

SERMON TRANSCRIPT

DATE

August 21, 2022

SPEAKER

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SERIES

Celebration Sunday

PART

TITLE

Because Praise Is Fitting

SCRIPTURE

Psalm 147



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Well, good morning, Providence. That was really pathetic. Yeah, if you're a guest here, that's how they greet me every Sunday. Let me first say thank you to Providence. Those of you who call Providence home, you gave a gift that I really can't repay, won't even try. To be offered two months of a sabbatical to be able to go and to rest and to write and to think and to dream and to make memories with all of our sons, which was just incredibly significant.

And to celebrate 25 years of marriage with my wife, Tabitha, and the opportunity to do that overseas at the start of a trip overseas, and then the last 10 days we were on that trip, we actually visited five countries to visit and to try to encourage and teach and be a blessing to many of our missionaries who have left this place and who live overseas, most of them in places that are unreached. I've been even asked, "Don't share where we went."

And so, it's a gift that you gave that there's really no way to quantify the impact on my life. All of us, we have these things in life that are offered to us, and then we experience them and sometimes they meet expectation, but it's pretty rare. And this one, in every way, the Lord did a work. He really encouraged my heart. I'd spent just tremendous time in the Word, which was just so meaningful to me. I had great memories with our kids, an amazing time with my wife overseas, and was so encouraged by the faith and hope and zeal of ministry and sharing the gospel by our family members overseas. And so, I just came back. I'm so full in my heart.

Now, when you travel and in 10 days, you visit five countries, you also bring home something which for me, is normally a sickness. And so, I'll be totally honest with you, I brought that back. And even though my heart is just absolutely overflowing and motivated for the next stretch, if the Lord offers that here at Providence and life on the earth, I am carrying around in me half a pharmacy, okay? And so, a little virus and that turned into some other fun. And so, my mind sort of feels like a circus. And so the balloons, they all just fit, this whole morning it just seems to fit really well. And so, let me pray for us, okay?

Father in heaven, we bow before you, our Maker, the one who speaks to us truth about life, truth about who we are, truth about who you are and how we are to live in a relationship with you. And we need your help. We need you to pour out your Spirit upon us to give us understanding and wisdom. I pray for those who do not have a relationship with you, that you would use this passage and your words to invite them to draw them to yourself. And for those of us who call Providence home, who know you as Savior and Lord, we love you, and we want to celebrate you today. God, we ask that you would open our eyes, help us to see majestic things in Christ, that would overflow into our heart, that would allow us to be a people that would praise and that would celebrate. And so, we look to you in faith, we need your help and we pray this in Jesus name, Amen.

In your Bible, Psalm 147. If you don't have a Bible, there's lots of Bibles in a chair near you and if you don't have one at home, take that home as a gift. But we'll be in Psalm 147 and it's my privilege to talk a little bit this morning, before we have an extended time of singing at the end, why it is so fitting for us to praise. To praise. See, it is Christ, we should be very clear about this, it is Christ who connected us. It's Christ who has

grown us. It's Christ who has served us, it's Christ who has sent us.

And when I say the word, it is Christ, I do not mean an inspirational memory of a dead man who once lived a good life. I mean the living Son of God, Jesus Christ, our Maker, the one who made us, instructed us, and then felt the personal insult of our sin and rebellion against him and his goodness. I'm talking about the Christ, who in spite of that insult, responded with such depth of love that he left heaven, became a man, first a baby, grew up into a man, lived without sin on the earth and then at a point in time that was predetermined, it says that he yielded his sinless, perfect life to the murderous hands of sinners, where he would then go on a cross and die for our sin.

I'm talking about the Christ who was buried in a grave, who rose from the dead and when he rose from the dead, he invited us to place our trust in him for the forgiveness of sins. That we would place our faith in him, and in doing so, he would wipe away our sin, he would give us his righteousness, something called justification, that he would invite us and adopt us into his family and make us one of his own and give us eternal life where we would be able to spend forever in heaven with him.

This is the Christ, the living Christ, who now reigns and rules and thinks and governs in heaven and over heaven and over the earth and under the earth, who is working from heaven through his Spirit, whom he has sent to live in the hearts of people who have trusted him.

