

Series Introduction:

- This morning, we're beginning a new sermon series we're calling, *Our Refuge and Strength*.
 - Because knowing that God is our protector and helper, can give us tremendous confidence through the storms of life.
 - When you feel discouraged or overwhelmed, the world will shout that strength comes from success, or self-reliance.
 - But the Bible tells us, that our strength comes from the Lord.
 - He's the shelter for us in uncertain times.
 - He's the one we can cry out to, when we need help.
 - And so, for the next few weeks, we'll be looking through the book of Psalms, and seeing how God is our refuge and strength.

Sermon Introduction:

- And we begin today, by looking at Psalm 30.
- Psalm 30, is a Psalm of David, where he cried out for help.
 - And God heard David's prayer.
 - David was weeping and mourning.
 - David felt he was in the bottom of a pit.
 - But by the end, David declares:
 - **"I will give thanks to you forever!"** Psalm 30:12
 - Psalm 30 shows how God turned David's mourning into dancing, and his weeping in joy.

- In the same way, there will be times when we have more tears than joy.
 - If I asked, how many of you cried tears of sadness, in the last month, I wonder how many hands would go up.
 - When you see your children, going through pain.
 - When you suddenly, remember the person you lost.
 - When you want to start a family, and God tells you to wait.
 - When you feel distant from your spouse, and feel unloved.
 - When stress and drama at work, never seems to end.
 - Do you ever feel overwhelmed by life, and find yourself weeping?
 - If that is you, Psalm 30 shows how God can turn our mourning into dancing, and our weeping into joy.
- And so, from Psalm 30, I want to lay out for us, 7 ways God can turn our weeping into gladness.
 - 7 ways that God brings joy to our lives, even in sorrow.

Point 1:

- First, we see in our passage how God is able to bring joy because he has the power to lift us up.
 - When your eyes are full of weeping.
 - When you feel weak and down.
 - He will lift you up.
- Verse 1 states:
 - **“I will extol you, O Lord, for you have drawn me up...”**
Psalm 30:1

- This word, extol, literally means to lift up, or to raise up on high.
- At the same time, when David says, **“you have drawn me up,”** this phrase also carries the meaning of lifting something up.
- And so, David is saying, “I lift you up, O Lord, for you have lifted me up.”
- **“I will extol you, O Lord, for you have drawn me up...”**
- The difference, however is that the word “extol,” means to lift up to the heavens, or to lift up to the stars.
 - While the words, “drawn up,” means for someone to lift a bucket of water from a well.
 - God is seen as a someone, pulling a bucket from a deep well.
 - David honors God with the highest praise.
 - He extols him.
 - Why?
 - Because, when David was deep in the well, deep in the pit, deeply discouraged, God drew him up.
 - God pulled him up from the darkness.
- Can you imagine being stuck in a deep, cold well?
 - No matter how hard you tried, you wouldn’t be able to climb out.
 - And after a while, you’d probably give up.
 - You’d lose all hope of being saved.
 - You’d think to yourself, “This is it. This is my end.”
- That’s how David felt.
 - He felt hopeless.
 - The great King of Isreal couldn’t save himself.
 - But the Lord was able to lift him up, and pull him out.

- When you're facing a difficult situation in life, you may feel stuck and discouraged.
 - You may feel this season of trial may not pass.
 - But remember that, God will lift you up.
 - The way he brings us up may not always be the way we expect.
 - And there will be times when we need to wait.
 - There will also be times, when we don't understand.
 - But remember that God is your Father who loves you.
 - And in due time, he will pull you up.
 - Isaiah 40:31 states:
 - **“But they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.”**
 - God brings joy in the weeping, because he's able to lift you up.

Point 2:

- Second, God is able to bring joy in your weeping, because he hears your cry.
- Now, when you read through this Psalm, what's clear is that David was deeply discouraged because he was sick, and he thought he was going to die.
 - That's why in verse 2, David says he was healed by God.
 - That's why in verse 3, he says how his soul was brought up from Sheol.
 - Sheol is another way to refer to the grave, or to death.
 - And David is saying how, he was nearly on the brink of death.

