

Psalm 34

1. This Psalm is basically David remembering the Lord's faithfulness to Him and based on that encouraging others to trust God too.

a. When you reflect on God's faithfulness in your own life, what are the key events or situations that come to mind? How did God prove Himself faithful in those situations?

2. In what ways has God used others to encourage you when you were going through seasons of hardship?

a. Who are those that God has uniquely positioned you to be able to encourage right now? In other words, who in your life needs to hear about how God has been faithful to you, that they too might trust the Lord?

3. In this Psalm David speaks both of the kinds of *fear* that God delivers us from (v. 4) and the *fear* we ought to have for God (v. 7, 9, 11). What's the difference between these two kinds of fear?

a. Along similar lines, this psalm speaks over and over again about God's goodness. Usually we fear things because they are bad or evil. In this case, God is good and yet we are to fear him. Why? How does this work?

4. At the end of the Psalm David declares that "many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of all of them" (v. 19). On the other hand, "affliction will slay the wicked, and those who hate the righteous will be condemned" (v. 21).

a. What are these verses teaching us about God's care for the righteous versus the wicked? What is similar about their situation and what is different?

b. How do we reconcile God's care with the fact that many Christians have suffered and even been martyred for their faith; even Jesus was killed by evil men? What then does God's deliverance mean and look like?

c. In what ways have you seen God's deliverance play out in your life or the life of those around you?