

It's time for a pause in your day. Welcome to a podcast where we press the pause button on our busy lives for a few moments. And we focus on God's Word with Sharon and Nicole. We pray this is a time of refreshing for you. The Sweet Selah Moments Podcast is a cooperative production of Word Radio and Sweet Selah Ministries.

Welcome to Sweet Selah Moments. We're celebrating 10 seasons of Sharing God's Word with you, and this season is our Selah season. This is episode 149, Testimony. Once a month at our church on Communion Sunday, our pastor asks a member of our congregation, or sometimes two members, to share a testimony of how God intervened in their lives. It is a wonderful way to enter in to the lives of our brothers and sisters as we listen to their stories and hear firsthand accounts of what God has done or how God has shaped them. I love hearing a good testimony, and we'll be talking about that today on this Sweet Selah Moments Podcast. But first, because this is our Selah season, we're going to talk about our Selah Word for the Day, the tip we have to help us all practice pausing and simply being with the God who loves us. So far, we've talked about silence, going slow, solitude, Selah days, sleep, scripture, song, and finding a space to meet with God. Sharon, what's up next?

Our word today is search. God encourages us to seek him, to search for him. You could almost have seek and search.

Right.

I mean, really seek and search. Jeremiah 29.13 puts it this way. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. In fact, this is a theme repeated all the way through the Bible. So we're going to just read. I wrote them out for us, Nicole, a small sampling. And it's only a small sampling of God's promises that follow when we seek and search for him. Okay? So I'm going to have you start with the first one.

All right. So in Deuteronomy 429, it says, but from there you will seek the Lord your God and you will find him if you search after him with all your heart and with all your soul.

First Chronicles 1611, seek the Lord and his strength. Seek his presence continually.

Proverbs 817 says, I love those who love me and those who seek me diligently find me.

Matthew 633, but seek first. The kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things will be added to you.

Luke 11, 9-10, and I will tell you, ask and it will be given to you. Seek and you will find. Knock and it will be opened to you. For anyone who asks, receives. And the one who seeks, finds. And to the one who knocks, it will be opened.

And Hebrews 11, 6, without faith, it is impossible to please him. For whoever would draw near to God, must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him. My goodness, God's big on this. There were over 40 verses when I Googled this. All about it. So I conclude from this. God really wants us to actively search for him, to seek him out. Not to take him for granted, like, oh, you're just there, but to yearn to know him better and love him more. And if you're seeking and searching out a person, you want to know them more. You want to know everything about them. That's what you do with someone you love.

Right.

And we love God. I can't think of a much stronger reason for Selah times than these verses where he promises us so much if we put aside our own agendas and seek him in his agenda for our lives.

Wow. That is such a challenging word. I really love that.

I love it. So search or seek.

Yeah.

Of course, they're both S's. How funny is that is our Selah word of the day. He's like God is like that one great pearl in Jesus' parable where it is worth selling every other thing we own so we can have him. So when we stop and seal it with God, let's do it with hearts that are yearning to know him better, love him, wholeheartedly seeking him. That blesses God because guess what he wants? What's the greatest commandment? Love me.

Yeah. Oh, what a great way to learn more about him and to love him, to seek him. Oh, that's very convicting. I do sometimes take it for granted that he's just there, but I'm going to be more intentional with that word seek. I love it. It's so good. All right, so now onto our Psalm of the day where the word Selah appears three times. This is a Psalm of testimony. The Israelites are remembering what God has done for them in the past, and they're marveling at it all over again. It's full of praise and wonder. So Sharon, why don't you do our first section of this song?

I will. Psalm 66, for the choir director, a song, a song, in case we forget. These are normally sung, although we are not blessing our listeners with that. Yeah, okay. Okay, verse one. Shout joyful praises to God, all the earth. Sing about the glory of his name. Tell the world how glorious he is. Say to God, how awesome are your deeds? Your enemies cringe before your mighty power. Everything on earth will worship you. They will sing your praises, shouting your name, and glorious songs, Selah. Okay, so this is a loud psalm. I would call it loud. And I was just so fascinated by the verbs.

