

Becoming a Wonder

I. Slide#1 **Announce:**

A. Slide#2 TOTG - Saturday men.

II. Slide#3 **Intro: Becoming a Wonder**

A. Read the Chapter.

B. This old veteran of faith sets his *fingers, lips & heart* to the praise of God & the telling of his story.

1. **Author:** no name is given. (though LXX has “By David”. See end of 2nd book 72:20. All Psalms in 2nd book have a title *except* 43, which most tie to 42 & this Psalm, which some tie to 70)

C. Slide#4 Old Age & its problems & insecurities (Did we save enough \$? Was my life meaningful?)

1. In some cultures **old age** is *revered, honored, respected*. Not nec in America/West.

2. **Loss of Strength: (9)** You're not as **strong** as you use to be...as Solomon so aptly described in Eccl.12:1-7.

3. **Troubles Continue: (10,11)** The difficulties we have faced throughout our lives do not go away but instead remain with us.¹

4. **Being Alone: (11b)** He had fewer people to help him, to solve problems, or help shoulder these burdens.

a) He seems to be *utterly alone* with no one to help but God.

b) *Maybe you feel this way also?* no matter your age.

III. Slide#5 **LOOKING TO THE PAST: OUR FAITHFUL GOD (1-6)**

A. David had known God from his youth.

1. He recognized God's faithfulness back in *Bethlehem's birth center* (6b).

a) I read a thought/quote: *We marvel at the fact that the **infant**, shut up in its mother's womb, can live in such a condition as would suffocate the strongest man in half an hour.*

2. He recognized God's faithfulness from his **birth** on (6a).

3. He recognized God's faithfulness as a **youth** (5).

4. He recognized God's faithfulness during his **maturing years** (17).

5. He recognized God's faithfulness now that he's **old** & aging (9,18).

a) *From his youth to the present David had known a relationship of personal trust and divine instruction.*

¹ James Boice, Psalms, Vol.2, pg.594

b) Eph. 4:16 **Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day.**

- B. **Slide#6** I like the testimony of Polycarp, the aged Bishop of Smyrna (modern Izmir, Turkey. Disciple of Apostle John. only his letter to Philippians remains) **was murdered/martyred on Feb22 AD.156.** As he was being driven to **the arena** where you would be given the **choice** of worshipping Caesar or, refusing, being offered to the lions, the City officials try to persuade him to make the gesture of homage to Cesar. They had respect for him because of his **age** and **reputation** and argued, “What harm is there and saying, ‘Caesar is Lord,’ and burning incense... And saving yourself?” But Polycarp answered, “For 86 years I have seen been Christ’s slave, and he has done me no wrong; how can I blaspheme my king who saved me?”
1. Despite his age and undoubted physical weakness, Polycarp was not weak. He was strong in faith. In fact, he was never stronger, because he remembered the strength and faithfulness of God to him throughout the many long years of his service as Christ’s slave.

IV. **Slide#7** **LOOKING TO THE FUTURE: THE NEXT GENERATION (7-18)**

- A. *We don’t know what the future holds, but we do know that God holds our future.*
- B. Some people who are in their old age only look back to the **past** & are often quite **unhappy** as they do.
1. They focus in on what they have **lost**, or what they wish they **could have had**, or on what they **never did**.
 2. **The present** doesn’t mean to much for them except as a basis for **complaining**.
 - a) Complaining about their multiple aches & pains, & just about everything else.
 3. **And**, they are afraid also to **look forward**. *They are afraid of dying.*
- C. **David’s approach was not like this.** He not only looked back to God’s goodness & faithfulness since birth, **but** also **looked to the future** in terms of the **work yet remaining to be done**.
1. He must have figured as we often say today, *“well, God hasn’t taken me home yet, He must still have other plans for me.”*
- D. **Slide#8** Someone said, *“The Christian church is always one generation from extinction.”*
1. Meaning, that each generation has the responsibility of passing Christian doctrine to the next. And also as Paul said, *We loved you so much that we shared with you not only God’s Good News but our own lives, too.*
 2. David **knew** this & it was **what he wanted to do** too.
 - a) **Will others put their faith in the Lord on the basis of your life and testimony?**
- E. (18) There seems to be a special bond between the elderly & children.
1. Secular communities have picked up on this & encourage bringing people from **nursing homes** to help care for children in **day-care centers**.

2. Our friends at **Partners Relief & Development** did this in Thailand with **Burmese refugees**, as often these were the 2 groups “left alive” during the raids by the Burma Army. - It’s a beautiful arrangement...for both.
- F. **How are you, will you pour into the next generation?** With the gospel. With your daily life. With a lifetime of experience.
- G. (18) **Also**, as last week I talked about **Safety** being overrated. But here David asks for it?...but **why? for himself? no**. But for **others**. (see **until**)
- H. **Slide#9** David **became a wonder to many** (7) - No verb or other noun uses the same root letters.
 1. The **first occurrences** of **mopheth** refers to **Moses’ rod changing into a snake** (Ex.7:9), as well as to the **10 major plagues** on the Egyptians.
 2. Most of the usages in the **Deuteronomy** passages refer to the the **wonderful provisions** God made for his people in the wilderness (e.g. water, manna, quails, and the pillar of fire).
 3. **I hope my life becomes a wonder to many!**

V. **Slide#10** **LOOKING AT THE PRESENT: PRAISING GOD NOW (19-24)**

- A. So, he **looked to the past** to remind himself of God’s faithfulness & power. He **looked to the future** to remind himself of work yet to be done. **So now** he **turns to the present** & begins to do exactly what he has been talking about.
 1. He bears witness to God now.
 2. He **praises Him by: singing** (22,23); **playing instruments** (22); **telling others about God’s character** (15,24); **telling others about God’s acts** (17b); **& praises Him by doing it all day long** (8,15).
 3. Especially he will speak of God’s **righteousness** (19-21) **& His faithfulness** (22-24).
- B. **His Righteousness** - (**not like** the NT uses this word, *i.e.* His divine righteousness that is imparted to us in justification) **but** it refers to **God’s right dealings, everything He does is just**, and **no one can fault Him**.
 1. This is a great testimony, that someone has lived such a long time & has found God does all things **rightly/justly**.
 2. **Therefore**, God can be **trusted** **&** we thus can **conform our lives** to God’s will & His standards.
- C. **His Faithfulness** - He wants to pass it on...God is utterly faithful & can be trusted to remain so.
 1. **Slide#11 Thomas Obediah Chisholm** born in a log cabin in Kentucky, came to the Lord at age 27. His health was unstable & he alternated between **bouts of illness & gainful employment**. **Yet** through all his ups & downs, he discovered **new blessings from God every morning**. **Thus**, the 3rd chapter of Lamentations became precious

to him: *His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness. So, he penned his famous hymn...*

2. *Slide#12* Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father;
There is no shadow of turning with Thee;
Thou changest not, Thy compassions, they fail not;
As Thou hast been, Thou forever will be.
3. *Great is Thy faithfulness! Great is Thy faithfulness!*
Morning by morning new mercies I see.
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided;
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!