

Hurry Lord, and Bring Each to His Appointed Destiny

Psalm 70:1-5

Halifax: 10 February 2019, 10:30 AM

Introduction

Today, in our sermon series on Mark, we are taking up a new Psalm of Focus.

- That means that our text today in the Mark sermon series will not be from Mark.
- As most of you know, I pick a Psalm every few weeks that relates to our morning sermon series and then we sing that Psalm for several weeks.
 - I always introduce the Psalm by preaching from it.

When we began Mark, we had Psalm 85 as our Psalm of Focus because it speaks of how we are restored to righteousness by Christ, the subject with which Mark begins.

Then, when we got to Mark 1:21, we took up Psalm 145 and sang it until last week when we finished Mark chapter 2. In Psalm 145, we extol God for His goodness.

- In those weeks in Mark, we were looking at how Christ, by coming as Mediator, brought God's authority, compassion, agenda, willingness to cleanse, forgiveness, restoring grace, presence, and Sabbath rest to us.

Now with Mark chapter three, we are going to see how various people respond to Jesus... some of them as followers, and some of them as enemies.

- Of course we have already seen this with the rising opposition of the Pharisees and with the calling of some of His first disciples, but in chapter three there is an even greater emphasis on this...
 - So I have selected Psalm 70 where God's anointed prays for God to hurry and bring each to his appointed destiny... the wicked to ruin and the righteous to joy.
 - As we see encounters both friends and foes of our King in Mark, it should stir us up to pray with Jesus that His kingdom would come...
 - which means that He arises in His kingdom to reward those who love His salvation and to cut off the wicked who oppose Him.

Please give careful attention as I read this Psalm to you... Psalm 70.

- This is the Word of God, a song that our Mediator leads us to sing in the church.

Psalm 70:1-5: «TO THE CHIEF MUSICIAN. A PSALM OF DAVID. TO BRING TO REMEMBRANCE.»

¹ Make haste, O God, to deliver me! Make haste to help me, O LORD! ² Let them be ashamed and confounded who seek my life; Let them be turned back and confused who desire my hurt. ³ Let them be turned back

because of their shame, who say, "Aha, aha!" ⁴ Let all those who seek You rejoice and be glad in You; and let those who love Your salvation say continually, "Let God be magnified!" ⁵ But I *am* poor and needy; make haste to me, O God! You *are* my help and my deliverer; O LORD, do not delay.

May the Lord add His blessing to the reading of His holy word.

- Let's consider this Psalm.
- First of all...

I. In this Psalm God's anointed king pleads with urgency and we must join Him.

A. Understand that it is a prayer of God's anointed king.

1. We are told in the title of the Psalm that it is "of David."
 - a. David was God's anointed king and he was very mindful of that.
 - He knew that the kingdom he had been given belonged to God—that he had been anointed by God and was His servant.
 - He had been appointed to represent God's rule by doing what God wanted rather than pursuing his own selfish interests.
 - When a man has selfish interests as a king or leader, he will do things that are actually contrary to what pleases God whenever he thinks they will advance his own interests.
 - God hates it when kings (or governors, or elders, or husbands, or parents) use their authority in that way.
 - b. Even in his prayers, David was not concerned for his own interests so much as he was for God's interests.
 - When he prayed against his enemies, it was not so much because they were against him as a private person, but because they were trying to destroy the kingdom of God over which he was king.
 - He was concerned for the prosperity of the kingdom because he knew that the state of the kingdom was tied to the honour that God would receive from it.
 - That's right—when the church is in a deplorable condition, it brings dishonour to God—and that ought to be disturbing to us.
 - It was disturbing to David and that is why he stood out as a man after God's own heart.
- So this Psalm is *of David*, of God's anointed king...
2. But much more than that, this Psalm is a Psalm of King Jesus, God's anointed King over us!
 - a. David was but a type of Christ.
 - Christ is the One who was anointed with Holy Spirit above measure.
 - He was the Son of David that God promised who would be David's Lord and who would reign forever and ever on David's throne...
 - David's throne was the throne of God's representative king.
 - b. So though David penned this Psalm, he penned it by the Holy Spirit of Jesus Christ so that it is not the word of David, but the word of Christ.
 - In this song we have *His* yearnings and sentiments and desires as the Shepherd-king of God's people who will reign forever and ever.

B. And you see that our anointed King finds the state of His kingdom to be intolerable!

- He prays for it with a holy urgency.
 - Everything here is aimed at haste... something must be done quickly!