Yeah.

So we're gonna talk about the verbs.

It was fun.

Okay, first verb is shout. God is great. He's big. He's the best. He's not meh. He's wow.

Oh, I love that.

So sometimes we have to be loud to just say wow. So that's the shout. Then we're told to sing, and we've talked a lot about this in the last few episodes. Songs are part of any culture. They really are. Songs bond us together. There's even songs at baseball games, like Sweet Caroline.

Yes.

And we all sing it together. We get emotional. Right? Songs are big deals. And when we gather as Christians, we sing together, saying the same words and feeling them in our hearts for the God we love. And then tell. Don't keep it to ourselves. Tell how great God is. Everybody needs to know this.

Yes.

And then say to God, we don't just talk about him. We sing to him. We shout to him, You're the best. Right.

That's nice.

Yeah. So we tell him as well. So the day I talk about a lot is the day that I was sick and I wanted to be healthy and I was stuck in a beautiful place. Well, everybody else was singing songs to God, and I'm alone coughing, hacking, blowing my nose, looking grotesque by that point. And God told me that day, all I want is for you to tell me you love me. And I spent an afternoon, had

nothing else to do but cough and blow my nose, telling him I loved him. And it was life-changing.

That's so beautiful.

It's absolutely life-changing. So anyways, this song starts with a lot of noise.

Yeah, I marked it joyful. It's very joyful. It's very engaging. You're ready to get in there and start shouting and telling and singing.

Yes, I imagine that the song, that when it was created, was lots of instruments and lots of happy noise.

It's gotta be some cymbals in there. I think there's a lot of cymbals.

Cymbals. It's a cymbal song.

Yes. All right, so down at verse five, we'll pick it up. Come and see what our God has done, what awesome miracles He performs for people. He made a dry path through the Red Sea, and His people went across on foot. There we rejoiced in Him, for by His great power He rules forever. He watches every movement of the nations. Let no rebel rise in defiance. Selah. I liked the structure of this part. They start with an invitation. Come and see what God has done for us. Then they start to praise Him, and what wonderful miracles He has performed. Then they kind of go into this remembering. They start telling of the things that He has done. He made a dry path through the Red Sea. We rejoiced in Him. And then they switch to who He is. He has great power. He rules forever. And again, kind of what He can do. So the praise part where He watches every movement of the nations. So I was just kind of struck with how they led us through that section of the song. Come and see. Remember when He did this. He's really great. And He could do this, too. Yes, that's right.

And He's in charge of the nations. So don't be upset about the bad guys that seem to be winning. He's watching every movement.

I did settle.

Nothing escapes Him.

Yes, I settled on that verse for a while. That was very comforting, the part that He watches every movement. So we can just rest in Him. He's kind of like, oh, wait, God, but what about this? Are you, do you know about this? Are you watching this? He's got it. Not much. Nothing escapes His eye.

Nothing escapes. This is quite the testimony.

It is.

It is.

It is a good testimony.

Okay. Starting in verse 8 now. Let the whole world bless our God and loudly sing His praises. Our lives are in His hands and He keeps our feet from stumbling. You have tested us, oh God. You have purified us like silver. You captured us in your net and laid the burden of slavery on our backs. Then you put a leader over us. We went through fire and flood, but you brought us to a place of great abundance. Now, I come to your temple with burnt offerings to fulfill the vows I made to you. Yes, the sacred vows that I made when I was in deep trouble. That is why I'm sacrificing burnt offerings to you, the best of my rams as a pleasing aroma, and the sacrifice of bulls and male goats. Selah. Wow, wow, wow, wow. So we are being tested, and he's testifying to that. I had some hard times, but you brought me through them. And now I want to offer sacrifices to you because

I'm so excited about it, and I'm going to shout my praises because you've got me through it. So it's a really fun little how to give a testimony. This was hard. This was really hard. And it also goes back in time. I mean, they were slaves for 400 years.

