WHEN THE LORD ENLARGES US

**DATE: 7/24/2011 am**

**TEXT: Psalm 4**

**INTRODUCTION**

As we continue thru the Psalms, we have seen so far, –

The *“Blessed Man”* in **Psalm 1**, *“Why the Heathen Rage”* in **Psalm 2** and last week *“How the Lord Sustains Us”* in **Psalm 3**

When we come to the **4th Psalm**, we again read the Word of God and see David who tells us that God has Enlarged his heart

It costs something to have a big heart!

When you compare the wording in this psalm with **Psalm 3,**

You cannot but draw the conclusion that they deal with the same situation in David's life

David is again dealing here with the rebellion of his son Absalom

But instead of telling us how God Sustained him

David speaks of how the Lord did a work in his life that gave him a greater capacity to care about the Lord and about the things of the Lord

He says – ***“Thou hast enlarged me”***

Let’s Prayer and look at –

***“When the Lord Enlarges Us”***

**~~~Prayer~~~**

**I. THE “POSSIBILITY” OF BEING ENLARGED**

God desires to Enlarge us

That is, to work in such a way in our lives as to make us more Christ-like

More Caring, More Compassionate toward others who are hurting

**A.** And the key to doing this is found in **vs. 1, 2**

Often people want pastors to teach them **How** to be more compassionate

This is a sincere request

But it requires more than some lesson on how to do it

Notice that David says in **v.1** –

***“Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness:”***

Then in the beginning of **v.2** he says –

***“O ye sons of men,”***

*Notice the order*

If God is to do the work in our lives, we desire Him to do,

We must First speak to God …

*Before* we speak to men

Of all the lessons we must learn, this is one of the most difficult

**B.** We need to make a covenant

A covenant, never to complain about something that we have not first prayed about

Instead of griping about something, we need to pray about it

Instead of opening up our mouth right away and complaining …

Why don’t we take it to the Lord first?

The reason we don’t, is because we aren’t really as spiritual as we think we are

I’ve discovered that when I start praying about certain things

It becomes increasingly difficult to complain about them!

**C.** We should also determine …

Not to speak *to anyone* about some difficulty

Nor speak *about* *someone* and their difficulty,

Until we first talk to God about that difficulty

David cried out to God in this Psalm –

***“Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness”***

David spoke to God before he spoke to man

We see this from the way the Psalm is ordered

There have been so many times in my life that I would not have spoken to men or about men,

The way I did...

If I had first spoken with God

As I think of this, my heart is convicted of the fact that I have talked too much and prayer too little!

I have said too much about people before I said anything to God about those people!

**D.** There is the **“Possibility”** that God will Enlarge our Hearts

He will allow us to become more Christ-like

He will give us a greater compassion for folks

If we will learn, to First go to God in prayer

**THE “POSSIBILITY” OF BEING ENLARGED**

Then there is -

**II. THE “PEOPLE” GOD ENLARGES**

God does not enlarge ministries, He enlarges people

God’s way has always been to use people

The Lord works in and through the lives of people

**A.** Does it shock you to think that God’s chief interest is in individuals?

While I’m making all kinds of plans to do this or that to increase my effectiveness

All the while God has been trying to get me to see that His real desire is to Enlarge my heart

God’s chief interest is in the individual

**B.** Again the Lord always does His work through individuals

When the Lord wants to do something,

He finds someone He can work through to get it done

We place too much emphasis on the external and material

Notice David did not cry out – *“Lord, give me a kingdom”* or *“Lord, give me a throne”*

Instead he spoke of How the Lord Enlarged him

Has far has I’m concern, the greatest work God wants to do for us is to Enlarge our hearts

**THE “POSSIBILITY” OF BEING ENLARGED**

**THE “PEOPLE” GOD ENLARGES**

**III. THE “PATHWAY” TO BEING ENLARGED**

The **“pathway”** to being enlarged is not the pathway most of us would choose

We do not like this **pathway**

It goes against our old natures

But it is in the Bible and we are going to have to face up to it

Look at the end of the second part of **v.1**

David says – ***“thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress”***

God uses times of distress to enlarge us

**A.** Mature Christians are people who have had to go through some very distressing times

We all want to be mature Christians; at least we say we do

But we do not like what it takes to become one

Remember this though, *Trouble borne in the spirit of Jesus Christ does not destroy people; it builds people*

**B.** David said – *When I was distressed,*

*When I was in a position where there was absolutely no way out,*

*When I was being pressed from all sides and there was no hope*

That is when God Enlarged me

**C.** The Reason God uses Distress

This is not a matter of simply having trouble and heartache

It is what we learn about God and His comforting presence that we can share with others

**II Corinthians 1:3, 4 – *“Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort;”
“Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God”***

This is not about boasting in our ability to get through difficult situations

This is about giving God the glory for getting you through

And then telling others that the same God can get them through

God may use times of distress to enlarge us

The reason being that it gives us a greater heart for Him and a greater capacity to be used of Him

**THE “POSSIBILITY” OF BEING ENLARGED**

**THE “PEOPLE” GOD ENLARGES**

**THE “PATHWAY” TO BEING ENLARGED**

**IV. THE “PEACE” FROM THE ENLARGED LIFE**

Let’s read **vs. 7 & 8**

The Lord declares – *“If you follow Me, the gladness I will put in your heart will far exceed what the world has to offer”*

Do I have all the answers?

No, but in my distress God Taught me to trust Him

And in trusting Him, He gives me Peace

We all have things we worry about, some more than others

But we must come to the place where we say –

*“I want God’s will”*

The only way we can have peace is by giving it to the Lord

God gives us a peace as we place our faith in Him

**CONCLUSION**

The Lord is not finished with us yet

Do you know how I know this to be true?

Because we are still here

Sometimes we get so weary, that we are about to just give up

But remember, God is not finished with us

This is the way the Lord works

We must put God before men

We must realize that God enlarges people, not ministries

The path to being enlarged involves distress

But through trusting God in our distress, He brings us Peace

***“Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness: thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress; have mercy upon me, and hear my prayer”***