

## In Times Like These, Too

### Psalm 27:7-14

This past week while taking care of my Dad, I met a young man who stopped in with his mother to pay a visit to see how he was doing. They attend his church and in the course of time became fast friends. Tyler is 19 years old and has had many battles in his young life including five operations to remove brain tumors.

After his recent surgery, he told my dad that he was afraid to die. They had a good talk about it. When the pathology report came back, his mom and dad were given the difficult news that they couldn't remove one of the tumors because it was in a place that is inoperable. They shared that news with him including that he may have weeks to live. So he visited with their pastor who helped him see what God's Word has to say about death and heaven and eternal assurance through faith in Christ.

As we visited for about half an hour, I could see a real maturity in how he spoke and in what he said. He said that it makes him realize that today could be his last day here on earth before he meets Jesus, making him appreciate everything about each day. I didn't see any fear in his eyes, nor hear it in his voice. He had a settled peace about him that indicated a solid trust in the Lord knowing that soon he'll be with Jesus. I told him I wished more people, me included, had that kind of eternal perspective living as if today were our last. We would live differently. Our conversations would linger. We wouldn't be as impatient, feel less inconvenienced, be more appreciative, spend more time in thoughtful contemplation, be kinder, gentler, loving, gracious, grateful, reflective, think about heaven more, have fewer doubts and more trust in the Lord.

He told my dad, maybe he would beat him there, to which dad said, you just be there waiting to greet me.

We get so weighed down by any number of troubles and can easily lose sight of eternity. Every day heaven should not grow dimmer because of troubles, it should be brighter as we realize that trust in God makes heaven draw all the closer.

We began last week with what has turned out to be a two-part sermon on trusting God in times like these. David began **Psalm 27** with a rhetorical question in response to three facts about God for which we can trust Him. Statements that give us confidence to keep pressing on. They give us a reason to get up in the morning.

Since God is my light,  
 Since God is my salvation,  
 Since God is my stronghold,  
**Whom shall I fear?**

The answer, of course, is no one.

We compared it to **Romans 8:31** which says the same thing: **"If God is for us who can stand against us?"** The Message reads: **"With God on our side like this, how can we lose?"** Paul finished the chapter saying that there isn't anything in this visible world like people, or things, or circumstances, nor in the unseen world, the devil and all his evil horde that can separate us from God's love, concluding that we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.  
**The question is, do we believe it?**

There are many dangers along the spiritual journey we are on. David was facing some kind of danger that prompted him to pen this psalm of confidence to help pilgrims along the way. He held such confidence because of the communion he had with the Lord. The more we spend time with God, the more likely we will trust him when we face danger.

Here's something you already know, but we need the reminder. We're all going to face dangers of many kinds in life – if not physical, certainly spiritual. And David helps us understand how we can face them, without fear. So let's pick up where we left off last week by turning again in our Bibles to **Psalm 27** starting at **verse 7**.

If you missed last week, here's the outline for your notes.

## I. DAVID'S ABSOLUTE TRUST IN GOD IN TIMES OF DANGER – vv. 1-6

### A. David Has Confidence in God – vv. 1-3

#### 1. David's rhetorical question – v. 1

#### 2. David remembers God's help in the past – v. 2

### 3. David knows God will help in the future – v. 3

#### B. David Has Communion With God – vv. 4-6

But with that, even when we trust God, some of the dangers we face can leave us feeling anxious and that's what we see in the next verses.

## II. DAVID'S ANXIOUS PRAYER IN TIME OF DANGER – vv. 7-12

It reminds me of Elijah, one minute he's defending the honor of God facing 400 false prophets of Baal in bold faith and the next minute he's running away for his life at the threat of Jezebel. It's something we all experience from time to time. We have fierce faith one minute and the next we have failing faith when something seems too big to handle.

Notice in **verses 7-10** David's plea for mercy.

#### A. David's Plea For Mercy – vv. 7-10

Here's an excerpt from Pastor Chuck Swindoll's book Great Days with the Great Lives. It's about the Apostle Paul when he faced an assassination attempt. It could also be how David felt. It's certainly how we may feel from time to time.

“Everyone sooner or later faces the reality of feeling as if life is spinning out of control. That may describe you today. Left unchecked, fear will run its course and paralyze you to the point of helplessness. If you're not careful, you'll spend your days wringing your hands and obsessing over your encroaching circumstances. That will cause you to focus on what might happen instead of what God has promised.” (Chuck Swindoll)

The danger David was facing caused him to cry out to the Lord.

#### 1. David cries out to the Lord – vv. 7-8

Notice the three things he cries out for.

He wants God to hear his voice when he calls out.

He wants God to be merciful and answer him.

He tells God he has sought his face. It's another way of saying that David sought after God's presence.

