

Humble Trust

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[0 : 0 0] now uh we have a couple of bible readings they'll both be up on the screen the first is from Isaiah chapter 55 and then we'll be in Psalm 131 so Isaiah 55 first of all let's hear God's word come all you who are thirsty come to the waters and you who have no money come buy and eat come buy wine and milk without money and without cost why spend money on what is not bread and your labor on what does not satisfy listen listen to me and eat what is good and you will delight in the richest of fear give ear and come to me listen that you may live I will make an everlasting covenant with you my faithful love promised to David see I have made him a witness to the peoples a ruler and commander of the peoples surely you will summon nations you know not and nations you do not know will come running to you because of the Lord your God the Holy One of Israel for he has endowed you with splendor seek the Lord while he may be found call on him while he is near let the wicked forsake their ways and the unrighteous their thoughts let them turn to the Lord and he will have mercy on them and to our God for he will freely pardon for my thoughts are not your thoughts neither are your ways my ways declares the Lord as the heavens are higher than the earth so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater so is my word that goes out from my mouth it will not return to me empty but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it you will go out in joy and be led forth in peace the mountains and hills will burst into song before you and all the trees of the field will clap their hands instead of the thorn bush will grow the juniper and instead of briars the myrtle will grow this will be for the Lord's renown for an everlasting sign that will endure forever and then in Psalm 131 one of the the shortest Psalms that we have in the Bible so let's read together from Psalm 131 my heart is not proud Lord my eyes are not haughty I do not concern myself with great matters or things too wonderful for me but I have calmed and quietened myself I am like a weaned child with its mother like a weaned child I am content Israel put your hope in the Lord both now and forevermore amen so as I was saying earlier this is a focus on trust that we find in this Psalm this is going to be our last time in the the book of Psalms for the next couple of months in our mornings we're going to look at the heart of Jesus as we find it in John's gospel but I wanted to finish here our study on the Psalms thinking about trust and how essential that is and I deliberately chose this really short Psalm because it has a really powerful image at its center they say a picture is worth a

thousand words and so I'm hoping as we think about this picture that we have in verse two of the contented child in its mother's arms that it will open the curtains and let the light of Christian hope and the Christian life shine for us whoever we are that we would recognize that in God we can find contentment as we learn to humbly trust in a wise and a loving father in heaven so it's a small lesson it's a small psalm but it's got this massive truth that if we want to find rest in the storms of life if we want to find shelter then we can do that in the arms of our God who made us and who wants to be with us and for us it seems important for the times in which we live I imagine all of us have found ourselves trying to anticipate what the next set of regulations and restrictions might be speculating when they might come to an end figuring out how our plans need to reorganize because of the changes that come in many of us are facing uncertainty some that's because of ongoing health concerns for many there's the new concern to do with health and employment for our young people and students the concern is about education for all of us family friendships relationships in the short to medium term what's it going to look like and the impact of all of that is that anxiety and fear and frustration can dominate our minds and dominate our horizons we can find all our energy going into figuring out what are the rules and why are they there and when will it come to an end but here we have an invitation and my prayer is that our experience will be that of David that in suffering and

worry and discontent we would lean into God our father and that we would find rest from and with him that we would go to him that we might be wrapped in his loving everlasting arms
Jesus was asked on a number of occasions who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven that kind of discussion would come up and Psalm 131 anticipates the answer that he gave greatness in the kingdom looks like becoming as a little child learning to trust learning to depend on our father in heaven so let's explore this psalm of David together and we'll begin in verse 2 with this picture of contentment where David says I have calmed and quietened myself I am like a weaned child with its mother like a weaned child I am content it's a lovely family image that God gives to us perhaps if we're parents here we can remember those moments we can look back and think about those times where our children were happy to find themselves in our arms wanting nothing other than to just rest there for a while there's a wonderful moment to enjoy maybe we remember those feelings as children and here is where David goes as he wants to express his trust he says I'm like a small child nestling in its mother's arms here is David coming to enjoy the comfort and rest of his father's love and God puts it this way in

Isaiah 66 God says to his people as a mother comforts her child so I will comfort you so God in kindness gives us this motherly image to speak of his tender love and care and in verse 2 we have a picture of contentment this is a weaned child not a little baby who sometimes might be content in our mother's arms other times fussing and squawking for food here is a here is a toddler a small child simply content to be simply content to rest in the closeness and the love of their mother's arms it's an invitation for us notice that David is making an active choice in all of this in verse 1 he said my heart is not proud I do not concern myself with great matters but I have calmed and quietened myself he's making an active choice to find contentment in God he's looking to still the storm that he feels in his heart and his mind he's looking to quieten that urge to frantic fixing or restless pursuit that perhaps we can all feel even although he is the king of Israel he's not straining under the illusion that I should be able to figure out all life's conundrums that I can manage these crises by myself rather he is humbling himself to trust in God his father and again I think this is a really gracious invitation for us if your mind is like mine probably you find itself from day to day going in a thousand different directions all at once and that can be exhausting but here is a call from God to lean into him as father and to rest if you find your energy is getting taken up by fear and frustration if your faith feels weak and you feel discouraged here is an invitation come to this God or return to this God as your place of refuge