- In verse 3, David says, **“You restored me to life from among those who go down to the pit.”** Psalms 30:3
- In other words, David was so close to death, he felt he was already with the dead.
- He writes how he was, **“among those who go down to the pit.”**
- But then, he cried out to God for help, and the Bible says how God graciously healed him.
 - David didn’t think there was any hope.
 - He thought this was it.
 - But God restored his life.
 - And saved him from the grave.
 - He writes:
 - **“O Lord my God, I cried to you for help, and you have healed me. O Lord, you have brought up my soul from Sheol; you restored me to life from among those who go down to the pit.”** Psalm 30:2-3
 - This is David’s testimony of how God heard his prayer.
- Not every prayer we make, will be answered the way we think is best.
 - But God hears every prayer.
 - He hears every cry for help, and he answers them according to his good and perfect will.
 - And in this case, God heard David’s cry for help, and healed him of sickness.
 - And we also need to remember that God hears our prayers.
 - Psalm 34:17 states:
 - **“When the righteous cry for help, the Lord hears and delivers them out of all their troubles.”**
 - 1 John 5:14-15 states:

- **“And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us. And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him.”**
- Let’s remember that God answers our prayers according to his good and perfect will.
- You can have joy, because he hears your cry.

Point 3:

- Third, you can have joy, because he gives you life.
- What’s clear from verses 1 to 3, is that God is the one who saves and gives life.
 - David worships God.
 - David cries out.
 - But that’s it.
 - Then what you see, is how God is the one who saves his life.
 - Everything else, is about what God does.
 - **“You have drawn me up.”**
 - **“You...have not let my foes rejoice over me.”**
 - **“You have healed me.”**
 - **“You have brought up my soul...”**
 - **“You restored my life...”**
 - The focus is on what God has done.
 - These verses show how God is the one who gives life and extends life.
- I’m sure David treasured his life even more, after being saved by God.
 - He thought there was no hope for him.

- But God restored his life.
 - His life was extended.
 - And so, he gives praise to God.
 - He was reminded how each day, is a gift from God.
- When you go to the doctor, and they find something that's concerning.
 - You'll begin to get worried.
 - And it will remind you that your days are numbered.
 - And you may begin to treasure each day, more than you did before.
 - But after time passes, what happens?
 - When the sickness passes, we forget.
 - We forget how each day is a gift from God.
- Now, I'm not saying that I want you to be sick.
 - But let's remember that each day we live is a gift from God.
 - Let's not take our lives for granted.
 - And each day we live, let's give thanks to God, for giving us breath.
- You can have joy:
 - Because he lifts you up.
 - Because he hears your cry.
 - And because he gives you life.

Point 4:

- Fourth, you can have joy, because God brings you justice.

- Our God is a God of justice, and throughout the Psalms, and in this Psalm, we see how God brings justice for his people.
- Listen to the second part of verse 1.
 - **“I will extol you, O Lord, for you have drawn me up and have not let my foes rejoice over me.”** Psalm 30:1
 - David was about to die.
 - And he was discouraged, that his enemies would prevail.
 - Vast armies wanted to defeat David.
 - At times, his own advisors schemed against him.
 - There were people around David, who didn’t want him to succeed.
 - Some were jealous of David, and they hated David.
 - And David felt a sense of injustice that his enemies would rejoice over his death.
 - But God restored his life, and he gives thanks, for God’s justice.
 - He gives thanks that his enemies didn’t prevail over him.
- It can be very discouraging when you see someone get away with sin.
 - Or when you see the wicked prosper.
 - I imagine that most of you have experienced a time when others were against you.
 - Surely, everyone here was at one time, unfairly judged by others.
 - Misunderstood.
 - Someone at work, may try to bring you down, and take your job.
- The Bible also talks about Satan our adversary.
 - He caused pain for Adam and Eve.

- He caused great pain for Job.
 - He also caused great pain for David.
 - In a moment, I'm going to speak about David's sin from the book of Chronicles.
 - But the first time, the word Satan appears in the Bible is in 1 Chronicles 21:1.
 - The Bible talks about the serpent in Genesis 3.
 - But in 1 Chronicles, it says how Satan incited David to sin.
 - Satan is our adversary, and he causes mourning and weeping in our lives.
- But in your weeping, remember that God will bring justice.
 - And he won't let your foes rejoice over you.
 - In the end, God will judge all evil.
 - And his judgement will be a perfect judgment.
 - **"I will repay, says the Lord."** Romans 12:19
 - You can have joy because God lifts you up.
 - God hears your prayer.
 - God gives you life.
 - And because God brings you justice.