Each of them is a desire on the part of the king to experience the favor and fellowship of God. It's a

realization that he could not live without God. Lots of people go about their days believing they don't need God, that He's unnecessary, that is, until something devastating happens and then they hope God is listening to their cries for help. Not David. He knew that God was with him all the time and in whatever danger he was facing, he needed God to hear and act, to show mercy.

Mercy is that aspect of God's nature what demonstrates compassion and favor on those in need and who can do nothing about their plight. GotQuestions says that mercy “is revealed in the actions God takes to relieve suffering and demonstrate His faithfulness and steadfast love...It is ‘the gift of God's undeserved kindness and compassion.’”

**So why not ask for His mercy?**

**Ephesians 2:4** says God is rich in mercy. He has an abundant supply.

**II Samuel 24:14** says God's mercy is great. It covers any need we have.

**Lamentations 3:22** says it is God's mercies that keep us from being consumed. It protects us.

David knew that God was merciful and loving and it is on this knowledge and past experience that he cries out to God. But while David knew God was with him all the time, it's possible that this plea comes because he feels God is not answering as quickly as he would like. We've all been there. We've all prayed in expectation that God would respond right away only to be met with silence. We lost our job, and we need God to respond right away by giving us a new one on our first interview, but days turn into weeks, and we wonder.

A loved one is sick, and we want God to bring instant healing but they worsen or pass on.

We face the pain of a relationship that has soured, maybe with a spouse or with a child, and we want God to bring reconciliation right away, but instead it grows even more distant and strained.

We face the trouble of some temptation, only to find that it grows stronger, and we pray that God would take it away, but instead we give in.

**What is God doing in those instances as we cry out to Him? Why doesn't He help us, if He loves us and**

## cares for us as He says He does?

Someone has rightly said that “fear lives right next door to faith... We ride the roller coaster from fear to faith over and over.”

David was obviously facing some danger for which he cried out to God for divine help. Let me give you a word that we'll come back to at the end of the chapter, but I want you to have it now, to ponder its importance and possibilities. It's the word **WAIT**. But waiting isn't passive, in this case it's active – “**Wait on the Lord.**”

David prayed fervently, but he prayed with some anxiety. It's one thing to pray to see God's sanctuary as he did in **verses 4-5** and quite another thing when we see the enemy. That's when the real test of faith in God comes out. **A basketball player can make lay ups, jump shots, and free throws all day long when no one is guarding him, but how about under pressure when someone is guarding him, he's tired, and the game is on the line?** No wonder David cried to God to hear his voice, to have mercy on him, and not abandon him.

God's response isn't always right away, so don't stop crying out to Him, but don't stop trusting.

The next thing we notice is how David pleads with the Lord.

### 2. David pleads with the Lord – v. 9

In **verses 7-8** David cried out based on God's character. In **verse 9** he pleads with God based on his own concern. He has three.

Don't hide your face from me.

Don't turn away from me in anger since You have been my help in the past.

Don't abandon me, for You are my salvation.

Let me remind you of something you have heard me say before: ***God's silence does not mean His absence.***

Charles Spurgeon writes: “**The command to seek the Lord's face would be a painful one if the Lord, by withdrawing Himself, rendered it impossible for the seeker to meet with Him... If the Lord meant to leave us, why did He begin with us?**”

David seems to be saying that if the righteous seek God, God shouldn't refuse to help them. In both **Psalm 102:2** and **143:7** the psalmist asks the Lord to answer him quickly.

We can feel left alone by God.

We can feel let down by God.

It's okay to let Him know you feel abandoned.

Plead with Him for His help but believe His promise that He will never leave or forsake you, let His abiding presence and abounding peace sustain you in your danger. And to that we come back to that word of hope “**wait on the Lord.**”

In **verse 8** David said he sought after the Lord. In **verse 9** he went further by saying that he has been God's servant. He hasn't just been a recipient of God's blessings; he has also done things on behalf of God or in the name of God. As someone who obviously loved the Lord, he demonstrated that love with acts of service. Authentic devotion will always be manifested in faithful service.

David pleads with God for a response because of his loyal service recognizing that God alone is his Savior. Only He can deliver David from the danger he was facing.

David cried out to and pleaded with the Lord. If that is all there is and the Lord truly is someone who may from time to time abandon those who seek Him, then there truly is no help or hope, but **verse 10** tells us of David's hope in the Lord.

### 3. David hopes in the Lord – v. 10

Gerald Wilson rightly states that “**there is no more crushing experience than for a child to be abandoned by his or her parents.**”

Kids can feel that way from time to time. They do something the parents don't like or approve of and the parents disown them, throw them out, have nothing more to do with them getting a cold shoulder and a stiff arm. Phone calls and text messages are left unanswered. Mail is returned to sender. At the root is bitterness, resentment and unforgiveness. The bond that was once forged in birth is severed and the child is alone. There is no worse feeling than to be forsaken by a parent.

