

From Persecution to Praise

Psalm 57:1-11

Halifax: January 29, 2011

Introduction:

Having just completed our exposition of Acts 6-7 and Stephen's glorious defence, we are due to take up a new Psalm of Focus for our sermon series in Acts.

- One of the great changes that came with Stephen's death was the turning of the Jewish people against their brethren who had trusted in the Lord Jesus.
 - Before Stephen, the Chief Priests and Sadducees opposed the followers of Jesus, but they were restrained by the common people who held them in high regard.
 - But now that the people have turned against the believers, a violent persecution breaks out—led by Saul of Tarsus.
 - But this persecution has the curious effect that persecution almost always has on the church of Jesus Christ...
 - Though meant to destroy the church, it causes it rather to increase and spread—in this case from Jerusalem to Samaria and beyond.

And so for our Psalm of Focus, I have selected a Psalm that has to do with persecution leading to praise—Psalm 57!

- As with all the Psalms, Psalm 57 is a song that our dear Saviour Jesus Christ sings in the church as the Captain of our salvation—as our worship leader.
 - As with all the Psalms, it is first of all about Him as our King to whom we are properly united by faith.
 - We are one with Him.
 - He is the head and we are the members of His body.
 - He is forever joined to us.
 - As He was in the world, so are we.
- King Jesus originally taught this Psalm to David.
 - David spoke by the Spirit of Christ who moved him to write these words.
- Jesus gave it to him, by the Holy Spirit, when he was hotly pursued (or persecuted—the word *persecute* means *to pursue*) by King Saul...
 - We are told this in the title to the Psalm...
 - It is called: “A Michtam of David when he fled from Saul into the cave.”
 - He and his men had been driven there as Saul hunted him like a partridge such that David said that there was only one step between him and death.
- And though this Psalm was written by David at that time and certainly applies to him in his circumstances,

- It applies all the more to the LORD Jesus Christ who is seated on the throne of David forever and ever and feels all the persecutions brought against His people throughout history as His own.
- We will soon see in Acts how Jesus rebukes Paul from heaven for persecuting Him when Saul was persecuting His church—His people—His members—
 - In all of our affliction, He is afflicted.
 - The attacks against us are really attacks against Him.
 - And so Jesus is the one who gave David this Psalm and who, through David, gave it to us.
 - It is first of all Jesus' song, and it is ours if we belong to Him.
 - As a type of Jesus, David was persecuted because of Him.
 - And as member of the body of Jesus, we are persecuted because of Jesus—we become part of His persecuted body...
 - And so it is our part to sing this song with Him as part of that great assembly that has been persecuted through the ages for His sake.

So in looking at this Psalm, I want to examine the things that our Lord here leads us to sing as part of His persecuted body.

- And I would exhort you to join with Him in singing these words before the Father if you are part of His body, the church.
 - If you are not a part of His body, then I exhort you to repent and turn to Him at once—
 - because whether you realise it or not—
 - If you are not reconciled to Him through faith in Him as crucified for the remission of your sins,
 - You are among the party of those who are persecuting Him and His church.
 - Think of it—
 - King Jesus has come from heaven to reconcile sinners to God.
 - We are estranged by our sin which began in Adam—when he rebelled...
 - And we continue in that rebellion until we repent and believe.
 - Until then, we are numbered with those who are against Him.
 - We are among the persecutors who oppose His kingdom.
 - Now you may protest and say, “I don't oppose His kingdom.”
 - But you do!
 - If you reject His terms of peace and offers of reconciliation that He has graciously come into this world to offer,
 - you oppose Him!

- He is the offended judge of the earth and you refuse to make peace with Him!
- To reject His gracious terms of peace is an act of inexcusable defiance.
 - It numbers you with the persecutors of Jesus Christ.
 - You say, “but I just don’t believe in Him.”
 - No you do not—and that is why you need to repent.
 - You need to repent of your unbelief and turn to Him.