And what all of this means, is that it is this living Christ who gave us faith. It is this Christ who gathered us together throughout the course of the last year. It is this Christ who inclined our hearts to have any inclination whatsoever to want to read the Bible and when we opened the Bible, he gave us a measure of spiritual understanding so that we would understand the things that he's done in our life and given to us. It is Christ who forgave us collectively of a million sins, who inspired and motivated our hearts to repent of sin and to give quick obedience to him because he convinced us of the superiority of his plan.

We're talking about the Christ today, who enabled ministry, who gifted us to do ministry, who motivated us to be generous. It is Christ who healed people's diseases within our midst this last year, who consoled the bereaved and brokenhearted, who lifted the spirits of the anxious and who delivered the addicted. It is Christ, the living Christ, who drew over 900 people to our place, in this place, to hear about Christ. Gave us the privilege of seeing over 200 people put their faith and trust in Christ, and who gives us today, tonight, the opportunity to see almost 40 people be baptized. To publicly say, "I'm not ashamed to be associated with Christ." It is Christ, the living Christ and only Christ who is worthy of our praise.

And Psalm 147 says it this way. "Praise the Lord! For it is good to sing praises to our God, for it is pleasant, and the song of praise is fitting. The Lord builds up Jerusalem, he gathers the outcasts of Israel. He heals the brokenhearted. He binds up their wounds. He determines the number of the stars, he gives to all of them their names. Great is our Lord and abundant in power. His understanding is beyond measure. The Lord lifts

up the humble, he casts the wicked to the ground. Sing to the Lord with thanksgiving, make melody to our God on the lyre. He covers the heavens with clouds, he prepares rain for the earth, he makes grass grow in the hills. He gives to the beasts, their food, and to the young ravens that cry. His delight..."

Listen to this, Providence. "His delight is not in the strength of the horse, nor his pleasure in the legs of a man. But the Lord takes pleasure in those who fear him, in those who hope in his steadfast love. Praise the Lord of Jerusalem! Praise your God, O Zion! For he strengthens the bars of your gates, he blesses your children within you. He makes peace in your borders, he fills you with the finest of wheat. He sends out his command to the earth. His word runs swiftly. He gives snow like wool and scatters frost like ashes. He hurls down his crystals of ice like crumbs, who can stand before his cold? He sends out his word and melts them and, he makes his wind blow and the waters flow. He declares his word to Jacob. His statutes and rules to Israel. He has not dealt thus with any other nation, they do not know his rules. Praise the Lord."

Every year we set aside one specific Sunday. It's chosen arbitrarily. It's not because the 21st of August is anything, it's just a day where we choose to collectively practice something called the discipline of celebration. You learn a little bit about this amazing discipline in Psalm 9:1. There we're told, "I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart. I will recount all of your wonderful deeds." You read that word recount, it means to count again, to remember again, to recall again. There are things that the Lord has done in our life that we currently this morning have already forgotten. They happened a month ago, five months ago, 10 months ago, within this one calendar year, we've already forgotten them and as a result of forgetting them, we forget what he can do tomorrow.

So he tells us to recount. And the recounting does not terminate with us to simply feeling better about ourself that God has done something in our past. No, that recounting is supposed to create a fuel within our heart that transfers praise and thanksgiving back to the Lord. Some of us today don't feel thankful and the reason is because it's been a while since we've recounted the faithful deeds of the Lord and what he's done in our life. And so, we devote a day, but what we have found historically is that on this day, there are always people, because the day is chosen arbitrarily, who don't feel like praise today. You came in here, some of us there's no problem whatsoever, we just feel cold, apathetic. Others, we feel guilty, shameful. Others, we feel like we're outcast or brokenhearted or we're simply wounded. Some of us are overwhelmed by the wickedness of everything that we see around us and we think, "Wait a minute, it just seems so out of step with everything that's happening in the world, to walk into a building and see balloons. I just don't feel like it, so how can I praise if I don't feel like it?"

What's interesting is that even the Psalmist recognized thorns in his day. If you notice in verses two through six, he actually lists four different categories of human experience, that he's remembering how God pulled people out of that, but by saying them, he's actually casting the categories that some of the people who are reading this for the first time, and because God is recorded within Scripture thousands of years later, many of us are reading it today and when we're told to praise the Lord, we don't feel like it, because we happen to

fit into one of these broken categories.

Some of us would feel like outcasts. And you feel like an outcast when you've been cast out of something, you were in a relationship and now you're not, you were in a family and now you're not, you were in a church and now you're not. And you're not for a reason, either they sent you out or you sent you out. It may be because there was a difference in morality, a difference in desire, a difference in economics, a difference in something. Some people today, you walk in here and you feel like you don't belong, an outcast.

