

Ps 27 (ESV) The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? ⁽²⁾ When evildoers assail me to eat up my flesh, my adversaries and foes, it is they who stumble and fall. ⁽³⁾ Though an army encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war arise against me, yet I will be confident. ⁽⁴⁾ One thing have I asked of the LORD, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to inquire in his temple. ⁽⁵⁾ For he will hide me in his shelter in the day of trouble; he will conceal me under the cover of his tent; he will lift me high upon a rock. ⁽⁶⁾ And now my head shall be lifted up above my enemies all around me, and I will offer in his tent sacrifices with shouts of joy; I will sing and make melody to the LORD. ⁽⁷⁾ Hear, O LORD, when I cry aloud; be gracious to me and answer me! ⁽⁸⁾ You have said, “Seek my face.” My heart says to you, “Your face, LORD, do I seek.” ⁽⁹⁾ Hide not your face from me. Turn not your servant away in anger, O you who have been my help. Cast me not off; forsake me not, O God of my salvation! ⁽¹⁰⁾ For my father and my mother have forsaken me, but the LORD will take me in. ⁽¹¹⁾ Teach me your way, O LORD, and lead me on a level path because of my enemies. ⁽¹²⁾ Give me not up to the will of my adversaries; for false witnesses have risen against me, and they breathe out violence. ⁽¹³⁾ I believe that I shall look upon the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living! ⁽¹⁴⁾ Wait for the LORD; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the LORD!

1. Why I love this Psalm

- A. In it you have a radical adversity met by a triumphant confidence in God
- B. Then suddenly – almost shockingly - you have a struggle with doubt
 - 1). But you see David work through it and come out triumphant again

Thought: I could so relate to David – I go through the same thing

- A. Time of trial hits – you have confidence in God and enjoy victory
 - But that victory is not continuous – times of doubt might creep back in – up and down you go
 - 1). Another angle comes at you – another “What if” and you struggle
- B. This is normal – we see the great man of faith David going through it in this Psalm
 - 1). We also see how he recovers – so important to learn that
 - 2). I think our spiritual growth is seen in how quickly we are able to recover

2. Background to the Psalm

- A. It is believed that this is written during the time David is being pursued by Saul
 - 1). He has had to flee his home – living in the wilderness – in danger of being caught and killed

3. Outline

- A. David’s confidence in God (1-3)
- B. David’s desire for God (4-6)
- C. David’s cry to God (7-12)
- D. David’s restoration by God (13-14)

I. DAVID’S CONFIDENCE IN GOD

We’ll see that it is a confidence that is based on three things

Ps 27:1–3 (ESV) The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? ⁽²⁾ When evildoers assail me to eat up my flesh, my adversaries and foes, it is they who stumble and fall. ⁽³⁾ Though an army encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war arise against me, yet I will be confident.

First: David’s Confidence Was Based On the Lord’s Personal Dealings with David

Ps 27:1 (ESV) The LORD is **my** light and **my** salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of **my** life; of whom shall I be afraid?

1. Notice all the personal pronouns – 3 times “My”

- A. We can know a lot about God intellectually – know all the facts
 - But in times of trial we need to know God personally and intimately to be an overcomer
- B. To know Him as **MY** light – the one I know will guide **ME** in life
 - To know Him as **MY** salvation – the I know will rescue **ME** in times of adversity

To know Him as **MY** stronghold – the one I know will provide **ME** the strength I need to live the Christian life and to persevere in time of trial

Thought: This personal intimacy with God is what gives us confidence in God – we KNOW HIM

And the closer I walk with Him – the more my trust in Him will grow

A. As one said – so many Christians don't trust God because it's hard to trust a stranger

1). They haven't spent enough time to really get to know Him personally

To experience that love that drives away fear

Point: So confidence in God is a natural result of living closely to God – that was David

A. This is why quiet times with Him are so important

B. You having trouble having peace – go deeper – draw nearer and watch what happens

Second: David's Confidence Was Based On the Lord's Past Dealings with David

Ps 27:2 (ESV) When evildoers assail me to eat up my flesh, my adversaries and foes, it is they who stumble and fall.

1. David is speaking about a past experience

A. He's been through this kind of trouble before – this isn't anything new

1). Many times he felt enclosed by Saul – like this was it – but it wasn't – God protected him

Point: So trusting God now in light of his history with God was just logical - reasonable

A. We see the same thing in our lives – we have a history of God's faithfulness behind us

1). Has He changed? Has He not come through in the past?

2). Has the one who paid such a cost to make us His Child not take care of us now?

