

Series: Psalm
Title: Two Cries, Two Answers, One Reason
Text: Psalm 4: 6
Date: January 5, 2012
Place: SGBC, New Jersey

Our text tonight will be Psalm 4: 6. I got my outline by borrowing a few points from several preachers from the past and ended up with two messages. So, Lord willing Sunday morning our message will concentrate on the Light of Thy Countenance.

Tonight we will focus on: **Two Cries, Two Answers, One Reason.**

Psalm 4: 6: There be many that say, Who will shew us any good? LORD, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.

Proposition: Here we have two cries. They are two very different cries from two very different hearts for two very different things with two very different answers.

I. LET'S CONSIDER THE FIRST CRY AND THE ANSWER TO THIS CRY.

This is the cry of the majority: v6: "There be MANY that say...". Just looking in the Psalms we see there be "many" whose hearts are enmity against the Lord.

Psalm 3: 1: LORD, how are they increased that trouble me! many are they that rise up against me. 2: Many there be which say of my soul, There is no help for him in God. Selah.

Psalm 22: 12: Many bulls have compassed me: strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round.

Psalm 25: 19: Consider mine enemies; for they are many; and they hate me with cruel hatred.

Psalm 31: 13: For I have heard the slander of many: fear was on every side: while they took counsel together against me, they devised to take away my life.

We could go on and on but you get the point. Christ Jesus said,

Matthew 7: 13: Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat.

And because there are "many" which go in the wide gate this is one reason why

Psalm 34: 19: Many are the afflictions of the righteous:...

Sadly, because the believer has so many afflictions, the believer may be found crying this first cry as well.

Psalm 34: 19:...BUT the LORD delivereth him out of them all.

It is the grace of God for Christ's sake, to turn us when we become weary and ready to despair.

Well, what are the characteristics of this first cry? I do wish this was not the cry of any here, but it is surely the cry of some—the many. Be sure to listen. See if the characteristics describe the cry of your heart. If so, after hearing this first cry, pay close attention to the second cry. This first cry:

It is the cry of unbelief and doubt—v6--“There be many that say, WHO will...”

This is not the cry of faith—but “Who.” It is not a cry of submission to God’s will but “Who will”. Will man? No.

Psalm 39: 6: Surely every man walketh in a vain shew: surely they are disquieted [murmur and roar] in vain: he heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them.

Psalm 49: 20: Man that is in honour, and understandeth not, is like the beasts that perish.

Application. When has the will of man ever provided lasting satisfaction to you or to God? God sent his own Son to fulfill his will. Because our natural will is want—want that is opposite to God—our thoughts are not his thoughts and our ways not his ways--and our natural will ends in more want.

Psalm 60: 11:...vain is the help of man.

B. It is a fleshly cry, a cry for the senses to be satisfied, a sensual cry—v6:. “who will SHOW US...”

The world and the carnal desires are for something to please the fleshly senses.

Matthew 12: 38: Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee. 39: But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: “For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

Is the Word of God not enough? Is the Word made flesh not enough? Is Christ who laid down his life on the cross not enough? Is the empty tomb not enough? Is the risen Redeemer not enough?

Illustration: Thomas. (John 20: 25-29.)

It is God’s grace to make his child walk by faith not by sight. Because...

- Faith sees the reality.
- Faith beholds certain and sure riches
- Faith sees the King in his beauty
- Faith sees all things are ours in Christ though our natural eye may see otherwise.

It is our flesh which desires the visible—who will show us.

This first cry is one of no discriminating discernment only doubt and bitterness—v6: “who will show us ANY GOOD.”

“Any” is added by the translators. But it is true that the unregenerate are looking for just “any” good. The believer is not crying for just for ANY good, but for THE GOOD; THE LIGHT, THE PRESENCE of THE TRUE AND LIVING GOD, FOR CHRIST OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. There is no other Good and nothing else will satisfy the new man.

The cry of the flesh is as doubting as it is indiscriminate—“what’s the use,” the flesh cries—who will show us good?” When we have tried every-brand of every-thing: we will be left more empty, more hungry, more thirsty, and more sad.

God says “there is none good.” Why then do we expect to find good as long as we keep looking to the place where God says there is “no goodness to be found.”

Looking to man won't bring peace: whether it be wine, women and song---churches, creeds and confessions—whether it be riches of self-righteousness, youth, or money. Has it yet?

Men end up going from party to party, vanity to vanity, only to become more bitter and lonely, murmuring against God, "Who will shew us any good?" Seeking happiness everywhere but where happiness is found, rest everywhere but where rest is to be found. Thirsty but refusing the River of Life. Hungry but refusing the Bread from heaven. “There be many who say, Who will shew us any good?”

Before we move on, what is THE ANSWER from the Lord to this cry? (Psalm 4: 2)

The cry of the flesh turns the glory of God into shame. It is God's glory to provide all! Shall we doubt his glory?

Illustration: The emails at the end of the year from church's begging for money. “Who will show us any good? You know you can write it off your taxes!” Glory into shame!

Vanity and lies, God says, how lone will you look to “broken cisterns” as if they are “fountains of living waters?”

