

Psalm 86:1–11

- 1 Bow down Your ear, O LORD, hear me; For I am poor and needy.
- 2 Preserve my life, for I am holy; You are my God; Save Your servant who trusts in You!
- 3 Be merciful to me, O Lord, For I cry to You all day long.
- 4 Rejoice the soul of Your servant, For to You, O Lord, I lift up my soul.
- 5 For You, Lord, are good, and ready to forgive, And abundant in mercy to all those who call upon You.
- 6 Give ear, O LORD, to my prayer; And attend to the voice of my supplications.
- 7 In the day of my trouble I will call upon You, For You will answer me.
- 8 Among the gods there is none like You, O Lord; Nor are there any works like Your works.
- 9 All nations whom You have made Shall come and worship before You, O Lord, And shall glorify Your name.
- 10 For You are great, and do wondrous things; You alone are God.
- 11 Teach me Your way, O LORD; I will walk in Your truth; Unite my heart to fear Your name.

***“How the Living God Can Become the Center of Our Lives”
Psalm 86:11***

INTRO:

This message began as a personal Bible study of a very important verse in my life. When I was at Moody Bible Institute I was told everybody needed a life verse. It wasn't a class assignment as much as a strong suggestion from spiritual men I admired. So, I began searching for a life verse. The one I settled on was David's prayer request in **Psalm 86:11**.

This is where the verse comes in. **Psalm 86:11** reads, ***“Teach me Your way, O LORD. I will walk in Your truth. Unite my heart to fear Your name.”*** In this short prayer, David responded to the greatness and great faithfulness of His God, and showed us how we can make Christ the center of our lives. The petition has three parts.

- I. Teach Me***
- II. I will Walk***
- III. Unite My Heart***

I. Teach Me

“Teach me Your way, O LORD; I will walk in Your truth; Unite my heart to fear Your name.” Psalm 86:11

A. The 86th Psalm, is simply entitled, ***“A Prayer of David.”*** The Psalm provides us a peek into David's heart and demonstrates why David was ***“a man after God's own heart.”*** The

Psalm opens with David's pleading with God to be heard (vs. 1-7). Then he glorifies God for who He is.

"There is no one like You among the gods, O Lord, nor are there any works like Yours. All nations whom You have made shall come and worship before You, O Lord, and they shall glorify Your name. For You are great and do wondrous deeds; You alone are God."

1. Because God is so great, there is no other God like Him. Even as man has exercised his creativity to create gods, none can come close to the splendor of the true and living God.

2. Not only aren't there any other gods like You, no one else can do the works that You do! All the nations of the earth will one day worship You! They will glorify Your name. They will acknowledge You are great and You do miraculous things. There is no other God.

B. If these things are so, how do we respond? How does David react? This is where **verse 11** fits in.

"Teach me your way, O LORD."

The first thing David desired Yahweh to do was to teach him.

1. **Psalm 119:33-40** gives us insight into how God answers our prayer to teach us His way.

"Teach me, O LORD, the way of Your statutes; and I will keep it to the end. Give me understanding, that I may keep Your law and observe it with my whole heart. Lead me in the path of Your commandments, for I delight in it. Incline my heart to Your testimonies, and not to selfish gain! Turn my eyes from looking at worthless things, and give me life in your ways. Confirm to Your servant Your promise that you may be feared. Turn away the reproach that I dread, for Your rules are good. Behold, I long for Your precepts. In Your righteousness give me life!"

2. The way the LORD teaches us is the way of His statutes, His Word. We cannot walk in the way of God apart from the Word of God. His way is found in His book.

3. More than just giving us rote knowledge of the Bible, He gives us understanding so we can keep the Law. He gives us clear direction so we can keep His Word. Here in **Psalm 119:36** is the prayer we should pray as we open the book.

"Incline my heart to Your testimonies, and not to selfish gain! Turn my eyes from looking at worthless things, and give me life in your ways."

Except the LORD works in our hearts as we seek to focus on His Word, nothing of eternal value happens. He must incline our hearts toward the Word when we are naturally inclined toward the world.

II. I will Walk

"Teach me Your way, O LORD; I will walk in Your truth; Unite my heart to fear Your name." Psalm 86:11

A. So, with David we pray, Lord, teach us your way. Help us to know how to serve, please, and glorify You. David did not stop there. His second request was a promise He would do whatever the Lord taught him or showed him to do. God must teach, but we must practice. ***“Teach me Your way, O LORD. I will walk in Your truth.”***

B. I remember many years ago teaching the youth here at Calvary and we were talking about walking in the Bible. I asked the obvious question, *“What does it mean to walk?”* Mark Jameson said, *“Walking is putting one foot in front of the other.”* That was a brilliant answer.

1. God is to teach us the way, but we must, with His help, do the walking. There are some significant verses on *“walking”* in the New Testament. First, we are told that as we live in this world we must ***“walk by faith and not by sight.”*** **2 Corinthians 5:7** This is our lot while we are present in the body and physically absent from the Lord. Paul wrote we need to live our present lives aware that this is not all that there is, and that heaven awaits us.

2. Second, we are to walk ***“in the Spirit.”***
“But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.”
Galatians 5:16

Walking in the Spirit is walking in active obedience to the will of the Spirit of God as expressed in the Word of God. On the heels of this verse are two lists. The first is the *works of the flesh*. This is a list of what yielding to the flesh produces in our lives. The second is the *fruit of the Spirit*. This is a list of what submission to the Spirit of God produces in our lives.

3. Finally, we need to walk ***“worthy.”***
“And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to Him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.” **Colossians 1:9-10**

This is found in Paul’s prayer for the Colossian believers. The worthy walk is carried out in the ***“knowledge of God’s will.”*** It is knowing God’s will and doing it. The worthy walk is also seeking to be fully pleasing to Him. Finally, it involves our desire to be spiritually fruitful and growing constantly in our knowledge of our God.

III. Unite My Heart

“Teach me Your way, O LORD; I will walk in Your truth; Unite my heart to fear Your name.” **Psalm 86:11**

A. If our Lord Jesus is to be the center, first, God must teach us. Second, we must put feet to our commitment to Christ. We must walk, continuously putting one foot in front of the other in the realm of spiritual things. Finally, God again must work. He needs to unite our divided hearts.

“Teach me Your way, O LORD. I will walk in Your truth. Unite my heart to fear Your name.”

B. David recognized a reality about his heart. We, like David, tend to have divided hearts. Remember what James the brother of our Lord taught us?

“If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord. He is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.” James 1:5-7

1. A ***“double minded man”*** or ***“a double-souled”*** man has two masters. He wants to serve God and he wants to serve the desires of his flesh and the world too. We all have a little of this in us. We all have a divided heart because we are fallen creatures.

2. David recognized this truth long before James was even born. When He prayed this prayer to the LORD, he *pleaded*, *“Yahweh, I want to learn from You the way in which I should go. I want to know You better and I want to live Your will out in my life. I will do it. I will make the effort to translate Your truth into my life. But I realize that I have a real problem in even doing this that only You, my God, can solve. I need you to unify my heart in my desire to make You my King and Lord.”*

3. This sounds like **Philippians 2:12-13**

“Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.”

C. If we want the Lord Jesus Christ to be the center of our lives, it would do us well to join David in his prayer to God.

“Teach me Your way, O LORD. I will walk in Your truth. Unite my heart to fear Your name.”

Hymn #395 “Teach Me Thy Way, O Lord”