

# The Life of David: Learning to Worship the Lord by Viewing Each Day Through the Lens of Scripture Psalm 71:1-13

Application is the best part of Bible study.

But, just like a “straight from the garden” meal: there is so much work to do. For food growth or caught, there are many stages to go through. Pick up and clean or wash; cut up and prepare; cook and serve—and then at last: the meal. There is nothing like fresh, home made meals, in all the world. It is the best; and it is hard!

The same is true for Bible study. The passage must be hunted, the truths must be dug out and stored, then they are prepared into personally applicable truths, then the meal: the personal prayerful application.

That is what is so powerful about this passage in Psalm 71 this evening.

## The Life Satisfying Meal of Biblical Application

Applying Psalm 71 is the best part of studying it: after the work is done, after the lessons and truths are all harvested: the meal can be made. Like hunting or gardening, the food is gotten but the cleaning, preparing, cooking, and serving all stand in line before the meal. But how wonderful is that moment when we can sit down and eat the meal of Scripture by applying.

As Jeremiah 15:16 says:

“Thy words were found **(that is the whole search and study time);**  
and I did eat them **(that is the meal of application);**  
and they were unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart. For I am called by Thy Name, oh Lord of Hosts. **(That is the whole result of learning to applying the Word).**

The 71<sup>st</sup> Psalm is the testimony of the man who God identified as one who fully accomplished God’s purposes in every part of his life: David walked, lived, and served after God’s own heart.

That designation that God gave David in Acts 13 should cause each of us to pause and reflect. This Psalm summarizes how David (aka man after God’s heart) made it through

the same troubles we all discover are common to living on planet Earth.

This evening as we open to Psalm 71:9 we see the next common trouble we all will someday face: *weakness increases* as we grow older. How true!

## **Weaknesses Increase As We Age**

Think of growing older for the vast majority of humans: Finances decrease and deplete as does our physical, emotional, and mental strength. Our senses dim, our minds dull, and our hopes diminish.

Everything in our physical world weakens from bones to teeth, from circulation to stamina, from sight to hearing. Nothing in our physical world escapes this slow (or rapid) decline.

John Wesley (1703-1791), a giant among eighteenth-century servants of the Lord, wrote this on his eighty-sixth birthday in a diary he kept for most of his adult life:

June 28. This day I enter on my eighty-sixth year. I now find I grow old:

1. My sight is decayed, so that I cannot read a small print, unless in a strong light.
2. My strength is decayed, so that I walk much slower than I did some years since.
3. My memory of names, whether of persons, or places, is decayed, till I stop a little to recollect them.

What I should be afraid of, is, if I took thought for the morrow, that my body should weigh down my mind, and create either stubbornness, by the decrease of my understanding, or peevishness, by the increase of bodily infirmities; But thou shalt answer for me, O Lord my God. John Wesley.

Weaknesses increase as we age, and all of us from the senior saints to the youngest child are all on an irreversible conveyor belt aging each moment, headed to the grave. Many are closer, many are further: all are headed to death is the start reality we must all come to grips with.

Consequently, every day is an opportunity to either focus on ourselves—our troubles, problems, misfortunes, woes (and there will always be some)—or to focus on God and His plans, promises, purposes, and faithfulness to guide our lives to the very end.

Someone has well said that for us as believers, life is not really mountains and valleys where we have all good times (mountains) and all bad times (valleys); rather, life is more like a parallel line of railroad tracks.

One side is all of our unending struggles;  
The other side is all of God's unending goodness being worked out in our lives.

The bottom line is that the way we understand life is when we allow the Lord to let us see all our trials through the lens of His Word—and that is exactly what David did in Psalm 71. David explains to us how to:

## **VIEW THE PRESENT THROUGH THE LENS OF GOD'S WORD**

In Psalm 71, a psalm of intentional living, David first surveyed the challenges everyone faces as they get older.

Remember when David was in life by looking at v. 18: "old and gray headed".

In the first thirteen verses, David blends God's faithfulness and promises, as he reflected upon the four common problems of aging. If you aren't there yet into old age, he reminds us what will be coming:

- 1. Confusion Increases as We Age v. 1-2**
- 2. Insecurity Increases as We Age v. 3-8**
- 3. Weakness And Troubles Increase as We Age v. 9**
- 4. Aloneness Increases as We Age v. 10-13**

With those challenges that David knew he faced in mind, listen to his confidence in these powerful words of hope and secure promises of God as we stand and read v. 5-10.

Psalm 71:5-10 (NKJV) For You are my hope, O Lord GOD; You are my trust from my youth. 6 By You I have been upheld from birth; You are He who took me out of my mother's womb. My praise shall be continually of You. 7 I have become as a wonder to many, But You are my strong refuge. 8 Let my mouth be filled with Your praise And with Your glory all the day. 9 Do not cast me off in the time of old age; Do not forsake me **when my strength fails.**

So, we have dug out the truths, now how can we make that satisfying meal to eat like Jeremiah talks about?

## **Confusion & Insecurities Increase As We Age v. 1-8**

David reminded us in verses 1-2 that as we get older, our minds get slower, and it is easier to get confused. Life moves so fast these days that when our minds and bodies slow down, it is hard to keep pace. This can prompt confusion.

Too many choices, too fast a pace, and too short a period to process needed information to make a decision can prompt confusion and indecisiveness as to what to do.