Illustration: The infant sucking on his hand

Isaiah 55: 2: Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.

II. LET'S CONSIDER THE SECOND CRY AND ITS ANSWER

This is the cry of few, in the midst of many. The sons of God are a little flock. (remnant.) Truly this is the cry of the inward man in the midst of the many enemies of our flesh. What are the characteristics of the cry of God's regenerate child of grace? Of the inward man of the heart?

It is not a shout in the darkness but a cry of faith. It is not “Who will”; it is Psalm 4: 6: “LORD,…”

How often our faith turns to murmuring! How often we think we are safe when we see prosperity, and think we are doomed when don't.

Who maketh thee to differ? It is not a lack of temptation in our flesh that makes us differ.

Romans 8: 26—God the Holy Spirit makes intercession within the believer—for we know not how to pray as we ought. The Holy Spirit turns us from doubts TO Christ who also maketh intercession for us at the right hand of the Father. (Read vv3-5.) This is the prayer of one to whom God has already given Light.

Illustration: The sun shined yesterday—will you be content if it does not shine today?

This is the cry of knowing that God is the only one who is able—this cry is not “Who WILL” BUT--v6: LORD, lift THOU up...

Ps 9: 13—thou that liftest me from the gates of death: that I may show forth praise in the gates of the daughter of Zion.

Election--God the Father's electing grace lifted me from the gates of death and put me in Christ the Straight Gate before as yet death entered in.

Redemption--Christ's finished the work lifting me FROM the gates of death and carried me into the gates of heaven where I am now seated in him.

Regeneration--The Spirit of God lifted me from the gates of my own flesh and spiritual death into the gates of the daughter of Zion and the gates of hell shall not prevail against us.

Reviving—none but our triune God can lift us in spirit out of this fleshly doubt!

Psalm 73: 25: Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee--v6: LORD, lift THOU up...

This is the cry for what is needful.--Psalm 4: 6: LORD lift thou up THE LIGHT OF THY COUNTENANCE UPON US.

Illustration: The frown of one you depend on—disheartens. But the smile of a friend uplifts.

The Spirit of God makes us to see

1. The LIGHT of the glory of God—the smile, the free favor, the finished work of his grace—
2. In Christ's face—the glory of God in the face of Christ Jesus
3. Then all the enemies of darkness in our hearts are turned back.
 - Darkness of doubts
 - Darkness of unbelief
 - Darkness of fear

All are turned back in the LIGHT of HIS PRESENCE—

Example: (Ps 9) Remember the soliders who came to arrest the Lord?

Psalm 9: 3: When mine enemies are turned back, they shall fall and perish at thy presence.

Example: (Ps 44) Remember all the enemies turned back for Israel?

Psalm 44: 1: We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, what work thou didst in their days, in the times of old. 2: How thou didst drive out the heathen with thy hand, and plantedst them; how thou didst afflict the people, and cast them out. 3: For they got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them: but thy right hand, and thine arm, and the light of thy countenance, because thou hadst a favour unto them.

Application: (Ps 80) Does anyone have a prayer request? Is it a particular temporal thing we need? Is it a particular affliction we need removed? Is it more people? Sharper swords? Bigger barns? More corn in the storehouse? Here is my prayer request. This is what the believer really needs.

Psalm 80: 1: Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a flock; thou that dwellest between the cherubims, shine forth. 2: Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh stir up thy strength, and come and save us. 3: Turn us again, O God, and cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.

In the Light of his Countenance faith rises triumphant in the heart shouting....

Psalm 27:1: The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

Now what is the answer to this cry?

1. V7: THOU HAST PUT... Ps 9: 12—he forgeteth not the cry of the humble.
2. What does God put? V7--“Thou hast put GLADNESS”—our gladness is Christ our Light.
3. Where does the Lord put gladness? V7: “In my heart”—Christ in you the hope of glory.
4. How much? How bountifully? V7—“MORE than in the time that their corn and their wine increased.”
5. What is the result? V8: I will BOTH lay me down in peace (peace with God in heaven) and sleep (I pass through this world resting in his care.)

Let’s go home with “Selah—something to hide in our hearts.”

1. The Lord doesn’t do this with the majority!
 - He passes by the greatest in the house and makes kings out of the least.
 - He passes by those whose confidence is the sword and makes warriors out of shepherd boys.
2. The Lord doesn’t do this with a carnal harvest of corn and wine
 - The LORD himself is the Gladness in the heart, the Light of his countenance.
 - Christ in you the hope of glory is more strength than any carnal treasure ever could be

THESE ARE TWO VERY DIFFERENT CRIES FROM TWO VERY DIFFERENT HEARTS FOR TWO VERY DIFFERENT THINGS WITH TWO VERY DIFFERENT ANSWERS. Do you see the great contrast between them!

III. Now here is the ONE REASON God gives his Light and turns us to ask him for his Light—V8:..For thou, LORD, only makest me dwell in safety.

The LORD only shall receive the glory for bridging the gulf and making the ends meet, for breaking down the walls and building up his house, the same as he does for putting away our sin and making us the righteousness of God in him.

Psalm 36: 9: For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light.

Amen!