Ro 8:31–32 (ESV) If God is for us, who can be against us? ⁽³²⁾ He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, *how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?*

a). He took care of the major issue – certainly He will take care of the minor issues

B. Therefore we have a reasonable – proven - faith

Transition: Confidence is based on the personal dealings and past dealings with us

Third: David's Confidence Was Based On the Lord's Promised Dealings

Ps 27:3 (ESV) Though an army encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war arise against me, *yet I will be confident.*

1. Where did this confidence come from? The promises of God

A. David is being chased around by Saul who wants to kill him so he can keep the throne

1). Things looked bad BUT God had promised the throne to David

2). So not Saul - his army – or any amount of hostility would stop that from happening

Thought: I believe David was living by the promises of God

A. God said it – I believe it – that settles it = the promises when embraced give us rest

1). Mighty weapons against fear and doubt – backed by divine power and faithfulness

2). No matter what you're going through there is a promise that will help – find it

B. As you start living by the promises you will rest

Summary: So David had great confidence because of God's *personal, past, promised* dealings with Him

Transition: The next thought is so important but so easy to miss when it comes to confidence in God

A. Did David have any part in this? Did the way he chose to live matter?

B. So the next section we see David's commitment to God and his confidence in God were linked

II. DAVID'S COMMITMENT TO GOD

1. He desired to be in the presence of the Lord

Ps 27:4 (ESV) *One thing* have I asked of the LORD, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD *all the days* of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to inquire in his temple.

A. I love this *one thing* have I asked above everything else – here is my priority

Thought: Don't miss this – here is a secret of a joy-filled confident Christianity - commitment to the Lord

A. We are saved by grace – but then called to run in a race = to press on towards God

1). To not settle for indifference and apathy – that will get you nowhere in Christianity

2). If you're lukewarm – indifferent – apathetic – that is so dangerous

Listen to Jesus words: Re 3:1–2 (ESV) “And to the angel of the church in Sardis write: ‘The words of him who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars. “ ‘I know your works. You have the reputation of being alive, but you are dead. ⁽²⁾ *Wake up, and strengthen what remains and is about to die...*”

3). That should awaken you – cause you to get your Bible out

Drive you to prayer – crying out that God will fan those remaining sparks into flame

a). But I don't feel like reading and praying – THEN you must read and pray

Your flesh is winning – how dangerous is that – where will that end?

4). Perhaps God is speaking to you about areas of spiritual discipline

Bible – prayer – Mid-week Bible study – prayer meetings in the church – you MUST respond

a). Do what it takes to be Christ saturated – it is the only place of safety

Point: Being apathetic and indifferent is no joke! That is a path to spiritual destruction

A. Do what you must do to fan those dying sparks back into flame

2. Notice where David wanted to be – in the temple – the church of his day

A. He was excited about it! Got to ask how do you come to church?

Excited to worship God – anticipating hearing from Him?

1). Do you spend any time preparing your heart? Seeking Him? Asking Him to speak to you

B. I wonder what would happen if on Sunday morning – our people got 10 minutes less sleep

And prayed before we came to church for God to move in the service – what would happen?

1). Maybe joined us at 9:35 on the bench for 10 minutes of prayer before the service

2). Sounds like the way to revival to me

3. Notice what David was praying for

Ps 27:4 (ESV) One thing have I asked of the LORD, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, *to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD* and to inquire in his temple.

A. Lord show us you today! Enlarge our vision of your beauty and your majesty

1). He wanted to enjoy the presence of the Lord in His house – so He prayed for that!

Join with me in praying for this! Lord we want to see you! We must see you

Ps 42:1 (ESV) As a deer pants for flowing streams, so pants my soul for you, O God.

Thought: If your heart longs for God – God will satisfy you – your confidence in Him will grow

A. Isn't that the promise in Scripture

Jn 6:35 (ESV) Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst.

Ps 107:9 (ESV) For he satisfies the longing soul, and the hungry soul he fills with good things.

Ps 16:11 (ESV) You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

B. One commentator defined beholding the beauty of the Lord like this

To behold the beauty of the LORD. An exercise both for earthly and heavenly worshipers. We must not enter the assemblies of the saints in order to see and be seen, or merely to hear the minister; we must be

intent on learning more of the loving Father, more of the glorified Jesus, more of the mysterious Spirit, in order that we may the more lovingly admire, and the more reverently adore our gracious God.

Transition: Because David was committed to the Lord – longed for the Lord – his longing soul was satisfied

- A. He experienced the Lord personally – that turned into a great confidence in the Lord – v. 5-6

Ps 27:5–6 (ESV) For he will hide me in his shelter in the day of trouble; he will conceal me under the cover of his tent; he will lift me high upon a rock. ⁽⁶⁾ And now my head shall be lifted up above my enemies all around me, and I will offer in his tent sacrifices with shouts of joy; I will sing and make melody to the LORD.

