

Series: Psalms

Title: I Cried, Christ Answered

Text: Ps 138: 3-5

Date: Feb 6, 2025

Place: SGBC, NJ

Last week our subject was **The Word Magnified**. We will read verse 1-2 again so we stay with the context of the psalm. Remember that “*the gods*” are religious and civil judges, rulers, people in authority. All sinners in an unregenerate state act as if they are gods by attributing to themselves aspects of salvation that only the true God can perform.

Psalm 138: 1: «A Psalm of David.» I will praise thee with my whole heart: before the gods will I sing praise unto thee. 2: I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.

David is saying he is not ashamed to confess Christ before anyone. It is because God has magnified his word to David.

Next he tells us how God magnified his word to him.

Psalm 138: 3: In the day when I cried thou answeredst me, *and* strengthenedst me *with* strength in my soul.

So David is not ashamed to declare the gospel before anyone: before literal kings and princes, as well as before unregenerate sinners who think they are as gods.

Next is what David knows the Lord will bring his elect, redeemed people to do through his gospel.

Psalm 138: 4 All the kings of the earth shall praise thee, O LORD, when they hear the words of thy mouth. 5 Yea, they shall sing in the ways of the LORD: for great *is* the glory of the LORD.

Divisions: 1) The Lord answers the prayer of his people—**Psalm 138: 3: In the day when I cried thou answeredst me**, 2) The Lord strengthens us inwardly--***and* strengthenedst me *with* strength in my soul**. 3) By answering us and strengthening us, the Lord makes us unashamed to declare his gospel through which the Lord brings others to praise him—**4: All the kings of the earth shall praise thee, O LORD, when they hear the words of thy mouth. 5: Yea, they shall sing in the ways of the LORD: for great *is* the glory of the LORD.**

THE LORD ANSWERS PRAYER

Psalm 138: 3: In the day when I cried thou answeredst me,

The Lord hears all the prayers of his people but this is the cry of a sinner who sees his sin and needs the Lord to save him. God before ordained, before prepared, every good work that the Lord effectually brings us to walk in.

Ephesians 2: 10: For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained [before prepared] that we should [shall] walk in them.

What is the next thing the Lord declares after that statement in Ephesians 2? He declares how Gentiles were dead in sins. How the Lord Jesus made his people one by fulfilling the law for us. The first good work of the Lord which the Lord brings us to walk in is faith in Christ.

The righteousness of Christ, also called Justification, is one of those good *works*. God before ordained, before prepared, before worked for us, outside of us, by Christ. When the Holy Spirit regenerates us, God our Father makes Christ Righteousness unto us. From then on, we walk by faith in Christ, in this good work before prepared *for us* by Christ our Righteousness.

Sanctification, also called holiness, is one of those good works. God before prepared this *for us* by Christ fulfilling the will of God—“*by the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once [for all time.]*” Then it is worked *in us* by God. When the Holy Spirit sanctifies us in the new birth, God our Father makes Christ Sanctification unto us. From that day forward, we walk by faith in Christ, in this good work of sanctification before ordained, before prepared and worked *in us* by God’s grace. It makes us look outside of ourselves, by faith, unto Christ. When the Lord Jesus sanctified the apostle Paul on the road to Damascus, our Lord told him, we are “*sanctified by faith that is in me.*”

Redemption, deliverance from sin and death, is by Christ our Redemption. In the new birth, the Holy Spirit of Life delivers us from the law of sin and death when God our Father makes Christ Redemption unto us. From then on we walk in this good work of redemption before prepared for us. From then on “*the Son abideth [forever in us, in our house]: If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed*” (Jn 8: 35-36).

Every good work God our Father before ordained, Christ our Savior before prepared for us in his righteousness and holiness. So when he brings us to do any good work he is our Righteousness and Holiness in it.

Likewise, like every other aspect of salvation, prayer is produced in us by our Lord. He makes us see our sin, he makes us poor, makes us need Christ to be our All. Then the Lord commands us cry to him.

Psalm 27:8: *When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, LORD, will I seek.*

Romans 8: 26: the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. 27: And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what *is* the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to *the will of God*.

And God answers our prayer. He put the cry in our hearts, therefore he promises

Isaiah 65:24 And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.

Before we call, he has answered by making us see our need of Christ and putting the cry in our hearts. While we are yet speaking, he hears and answers our petition. David said, “*In the day when I cried thou answeredst me.*”

The Lord Jesus arrested Paul on the road to Damascus. Christ shined the light. He brought Paul down to the dust. Paul saw his need. The Lord answered Paul before Paul called by doing this. Then the Lord made Paul cry to him. Then while Paul was crying, he answered him.

Acts 9: 3: And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: 4 And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? 5 And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: *it is* hard for thee to kick against the pricks. 6: And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord *said* unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. [Christ sent Ananias to tell him what he must do. Christ said, “Behold he prayeth]

Before he called, the Lord answered him. The Lord put the cry in Paul’s heart. Then while Paul cried out, the Lord answered him. David said, the Lord magnified his word to him. And “*In the day when I cried thou answeredst me.*”

Let see an illustration with one already called to faith in Christ.