Point 5:

- Fifth, we see how we can have joy, because God forgives your sin.
- In verse 5, David makes a confession.
 - He says that he was disciplined by God because of sin.
 - That is, his sickness was given by God to correct David.
 - That's why he says:

- **“For his anger is but for a moment...”** Psalm 30:5
- David experienced God’s anger, even though it was for a brief moment.
- Please hear me clearly, please don’t think God is angry at you, when you get sick.
- That’s not what the Bible is teaching here.
- But in this case, David’s sickness took place in order to discipline David.

- And then in verse 6, David states his sin.
 - He says:
 - **As for me, I said in my prosperity, “I shall never be moved.”** Psalm 30:6
 - David had great success.
 - He was living in prosperity.
 - And he said to himself, **“I shall never be moved.”**
 - David was blinded by his pride.

- And so, God had to remind David, how he was the one who made David stand strong.
 - And so, David writes:
 - **“By your favor, O Lord, you made my mountain stand strong; you hid your face; I was dismayed.”** Psalm 30:7
 - God hid his face, and David fell sick.
 - He was dismayed.
 - He was humbled by God.

- Now, we can’t be entirely sure if Psalm 30 is referring to this, but we’re told of a time in David’s life when he fell sick because of sin.
 - In 2 Samuel 24 and 1 Chronicles 21, we’re told a story when David wanted Joab, his general, to count the number of people in his kingdom.

- Joab stated that this would not be good to do, but David insisted this count be done.
 - We're not sure why this was wrong, since there are other times God numbers his people, but the Bible clearly states this was displeasing to God.
 - It's possible David took pride in his vast kingdom, and his strong army.
 - This occurred when David had defeated most of his enemies.
 - This was during a time of prosperity.
 - And it was during this time, he might have said, **"I shall not be moved."**
- And because of David's sin, God sent a plague against his people.
 - And many people became sick.
 - And many people died.
 - And the angel of the Lord was about to destroy all Isreal.
- But David and the elders put on sackcloth, and repented of their pride, and God relented from destroying David and the people.
 - God told David to buy land from Araunah the Jebusite.
 - And to build and alter on that land, and to make a sacrifice.
 - And that's what David did.
 - Afterwards, God removed the plague.
 - David was on the brink of death.
 - But God showed mercy and saved his life.
 - And God forgave David's sin.

- When we achieve success in life, it's tempting to think that we got to where we are because of what we did, and not because of God.
 - But we need to remember that all of life, is a gift of grace.
 - The positions we have.
 - The work we do.
 - The money we make.
 - The achievements in our lives.
 - The success in ministry.
 - It's all because of the grace of God.
- And so, if you see pride growing in your heart, don't let it grow.
 - God's discipline is loving, but it can be painful.
 - And so, let's humble ourselves, before God humbles us.
 - Let's consider if there's any way, we are trusting ourselves, instead of trusting in God.
 - Let's ask the Lord to reveal any pride in our hearts.
 - And let's repent of our sin.
- Because God is able to forgive.
 - When we confess our sin, he is faithful to forgive us.
- You can have joy, because God forgives your sin.

Point 6:

- Sixth, you can have joy, because God will change your heart.
 - God doesn't just leave his children to be immature.
 - Rather, he helps them to grow in holiness.
 - In other words, God doesn't just forgive our sin, he also changes our hearts.

- That's what we see with David.
 - David was full of pride.
 - He wouldn't listen to others.
 - His head became puffed up.
 - He said, **"I will not be moved."**

- But then in verses 8 to 10, what you see is David declaring his commitment to worship God.
 - He pleads for mercy, he pleads for mercy not so he could save his position as king, he pleads for mercy not for any selfish gain.
 - But rather, he pleads for mercy, so that he might praise God, and tell others about God's faithfulness.
 - **"To you, O Lord, I cry, and to the Lord I plead for mercy: What profit is there in my death, if I go down to the pit? Will the dust praise you? Will it tell of your faithfulness? Hear, O Lord, and be merciful to me! O Lord, be my helper!" Psalm 30:8-10**
 - David was blinded by his pride.
 - But after this sickness, he remembers his main purpose in life.
 - He longs to praise God, and to tell others of God's faithfulness.
 - David's heart was changed from, praising himself, to praising God.