1. It begins with haste: The opening of verse 1 is translated: *Make haste, O God, to deliver me! Make haste to help me, O LORD!*
 - a. But you will notice that the first two words are in italics—which means that they are supplied by the translators.
 - That is because in the original, the grammatical structure is choppy.
 - A literal translation is something like: “God, to deliver me! Lord, to my help! Hurry!”
 - It is written that way to bring out the state of urgency—it sounds rushed.
 - The status quo must not be allowed to continue.
 - Deliverance is desperately needed.
 - b. How often has our Lord prayed for us like that!
 - How many times have the church’s sins brought us to the point where we are on the brink of total ruin... but for His intercession!
 - Can we not look in history—both the inspired history of Old Testament as well as the history of the church over the last 2000 years—and see many times when if God had not reached out to deliver us we would have been swallowed up by the world to be no more?
 - Ah yes, there is often a need for urgency when our enemies rise up against us, either to murder us, or to draw us away... and it is then that our Lord lifts up His holy intercessions for us.
 - c. And might I add that in His intercessions, He often prays as our king in the first person singular...
 - He says not “Make haste to help them,” but rather “**Make haste to help Me.**”
 - That is a much more effective prayer because it shows that He is so tied to us that when we are on the brink of ruin, so is He... when we prosper, so does He!
 - He has made Himself to stand or fall with us... our reproach falls on Him, and our deliverance is also His deliverance.
 - How His love for us is seen by His urgent prayer for us.
- That is how the Psalm begins...
2. It also ends with the same sense of urgency.
 - Verse 5 says: “**But I am poor and needy; make haste to me, O God! You are my help and my deliverer; O LORD, do not delay.**”
 - a. You can see the double note of urgency here...
 - There is the cry, “**Make haste to me, O God...**” and then at the end, “**O LORD, do not delay.**”
 - b. And again, the reason is given, “**I am poor and needy...**”
 - Our king is poor and needy because His kingdom is well-nigh ruined... and He cannot be well unless it is well.
 - The state of the church is intolerable and God is His help and deliverer because God is our help and our deliverer.
 - Yes, He Himself is fully God, but as He is now also made flesh, He prays, as He did when He was here, to God as His God.
 - There is a true sense that if God does not act, His kingdom will be ruined!

TRANS> Something must be done at once!

- Such is the urgent prayer of our anointed King Jesus.

C. And my believing brothers and sisters, you are called to join Him in His prayer.

1. The very fact that this prayer is in the Psalter (the book of Psalms) tells us that this is so.
 - The Holy Spirit has compiled this collection of the songs of Jesus for His church to sing, just as He has compiled the scriptures for us to read.
 - We are commanded to read the word, and we are commanded to sing these psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs that He has given us.
2. But too often passionate prayer like this is not to be found in us.
 - Even when we have the right words, we are often lacking the sincerity.
 - a. Too often our prayers and our songs are merely formal—there is no begging in us such as we find in this song.
 - We may say the words, but a true spirit of pleading is missing.
 - b. And perhaps even worse (is it worse?) we do not pray at all...
 - c. Or we are so distracted with other thoughts and plans, or so sleepy, that we *might as well* not be praying at all...
3. What hinders us from begging for the kingdom of God? Let's look at four hindrances
 - a. First hindrance: we simply don't care enough about the kingdom of God...
 - We are content to pray for our wealth, our health, our personal peace, our relationships... but we have little concern for the intolerable state of the church.
 - b. Second hindrance: our pride...
 - We are too proud to beg the way our Master does—we feel that it is beneath us and we will leave it to God to do as He pleases...
 - How deplorable that is to Him! A humble Saviour with proud sinners!
 - The pleading He wants for us is not because He needs it from us, but because we need to be humbled before Him—to see how much we need Him.
 - In fact, when His people are drifting away from Him, one of the ways He fixes that is to let everything fall apart so that we realise that we need Him.
 - c. Third hindrance: a lack of faith—
 - Perhaps we do not believe that God is *able* to deliver His church—the forces of Satan and the world seem too strong and too entrenched;
 - Or perhaps we lack faith in the goodness of God—that He is a God of abundant grace who delights to answer the prayers.
 - This afternoon, we are going to see in John's gospel how Jesus describes the time that now is (the time when He is in heaven and we are on earth) as a time when the Spirit is given to us that we might pray in Jesus' name and have all that we ask—
 - not all that we ask selfishly, but all that we ask when we pray that His name will be hallowed, that His kingdom will come, that His will will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

- d. Fourth hindrance: unconfessed sins that we harbour.
 - When we are harbouring sins, how can we who are resisting Christ's reign pray for the advancement of it?
 - We are ashamed to come with such prayers—and rightly so.
 - The Bible tells us that the Lord will not hear us if we regard iniquity in our heart... that is true...