But now,

- Let us see what our Lord leads us to do in this song as a part of His church.
 - We will look at three things that He leads us to do in calling us to sing this Psalm with Him...

I. First, our Lord leads us to cry out God in faith when we are persecuted.

II. Second, that our Lord leads us to rest in God when our enemies pursue us.

III. Third, our Lord leads us to stir up our praise to God when our enemies pursue us.

But before we proceed, let me explain one thing to you...

- It may have occurred to you that I have said things like “Our Lord [meaning the Lord Jesus] leads us to rest in God when our enemies pursue us,”
 - But is Jesus Himself not God?
 - Yes, of course He is!
 - When I say “rest in God,” I speak of the triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and sometimes of the Father who represents all three persons.
 - But you must understand that Jesus is our mediator and as such He is both God and man...
 - So as our Lord, He is not only the one that we pray to, but also the one that we pray with!
 - The Bible teaches us this—especially in Hebrews where we are told that Jesus continually makes intercession for us.
 - He is at the head of the church, praying for us, and we cannot pray to God at all unless we pray *with* Him—in His name who went to the cross for us and who ever lives to make intercession for us.
 - So understand that Jesus has this dual role as having become one of us and so leading us in prayer and singing...
 - but also as the one who is the Son of God from all eternity to whom we offer our prayers along with the Father and the Spirit.

Well, with that in mind, let's move forward with our examination of this song that Jesus has given as to sing as members of His body—the church that is persecuted in every age.

- Consider carefully what Jesus leads you do when He leads you to sing these words.

I. First, our Lord leads us to cry out to God in faith when we are persecuted.

A. You see how He cries out with great earnestness from the very start!

- The opening words are:
 - **Ps 57:1: Be merciful to me, O God, be merciful to me!"**
- 1. The word *merciful* here is the same that David used in Psalm 51.
 - It refers to a cry of an inferior to a superior when the inferior has no claim for merciful treatment...
 - It is a humble prayer in time of distress.
 - It is the prayer of Jesus when He realises that it is all of grace that the Father accepts His sacrifice for His people's sins.
 - It is not a cry for justice, but for pity in times of desperation...
 - This is how we ought to come to the Father in times of persecution.
 - Not demanding our rights (though we may indeed claim God's promises in Christ), but rather pleading for gracious treatment that is undeserved!
- 2. The cry is repeated because it is a very earnest cry!
 - **"Have mercy on me, O God, Have mercy on Me!"**
 - The repetition shows the intensity of the desire!
 - It speaks of great grief and distress!
 - And no wonder...
 - a. When we think of our Lord Jesus Himself, we know what deep distress He was in when He came to make His soul an offering for our sins...
 - We know the intensity of His prayers in the Garden of Gethsemane when He was under such stress that blood and sweat began ooze from His pours...
 - This is a known physiological condition that occurs in times of deepest distress.
 - His enemies were about to become the instruments of inflicting God's curse upon Him for the sin of the whole world.
 - They took great pleasure in this!
 - They delighted in heaping shame upon Him as one cursed of God.
 - It was the hour of the power of darkness.
 - And our Lord looked for mercy in that hour.

- b. But not only was it intense for Himself,
 - His cry for mercy is also intense for His people as they are persecuted.
 - He loves us.
 - As I mentioned in the introduction, He is afflicted in all of our affliction.
 - He feels every attack that is launched against His people and as our intercessor, He earnestly pleads for mercy...
 - He is a merciful and faithful high priest who goes before the Father on our behalf.

- c. And you, my brothers and sisters—you who know Him—are to join Him in praying for mercy with intensity when you sing these words...
 - You are to offer to the Lord this double cry for mercy for the persecuted church of which you are part!
 - You are to care for them together with your Lord!
 - It may not be that you are yourself being persecuted—neither is Jesus, for He is now reigning in heaven...
 - But like Him, you are to identify with His people all over the world and pray for mercy.
 - Like Jesus, you are to pray with fervency.