1. He is being pursued by Saul – yet he is trusting in God's protection

- A. You WILL hide me in your shelter where the enemy can't find me
You WILL lift me high upon a rock where the enemy can't reach me

Thought: This is the confidence that comes when we dwell closely to the Lord

- A. Said it before when I get anxious – it is usually because I've drifted
The solution is always the same – draw near to God – then His peace floods my soul

2. See the great desire of David surface again in v. 6

- A. Here is what he's excited about – ***"I will offer sacrifices in your tent (tabernacle) with joy"***
"I will sing and make melody to the Lord"
- B. David knew he was going to become king
"So don't you mean you're excited about taking the throne – living in the palace – all those things that tag along with being a ruler. The banquets and feasts."
- 1). All of that was secondary in David's desires – God was his priority

Transition: So everything is great – David's riding on top of the trial – brimming with confidence

- A. Suddenly this Psalm takes what seems to be a strange turn – a shocking plummet
- 1). David goes from the mountain top of victory to the valley of fear and defeat in one verse
- 2). Where it seems all of his confidence unexpectedly drains away

III. DAVID'S CRY TO GOD

Ps 27:7–9 (ESV) Hear, O LORD, when I cry aloud; be gracious to me and answer me! ⁽⁸⁾ You have said, "Seek my face." My heart says to you, "Your face, LORD, do I seek." ⁽⁹⁾ Hide not your face from me. Turn not your servant away in anger, O you who have been my help. Cast me not off; forsake me not, O God of my salvation!

1. Notice the radical extreme here

- A. From you will defeat my adversaries and I will worship you in your temple
To don't cast me off. Don't forsake me. Hear me Lord. Be gracious!
- B. From you are with me – you WILL hide me in your shelter – you WILL BE my stronghold
- 1). To where are you? Please don't hide your face from me!

Thought: That really hit me as strange – until I took time to think about it – this is NORMAL

- A. Can't you relate – you're in a trial – you hear a sermon – read a scripture – VICTORY!
- 1). Then the trial takes a different angle – a new "What if" comes up and – DESPAIR!
- B. Everything can turn suddenly dark

David becomes very melancholy – fearing rejection from God – remembering rejection from family

Ps 27:10 (ESV) For my father and my mother have forsaken me, but the LORD will take me in.

- 1). The process of David becoming king wasn't easy on his family
- a). Because of Saul's persecution his parents weren't safe
David moved them out of their farm into a cave with him
Eventually that wasn't safe – he moved them to Moab where they died

- b). This is conjecture – perhaps they had rejected David because of that
- C. When I read of this I thought of the isolation you can feel when you're in a big trial
- 1). Isolated in your pain: Everybody's life seems so perfect BUT MINE – I'm all alone in this
 - a). Nobody can understand – I don't feel like talking about it anyway
 - 2). We also tend to sequester ourselves – I don't feel like being around anybody
 - a). We need the body – but we pull away when we need it the most
 - 3). If God doesn't answer quickly – we feel forsaken by Him!
- Thought:** I believe the Bible puts this here because it is normal – to go from victory to defeat like this
- A. To swing from the victory of faith to the despair of doubt
- 1). From the mountain tops of joy and worship – to the valley of doubt and despair
 - 2). I'm sure you've experienced this in your times of trial
- B. The important thing is to learn what to do when that happens – so you can recover quickly
- 1). I think the more we grow spiritually the quicker we recover in times like this
 - 2). I've noticed in my own life – this still happens – but my recovery time is much quicker now
- C. Let's see what David does to get back to that place of joy in his life
- 1). Watch his cry to God turn from the negativity of despair – driven only by emotion
 - 2). To a three-fold prayer that is based on reasoning - truth
 - a). As he does this – regains a proper footing in his thought life – watch him elevate

First: David Prays for Instruction

Ps 27:11 (ESV) Teach me your way, O LORD...

“Lord use this to instruct me – don't let this just be wasted pain. Teach me how to handle this in a godly manner”

1. Trials are meant to develop us – train us – mature us

- A. But it is possible to waste the trial and not grow from it at all
- Heb 12:11 (ESV)** For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the *peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.*
- 1). Trials are sent by God for good purposes
Are you willing to allow those purposes to be accomplished
 - 2). David gets it – this is an opportunity for growth – for greater godliness to be developed
So he doesn't pray “I want my way” – He prays “Teach me your way”
- B. Can I suggest your trial would end sooner if you learned to pray like this
- 1). Lord what are you trying to teach me here? What are you trying to change?
 - 2). The trial will be lifted when it accomplishes its purposes
Get in the flow of what God's doing so those purposes will be accomplished as quickly as possible
- Thought:** It is possible to scheme and manipulate circumstances to remove the trial for awhile
- A. But if your loving Father sees something that has to change – for your own joy
For your own protection – something that could destroy you spiritually down the road
- 1). He loves you too much to let you have your way – you'll run that lap again and again
 - 2). How much better to just let Him get to that area early – *“teach me your way Lord”*

Second: David Prays for Direction

Ps 27:11 (ESV) ... and lead me on a level path because of my enemies.