TRANS> Oh church of Jesus Christ, our lack of passionate prayer for Christ's kingdom is one of the reasons we ought to pray passionately for His kingdom.

- Our prayerlessness is one of the symptoms of the intolerable state of the church.
 - Let us join our passionate Lord in lifting up the words of Psalm 70 to God!
 - We will now look first how He prays regarding His enemies and then we will look at how He prays regarding His friends.

II. Our anointed King prays for the frustration of those who oppose His kingdom.

A. Of course He does!

1. By opposing King Jesus, they show that they do not want God to be glorified by Him. They are trying to keep God from being glorified.
 - They do not want King Jesus to be successful in saving sinners and bringing them to God.
 - They do not want Him to be successful in preserving this kingdom of righteousness—they want His kingdom to fail and to go away.
 - Isn't that true?
 - Of course it is—they do not want God's rule to be established among us or God to be worshipped and thanked.
2. You can see how their attitude toward our anointed king is described in Psalm 70.
 - Jesus says they are those: **“who seek my life.”**
 - They want to murder Him, just as much now as they did when He came into the world.
 - He also says in verse 2 that they are those **“who desire my hurt.”**
 - They do not want this king to prosper in His kingdom—they want to bring Him down.
 - Verse 3 tells us how they get very excited when they feel that they have obtained their desire—it describes them as saying **“Aha, aha!”**
 - They are elated when God is kept out and they can go on without being bothered by Him... when the church is full of corruption and pride.

B. Jesus prays here in Psalm 70 that these enemies...

1. will come to see how foolish they have been to oppose God's anointed king—**“Let them be ashamed and confounded who seek my life.”**
 - In other words, let them see how utterly futile it is to fight against God!
 - This is what they will see in time—and the prayer is that the day of their humiliation will come very soon—**“Make haste, O LORD!”**

2. He also prays that these enemies will be **turned back**...
 - stopped, turned aside, from their wicked work of opposing Him and His kingdom.
 - He does not specify how—they might be brought to destruction, they might be brought to discouragement, they might even repent and be turned to follow Him instead of opposing Him!
 - But be they Satan, his demons, or the world, the prayer is that God will soon stop them in their tracks so that His people can serve Him without fear and opposition forever.

C. There are a couple of things to learn from this prayer of Jesus against His enemies.

1. First, learn that you cannot fight against God.
 - That is what you have been doing until you come to Him to serve Him and to receive His salvation—you are resisting His call.
 - It is time to turn from such nonsense.
 - Jesus is about bringing us to God—why should that be opposed?
2. Secondly, if you are a believer, learn to pray against the enemies of Christ's kingdom... that they will be frustrated in their effort to oppose Him.
 - Jesus' prayers will be answered...
 - But as one who loves God and loves Christ, you are to yearn for this and pray that it will happen sooner rather than later.
 - You are not to be any more content than Jesus is that people are allowed to go on opposing His kingdom and oppressing His people and trying to keep them from serving God or even coming to Him.

TRANS> So again, our King prays for the frustration of those who oppose His kingdom and we are to join Him in these prayers.

- What else does He pray here in Psalm 70?

III. Our anointed King prays for the blessing of the friends of His kingdom.

- Oh how He loves them!

A. They are described as:

1. **Those who seek God.**
 - The word *seek* is the same that was used of the wicked in verse two who seek the life of the king.
 - These are said to seek God, something that none do unless they are born again, but that they take delight in once they are born of the Spirit.
 - They see the goodness of God, they see His beauty revealed in Christ, His power and glory as Creator, His majesty as the judge of all, His purity as the one who is holy and just—and they seek Him..
 - Their great desire is to go to the Father, to dwell in the house of the Lord forever.
 - They find their highest pleasure in knowing Him, learning of Him, pleasing Him, serving Him.
 - Their hope is not in the fleeting things of this world, but in His presence where there are pleasures forevermore.