TRANS> And because your desire for this mercy is intense, you are to bring forth arguments.

- I know I said a moment ago that the very word for mercy here excludes any personal merit—we are looking for undeserved mercy...
 - nevertheless, our Lord uses arguments and teaches us to use them as well in our yearning to be heard.

B. Our Lord here presents two arguments in His cry for mercy...which we are taught to present whenever we sing this Psalm with Him...

1. The first argument is that God would show mercy because we trust in Him.
 - a. The word *trust* is one that speaks of a refuge of hope—
 - It could be translated, “My soul has taken refuge in you.”
 - It is the same word that is used in the second part of the verse when it says, “in the shadow of Your wings I will make my refuge.”
 - David knew that the cave was not his true protection—it was God!
 - And Jesus knew that the church’s safety was in God’s preservation of her.

- b. And by saying “my soul trusts in you,” it shows that the trust is a settled trust of the whole man...
- 1) Jesus, going to the cross for us, put the life—the very soul—of the whole church in the care of the Father.
 - If the Father had not accepted His sacrifice and heard His cries, the whole body could not be saved.
 - But the Lord will not turn away the soul who entirely entrusts itself to Him.
 - It is not that our faith deserves mercy—It does not...
 - But our gracious Lord always responds to faith.
 - He has promised to save the soul that trusts in Him.
 - Jesus’ faith came first, when He entrusted Himself to the Father as the mediator of the whole church.
 - Our faith is joined to His.
 - 2) He put His very life in the hands of the Lord like a chick coming under the wings of its mother.
 - What a beautiful picture of safety!
 - Not the cold stone walls of the cave, but the warm, personal, loving protection of a mother’s wings!
 - The Lord Almighty repeatedly presents Himself to us in this way in scripture!
 - What a tenderness!
 - What encouragement!
 - What condescension that the God of glory should present Himself as a mother Hen!
- c. You see that Jesus has great confidence in this refuge and expresses His confidence in the song...
- He will stay under this refuge until the calamities have passed by.
 - Our dear Lord knew that the cross would not be forever for Him.
 - He knew that the resurrection of joy would come.
 - And He knows that for His people the day of resurrection will also come.
 - We must suffer for a time, but we are kept by the power of God through faith unto a glorious salvation ready to be revealed at the last day.
 - Sing of this hope with our dear Lord Jesus my brothers and sisters!
 - You are safe under the shadow of the wings of the Almighty!

- The calamities will not destroy you—and there will be an end to them—
 - always remember—there will be an end for those who entrust their soul to the Lord!
 - Ask the Lord to hear your cry for mercy because you have entrusted your soul to Him.

TRANS> That is the first argument...

2. The second argument is that God will show mercy as He has always done in the past—

- because it is His way to show mercy.
 - That is the kind of God that He is.
- a. He is described in verse 2 as “God most High (*Eloheem Elyon*)... who performs all things for me.”
 - As God Most High, the all-powerful one—the highest One—He is presented here as the God of conclusions...
 - He is the One who carries forward to completion and to perfection the work that He has begun.
 - That’s what we mean when we sing of Him as “the One who performs all things for me.”
 - He has an eternal purpose for each one of His children and He will not fail to accomplish His work in us...
 - You can count on it, even in times of the worst distress... when destruction is all around you!
 - He never forsakes the work of His own hands.
- b. It is His way, as verse 3 explains, to send forth aid from heaven!
 - You can see the confidence expressed in verse 3...
 - **Ps 57:3: He shall send from heaven and save me; He reproaches the one who would swallow me up. God shall send forth His mercy and His truth.**
 - 1) Notice how it says that He will send from heaven and save me!
 - That is what our gracious Lord does when there is no earthly help that can save His people!
 - He sends help from above—by divine agency!
 - He parts the Red Sea so His people can cross over!
 - He sends manna from heaven to feed His people in the wilderness.