Yes.

Okay. So some people were born and died in slavery.

Right.

It's not like they got the Promised Land, but as a nation, he brought them out. And then he did wonderful things, and he brought them into a land of abundance where lots of big grapes and stuff. I'm trying to picture all the things, the land flowing with milk and honey and grapes.

Right. And giant grapes.

I remember they were really good grapes. Yeah. And I always laugh because I love honey, milk, and grapes. I'm like, just bring me to that Promised Land.

Just yearn for the Promised Land.

I'm there. Yeah. So God tests us. He purifies us.

Yeah.

So testimony is not just, God's always been wonderful to me, and nothing has ever gone wrong.

Right.

The testimonies that we hear in church are all about purifying times, because it's through the hardest times that we see him the clearest.

Absolutely.

And then we want to offer a sacrifice. Now, today, we don't slaughter rams for which I am eternally grateful. Jesus was the ultimate sacrifice. But a testimony, in a sense, is an offering, a sacrifice, a praise. And it's also a sacrifice of vulnerability.

Yes.

I did this awful thing. A lot of our testimonies in church are very brave people saying, I was really bad, and look what God did anyways. So, just beautiful.

It is beautiful. I'm so glad they mentioned that part about reviewing the hard times, too. That's so important. It is. Like you said, you don't just show up and say, God is great. Everything works out for good. It does, and He is. But we need to remember the hard times.

We do.

We have to. I think that's a huge part of our testimony, and it's a huge part to how He works in us, too.

Absolutely.

Very important.

Yeah.

All right, the next section, verse 16. Come and listen, all you who fear God, and I will tell you what He did for me. For I cried out to Him for help, praising Him as I spoke. If I had not confessed the sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened. But God did listen. He paid attention to my prayer. Praise God, who did not ignore my prayer, or withdraw His unfailing love from me. Oh, that's so beautiful. So kind of what I just said about remembering

all who... I cried out to Him for help, praising Him as I spoke. So He remembered the hard times, but we remember to praise Him through that hard times. And this format kind of reminds me of the mom in prayer format, where we start with praise when we talk to God. But right after praising God for who He is, we confess. And that's such an important part of our testimony.

It is.

Kind of the first step. We have to acknowledge that God is God, and He's bigger than us, and greater, and more wonderful, and holy than us. And that immediately leads to a reflection of, I am not any of those things, and I am unclean, and I have sin in my heart. God, forgive me. And that humbling puts us in that position to let Him start His work. That will become our testimony.

Absolutely. I've always loved that. And before we intercede for children, or in my situation, grandchildren, you want to be clean before Him. You don't want to have the accuser saying, what are you doing praying like you're all holy? I saw the way you talked to your husband this morning. But if you confess up, you're clear.

It clears the clutter out, so we can receive God's truth. It's not just, well, you're not holy enough for me to listen to you, because it says God will not listen if there's sin in my heart. We can't hear him with sin in our hearts.

We can't.

We're not able to. So he knows us because he created us. He knows how our bodies and mind work. We cannot sit and receive the truth of God and healing without first confessing and just getting a clean slate.

Yeah. Yeah. He wants us to come to him honestly. And if we've got sin, it's not. I've told this story a long time ago in one of our

podcasts, but I'm going to tell again because it is such that the quintessential confession story.

Yeah.

And it was when the girls and I and Ray were all in England. We'd done a house exchange, and we were staying in this house of people that were living in our house.

Yeah.

And I was borrowing their car, and the first week, learning to drive with a clutch, wrong side of the road, all the things. I put it in reverse, and I stripped the gears, and I ruined their transmission.

Oh, no.

That is great. So I had to call their son-in-law, who came and bailed me out, and said, you do not need to pay for this. It was going anyways. Very kind.

Yeah.

But I felt terrible, of course.

Oh, yeah.

