

**O my Strength, I will Sing  
Praises to You:  
How to Sing when You Suffer**

**Ephesians 5:18-21**

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# John Piper & Richard Baxter

*“Therefore, it is not folly for a Christian to assume that there is a residue of gratitude in his heart when he speaks and sings of God’s goodness even though he feels little or nothing. To this should be added that experience shows that doing the right thing...is often the way toward being in the right frame. Hence, Baxter gives this wise counsel to the oppressed Christian.*

# John Piper & Richard Baxter

*‘Resolve to spend most of your time in thanksgiving and praising God. If you cannot do it with the joy that you should, yet do it as you can. You have not the power of your comforts: but have you no power of your tongues? Say not that you are unfit for thanks and praises unless you have a praising heart and were the children of God: for every man, good and bad, is bound to praise God, and to be thankful for all that he hath received, and to do it as well as he can, rather than leave it undone... Doing it as you can is the way to be able to do it better. Thanksgiving stirs up thankfulness in the heart.’”*

# Suffering in the Psalms

Of the first 50 Psalms...

- 19 Deal with an Immanent Threat
- 6 Deal with the Suffering of Personal Sin
- 10 Deal with Recent Deliverance

*Conclusion: 35 of the first 50 Psalms  
(70%) deal with suffering!*

# **John 16:33**

*“In the world you will have tribulation.*

*But take heart; I have overcome the  
world.”*

## **Luke 9:23-24**

*“If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it.”*

# 1 Thessalonians 3:1-4

*“Therefore when we could bear it no longer, we were willing to be left behind at Athens alone, and we sent Timothy, our brother and God’s coworker in the gospel of Christ, to establish and exhort you in your faith, that no one be moved by these afflictions. For you yourselves know that we are destined for this. For when we were with you, we kept telling you beforehand that we were to suffer affliction, just as it has come to pass, and just as you know.”*

# Romans 6:5

*“For if we have been united with him  
[Christ] in a death like his, we shall  
certainly be united with him in a  
resurrection like his.”*

# Philippians 3:7-11

*“But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith—that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.”*

# What About Singing?

*One of the reasons we don't sing when we suffer is because we don't have a biblical view of suffering.*

*We don't expect that we should suffer and therefore when we do suffer we find it hard to understand what God's doing in our lives.*

# James 1:2-4

*“Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.”*

# Psalm 59:16-17

*“But I will sing of your strength; I will sing aloud of your steadfast love in the morning. For you have been to me a fortress and a refuge in the day of my distress. O my Strength, I will sing praises to you, for you, O God, are my fortress, the God who shows me steadfast love.”*

# Proverbs 25:20

*“Whoever sings songs to a heavy heart is like one who takes off a garment on a cold day, and like vinegar on soda.”*