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“The psalms are designed to teach us to do one primary thing--to worship. Though they reflect every human emotion, they do so in a distinct and important way: They are emotions seen in relationship to God. Every psalm is written as in the very presence of God. This book therefore teaches us how to be honest before God. ... This is what worship is--a heart pouring out honest reactions to a God who can both correct and restore. If we learn to be honest before God even about troubles and problems, wrong moods and resentful attitudes, we shall quickly find His grace answering our needs.”

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RAY STEDMAN

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In this Psalm, God is inviting us to draw near to him in prayer even when He seems far away and we feel forgotten.

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“Drawing near is not a physical act. It’s not building a tower of Babel, by your achievements, to get to heaven. It’s not necessarily going to a church building. Or walking to an altar at the front. It is an invisible act of the heart. You can do it while standing absolutely still, or while lying in a hospital bed, or while sitting in a pew listening to a sermon.

Drawing near is not moving from one place to another. It is a directing of the heart into the presence of God who is as distant as the holy of holies in heaven, and yet as near as the door of faith. He is commanding us to come. To approach him. To draw near to him.”

JOHN PIPER

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## I. Smile on Us: A Plea for the Restoration of God’s Favor and Presence

PSALM 80:1-3

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“Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, you who lead Joseph like a flock. You who are enthroned above the cherubim, shine forth. Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh stir up your might and come to save us! Restore us, O God; let your face shine that we might be saved.”

PSALM 80:1-3

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This psalm sees God as the Shepherd who has brought His people into a season of sorrow and God alone as the One who can shepherd them out.

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“Circumstances do not alter truth. God is still the shepherd of His people even when alienated from them.”

ALEC MOTYER

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“And he blessed Joseph and said, ‘The God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, **the God who is my shepherd all my life to this day**, the angel who has redeemed me from all evil, bless the boys...’”

GENESIS 48:13-16

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The psalm also sees God as the Holy One who sits enthroned who alone has the power to rescue God's people.

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“The Lord reigns; let the peoples tremble. He sits enthroned upon the cherubim; let the earth quake. Let them praise your great and awesome name! Holy is he!”

PSALM 99:1

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“Pain has a way of awakening us to our need for God's help. It shines a spotlight on our powerlessness to control everything. We are never more aware of our frailty than when hardship comes our way. This is one of the blessings of suffering if we allow lament to lead us. The various trials of life can become a platform to reaffirm our dependence upon the Lord. The requests of lament can become the place where we celebrate our need for God's help.”

MARK VROEGOP

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“For Christ has not entered into holy places made with hands which are copies of true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf.”

HEBREWS 8:24

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Christ alone is the Holy One, the Shepherd, who must fight on our behalf lest we would lose to our enemies within and without.

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## II. Smile on Us: A Plea for the End of Sorrow and Shame

PSALM 80:4-7

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“O Lord God of hosts, how long will you be angry with your people’s prayers? You have fed them with the bread of tears and give them tears to drink in full measure. You make us an object of contention for our neighbors, and our enemies laugh among themselves.”

PSALM 80:4-7

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“Our Shepherd God sometimes feeds us with the ‘bread of tears,’ but never as our adversary—he is always our Shepherd.”

C. HASSELL BULLOCK

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“Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven,  
whose sin is covered.  
Blessed is the man against whom the LORD counts no iniquity,  
and in whose spirit there is no deceit.  
For when I kept silent, my bones wasted away  
through my groaning all day long.  
For day and night your hand was heavy upon me;  
my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer. *Selah*  
I acknowledged my sin to you,  
and I did not cover my iniquity;  
I said, ‘I will confess my transgressions to the LORD,’  
and you forgave the iniquity of my sin. *Selah*”

PSALM 32:1-5

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We must thank God for times when we do not feel the smile on His face because often this is the kindness of God which leads us to repentance.

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### III. Smile on Us: A Plea for Strength to Remain Faithful and Fruitful.

PSALM 80:8-19

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“Turn again, o God of hosts! Look down from heaven, and see; have regard for the vine, the stock that your right hand planted, and for the son whom you made strong for yourself.”

PSALM 80:14-15

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“But let your hand be on the man of your right hand, the son of man whom you have made strong for yourself. Then we shall not turn back from you; give us life, and we will call upon his name.”

PSALM 80:17-18

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If God shines His face, two things will happen:

Faithfulness to God – “Then we shall not turn back from you.”

Worship of God – “Give us life, and we will call upon your name.”

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We don't get God to shine his face on us by learning to be faithful to God.

We learn to be faithful to God when God shines His face upon us in Jesus Christ.

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“For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. <sup>6</sup> For God, who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”

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2 CORINTHIANS 4:5-6

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