



Memories of God speaking to me through Psalm 34 at significant life moments

Avignon Festival, July 1970
with Christian friend from PGCE course,
about to start teaching career in
Sevenoaks.
Next visit Sept 2002, first Ramblers lead.
Revisited most recently in June 2022.
I set to music French words of verses 4-7.
Still fondly remembered.

Ashburnham, August 1975
with a friend from university
and her Christian community
Revisited many times since.

Holy Spirit encounter,
worship led by Fisherfolk.
Verses 1-10 narrated with
accompanying expressive
movements in group work.



Psalm 34 *Of David. When he pretended to be insane before Abimelek, who drove him away, and he left.*

- ¹ I will extol the LORD at all times;
his praise will always be on my lips.
- ² I will glory in the LORD;
let the afflicted hear and rejoice.
- ³ Glorify the LORD with me:
let us exalt his name together.

We resolve to praise the Lord and invite others to join us in worship. Praise has power to transform lives

I will call upon the Lord, (SoF 266)
Who is worthy to praised.
So shall I be saved from my enemies.
The Lord liveth and blessed be my Rock
and may the God of my salvation be exalted.
The Lord liveth and blessed be my Rock
and may the God of my salvation be exalted.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Q1Ui1eMfx8>

Worshipping God in all of life

David wrote Psalm 34 on emerging from a time of extreme danger when his life had been under threat.
This psalm is his response.

Give thanks for the times when God has been there for us when we have called upon Him in times of trial

- With healing and forgiveness
- Giving wisdom and direction
- In rescue and provision for needs



- 4** I sought the LORD, and he answered me;
he delivered me from all my fears.
- 5** Those who look to him are radiant;
their faces are never covered with shame.
- 6** This poor man called, and the LORD heard him;
he saved him out of all his troubles.
- 7** The angel of the LORD encamps around those
who fear him, and he delivers them.

Faces that reflect God's radiance

- Ex 34: 29-35 Moses in God's presence
- 2 Cor 3: 17-18 God's glory in Holy Spirit
- Psalm 27:8 Seek His face



Does God answer when we call?

- He knows our inner fears
- He saves and delivers us
- He transforms our outlook
- He enfolds us in His love

What about in times of trouble?

- Turn to the Lord in prayer
- Look to Bible verses for guidance
- Call on friends for support
- Believe that God will send help – maybe even angels in extremis!



- 8** Taste and see that the LORD is good;
blessed is the one who takes refuge in him.
- 9** Fear the LORD, you his holy people,
for those who fear him lack nothing.
- 10** The lions may grow weak and hungry,
but those who seek the LORD lack no good thing.



God is our loving heavenly Father.

We come to know Him through Jesus, who died for our sins.

We live in His presence through Holy Spirit who strengthens us.



Taste and see
that the Lord
is good.
- Psalm 34:8 -

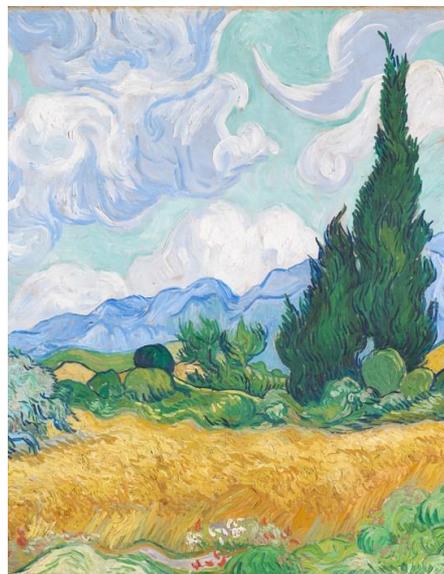
iBelieve.com

But those who hope in the LORD
will renew their strength.
They will soar on wings like eagles;
they will run and not grow weary,
they will walk and not be faint.
Isaiah 40:31



- ¹¹ Come, my children, listen to me;
I will teach you the fear of the LORD.
¹² Whoever of you loves life
and desires to see many good days,
¹³ keep your tongue from evil
and your lips from telling lies.
¹⁴ Turn from evil and do good;
seek peace and pursue it.

Can we learn any lessons from the life and work of the artist Vincent van Gogh?



The psalms of David challenge us to worship God in all of life, in all circumstances.

Do we appreciate God's creation?
Do we use our God-given gifts?
Do we reach out to help others?
Do we love others as God loved us?
Are our words truthful and kind?
Are we bringers of peace from God?

"Shalom" – the Peace of the Lord

David exhorts the people to "Seek peace and pursue it" (verse 14). The Hebrew word for "peace" here is *shalom* and it means far more than "psychological ease" or the absence of war. Rather, it describes human flourishing with God in all its fullness, an ideal state in which everything is the way God intends it to be: relationally, physically, emotionally, mentally, economically, politically and ecologically. This is what God's people are to seek, not just for themselves, but even for their enemies, as we see God commanding the exiles in Babylon to pray for and seek the *shalom* of that city (Jeremiah 29: 7).

Looking to Christ, it is an even richer *shalom* that is the ultimate goal of his sacrifice: "For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross" (Colossians 1: 19-20). What is Christ's goal? Nothing less than the complete, eternal and universal fulfilment of peace.

Mark Greene LICC *Six Studies in David's Psalms*

SoF 2989: *Now may the peace of the Lord* (Graham Kendrick)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BCELOpxQXqk>