- He sends Jesus from heaven to die for our sins when there was no earthly solution.
 - He pours out the Holy Spirit on us when there was nothing else that could change our stony stubborn hearts.
 - The poor deists believe that God only created and then left the world to run on its own...
 - That is a doctrine of despair!
 - We have a God who sends from heaven to save His people!
- 2) Look, the song speaks of the two hands that God uses to save us at the end of verse 3...
- Mercy and truth.
 - These are personified for us as what God sends to rescue us.
 - Mercy (*chesed*) refers to His steadfast covenant love and *truth* (*emeth*) speaks of His faithfulness.
 - God sends these agents from heaven to save us.
 - He makes insane promises and then He keeps them!
 - Promises such as the one that He would be our God and would provide an offering for our sins!
 - A promise that was totally impossible by means of ordinary providence and that required Him to send mercy and truth from heaven!
 - Even to send Jesus Himself!
 - God will always be true to Himself—to do all that He has promised in His covenant—
 - He is the God who goes to extreme lengths to do all that He has spoken.
- 3) What confidence this ought to give us that He will deal with our enemies in time...
- He will reproach the one who would swallow us up—
 - The one who tried to swallow Jesus up at the cross—but who ended up only doing what had to be done to make Him an offering for our sins...
 - The one who tries to swallow up the church—but whose worst attacks only further the work of the church.
 - God will reproach our enemy.

- How many times was Saul reproached as he pursued David.
- So it will be for all who oppose Jesus and His church.
 - The schemes to swallow us up with fail because God will send from heaven to save us!
 - He is *Eloheem Elyon*, God Most High, and He will perform all things for us!

TRANS> From here, our Lord leads us to rest in God when our enemies rage.

- Having pled for mercy, He now speaks of the rest that He has even while in the midst of raging foes!
- See this as the second thing our Lord leads us to do...

II. Second, our Lord leads us to rest in God when our enemies rage against us.

A. See the vivid picture that is drawn for us in verse 4.

- **Ps 57:4: My soul is among lions; I lie among the sons of men Who are set on fire, Whose teeth are spears and arrows, And their tongue a sharp sword.**

1. The illustration of Daniel in the lion's den immediately comes to mind...
 - There he was—sleeping among the ravenous beasts.
 - You see how Jesus sings of lying down among ravenous beasts.
 - There is peace and safety in the midst of danger because we are confident that God is protecting us.
2. This is all the more striking when we see the terrible way in which the enemies are described.
 - a. They are lions—female lions who are know for their ferocity.
 - They are the sons of men who are set on fire—
 - Ignited with malice and hatred...
 - And igniting whatever is in their path.
 - They are portrayed as having teeth that are like spears and arrows...
 - combining the imagery of beasts and warriors who are ready to pierce you through as soon as they can get a hold of you.
 - And look, their tongues are said to be sharp sword.
 - This refers to:
 - their threats that they use to intimidate,
 - their arguments that they use to overthrow truth,
 - and their slanders that they use to condemn before the courts.
 - b. This is the picture of the persecutors of King Jesus...
 - It is the picture of them surrounding Him with hatred when He was brought to trial and then put on the cross.

- It is the picture of Saul and his men pursuing David and closing in on him for the kill.
 - It is the picture of them coming against Stephen with their accusations and murder.
 - It is the picture of Saul of Tarsus raging against church with intent to destroy it completely.
- c. But even with such enemies surrounding us, ready to close in, we can lie down and sleep.
- We have the Lord as our refuge—a very present help in time of need.
 - He has the whole affair perfectly in hand.
- B. Despite the appearance of things, we look to God to be exalted through all of this!
- Look at verse 5...
 - **Psalm 57:5: Be exalted, O God, above the heavens; Let Your glory be above all the earth.**
1. Indeed, the Lord sits above the whole creation—exalted—far above the tumult that goes on among fallen men.
- Not that He is aloof and unconcerned...
 - But rather, again, that He has the matter perfectly in hand.
 - He is working out His sovereign purposes to bring glory to His name even through the very deeds of His enemies.
2. In singing these words, we are adding our petition—our prayer—that the Lord would be glorified through our persecution.
- a. With what resting confidence we can pray this to our great God!
- It is a true saying that the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church.
 - Again and again, persecution comes and again and again, God is glorified through it.
 - His people show their love for Him and their commitment to Him in their willingness to suffer for His name...
 - And against and again, the church grows in number and in strength.
 - The more she is attacked, the more she flourishes, all to the glory of God.
- b. History has proven this to be the case.
- 1) So it was with Jesus—

