food; pay for braces; and provide shuttle service to all their events.

*My kids have never bought toilet paper; they’ve never filled a gas tank; they’ve never changed a light bulb; and because we love them, we love to HELP!

*The Christian Faith is built on this reality: there is 1 Self-Sufficient Person in the Universe who has no needs and does not rely upon anyone for anything...not you.

*By nature, the rest of us are “Dependents” – Like David in Psalm 86 – “Poor & Needy”

*Ps. 86 is a beautiful case study of a man who Gets Unstuck from worry by casting His cares on the Lord

*Through this Psalm, we will hear the voice of Jesus, (Mr. Dependent) who prayed from the Garden of Gethsemane – as he prayed to the Father & cast His cares upon Him.

1. Life is full of problems, (v.1-7, 14)

*v.1 plunges us into action...like Jason Bourne movie that starts w/ Bourne floating in the water with gunshot wounds - but we’re not quite sure what happened. (David = gunshot)

v.1: Incline your ear...answer me, (lit: “bow down & bend your ear”)
v.1: I am poor and needy. (not a financial condition; but a condition of the spirit – a Beggar!)

*Beggars! Needy! (Like BOB in this VIDEO) “I’m in really bad shape…gimme, I need

*We don’t like to admit it, but we are Bob Wiley - 1 beggar telling other beggars...

v.2: Preserve my life for I am godly; Save your servant, for I trust in you.

*Preserve = Lit: “put a hedge around me” – in v.14 we finally understand his dilemma:

v.14: insolent men have risen up against me; a band of ruthless men seek my life...

*Do you hear Jesus in Gethsemane – “Father, take this cup…”

v.3: Be gracious to me, O Lord for to you I cry all the day.

Grace. Grace. Dependent. V.16: Be gracious to me. v.6: listen to my plea for grace.

I grew up singing: “Grace, Grace, God’s Grace. Grace that will pardon & cleanse within. Grace, Grace, God’s Grace. Grace that is greater…”

Peterson: “The biblical fact is that there are no successful churches. There are instead communities of sinners…where one of the sinners is called pastor.”

v.4: Gladden the soul of your servant, to you do I lift up my soul. (Hoover vacuum sucked joy)

v.6: Give ear to my prayer. (Lit Expand your ear; Turn up hearing aid)

v.7: In the day of my trouble I call upon you for you answer me. (For what it’s worth, ‘Trouble’ is feminine – like a female rival – i.e. In the day when I have trouble with a female rival, help!)

*I’m not sure if David was facing problems with a lady, but let me give encouragement.

*Ladies, if you face problems w/ female rivals who tread on your territory or you feel threatened, it is best not to retaliate or get even – better to cast your care on the Lord.

*Men, if face problems w/ ladies who are complex and difficult to understand, call upon the Lord to give you wisdom & grace to help you.

Typical “Flesh” Response when we face troubles of this magnitude:

Worry & Anxiety – Miss Independent loses sleep; panic attacks; unravel in breakdown...

Anger – Mr. Control tries to remedy the situation by controlling by controlling everyone in life.

Or, we can take the path of Psalm 86…Turn to God for perspective on the Problem.

2. Life is full of problems…but God is bigger, (v.8-13)

The Moon=1,079 mi radius; The Sun= (400x larger) 432,474 mi radius

How is it, then, that in a Solar Eclipse, a much smaller moon blocks a sun that is 400x larger!?

Reality: When problems occur, they often create a “God Eclipse” – causing us to lose Perspective of God & His Word – (resulting in fear, anxiety, worry…)


v.8-13 is unique = in the middle of a Psalm of Lament, David turns his problems into praise!

*When problems eclipse God, he lifts a rich doxology of praise to RESTORE PERSPECTIVE:

(Praise God from Whom...!) His Works are Awesome (v.8-10)

“8 There is none like you among the gods, O Lord, nor are there any works like yours.

*None like Adonai (personal name of God) among all the elohim (plural gods).

Chorus: “For Thou O Lord, are high, above all the earth; thou are Exalted, far above...”

*Mission India partner. A Hindu bus guide said to the group of travelling Christians: “You know, the difference between your God and my gods, is your God is alive!”

...10 For you are great and do wondrous things; you alone are God.

*No other God; His works are awesome; (Hymn “To God be the glory, great things)

9 All the nations you have made shall come and worship before you, O Lord, and shall glorify your name.

*An image of a triumphant future when creation is restored & nations gather from every tribe & language to worship the Lord!

*As we go through another election year, remember this about biblical Christianity: We are not first & foremost a voting block of Americans who elect a President. We are first and foremost a people of the cross who worship a King.

*Our allegiance is not to the one who sits in a White House. Our allegiance is to ONE who sits on a White Horse. And He will be worshiped by the nations.

His Ways are True (v.11-13)

v.11 Teach me your way, O Lord, that I may walk in your truth; unite my heart to fear your name.