So about two days later, they had French doors for going from the living room into the dining room.

Yeah.

And a French door, there's a knob that isn't really a knob.

Yes.

But I forgot it wasn't a knob. Oh, no. And I turned it, and it wouldn't turn. I got angry at it, and I broke it. Oh, no. I broke the knob.

Oh, Sharon.

So two days after stripping the transmission, I have now broken the knob on somebody else's door. Great. I call him up. I apologize. Oh, not to worry. Kindest can be. And so there we go. A day later. The girls and I are dancing in the living room, pretending we're ballerinas, and in their fireplace that they didn't use, it was sort of just decorative, they had a prized possession. He'd shown it to us, hand-carved elephants from Africa when he was on a mission strip in Kenya. There was a daddy elephant, there was a mother elephant, there was a baby elephant, and they were beautiful and shiny. And Catherine fell into the fireplace in one of her pliés, it didn't quite work or spins, and broke a leg, the daddy elephant's leg completely off.

Oh, no.

Nicole, I did not tell them. I took that leg, I fit it back on, pulled my hand away, it looked okay, as long as you didn't touch it. It looked like daddy elephant never had that broken leg. And we shut the grate, and we never went in the living room again.

We did not speak of it.

We did not. But I had sinned and I didn't confess it. Now that sounds so minor, but God didn't think it was minor. I had broken something in their home that was very precious to them, and I had deceived them, these good people. So it took me six months, and my prayer life was terrible, because I came to God knowing the elephant was looming. Literally. Literally, in my brain. And there was a wedge between us, because I knew what God wanted me to do, and I didn't want to do it. And the more

months that went by when I did not, the more embarrassing it seemed to be to confess it. But I finally did. I sent them a Christmas card, sent them \$50, which I don't know how much an African elephant that was hand carved from Kenya cost, but I bet it was more than that. And I confessed my sin to them. Oh, and then I was back with OK with Claude. So this is why confession is so good, right? Why did I wait? Why did I spend six months stumbling around? It's not like God wasn't going to forgive me.

No. And that's the part I love about this in verse 20. Well, he did listen. He pays attention and then praised God because he doesn't withdraw his unfailing love from us.

It flooded back into me. He's like, finally, Sharon.

I've been waiting to just pour this on you, but you couldn't receive it.

Because the elephant was between us.

I love that there was, it was really an elephant in the room.

Man, there really was an elephant in the room.

A little broken-leg elephant. Yes. Yeah.

So we need to confess quickly.

Yes.

We really do. And then the joy, you know, is just full of joy again, and loud and happy.

Yes. Loud, happy praises.

Yes. Yes.

Yes.

Yes. So all right. So let's go to our questions. First of all, Nicole, what did we learn about sharing a testimony from this passage and how could we apply it to us?

I know. I loved this psalm. I thought it had a great format, the way they laid it out, to share your testimony. If you're not even sure where to start, this is a great way to start. It first starts with inviting people to hear your story. Come and hear what the Lord has done for me. I love that. Come and see what God has done in my life. Sometimes it can be very scary or very vulnerable, like you said, to share, and where do I start? What do I share? Do I start from the beginning or the middle? But I love, I can't remember who said it. Probably one of our dear pastors or something. But our testimony should always be 24 hours old. There's always something we could be sharing about God, even if it isn't the big, long testimony of our life. But if we want to share that, invite people to hear your story. You can share a part of it just recently or all of it. And then remember to praise Him for what He has done. Because as we're sharing our testimony and praising Him, things will come to mind too, if you're sharing one-on-one with somebody. Like, oh yeah, and then yesterday He did this, and you right now remembering of when you confessed and He poured love and you had that restoration. There's just, sometimes we forget what He's done, but once we start saying how wonderful He is and remember what He did in this situation, it all comes flooding in, and we can't stop telling our testimony.

We can't stop, and we have to shout it.

Yes. It just starts getting louder and bigger.

Because it's so wonderful. That is so true.

Yeah. How about you?