- His enemies raged against Him and delivered Him to be crucified, and so He was, but only to be raised again from the dead!
- Instead of God's glory being diminished by His persecution, it was furthered!
- Jesus showed His loving obedience in suffering the cross...
- And then the Father showed His power and goodness in raising Him from the dead to be Lord and Christ.
 - The malice of God's enemies did nothing but bring more praise to Him and more blessing to His church!

2) So it was with the persecution of Stephen...

- How God was glorified by his suffering and death—so humble, so sincere, so true, so merciful to his enemies even as they stoned him...
- And in the persecution that followed which we will see as we move into Acts 8—
 - The believers were scattered, but they went everywhere preaching the word so that the gospel spread into Judea and Samaria!
 - What the persecutors tried to suppress was only advanced!

TRANS> That is why we can confidently sing when we are surround by ravenous, vicious enemies:

- **“Be exalted O God, above the heavens, Let your glory be above all the earth!”**

3. Look at what becomes of the persecutors...

- They end up falling into their own traps...look at verse 6:
 - **Ps 57:6: They have prepared a net for my steps; My soul is bowed down; They have dug a pit before me; Into the midst of it they themselves have fallen.**
- a. How they labour to prepare their nets...
 - 1) Remember how Saul took his whole army in hot pursuit of David and how he tried to slander him and to trap him.
 - But even as he did, he kept falling into David's hands...
 - Two times David could have killed him, but spared him, exposing his hypocrisy.
 - 2) Remember how the enemies of Jesus kept trying to trap Him in His words?
 - The Herodians, the Sadducees, the Pharisees...

- Each party sent his best and brightest and tried to set up a trap for Him, but the hypocrisy of each party was exposed.
- They were caught in their own net.

b. But notice the confession here that we make under persecution—

1) “My soul is bowed down”

- The language here refers to a bird caught in a net, paralysed in the net before the fowler...
- Often for a time, it appears that our enemies have gotten the upper hand...
 - There is David, hiding in the cave
 - There is Jesus, nailed to the cross and then put into the tomb before His jubilant enemies.
 - There is Stephen, dead under a pile of stones.
 - There is Saul, locking up believers in prison—one after another—and consenting to their murder.

2) But this is only temporary...

- In the end, our enemies, as we have seen, fall into their own nets.
 - That is why, even when we are in the net for a time, we can confidently look to the Lord to be glorified...
 - **v. 5: Be exalted, O God, above the heavens; Let Your glory be above all the earth.**
- The striking thing about this request is that it is offered to God in the very time of persecution!
 - His glory is to be our desire in all our persecutions.
 - That is the prayer the Jesus sings and that we sing with Him, knowing the Father always hears Him and so hears us when we join our voices to His!
 - This is the confidence in which we rest even when we are surrounded by vicious persecutors.
 - We can rest.
 - The Lord will be glorified.

TRANS> So now we have seen how our Lord, in leading us in the singing of this Psalm,

- first leads us to cry out to the Lord when our enemies come against us...
- and then leads us to sing of our rest in Him as the one who has the matter in hand...
- And now, thirdly, from this posture of dependent rest,

III. Our Lord leads us to stir up our praise to God even while our enemies pursue us.

A. We are to set it down as our determined purpose to praise our God even when we are under persecution.

1. This is what our Lord Jesus expresses when He leads us in singing verse 7:

- We sing,
 - **Ps 57:7: My heart is steadfast, O God, my heart is steadfast; I will sing and give praise.**

a. Here is another repetition similar to what we saw in verse 1.