Daniel 9: 18: O my God, incline thine ear, and hear; open thine eyes, and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by thy name: for we do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies. 19: O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God: for thy city and thy people are called by thy name. 20: And whiles I *was* speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God; 21: Yea, whiles I *was* speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation. 22: And he informed *me*, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding. 23: At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth, and I am come to shew *thee*; for thou *art* greatly beloved: therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision. 24 Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.

Before he called, the Lord answered Daniel by making him see his need: the Lord put the cry in Daniels’ heart. Then while Daniel prayed, the Lord answered him by sending the angel Gabriel. David said, “you magnified your word to me and *In the day when I cried thou answeredst me.*”

Brethren, he has done the same in us. In the day he made us see our sin and need of Christ, we cried and the Lord answered. He put the prayer in our heart and while we were crying he answered. That is how he magnifies his Word to us, Christ Jesus, and makes us no longer ashamed to declare the gospel before kings, and would-be kings.

THE LORD ANSWERS BY STRENGTHENING US

Psalm 138: 3...and strengthenedst me *with* strength in my soul.

Christ is the Strength and he strengthens us inwardly.

Natural man goes through trouble but Christ teaches him nothing. The Spirit declares in Ephesians 2, Christ came and preached peace to us and he continues to do so. He is our Strength.

Our Lord made us see our sin and need of Christ. When we cried, he answered by showing us he had worked peace between his elect and God on the cross. He showed us how he fulfilled the law for us. The Lord revealed in us how he abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances. He made his people one in him. That is how he strengthened us in our soul. That is how he continues to strengthen us inwardly

Christ and his finished work is the strength of our inner man for those he has anointed with the Spirit.

Psalm 28:8: The LORD *is* their strength, and he *is* the saving strength of his anointed.

Psalm 73:26: My flesh and my heart faileth: *but* God *is* the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.

He has been teaching us more of him since he first called us. Through every trial, Christ makes us see our need and we cry and he hears and strengthens us inwardly. So we are thankful even for the trouble.

Romans 5: 3: And not only *so*, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; 4: And patience, experience; and experience, hope: 5: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

The Lord had taught David this. So as he declared Christ before the gods, this was David's patience and experience and hope. He said,

Psalm 138: 6: Though the LORD *be* high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly: but the proud he knoweth afar off. 7: Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me: thou shalt stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me. 8: The LORD will perfect *that which* concerneth me: thy mercy, O LORD, *endureth* for ever: forsake not the works of thine own hands.

Christ taught the apostle Paul that Christ strengthens his elect in our souls in our inward man. So Paul prayed for his brethren,

Ephesians 3:16-17: That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, 18: May be able to comprehend with all saints what *is* the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; 19: And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.

By Christ strengthening Peter inwardly through his troubles, Peter then was able to comfort his brethren with this sure word

1 Peter 5:10: But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.

Christ teaches his child more of Christ in the trial so we say what David said,

Psalm 119: 71: It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes.

We value the comforting words of scripture but we forget that Christ taught his saints these things through sorrow and trouble. We heard David declare “when the Lord said seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord will I seek.” But he began that Psalm saying,

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? 2: When the wicked, *even* mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell. 3: Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this in this *will I be* confident.

Psalm 29:11: The LORD will give strength unto his people; the LORD will bless his people with peace.

CHRIST MAKES US PREACH THE GOSPEL THROUGH WHICH HE SAVES OTHERS

Psalm 138: 4: All the kings of the earth shall praise thee, O LORD, when they hear the words of thy mouth. 5: Yea, they shall sing in the ways of the LORD: for great *is* the glory of the LORD.

Christ has a purpose in teaching us that he is our Strength. It is to magnify his word to us. It is to make us not ashamed to declare his gospel before the gods, before kings and would-be kings. He works this in us because it is through the gospel that Christ saves others.

Does he mean literal kings? Though there are *not many might, not many noble*, called but there are some. Scripture declares he shall save literal kings. When Paul told Timothy to pray for all men for God will have all men to be saved, he meant kings and princes, paupers, and all his people in between.

But it appears this also applies to the fact that all unregenerate sinners think they are as gods. They all think they are kings with a will to do as they please. We had that same will. But he makes us poor and needy. He puts the cry in our heart. Then as we call he hears and brings to faith in him.

Psalm 72:10: The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. 11: Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him. 12: For he shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and *him* that hath no helper. 13 He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy.

Christ came and made himself a servant to men who thought ourselves all powerful rulers. And we abhorred him. Yet he redeemed all his people and now he is calling each one.

Isaiah 49:7: Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, Kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the Lord that is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee.

The sure result is the last verse of our Psalm 5, “**Yea, they shall sing in the ways of the LORD: for great *is* the glory of the LORD.**”

Revelation 15:4: Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest.

Amen!