Others have a broken heart. Something's happened in your life to where you look at your life and perhaps you've looked in the mirror recently and you said, "I just did not think my life was going to turn out like this. I didn't think when I stood at the altar, that marriage was going to end like this. When I took that job, that it was going to end like this." And we have balloons. How am I supposed to celebrate today? Others are wounded. The wound may be because of your sin and maybe because someone else's sin splashed up on you, but wounds are real and they're felt, and it's hard to celebrate when you feel wounded.

And other people, whether it's our own wickedness, or we look at the wickedness around in the world where there's lawlessness and injustice and we feel anxious about our own life, we feel anxious about maybe our own possessions. We feel anxious about our own security and then we start thinking about our children and grandchildren, even children that aren't yet born, and we think, "What kind of world are they going to come into?" And as a result of that, many of us, we come into a place like this and we say, "Okay, it's time to praise the Lord." And you're like, "What?"

The discipline of celebration is the discipline not to wait for some magical day when there's no pain or to ignore the pain in our day, but it is to praise the Lord and acknowledge the Lord in the day that includes pain. And this Psalm, just like with the Psalm we looked at last celebration Sunday, which was Psalm 146, models identically, what does this discipline of celebration look like?

And Providence, we don't just go, "Okay, I'm going to do this and then we'll do it again next year." We're doing it collectively to practice so that we can do it individually any day that we desire. So, what does it look like, this discipline of celebration? The first thing he tells us to do is to direct your praise to the Lord. To direct your praise to the Lord. You see like a leaky faucet, your mouth and my mouth leaks praise. Whatever stirs our soul receives our praise. And the reason it receives our praise is because when we praise it either to others or share it with others, it completes the enjoyment we have of it.

And so, for example, if you see something that is beautiful, you see a sunset, you run in, whether it's to your roommates or to your husband or wife or kids or a friend, you say, "You've got to come see it." Why do we do that? It's because when we talk about what has moved us, we praise it. And for that to be fulfilled, we need someone else to share it. We hear a funny joke and it moves us to laughter, we go home, you go, "You got to hear this. I heard this joke today." You're sitting there eating a meal with somebody, you order one thing, they

order another thing, you take a bite of yours and you go, “You’ve got to try this.” Why do we do that? It’s to complete our enjoyment of it, that I might have someone else come and share the joy with me.

My point is this, the question is not if we’re going to praise today, it’s what or who are we going to praise today? You will praise something. You will praise a golfer or your fantasy football draft or your child or a tree, you’ll praise something. The question is this, is it worthy of praise? Is it the worthiest of your praise? And so he says, of course, you notice that the Psalmist, he’s seen God, he’s utterly moved, he’s stirred to praise, but he also is stirred to redirect our praise. He knows that the people of Israel who are receiving these benefits in his day, for us at Providence, who are receiving these benefits in our day, sometimes we’re simply not impressed, either because we don’t see them, or we’re simply not impressed because we’re distracted by other things.

And so what he does, in the Psalm, he says, “All the things that God is doing, some of them feel to you as though they’re simply not all that significant. In fact, you may even relate them to simply everyday life where you never even think about God that’s involved in those things. And so, let me redirect your attention to God.” So, he says in verse one, “Praise the Lord.” And then he says, “For you it is good to sing praises to our God, for it is pleasant and a song of praise is fitting.” I love that the Bible uses words and words build sentences and sentences build arguments.

So, you notice what he says, “Praise the Lord.” He knows someone’s going to say, “Why?” So he answers, “Because, for, well, because it’s good sing praises.” And he knows someone’s going to say, “Well, why?” So he says again, “Well, let me tell you why, for it’s pleasant and a song of praise is fitting.” It’s pleasant. Why is it pleasant? Because praise is our created purpose. When we’re praising the Lord, we’re actually connecting to our created purpose. And so, he knows that it’s designed for our pleasure when we do so. But not only that, he says it is fitting.

And what’s interesting throughout the Scriptures is that you find is that anything God finds to be terribly important, he repeats. And so, we see in Psalm chapter 33:1 another instruction. He says, “Shout for joy to the Lord, O you righteous! Praise befits...” You see it? It’s fitting for the upright. Now, what’s the point.? The point is this. Praise is the only shoe that fits the footprint of God’s grace in our life that took sinners and made us righteous and upright before him. The only response from someone who rebelled against God and then who became a recipient of his grace, because he sent his Son to the earth to die on a cross for that person’s sin to be buried and to rise from the dead, to give us faith, to awaken our heart, the only appropriate shoe you can wear that fits the footprint of that grace in your life is to praise him.