Yeah. Well, just the fact that God wants us to share and not just the triumphs.

Yes.

You know, the hard things, and then how he got them through, I think is so important. And somehow, sometimes the times when I failed resonate a whole lot more than the times when I did it right to people. It is embarrassing but true that when I run into moms in prayer people, I first confess to the world about the African elephant incident in a huge assembly, over a thousand women.

What a way to do it.

I know. That was another struggle with God. You want me to tell them this? So, but I did. They now come up to me still, and they'll say, I'll never forget.

You're like, that God, that's what they remember?

Great.

And the Cheerio story. Yes, and the Cheerio story.

Yes, yes, yes.

Everybody loves it. So, but you know what's good about it? It gives God the glory. Yeah, it says, I am a weak human being prone to sin and deceit. This is me.

Yes.

God. God is the one that gets us through. God is the one that forgives and gives us another chance. God is the one who's pure and holy.

Yes.

You know, so then it all goes back to him, and he gets the glory. A testimony should give him the glory.

Absolutely.

Yeah.

No, that's good. I like that.

So all right. What was the next one? Oh, favorite verse. My favorite verse. I wonder if...

I know.

Let's see.

We've been two for two so far. Let's see.

I know. We'll see. What was my favorite verse and why? My favorite verse was verse nine. Are you kidding?

Yes. That's so funny.

Three in a row.

I love it. All right.

Okay. Well, the verse is, our lives are in his hands, and he keeps our feet from stumbling. And I just love the thought that I'm literally cupped in God's hands, that close. And that's where my life is, which means worrying about when I'm going to die is just so silly. He knows, and when he takes me home, it will be the right time, even if I think it's not the right time. It just changes how you view life, and it makes you take more bold steps sometimes because you're like, no, my life is in his hand. There's another, I think it's Psalm 90 something, where it says that God

numbers our days. He has everyone numbered. He already knows.

It doesn't surprise him. Like, oh, it's getting close. Maybe she'll die this week.

He knows. He knows. And precious in his sight are the death of his saints. It's not like it's a bad thing. God's happy when we come home.

Because he gets to see us.

I know.

I never think of that.

Yeah. I love that verse too. I just love all these verses so much.

It's hard to pick a favorite.

No, it really is. And then we are going to stumble. The only one that keeps our feet from stumbling is God. And I still stumble, but I wonder how many times he's kept my feet from stumbling because it's been a day where I've really yielded my day to him. So I wonder if he'll let me see sometime. You know that day you yielded to me? Well, I kept your foot from stumbling here because you'd softened your heart to me and I could work with a malleable person. You know that day when you stumbled? That was the day when you didn't, you know, or whatever.

Right. Oh, I love that, what he can do with our offerings. Yeah, so I also picked verse 9, but I love how God reveals different things. We're fairly similar in personality, and we do often pick the same verses, but he reveals things so differently. I got so much comfort from this verse. I like to try to control things, as some of us do, but recently with my neurological issues, I've been having trouble stumbling. That is very frustrating with me, and I like to be very,

you know, poisoned put together. I don't like falling and tripping and stumbling. It doesn't feel good, but reading this verse, our lives are in his hands, and he keeps our feet from stumbling, and he may not be keeping my actual left foot from stumbling at the moment, but he keeps me, if I stay grounded in him, my soul, my heart, he keeps me from stumbling and losing sight of him. And that was such a comfort to me. Like, he's got my life in his hands, even if I have zero control over my stumbling ability or my life, he's got it. And I can just trust him, and if I'm tripping through life, my soul is not. And that was just really, really encouraging to me.

So beautiful. And this, right now, is such a good illustration of why God's word is living.

Yes.

The situation you're in right now, it spoke to you. And yet, where I am, it spoke to me. It said different things, both true, and because the Bible is like no other book. It's so beautiful. God has breathed it, and therefore every word has significance for the reader.

Yes. He's infused his word with so much life and power.

So beautiful.