- God's discipline isn't pleasant at the time.
 - But let's remember that when we face the consequences of our sin.
 - When we face dark times in our lives.
 - He's making us more like him.
 - He moves us from selfishness to selflessness.
 - And he'll lead us to bear healthier fruit in our lives.

- You can have joy, because God will change your heart.
 - He's making you more like him.

Point 7:

- Seventh, God can turn your mourning into dancing, because God works for your good.
- In verses 11 and 12, David writes:
 - **“You have turned for me my mourning into dancing; you have loosed my sackcloth and clothed me with gladness, that my glory may sing your praise and not be silent. O Lord my God, I will give thanks to you forever!”** Psalm 30:11-12
 - David sinned against God, but God was able to bring good out of this situation.
 - The Lord was able to lead David to repentance, change his heart, and enrich his praise.
 - And you see how David is now, declaring how he will give thanks forever.
- Not only that, but God was also able to bring good to all the people, through David's sin.
 - Remember I said, that David bought land to build an altar.
 - Do you know what that land was eventually used for?
 - That's where King Solomon built the future temple.
 - It's through David's sin, that God's people purchased the place where they would worship God and make sacrifices for generations and generations.
 - Now, I'm not saying we should sin, so that God can use it for good.

- But, even in our failure, God is able to redeem our sin, and use it for good.
- Let's remember, even in the difficult seasons of life, that God is working for our good.
 - Even in our sin, God leads us to see his grace and mercy.
 - Romans 8:28 states:
 - **“And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.”**
- You can have joy because God lifts you up.
 - He hears your prayer.
 - He gives you life.
 - He brings you justice.
 - He forgives your sin.
 - He changes your heart.
 - And he works for your good.

Conclusion:

- As you think back can you think of a really low point in your life, and how God turned your mourning into dancing?
 - Probably one of the lowest points in my life was when my mother became very sick, and I had to take a semester off from college.
 - Growing up, it was just my mom, my brother, and me.
 - And with my mom in the hospital, I had to withdraw from college for the semester, to take care of all the bills.
 - On top of that we didn't know if she was going to get better.
 - Or it was possible that she'd have to be in the hospital for a long time.

- At that time, I was 20 years old, and my brother was 16 years old.
- And as the bills kept piling up, I remember one evening, when my brother said to me, “Tom I’m hungry, and there’s no food in the house.”
- I honestly felt so lost and desperate.
- I was in the pit.
- All I could do was cry out to God.
- After I prayed, we heard the doorbell bring, and it was one of my mom’s friends.
- She said, “I felt like you guys needed these, and she had two bags of groceries in her hands.”
- In that moment, I felt the Lord lift me up.
- I knew the Lord heard my prayer.
- And by the grace of God, after some time, my mom got better, and people in our church and others, helped us pay 3 months of our bill.
- In fact, as I took over our bills, I saw that my mom was behind, and through donations, we were actually able to catch up.
- I was also able to return to school.
- And I ended up changing my major from electrical engineering to history.
- Later I saw how that was a blessing, because it really prepared me for seminary.
- In the midst of many tears and sorrow, God was working good in my life.
- I was able to say:
- **“O Lord my God, I cried to you for help, and you have healed me. O Lord, you have brought up my soul from Sheol; you restored me to life from among those who go down to the pit.” Psalm 30:2-3**

- **“You have turned for me my mourning into dancing...O Lord my God, I will give thanks to you forever!” Psalm 30:11-12**
- Our God is a good God, and so let's give him glory.
 - He's our refuge and strength, and so let's worship him, and lift up his name.
 - Let's tell others about what God has done for us.
 - Let's lift him up, for he has lifted us up.
- And if you've never trusted in Christ before, I ask you to believe in him.
 - He can turn your weeping into joy, he can turn your mourning into dancing.
 - But you must trust in Jesus Christ.
 - He's the sacrifice, that can stop the plague of sin in your life from killing you.
 - And you don't have to purchase any land, or build an altar.
 - He's the sacrifice for your sins, and he can lift you up from the pit of judgment.
 - Believe in Jesus Christ, and you can have the joy of salvation today.