Great memory verse! Teach: (Lit: Point it out with a finger. Direct me as an arrow.)

*I gave a Dog treat to a dog recently. The dog looked all over when it was right in front of him. I had to get down, point with my finger – This is it!

*This is Discipleship – pointing out what Jesus said - “This is the way, walk in it”

Unite my heart = “Join my heart to yours...undivided” - become ONE with you.

FIC Truth: “I am united with the Lord & one with Him in Spirit.”

*Teenagers: imagine your life with an undivided heart – not ½ in; ½ out...

12 I give thanks to you, O Lord my God, with my whole heart, and I will glorify your name forever.” 13 For great is your steadfast love toward me; you have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol.
YADAH – a throwing up of the hands in Superbowl style praise!

Exuberant praise b/c of this fact - God has delivered David from the depths.

If David, 1000 years before Christ could shout to God in praise for deliverance, how much more should we who have an empty tomb & the hope of resurrection!

“And as He stands in victory, Sin's curse has lost its grip on me
For I am His and He is mine, Bought with the precious blood of Christ”

3. Life is full of problems...but God is bigger...so cast your cares on Him. (v.5, 15-17)

v.15 is THE KEY OF THIS PASSAGE – (& v.5) Restoring the magnificent size & scope of WHO GOD IS!

“But you, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.”

God’s covenant name, declared to Moses in Ex. 34 – a self-revelation of His character.

*Not a Groundhog Day prediction – “I think God is like this...I think Spring is coming...“ - But a true revelation of Who God is

God is good and forgiving

This is a game-changer. If God was a bitter old curmudgeon we’d be right to be miserable.

But, since God is a good, good Father, we can trust:

...He is generous & will bless those who depend on him.

...He is ready to forgive all who sin.

God is merciful & gracious, slow to anger (Lit: breath rapidly from nostrils)

Merciful – God doesn’t give us what we deserve. (Judgment to Death)

Gracious – God gives us what we don’t deserve. (Righteousness of Christ)

*We all know quick-tempered, volatile men; unstable as water & ticking timebomb

But David takes comfort in the character & nature of God!

*He does not fly off the handle; act rashly; judge impulsively; or seek to pay us back.

*He patiently endures the blasphemies of men – desiring all to be saved & understand truth

God is abounding in steadfast love. (Covenant Faithfulness – unable to break his contract)

“You’re so full of it!” Abundant in size, quantity & quality. Heaping portions of love

Love – piled high, deep, wide, long – love unfathomable – like a spring it never runs dry;

*David, who gained perspective on his problems through Praise, now turns it to prayer.
16 Turn to me and be gracious to me; give strength to your servant and save the son of your maidservant. 17 Show me a sign of your favor that those who hate me may see and be put to shame because you, Lord, have helped me and comforted me.

Turn to me. Give strength. Save the Son... (We can hear the cries of Gethsemane!)

*As the Son of God’s maidservant overcame dark eclipse of the cross through prayer

((BTW: The only time to safely view the sun is total eclipse – sometimes our greatest opportunities to get a glimpse of God’s greatness is through our problems)

Show me a Sign!

*Sign = a beacon; a monument; when hiking mountain trails, you look for “Cairns” – man-made monuments that indicate you are still headed the right way.

David is asking God for a sign he is still on the right track.

David, who began in worry, now lifts his problems to God in prayer, expecting future grace.

1 Pet. 5:7 “casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.”

Action Steps: (C.A.S.T.)

C – Call upon the Lord

*Ps. 86 offers hope to 1 group of people – all who CALL on HIM!

v.5: abounding in steadfast love to all who call upon you.

v.7: In the day of my trouble, I call upon the Lord, for you answer.

*If problems have created a solar eclipse over God’s Word, Call on the name of the Lord!

A – Ask for Grace & Mercy

Ask Him for Help. Admit you need Him; Tell Him you need mercy.

*Do you have female rivals? Trouble at work with adversaries? “Call upon Him”

*Have you lost joy? Ask him to Gladden your life & restore joy.

Some have sin you’ve never asked God to forgive – Ask him today for Grace; he’s full of it.

S – Self-sufficiency must die

*We live in Laodicea – a day of prosperity has created Miss Independents; Mr. Self-sufficient.

*Truth: We are “poor & needy” of God’s love. Beggars.

*One of my favorite Scriptures is 2 Cor 3:5: Not that we are sufficient in ourselves to claim anything as coming from us, but our sufficiency is from God...

T – Turn Your Problem to Praise.
*Based on Who God is, praise Him!

*Based on His past work at the cross, Praise Him!

*Based on What God has promised, Praise Him!

*Based on what God will do, Praise Him!

*Based on His delivering us from the depths & giving us hope in the resurrection, Praise Him!

   “What a Friend we have in Jesus – all our sins & griefs to bear!

   *What a privilege to carry, everything to God in prayer!

   *O what peace we often forfeit; O what needless pain we bear.

   *All because we do not carry; everything to God in prayer!"