There's nothing like God's word. There's nothing like it.

Nothing, nothing, nothing. This is why we read a lot.

Yes.

At the podcast, because I mean, anything else we could say is piffle.

A puff of wind.

A puff of wind. So, okay, what did you learn about God from this passage?

Reading through this psalm and seeing what he's done for the Israelites. He has done some amazing things.

He sure has.

He really has. He is glorious. He rules with great power. He can perform miracles. And then that verse we had talked about a little bit. He watches every movement of nation. So, he's not unaware of what's going on in the earth. When things seem big around us and we get nervous, he's got it. He knows what's going on. Yes. He keeps us from stumbling. He listens and he pours out his unfailing love.

Isn't that beautiful?

I just love sitting and soaking in the pouring of unfailing love. Who else can offer that to me?

Especially right after you confess horrible things.

Right. That's usually what even with humans, there's still that awkward phase where you have to learn to trust. He pours out unfailing love right after confession. You will never find a love like that.

So generous.

So lavish. Yes.

Yes.

I can't get over that. I hope I never do.

Yes. I hope I never do either. Absolutely. Well, I learned that he's worthy of loud praise.

Yes.

I am a loud person, so this suits me just fine. Second, he wants transparency.

Yes.

When we have done something wrong, we need to say it. Unconfessed sin means our relationship with him is a bit broken. I felt that incredibly during my hiding of my broken-legged elephant. I felt it. There was not that nestling in. Yes, I was talking to him, but it was different.

Yeah.

And it always is. It always is. If we're not transparent with someone, we can have a superficial relationship, but we can't go deep.

You're always afraid it's going to come up. You're always afraid you're going to slip or something. Yeah.

Right. If the people that you're closest to are the people you could be realist with.

Yes. Right.

And God wants real. He just does. And number three, I have the same thing. He's the rescuer of unfailing love. He rescues, he redeems, and his love just never stops. And that is such a gift.

Wow.

I know. It's a wow, not a meh.

Yeah. That's a wow. That's going back to the beginning of the song and praising him with cymbals. Wow. Unfailing love. You cannot beat that. Yes.

Exactly. Exactly. I hope in heaven, we get to hear these sung as they were meant to be sung.

How cool would that be?

Maybe there'll be a concert. I'm going. You want to come with me?

Yes. Do you remember back in like our little Baptist church in the olden days, we'd have sing inspirations on Wednesday nights and pick your favorite hymn? Well, I hope we have like a special night when you go, I want to hear this psalm sung please and thank you.

Yes, yes, yes. That would be so fun.

Song request.

It really would. Song request. I used to love those song nights where you get to choose it.

I loved the hymns.

Especially when whoever was in charge of the hymns hadn't chosen my hymn. In many weeks, I'd be like, oh, tonight's the night I get to sing the one I love.

Yeah, that's so good. That's so great. Oh, man.

Well, let me pray. Oh, heavenly Father, you are worthy of shouts of praise and big thanks for your unfailing love, for your desire for us to have testimonies that are transparent and real. God, you don't want fake us. You want the very heart of who we are. You

are most pleased when we are most real. I praise you for that. And help us, Lord. Help us to confess quickly. Help us to share our stories of how you redeemed and saved and rescued us. Lord, don't let Satan keep us bound in shame, for you have freed us from it. And we praise you. In Jesus' name, Amen.

As humans, we have many trials and troubles. But when we belong to God, He often steps in and literally saves us. His power is great and His love for us is sure. How about you? Do you have a testimony you'd like to share? We would love to hear from you. You can find us at sweetselah.org/podcast, or you can email us at Sharon at [sweetselah.org](mailto:Sharon@sweetselah.org). Join our podcast family by donating and becoming a podcast partner by going to sweetselah.org/donations. Hearing from our listeners or reading a review just makes our day. Please consider helping us out. In any case, we hope that you'll be back next episode for episode 150, Yearning for God. Thanks so much for listening and have a great week.

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