It’s the only thing fitting and it’s terribly fitting. And what he says is this, is this shoe of praise is worn in a particular kind of way. He says words are not enough. Without emotion, we just say, “Oh, this is what he’s done for me. All right, well, that’s it.” No, it requires music. It requires music. Why is it that it requires music? It’s because the Lord created us not only as rational creatures, but also emotional. And so, he gave us one language for rationality, it’s called sentences and words, and he also gave us another language for emotion,

it's called music, which is why in verses one and seven he says, "Look, it is important to praise the Lord and now this is how you're going to do it. You're going to sing praises to our God and a song of praise is fitting. And sing to the Lord with thanksgiving."

A songless Christian or a songless Providence is as unfitting as a groom dozing off as his bride in his wedding is walking down the aisle. How could we possibly make it through a Sunday together, once objects of God's divine wrath, we've been made sons and daughters of the King, not sing. The reason that we can do so is because we don't see. Failure to praise is always preceded by a failure to see.

To see his handiwork, to see his fingerprints, to see his grace. We don't see it. And so, what does the Psalmist do for us? He says, "Let me help you see." You see, he knows his Bible. Of course, he knew up to a point. You get to the end of the Bible, I want to show you why it's just so important that our praising is connected to our seeing. You get to the very end of the Bible and it says that all of heaven is there singing a song to God Almighty, God, the Father. And suddenly everyone in heaven, it says, notices that there's a scroll, which is the title deed to the universe in the right hand of the Father. And the question is asked, "Who is worthy to open the scroll?" It says there's no one found worthy and so the song ends and people are crying.

And then it says, "The Lamb of God, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, Jesus Christ, ascends to that throne and he takes the scroll out of the Father's hands." And when heaven, listen, saw, it says they sang a new song. "Worthy are you. Worthy are you to take the scroll for you were slain." If you don't feel like praising today, it's because your eyes are not seeing today. And so the Psalmist directs our attention to be able to see in the every day of life what he's doing all around us.

So notice what he says, let me just give you six of them. Let me ask you, have you been comforted this year in any way? You had an experience, it was really bad, it was brokenhearted, you were wounded and suddenly you find a little bit more comfort. You might attribute that to something else, you might attribute it to a funny movie you saw, or to a friend who came and encouraged you. But the Psalmist says that it is the Lord who heals the brokenhearted, which means that God was behind the person who came and encouraged you. Some of you, you have longed for justice and received justice. Maybe some of us are still waiting for it and one day it will come. He says he is just, and one day he's going to bring a whole world to rights. It's going to happen. But if you have experienced what feels right, that the right thing happened in that situation, notice what it says, "The Lord lifts up the humble and he casts the wicked to the ground." God was involved in your life. That's his fingerprint.

Some of us, we've walked into a supermarket and we've seen food. We've enjoyed a meal. If you had, there's a reason for that and it's because he prepares rain for the earth, making the grass to grow. We just assume, "No, don't you understand? The rain comes, there's a water cycle." Who rules the water cycle? Who created the water cycle? It rains on us today. We don't complain about it, we say, "Fingerprints." There are fingerprints everywhere.

Some of us have experienced peace, real peace, where at one time there was no peace. Maybe it was a marriage, a relationship, a family, a church, a life group, something happened and suddenly you're experiencing peace where maybe in that place, there was no peace. Maybe it's just in your own heart. There is no peace in any of your boundaries that God Almighty was not involved in placing there. He makes his wind blow. Some of us have been really hot this summer and all of a sudden in the evening, there was a nice little breeze, and you're like, "That was very nice." That was not just nature, that was God welcoming you.

Some of us have been instructed. Some of us in our life, we've learned something from God's word. We've grown in an area of wisdom and it's added flavor or added health to a relationship or to a situation and it wasn't because you have a great teacher, it wasn't because you have a great pastor, it wasn't because you read a great book. It's because God perhaps spoke through that book or that pastor or that lesson. He declares his word to Jacob, he's the one who brings instruction to his people. If you have been instructed in God's truth, it's because he originated that instruction. Do you see? You see, even in pain, we praise Christ, not only because he is worthy, but because he has planted a billion benefits of pleasure in the fields of obedience.