There is no indication in scripture that David's parents ever abandoned him. But even if it was possible that his parents would somehow forsake him, God would not. He would always be there. That is our hope when we feel the overwhelming weight of any danger we face, that God is still there. He walks with us in all our shadows (**Psalm 23:4**).

If everyone else were to abandon you, even those who had been closest to you, God will never do that. He will ALWAYS be there with you and for you.

**When you are anxious about what's going on in your life, thinking that everything and everyone is against you, can you find hope in the Lord as you cry out to and plead with Him?**

In **verses 7-10** David pleads for mercy.

In **verses 11-12** David pleads for deliverance.

## **B. David's Plea For Deliverance – vv. 11-12**

Looking back over your life we could all probably point to someone who really impacted our life in some way. They were a guiding light and a steady compass point directing our path, especially during turbulent times.

Aside from my parents, I would have to say it was Uncle Johnnie, founder of Camp Barakel. There have been others along the way who have guided me during certain times of challenge and struggle. Robyn is up at the top. She is my go to person when I'm facing danger. My friend Dick who I have known for 60 years would rank high on that list. He has always been there when I needed someone to talk to. His guidance has been invaluable. There was Mark in HR where I worked for a few years who encouraged me in my journey of faith. I would put my twin brother, Charlie, up there also. He's a steady head with a solid faith who has been there for me. There are others.

David certainly had any number of advisors that he went to for guidance, but in **verse 11** we see that he requested guidance from the Lord.

### **1. David's request for guidance from the Lord – v. 11**

David asked God to teach him the right way to go because the enemy, whoever it was, was waiting for

him. David wanted and needed clear direction.

If I am traveling in a big city, especially one where I have never been before, I get quite frustrated when the signage isn't obvious. Even GPS can be confusing at times. And then you hear that ominous voice say "rerouting." After the fifth or sixth time of hearing that they just shut down all together because even they're confused. If GPS was human, you'd probably hear some snickering.

David doesn't ask any passerby for directions. He goes right to the Lord to guide him. There's only one person who can point the way he needs to go. That's what got Christian in a mess on more than one occasion in John Bunyan's classic Pilgrim's Progress. He met with different people who wanted to give him advice on the best way to go, which ultimately led him off the right path and into greater danger. That's where trust becomes essential. **Do you trust the one from whom you are getting advice?**

David's son, Solomon, would write about the importance of trusting in God alone in **Proverbs 3:5-6**. We can think we know the way; we can think someone else knows the way we need to go, but at the end of the day, we need to trust the Lord with all our heart. When we place all our trust in Him, He will make our paths straight, plain, clear. He has given us that guidance in His Word.

Last weekend we visited Ryah and the kids while Thomas was away for National Guard training. She wanted me to help put a couple shelving units together. We used the directions but got distracted by one of the kids and ended up using the wrong screw on one step so when it came time to use the right ones, well, we had to use the other ones. Now, in defense, the instructions weren't really clear and fortunately it turned out okay rather than looking like something Picasso might have made. But you get my point. When we don't use the directions or use them only when we feel like it, it doesn't always turn out.

It's the same with direction in life, especially when we face dangers in the Christian life. It is important to always be in the guidebook getting direction for the path we should take. When we are in His Word,

His Spirit will use what we study to guide us. **II Timothy 3:16-17** tells us that God's inspired Word is intended to instruct us and guide us into spiritual maturity. **Yet how many times do we try to navigate our journey in this life without much assistance from God?** Ask Him to teach you the way you should go, especially when facing those who would oppose you.

Notice that he didn't ask for an easy path. He asked for the right path, the path the Lord would have him go. He asked that God would teach him His way, not any way. Solomon says there is a way that SEEMS right, but it's end is destruction. Jesus says He is THE WAY, THE TRUTH, and THE LIFE. **Which way do you want to take: the path that leads to destruction, or the path that leads to life?** Ask God to teach you His way.

Gerald Wilson states that **"to seek God in this way is not a matter of unfocused searching but a sign of commitment to the way of life He demands and provides."**

Let's learn from David and request guidance from the Lord. We see the why to his request in **verse 12**.

## 2. David's reason for asking the Lord for deliverance – v. 12

There were false witnesses who opposed him. They were breathing out violence against him.

Let's be clear that a false witness is a liar, and Jesus said that Satan is the father of lies, so a false witness is from the devil himself.

David obviously felt the sting of betrayal either in what others were saying about him that he knew were not true or things people were saying to him that he knew were not true. In either case, David was asking God to deliver him from the false witnesses.