- Only now, instead of crying out for mercy twice, we are led to twice declare the determined purpose of our heart...
 - The word *steadfast* means *fixed, steady, prepared, resolute, established.*
 - With persecution all around, you might expect Him to say, “My heart is flustered,”
 - But instead He says,
 - **“My heart is steadfast, O God, my heart is steadfast.”**

b. And what is He so steadfast about?

- He is steadfast about singing and giving praise...
 - **“I will sing and give praise.”**
- In the midst of persecution, yes—we are to cry out to God for mercy,
 - But we are also to resolve that we will praise God—right in the midst of the persecution.
- We will have opportunity to praise Him before our enemies.
 - This is very special—
 - In persecution, we can show our love for Him in ways that are not ordinarily possible.
 - Instead of backing away, we need to see it as an opportunity to testify of our love for our Lord.
- Jesus told His disciples:
 - **Luke 21:12-13: They will lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons. You will be brought before kings and rulers for My name’s sake. But it will turn out for you as an occasion for testimony.**

- c. But it is not so easy to praise the LORD when you know that you will have to suffer if you do...
 - Perhaps that is why there is this firm declaration that we will praise Him—
 - this twice repeated declaration that we are fixed to sing and give praise to Him...
 - “My heart is steadfast, O God, my heart is steadfast”
 - It is almost like we trying to convince ourselves and God that we will—we are vowing that we will praise Him.
 - Think about that whenever you sing these words!
 - I like the way Spurgeon expands on this verse...
 - “Satan shall not stop me, nor Saul, nor the Philistines, I will make Adullam ring with music, and all the caverns thereof echo with joyous song. Believer, make a firm decree that your soul in all seasons shall magnify the Lord.
 - "Sing, though sense and carnal reason
Fain would stop the joyful song:
Sing, and count it highest treason
For a saint to hold his tongue."
 - Isn't that excellent?
 - Count it highest treason for a saint to hold his tongue!
 - To refrain from praising our God—even in times of persecution—is an act of highest treason against Him!
 - How much more to refuse to praise Him when you are not under persecution!
 - Recoil from such wavering!

TRANS> It is important to settle it in your heart that you will praise Him...

- 2. Jesus leads us to stir up our hearts for this work.
 - You can see that in verse 8...
 - It says:
 - **Ps 57:8: Awake, my glory! Awake, lute and harp! I will awaken the dawn.**
 - a. You are to rouse yourself to this work of praise...we are naturally sluggish and drowsy.
 - “**Awake my glory**” means awake my best part—
 - Some say it refers to the tongue, some to the soul—
 - but it doesn't really matter—the idea is that whatever glory I have needs to be engaged in singing praise to God.

- **“Awake, lute and harp”**
 - These are the instruments that the Levites played at the temple for the praise of God—they were to put them into action.
 - In the New Covenant, we are instructed to pluck the strings of our heart—
 - We are the lute and the harp that accompanies King Jesus in the great assembly.
 - And then it says, **“I will awaken the dawn.”**
 - Ordinarily, it is the rising of the sun that wakes people up, but here it is the other way around!
 - Here we testify that our praises will be so ardent that we will be the ones who awaken the dawn!
 - Our praises will be more rousing than the very dawn itself.
 - It is a testimony of our firm commitment to give praise to our God.
- b. The praise of God is such an important work—
- It is not to be neglected!
 - Neither is it to be done in a drowsy, half-hearted manner!
 - I have complained to you about dragging into church late,
 - about coming to worship tired because you were goofing off on Saturday night...
 - about allowing yourself to be distracted by vain thoughts even while worshipping...
 - You are before the God who sees what is in your heart!
 - You are here to honour and praise Him!
 - Devote yourself wholeheartedly to this work!
 - This is really the difference between a mere social Christian and a person who really has a relationship with God.