So let me encourage you to fortify your praise by pleading for eyes to seek Christ. If you're sitting here today, you say, "I just don't see it. I just don't feel it. I don't feel like singing." Just take some time right now where you're at. I'm not going to give you time. Just stop listening to me and start talking to him. Say, "God, I need to see. I need to see. Remind me of some things that have happened in my life over the last week, month, year, anytime of my life, remind me, help me see some of your fingerprints." The reason is because we will not praise him if we do not see him.

Second thing he tells us to do is to place your trust in the Lord. And the reason is because every one of us look for a hero in a broken world and we tend to look where we can see. And so, we look out, and go, "Okay, I got all these people, I need a hero, this world is broken. Who among us is the most powerful, influential, attractive and charismatic? Who has positions of authority that they can get things done that's going to turn the tide?" Every single one of us, if we don't look at another human being, we just assume it's because we are the most influential charismatic and so it's up to us. We all look for a hero in the broken world and God does not stutter on this point. Listen to Jeremiah, Jeremiah chapter 17, he says this. "Cursed is the man who trust in man and makes flesh his strength."

Absorb that for a second. Remember this when you go vote in November. Cursed is the man who puts his everlasting trust in himself or another man, who one day is going to be in a grave as well. He says, "He's like a shrub in the desert." This is beautiful. Really, it's not beautiful. Some of us are like, "What's a shrub in the desert?" So let me show you one. This is a shrub in the desert. Doesn't it look great? No, it's terrible. It's because it is. That's why he used it as a description of what it means to be cursed, this is what happens to your soul when you trust in humanity for the greatest things in your life. You become dry and there's nothing around you that can quench that thirst.

And what a reminder, Providence, for a church today, that's trying to attribute cause to the good things that we have seen. Let it never be said it's because we have great pastors that we've seen this fruit. Let it never be said it's because we made great plans. The best of men or men at best, we look for heroes and God looks to those who make him their hero. And that's what 10 and 11 says in our passage, he says, "His delight is not in the strength of the horse nor his pleasure in the legs of man. But the Lord takes pleasure in those who fear him and in those who hope in his steadfast love." You notice that this is actually two sentences that form two sides of the same coin. He's telling us this is where God's pleasure isn't and this is where God's pleasure is.

His pleasure isn't... He doesn't look around and go, "Who has the strongest army?" The strength of the horse, horses were at the time... Now, it'd be like, "Okay, who has the best fighter jets and tanks, that's who I'm going to put my pleasure upon." No, he says, no, it's not your biggest army, nor is it your strongest man. It's not the strength of the leg, it's not your ingenuity, your creativity, who has the best administration, who has the most charismatic leader, the best communicators. And he goes, "No, that's not where God's pleasure is at."

You want the pleasure of God in your life? The Lord takes pleasure in those who fear him and in those who hope in his steadfast love. To fear him. See, those who fear the Lord, they see God, they recognize his authority, they regard his justice and they fear a life of being like a bush in the desert. And that fear causes them and that respect for God causes them not to run away from God, but to run to God, to trust God with all of their heart.

And this is what Jeremiah says. He gives us the flip side of this amazing illustration when he says, "Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, who trusts the Lord, he is like a tree planted by water." You look at this image of a tree planted by water, that's significantly more attractive what your soul can feel like than that bush in the desert. And you look at this and you ask the question, "Well, who in the world, who in their right mind after hearing these truths today would wake up tomorrow and trust in man?" And the answer to that question that Jeremiah gives in the next verse is us, that's who.

In verse nine he says, "The heart is deceitful above all things and is desperately sick, who can understand it?" You know what this means? It means that you're going to listen today, and some of you, there's like three of you that believe what I'm saying. You're like, "No, this is true. I'm going to trust in the Lord. I'm going to trust in the Lord." God has moved some of you today to be inspired to say, "This is how I want to look and live my life." And I want you to know tomorrow morning, one of the first impulses you're going to have is to trust yourself. It's going to be to trust your boss or a president. It's going to say, "Okay, I feel a little strained today, so where's my hero for the day?" We have this condition, even though we have been reformed, we've been reborn by God, we have a disposition in our old man to constantly look back to ourself.

