

August 15, 2021 - Pastor Mike McClenahan

**PSALM 34:1-14 (NIV)**

*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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

(Message Outline continued on the back.)

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## Our response of worship

### 1. Develops wisdom and contentment.

*for those who fear him lack nothing.*

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. **Psalm 111:10**  
(see Proverbs 1:7, 2:5, 9:10, 10:27, 14:27, 15:16, 16:6, 19:23, 22:4, 23:17, 29:25)

So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' **Matthew 6:8,31 (NIV)**

### 2. Creates desire for us to live for God.

*Turn from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it.*

Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is. Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Ephesians 5:15–20 (NIV)**

American church membership is at its lowest in history.

- In 1937, three out of four Americans belonged to a church, synagogue, or mosque.
- That number remained steady until the turn of the century, at which point church membership started to decline.
- In 2020, church membership dipped below the majority for the first time — a record low of 47%.
- As organized religion fades in influence, we are further abandoning our country's key connective tissue: community, fellowship, and empathy towards people different from ourselves.

**Scott Galloway, "Chart of the Week"** (see also <https://news.gallup.com/poll/341963/church-membership-falls-below-majority-first-time.aspx>)

In the final analysis, there is nothing we can do to transform ourselves into persons who love and serve as Jesus did except make ourselves available for God to do that work of transforming grace in our lives. **M. Robert Mulholland**

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