TRANS> But look, the resolution is now expanded—

- Not only do we declare that you will praise Him in persecution...
- Not only do we declare that you will praise Him fervently...

3. But now our Lord leads us to resolve that we will praise God among the nations!

- Look at verse 9
 - **Ps 57:9: I will praise You, O Lord, among the peoples; I will sing to You among the nations.**

- a. This is a remarkable thing!
 - David led Israel to sing praises to God in Jerusalem...
 - But Jesus testifies here that He will lead His church in the singing of praise among the nations!
 - He will lead the world in the singing of praise to God!
 - b. Our interpretation of this verse is certain because it is quoted by the inspired apostle in Romans 15.
 - Jesus is promising that the Gentiles will join in the praises of God.
 - And so they have!
 - Here we are today, singing praise to the Lord in Halifax, Nova Scotia with Jesus as our Captain!
- B. And what is the occasion for all this praise? What has stirred them up to praise?
1. It is praise to God for His mercy toward us in Jesus Christ...
 - It is mercy that exceeds all bounds of our understanding—
 - Mercy that extends downward to man on earth and upward beyond the highest heavens!
 - Verse 10 says,
 - **Ps 57:10: For Your mercy reaches unto the heavens, And Your truth unto the clouds.**
 - Mercy and truth—
 - Here they are again!
 - These are the two hands that reached down from heaven to save us in v. 3!
 - *chesed* and *emeth*—covenant love and faithfulness.
 - By these we saw how God reaches down from heaven to save us when there was no earthly solution...
 - And now we see that these hands reach to the nations to save them.
 2. What is amazing here is that the gospel has been advanced through persecution.
 - a. Jesus' enemies surrounded Him like ravenous beasts and delivered Him up to be crucified...
 - And it was through that that He made Himself an offering for sin.
 - It was through that that we were enabled to see the mercy of God that reaches to the heavens and the faithfulness that reaches to the clouds!
 - The immeasurable love and faithfulness of God at the cross!
 - That He so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him might not perish, but have everlasting life.

- This is what ignites praise among the Gentiles!
 - Jesus declares the gospel to the whole world and leads the world to join in giving thanks for this marvellous salvation!
 - The whole world comes alive with His praises!

- b. And just as persecution set forth Christ as God's salvation...
 - so the ongoing persecution of the worshipping church advances the testimony of Jesus among the nations...
 - Jesus goes with us as we go out to spread the gospel, and He gathers all of His sheep into the assembly to sing praise with Him....
 - Praise to God for His mercy in sending Him to save...
 - And in receiving His offering and His intercession for the remission of our sins!

- c. Resolve that you will join Jesus forever in praising God for His mercy and truth.
 - Let our gracious Lord be honoured and adored in all the earth!
 - Let our Lord Jesus be trusted in as the only Saviour in all the earth.
 - Let the whole world join in the happy songs of praise to our God.

- 3. To Him be the glory forever and ever!
 - **Ps 57:11: Be exalted, O God, above the heavens; Let Your glory be above all the earth.**
 - Hallowed be your name!
 - Be glorified in all heaven and earth because your mercy reaches to the heavens and your faithfulness to the skies!

Conclusion: That is the song of our Saviour, the head of His persecuted church!

- That is the song He teaches the whole church that He purchased with His blood to sing.
- Won't you join Him in singing it—even when your enemies surround you with malice?
 - If you understand His mercy—if you truly grasp it—it will be impossible for you to keep silent!
 - You will join the worldwide praise that King Jesus is leading to the glory of God and nothing will be able to stop you.
 - The more they try to stop it, the more praise will come forth!
 - Our gracious God brings forth beauty out of persecution!
 - Glory be to His name—glory in the highest!