

**A Confident Cry for Help
Psalm 86:1-17**

Tim Keller:

Discern how many of your most difficult emotions, bad attitudes, and foolish actions come from losing your grip, at that moment, on who God is.

#1: Finding Confidence in the Character of God (86:1-10)

- ¹ Incline your ear, O Lord, and answer me,
for I am poor and needy.
- ² Preserve my life, for I am godly;
save your servant, who trusts in you—you are my God.
- ³ Be gracious to me, O Lord,
for to you do I cry all the day.
- ⁴ Gladden the soul of your servant,
for to you, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.
- ⁵ For you, O Lord, are good and forgiving,
abounding in steadfast love to all who call upon you.
- ⁶ Give ear, O Lord, to my prayer;
listen to my plea for grace.
- ⁷ In the day of my trouble I call upon you,
for you answer me.

John Collins

These verses use vivid imagery that captures what things feel like: in times of distress, it feels like one must cry out for God's attention and request that he be gracious. Theological questions regarding God's omniscience would get in the way; indeed, to the person who objects to such prayers with the argument that God needs no informing or persuading, the only biblical reply is that offered by Fledge the Horse when Polly supposed Aslan would know of their need for food without being asked: "I've no doubt he would," said the Horse (still with his mouth full). "But I've a sort of idea he likes to be asked."

- ⁸ There is none like you among the gods, O Lord,
nor are there any works like yours.
- ⁹ All the nations 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.

#2: Prioritizing a Right Relationship with God (86:11-13)

- ¹¹ Teach me your way, O Lord,
that I may walk in your truth;
unite my heart to fear your name.
- ¹² I give thanks to you, O Lord my God, with my whole heart,
and I will glorify your name forever.
- ¹³ For great is your steadfast love toward me;
you have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol.

#3: Seeking Specific Help from God (86:14-17)

¹⁴ O God, insolent men have risen up against me;
a band of ruthless men seeks my life,
and they do not set you before them.

¹⁵ But you, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.

¹⁶ Turn to me and be gracious to me;
give your strength to your servant,
and save the son of your maidservant.

¹⁷ Show me a sign of your favor,
that those who hate me may see and be put to shame
because you, Lord, have helped me and comforted me.