2. They are also described as those who **love His salvation**.
 - To them, there is nothing so marvellous as to be saved by grace, having once been a sinner, without God and without hope in the world.
 - Loving His salvation, they find great pleasure in seeing King Jesus gather more and more people into His kingdom.
 - Accordingly, they support missionaries and preachers of the gospel with their prayers and their pocketbook.
 - Loving His salvation, they live lives that adorn the doctrine of the gospel and make the most of every opportunity to testify of the hope that is in them.
 - They pray for the lost, that they might be converted and come to true faith. They pray that God’s word will prosper and increase.
 - And they love God’s salvation that continues in their sanctification...
 - They find pleasure growing in grace, in putting off the old man and putting on the new man, in dying to self and in living more and more to God and to His Son Jesus Christ.
 - For them, there is more joy in this than in riches and honours and pleasures.

TRANS> They have found Him whom their soul loves.

B. And just as our Lord prays that the wicked will be frustrated in what they seek, He also prays that these who seek God and love His salvation will be filled with what they seek.

1. **“Let them rejoice and be glad in You,”** He says.
 - He has been rejoicing in the Father and has been glad in Him for all eternity, and He is thrilled to see these who want the same.
 - And He is grieved to see them hindered, whether by their own sin—what Paul called this body of death that he wishes to be delivered from;
 - and what he called the flesh that lusts against the spirit so that you cannot do the things that you want to do;
 - and what Hebrews calls the sin that so easily entangles us.
 - Whether we are hindered by that...
 - Or by persecutors who try to stop us from serving God...
 - Or by false teachers who come in sheep’s clothing...
 - Or by doubts and discouragements... or sorrows in the world...
 - He prays that we will be glad in God.
 - He prays for us as we go through all of our trials and burdens and persecutions in this world that none of these will separate us from the love of God...
 - that instead tribulation would bring patience, and patience proven character, and proven character bring about hope because the love of God is poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit.
 - He knows that for those who seek God, tribulations only enhance their joy in God—and for that He prays.

2. And in addition to that, He prays that these who love His salvation would be disposed to say, “**The Lord be magnified.**”
 - He prays that they would have that delight in God that makes them want Him to be known by others—to want all to see His glory with them.
 - What happiness and blessedness there is for those who are busy speaking of magnifying the Lord!
 - The more they do, the more they themselves see His glory and the more pleasure they have in seeing others come to know Him too.

C. Oh that we would learn to pray for others like this!

1. So often, our prayers only go so far as for their immediate comfort and prosperity, for relief from their trials and their burdens...
 - How much better when we learn to pray with Jesus not just for their temporal happiness, but that they would rejoice and be glad in God.
 - That is the true and lasting and deep happiness that reaches to their soul.
2. In Mark, as we see people coming to Jesus as disciples and followers, let it stir up prayer in us as it did in Jesus...
 - That those we know who seek Him would indeed rejoice and be glad in Him and that those who love His salvation would say, “Let the Lord be magnified.”

TRANS> So we join Jesus in praying for the frustration of the wicked who oppose Him and for the success of those who seek God.

- But now we come to the conclusion with verse 5.

Conclusion: Here is a reality check.

- There is great excitement and hope in praying these prayers, but what is the present reality? What is the state of our king in His kingdom?
 - What is the state of His church in the world?
 - Verse 5: All these prayers, all this hope, “**but I am poor and needy.**”
- This is the reality. This is what we see.
 - Very often, we see the wicked prospering...
 - Instead of being turned back, we see them growing in confidence in their opposition to Christ.
 - Instead of seeing them ashamed and frustrated, we see them proud and full of scoffing and contempt toward those who would follow Christ.
 - And we see those who seek God, not rejoicing and glad in Him, but broken and struggling;
 - not loving His salvation, but pursuing the things of the world—weighed down by cares and concerns, full of anxiety and depression, on the brink of despair.
- And that is why there is this urgency in this prayer...
 - Our Master is burdened by these things and that is why He prays with such urgency, saying, (v. 5): **But I am poor and needy; make haste to me, O God! You are my help and my deliverer; O LORD, do not delay.**
 - The present state of affairs is intolerable to Him... and we are glad that it is.
 - He will not have it to go on.
 - He insists before the great throne of God that it not go on and it won't.

- And the more we join our prayers with His, praying in His name that God will make haste, the more we will see those prayers answered.
 - Often He waits until we pray... truly pray.
 - He brings us low so that we will see how much we need Him, and then He answers us and we know Him and see His glory.
- As we study Mark 3 and see enemies who oppose Christ and friends who come to Him,
 - let us then think of those today who oppose Him and those who seek Him and let us pray concerning them the way our Lord does... that God will make haste to deliver us and that He will not delay.
 - This prayer will always be answered.
 - See that you join Jesus in praying for it.
- **Give God no rest until He makes Jerusalem (His church) a praise in the earth!**