One of my favorite episodes of Veggie Tales is the Rumor Weed. Rumors are untruths or half-truths that leave out some of the details that would give it a whole different meaning. It's an opinion given with no discernable truth. I'm sure we have all been the target of rumors. We may have even been the originator of a rumor.

David doesn't tell us what others were saying about him, but they were significant enough to go to the Lord about those spreading the lies.

If false words weren't enough to try and hurt him and his reputation, there were those who were actively seeking to harm him. They weren't just saying false things about him, they were threatening some kind of violence against him.

Whatever danger you are facing, plead for deliverance asking God to lead you along the right way. He will never lead you down the wrong path.

Last week we looked at David's absolute trust in God in times of danger. But as we have seen today there are times when David expressed anxiety because of what he was facing. Let's conclude with some encouragement as once again we see David's assuring confidence in God in times of danger.

## III. DAVID'S ASSURING CONFIDENCE IN GOD IN TIMES OF DANGER – vv. 13-14

Despite all he was facing, David could emphatically say **"I am still confident of this."** He knew that God was his provider, protector, deliverer, and sustainer, that God would see him through. He had done so in the past and would continue to do so. In **verse 13** we see David's need for faith in the Lord.

### A. David's Need For Faith in the Lord – v. 13

**Do we have complete confidence in the Lord?  
Do we have complete confidence in His promises?  
Do we completely trust that He will keep His word?**

If he did not believe, trust, or have faith in God to keep His word, David would have despaired. But he believed in God's goodness. He believed that in the end he would experience God's blessing. And in the believing, he gained strength for the battle he was facing.

**How did he come by such confidence?** He had learned to wait on the Lord.

### B. David's Need To Wait on the Lord – v. 14

The dictionary says waiting is to stay in the same place or not do anything until something else happens.

Saul was told to wait for Samuel to come and offer the sacrifice and bless the troops. He didn't wait and the kingdom was taken from him.

The disciples were told to wait in Jerusalem until the Holy Spirit came upon them. They did and the world was turned upside down.

When faced with a sea in front and a formidable army fast approaching from behind, Moses told the Israelites to wait and see the salvation of the Lord.

But I find it hard to wait, especially when I don't know how long it will take. It's close to unbearable to wait in a doctor's office or hospital waiting room. I don't like to wait in a traffic jam. It's hard to wait Christmas morning to open gifts. But David said, if we want the full blessing of the Lord we must wait.

Tony Evans says that waiting isn't passive but **"is an active engagement of life's challenges within the revealed will of God as we hope for His deliverance."**

Another word for waiting is trusting. **Isaiah 40:31** tells us that when we wait on the Lord our strength will be renewed. Waiting charges up our spiritual batteries. We may be in a hurry, but God is not. If His plans and purposes are perfect, we are best served by waiting for Him. And in the waiting we are told to take courage.

It's the advice Moses gave Joshua as he was commissioned as the new leader who would take Israel into the Promised Land (**Deut. 31:7, 23**)

It's the advice Joshua was given by the Lord before Israel began the conquest of the Promised Land (**Joshua 1:6-7, 9, 18**).

We are told to wait and, in the waiting, our strength is renewed. The waiting builds our faith as we trust in the sovereign will of God who has allowed these dangers to happen for the purpose to grow us.

We are not to wait fearfully.

We are not to wait fitfully.

We are not to wait frantically.

We are to wait faithfully, fully, and finally on the Lord.

When we don't wait on God when we are told to do so, we essentially become 'functional atheists' says

Gerald Wilson. We say we trust God, but we don't act like it because we deny God's active role in us. When we don't wait for God, we are essentially saying that we know better and we'll go our own way and do our own thing.

Charles Spurgeon tells us to **"wait at His door with praying, wait at His foot with humility, wait at His table with service, and wait at His window with expectancy."**

Wait in absolute trust of the One whose way is perfect.

Wait by continually seeking Him in His Word.

Wait in patient prayer to Him.

Wait in faithful expectation of Him.

Franklin Graham said **"No matter what storm you face, you need to know that God loves you."** To which I add, because He loves you, you can trust Him in the waiting.

No matter what danger we are facing, even when we feel that God doesn't see us or hear us, it is in those moments when our faith is stirred to trust the Lord waiting in eager expectation that God will carry out His promises.

We end where we began in **verse 1**. Since the Lord is my light, my salvation, and my stronghold, what do I have to fear – wait on the Lord. Whatever you are facing right now or will be facing in the future, remember that this is not the end. There is coming a glorious day when we will see our Savior. Dad's friend Tyler is expectantly waiting in faith and in the waiting, finding strength and courage. **Can we be strong and take heart while we wait?**