*When confusion increases what should we do? We should declare our unwavering choice to form these godly habits.*

### **Application Meal #1:**

- **Like David, I will flee to the Lord for hope instead of living in confusion:** *In thee, O LORD, do I put my trust: let me never be put to confusion (Psalm 71:1 KJV).*
- **Like David, I will cry out to the Lord before giving in to temptation:** *Deliver me in Your righteousness, and cause me to escape; incline Your ear to me, and save me (Psalm 71:2).*

Secondly David reminds us in Psalm 71:3-8, that an increase of insecurity is another challenge of growing older. Like confusion, insecurity shows up periodically from childhood; it just gets bigger and bigger the older and weaker we get. Elderly people commonly feel like they are no longer needed, and often are in the way. Combined with all the other weaknesses of life, a sense of feeling unwanted breeds an increased insecurity.

So David gives us six rapidly stated truths that are God's:

## **The Prescription for the Insecurities in Life**

*When insecurity increases what should we do? We should declare our unwavering choice to form these godly habits.*

### **Application Meal #2:**

- **Like David, I will resist fear by running into God's Refuge:** *Be my strong refuge, to which I may resort continually; You have given the commandment to save me, for You are my rock and my fortress (Psalm 71:3).* Rather than let fears paralyze us, we should trust God's Word over the fears.
- **Like David, I will ask for God's help before becoming bitter:** *Deliver me, O my God, out of the hand of the wicked, out of the hand of the unrighteous and cruel man (Psalm 71:4).* We should turn our hurts over to the Lord to handle!
- **Like David, I will keep remembering the faithfulness of God:** *For You are my hope, O Lord God; You are my trust from my youth (Psalm 71:5).* We should choose to believe God's faithfulness!
- **Like David, I will remember to praise God that He has a plan for our lives:** *By You I have been upheld from birth; You are He who took me out of my mother's womb. My praise shall be continually of You (Psalm 71:6).* We should seek God's plan

every day!

- **Like David, I will let my life be a testimony for the Lord:** *I have become as a wonder to many, but You are my strong refuge* (Psalm 71:7). In all circumstances, we should do what's right because it's right in God's eyes!
- **Like David, I will praise God so much that no time is left for complaints:** *Let my mouth be filled with Your praise and with Your glory all the day* (Psalm 71:8). We should praise often!

David also noted in Psalm 71:9 that *weakness increases* as we grow older. How true!

Finances decrease and deplete as does our physical, emotional, and mental strength. Our senses dim, our minds dull, and our hopes diminish. Everything in our physical world weakens from bones to teeth, from circulation to stamina, from sight to hearing. Nothing in our physical world escapes this slow (or rapid) decline.

Another realm David mentioned in Psalm 71:10 is that *troubles increase* as we age.

David mentioned his enemies were as much present at the end of his life as they were at the start and throughout. And so we will also discover the older we get. From troubles with mobility to troubles with relationships, life will be filled with tribulation. It will become harder to get up, get around, sleep, hear, remember, and even trust.

Anxiety will be easily accessed, fears will multiply, and bitterness will be near at hand. Enemies imagined and enemies experienced will then all run together.

There will be emotional troubles (some struggle with lifelong depression), financial troubles (some have constant financial needs and hardships), family troubles (some have hurtful children or burdensome and ungrateful parents for many years)—and all these troubles will feel heavier to bear the weaker we get.

*When weakness and trouble increases what should we do?* We should declare our unwavering choice to form these godly habits:

### **Application Meal #3:**

- **Like David, I will trust God to the end of my life:** *Do not cast me off in the time of old age; do not forsake me when my strength fails* (Psalm 71:9).
- **Like David, I will trust in the Lord's ability to rescue me:** *For my enemies speak against me; and those who lie in wait for my life take counsel together, saying, "God has forsaken him; pursue and take him, for there is none to deliver him." O God, do not be far from me; O my God, make haste to help me!* (Psalm 71:10-12).

In a modern sense David trusted God as much as in 911, so take all fears to the Lord in prayer.

## Summary of Application Meals that Satisfy our Souls

- **Like David, I will flee to the Lord for hope instead of living in confusion:** *In thee, O LORD, do I put my trust: let me never be put to confusion (Psalm 71:1 KJV).*
- **Like David, I will cry out to the Lord before giving in to temptation:** *Deliver me in Your righteousness, and cause me to escape; incline Your ear to me, and save me (Psalm 71:2).*
- **Like David, I will resist fear by running into God's Refuge:** *Be my strong refuge, to which I may resort continually; You have given the commandment to save me, for You are my rock and my fortress (Psalm 71:3).* Rather than let fears paralyze us, we should trust God's Word over the fears.
- **Like David, I will ask for God's help before becoming bitter:** *Deliver me, O my God, out of the hand of the wicked, out of the hand of the unrighteous and cruel man (Psalm 71:4).* We should turn our hurts over to the Lord to handle!
- **Like David, I will keep remembering the faithfulness of God:** *For You are my hope, O Lord God; You are my trust from my youth (Psalm 71:5).* We should choose to believe God's faithfulness!
- **Like David, I will remember to praise God that He has a plan for our lives:** *By You I have been upheld from birth; You are He who took me out of my mother's womb. My praise shall be continually of You (Psalm 71:6).* We should seek God's plan every day!
- **Like David, I will let my life be a testimony for the Lord:** *I have become as a wonder to many, but You are my strong refuge (Psalm 71:7).* In all circumstances, we should do what's right because it's right in God's eyes!
- **Like David, I will praise God so much that no time is left for complaints:** *Let my mouth be filled with Your praise and with Your glory all the day (Psalm 71:8).* We should praise often!
- **Like David, I will trust God to the end of my life:** *Do not cast me off in the time of old age; do not forsake me when my strength fails (Psalm 71:9).*
- **Like David, I will trust in the Lord's ability to rescue me:** *For my enemies speak against me; and those who lie in wait for my life take counsel together, saying, "God has forsaken him; pursue and take him, for there is none to deliver him." O God, do not be far from me; O my God, make haste to help me! (Psalm 71:10-12).*