1. He's not praying for an easy path – but for wisdom for the steps he will take

- A. We can panic in times of trial and do stupid things that have long term repercussions

- 1). Fear and prolonged pain can lead to some very damaging decisions
- 2). We can start to manipulate circumstances so we aren't trained by the trial
- B. David says – teach me in this – and lead me in this – keep me on those right paths
 - 1). Don't let me stray off – help me to stay right in your will – so I will grow – I will be trained

Transition: He prays to learn from the trial

- A. He prays too walk wisely during the trial – walk towards God and growth not away from Him

Third: David Prays for protection

Ps 27:12 (ESV) Give me not up to the will of my adversaries; for false witnesses have risen against me, and they breathe out violence.

1. Lord while this is happening – while I'm learning – I pray you'll protect me

- A. Lord I turn all these circumstances that seem so daunting over to you
 - 1). All the "What if's" that can drag me back down into despair – over to you
 - a). You're in control of this situation – these people – I trust you to protect me
- B. For the NT Christian it would be "Lord you say all things will work for my good"
 - 1). So I'm praying you'll bring that about - I'm going to fight fear with the promise
I'm going to fight against my fear with the knowledge of who you are – in control

Thought: David has started to preach to himself – tell himself the truth

- A. The *value* of the trial = Lord teach me in this – don't let me miss this opportunity to grow
- B. He asked for *direction - wisdom* = to make his paths level
 - 1). I believe that part of that leveling out of his path is the leveling out of his emotions
 - a). Scripture says God is the lifter of our heads – encourages us
 - b). We've all experienced that – down cast – suddenly lifted – ready to go again
 - 1a). Seems like God is doing that now with David – answering this prayer

Point: He had taken his focus off of God and put them on the circumstances

- A. That lead him into the valley of fear and despair
- B. As he took ahold of himself – *as he shook himself to think scripturally rather than just react*
 - 1). *As he tells himself truth – he starts to focus again on God*

Transition: As he focuses on God again his spirit starts to lift

IV. DAVID'S RESTORATION BY GOD

The Power of a Proper Focus

Ps 27:13 (ESV) I believe that I shall look upon the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living!

2. He is concentrating on the goodness of God again

- A. Thinking about the truth of God – praying to God – turns His heart to God
 - 1). To concentrate on His love – grace – mercy rather than the power of his adversaries
 - 2). God you've got this one – this is nothing to you – you've done this before – *You're so good!*
- B. He again says "I will look upon the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living"
 - 1). I *will* worship you again in your tabernacle – I will worship you again in your house
 - 2). I *will be* with the living – these adversaries – circumstances won't destroy me

The Power of a Proper understanding

Ps 27:14 (ESV) Wait for the LORD; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the LORD!

1. Preaching truth to himself again

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- A. Wait for the Lord David! Be strong and courageous!
 - 1). Remember His timing is different than yours – but it is better than yours – it is always perfect
 - 2). He knows what He’s doing – so be willing to wait!
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CONCLUSION

1. Where are you at this morning – in a time of trial

- A. Are you on that roller coaster – victory then defeat – back to victory and then defeat again

Question: What can we learn from David in this great Psalm?

- A. We learn that is not unusual – we all go through that – but we don’t want to stay down there
 - 1). We have to learn how to recover – to get our eyes back on God – tell ourselves truth
- B. David saw the trial as *valuable* – these circumstances are sent to change me – to teach me
 - 1). So teach me your ways Lord. Don’t let me miss the lessons here
There is things that are very valuable in trials
- C. David looked to God for *guidance* – guide me onto those paths of righteousness
 - 1). Help me to make choices that bring you glory in this
Keep me from making choices that would stop me from being trained in righteousness
- D. David trusted God for *protection* – It may look bad but the promises are sure
 - 1). I trust you to protect me in all this – teach me but also protect me

Question: What happened as David started to preach to himself the truth of God?

- A. He started to focus on God rather than the circumstances – he lifted his eyes
 - 1). He started to remember the goodness of God – He will work this out in His timing
1 Pe 5:10 (ESV) And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you.
- B. He started to rest in the timing of God – it is different than mine but it is better than mine
 - 1). So take courage and wait! Trusting in His goodness that He knows what He is doing

2. This is the fight for faith isn’t it – victory – then doubt

- A. The important thing is learning how to climb out of that doubt quickly
 - 1). The more we grow the quicker we are able to do this