So, what are we to do? Let me encourage you to consider our condition and help one another trust Christ. This is why we're a family. This is why he puts us together, so that mutually we can come together, we can be with one another, we can come and sing true songs, we can come and listen to God's true word, that we can

make the decision to get up out of our house, out of our living room where no one can remind us to the truth in that moment, even though we're watching, we can come into this place and we can listen here and all of a sudden, we start to talk to one another and we start hearing one another talk and it sounds like that person must be, might be trusting in themselves and we can remind them, "Hey, don't forget."

We can pray for one another and we can love one another. And the reason is because we don't look down on each other, we simply recognize collectively that we have an old condition of the heart that still creates motivations in the way that we live our life and that God Almighty is speaking and that he is giving us people into our life to echo his voice, to say, "Trust in the Lord today. Trust in the Lord."

And if you happen to be here and you don't have a relationship with Jesus Christ, I want you to know that you do not have to listen to what I'm talking about from outside of the room, from outside of the space. He brings back the outcast. If you happen to feel like you're outside, the Bible says that if you will place your faith and trust in Jesus Christ by confessing, "God, I know that I am a sinner. I cannot, I don't have the strength in myself and I don't see a hero in the world that can take away my guilt and shame before you, but I believe that you sent your son Jesus Christ to this earth, to die on a cross, rise from the dead in order to take away my sin and I trust you."

And the Bible says he'll forgive you, he'll justify you, give you his righteousness, adopt you into his family, begin to change your heart so that your heart and soul won't look like that bush in the desert, but by that tree, by the water. Trust him. The last thing before we take some time to respond by singing to the Lord with our heart, let me encourage us to fix your hope upon the Lord.

Now listen, recounting his deeds, it doesn't simply stop with us saying thank you to the Lord, it also motivates hope. And this is why in verses 10 and 11, if you've noticed, I didn't talk about the last phrase, but the Lord takes pleasure in those who fear him and then he qualifies what it looks like to fear him by giving another phrase. He says, "How do you know if someone's fearing the Lord? This is how. They hope in his steadfast love." You can feel and hear hope in their heart, that God in his steadfast love is not going to stop loving me. You see steadfast love is love that never ceases and it's the love that God has for the people who put their faith and trust in his son. And it is this very steadfast love that his people throughout the ages have leaned upon, and even after being saved in their soul, they happen to fall back into a pit.

For example, Psalm chapter 6:4, "Save me for the sake of your steadfast love." He says it's because of your steadfast love that you have placed upon me, and he uses that steadfast love as his appeal. He doesn't say, "Look, I happen to be back in the ditch again, but because I'm so worthwhile, would you save me?" He says, "No, on the fact that you've promised to never allow your love to remove from me, would you save me?" And this hope or this steadfast love, what it does is it creates a hope, because this recounting of the past reminds us that if he did it before, and his love is not come... That it's still on me, he can do it again. It's just some of us, some of us have heard stories of a wayward child who's come back to the Lord and it is recounting those

deeds, is what gives us hope to say, "Maybe the Lord could do it in my own family as well."

Some of us have heard about people's sicknesses being healed and all of a sudden somebody in your family is sick and so it creates and buoys your hope to move forward. The last thing is this steadfast love, it does something else and that is it assures us in the devastating darkness of our own sin that he still loves us. That neither death nor life nor angels or rulers or things present or things to come nor powers nor height or depth or anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus, our Lord. And so, what we're going to do is we want to end by expressing our hope to Christ. And we want to do that in two ways. The first thing I want to do is to give you an opportunity, just a moment of silence, to do two specific things. First of all, if you know Christ, two specific things and that is to ask God, "God, would you help me to see some of the things that you've done in my life and would you buoy and motivate future hope of what you can do in my life?" This time is also a great opportunity if you need to trust Christ and you feel like, "Well, when do I do that?" You can just pray to him right now, and confess to him, say, "Christ, I believe." And then what we're going to do is we're going to sing together as we close, okay? So let me give you a moment right now to pray.

Father in heaven, for those who have placed their faith and trust in you just now, we give you praise. We honor you and we thank you God for leading them, inclining their heart to put their trust in you. And for those who received a memory of something that you've done, we thank you for that memory. And we ask that now that you would transfer that into hope, hope of what you could do tomorrow in our life. It's only fitting for us to do just what the Psalmist told us to do and that is to put these words of praise into song. So God, would you create emotion within our heart? And would that emotion be built upon the truth of what you've done in our life. It says we sing to you now, would you help us do that? We pray this in Christ's name. Amen. Would you stand?



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