I read an article yesterday entitled when God says no to earnest prayers and the author was exploring the difficulties that come when you pray sincerely and answers don't come and he was looking to the Bible to find answers for how do we respond as Christians in those moments and he directed in one of his points readers to Psalm 131 to say that in all circumstances we have this invitation to trust in God's wisdom when we don't know why answers don't come when we don't know why circumstances don't change like David we have to recognize there's a point where there are things that are too wonderful for us to recognize that God's ways are not our ways and to rest in that knowing that we can trust our good father in heaven and to trust in his wisdom David is able to rest contented because he knows his God and he knows God's character I wonder if we've come to discover God as father in that way so that we too can rest content because we know we have a father in heaven we know his character we know that he is for us so that he would be the one safe place the refuge the fortress that we would run to this is an invitation that we all need to hear it's an invitation to enjoy God's love and to know that love in our experience to make that choice to move towards this God who loves us

[12 : 05] I was thinking about the first of the Harry Potter books and a little conversation towards the end where Dumbledore is talking to Harry about his scar and about his mother and Dumbledore said this to him he said your mother died to save you if there is one thing Voldemort cannot understand it is love and then this love as powerful as your mother's for you leaves its own mark to have been loved so deeply will give us some protection forever love as powerful as your mother's well at the heart of the Bible is the powerful love of God the father a love so great that he would send his one and only son so that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life the mark of our father's powerful love we see at the cross where Jesus the one and only son of his father is given in our place for our sins so that we by faith might become sons and daughters that to trust in Jesus according to the language of first Peter is to be shielded by God's powerful love now and until final salvation when Jesus returns we can rest content when we know the love of our father let the cross show us and teach us how deep the father's love for us is and that we would find

contentment and trust in him from there I want us to go back to verse one and to recognize that to have that kind of contentment we need humility before God

I don't know if all schools are the same but the school that our boys go to is very big on trying to help children understand their emotions they seem to get a lot of classes on emotions and we know we understand emotions we understand opposites happy and sad or opposites love and hate or opposite verse one's really interesting because David is appreciating and helping us to see that the opposite of anxiety the anxiety that perhaps we feel isn't always calmness and peace the answer to anxiety in verse one is humility and especially humility before God what kind of anxiety does David have in view in verse one what is it that he is trying to rid himself of verse one my heart is not proud Lord my eyes are not haughty I do not concern myself with great matters or things too wonderful for me he understands there is an anxiety that we can feel when we are overreaching overstepping our limits when our desires are too great so he's trying to put those to one side a desire for greatness compared to others and a failure to accept our limitations before God he's come to understand that that path that way of living leads to restlessness and frustration and discontent and so the answer the antidote to that then is humility and so he's showing us a pattern of humility against in the first place the temptation of pride my heart is not proud Lord my eyes are not haughty that temptation to have an overinflated view of ourselves that would then at the same time undervalue others it's a warning against that drive to be great and to ambition that is severed from a concern for God's glory and a desire to serve others it's an understanding that pride feeds on comparison and competition and that is not the pathway to peace and contentment where we're not just happy to be good we have to be better than the other person we're not content with being smart we need to be smarter than someone else constantly fighting for recognition and approval will not lead to contentment rather it will make frustration inevitable because it's very unlikely we're ever going to reach that point where we've we can say I have enough or I truly am at the top of the game and there's nobody above me even David is king he has to make that deliberate choice to fight against pride so he can be content how does our image of the content child in verse 2 help us in that battle that we face against pride and competition we're here as Christians those who are in Jesus Christ we have that wonderful truth that in Jesus we have full approval from our father in heaven when we are in him that our position is secure as loved and adopted children of God our inheritance is certain eternal life in glory ruling in the new heavens and the new earth if we live for the approval of the one who matters for God almighty then we have the freedom to be humble we can be overlooked and not be crushed by that we can miss out on opportunities and not feel as if the world has come to an end we can be free to suffer and knowing that we are loved we are kept and we have a glorious future if we learn the contentment of resting

in the loving arms of our father the second part of verse 1 moves from pride to presumption when David says I do not concern myself with great matters or things too wonderful for me he's saying again he's put to one side an overestimating of himself and his own abilities in particular he's determined not to forget his limits compared to God David is content to say even although I am the king I cannot understand and I cannot manage many of the great things there is a set of wisdom that belongs to God alone and I'm going to trust him and I'm going to trust his will I'm going to trust his character and I'm going to rest rather than trying to become God-like and reach for those kind of wisdoms the Bible teaches that distinction really clearly for us

God is the creator and we are created God is all-knowing and all-powerful he is all-wise he knows the past the present and the future and we do not we are limited compared to God and if we try and break free of our limits again we will find ourselves frustrated we will find ourselves anxious because we are trying to make decisions and to control things that are ultimately outwith our control what does that look like?

it might look like sleepless nights and agonizing over the future because we want to know what's God's will why this why me what can I do to change things and sometimes we need to learn to rest and wait on God David has come to discover that freedom of living within those limits that God has set resting and knowing I can't control everything I can't fix everything I can't understand everything not now and not in my future so if you are anxious today frustrated or fearful today let Psalm 131 be God's gift to each of us so that in humility we would be ready to accept our limits and trust our unlimited God and that at the same time we would take our cares to our Father in Heaven knowing that He loves us and that He cares for us one last thing to notice verse 3 as David draws the Psalm to a close and it's this that trust is the basic posture of faith so David's given us this wonderful

testimony as the king you know before God

[21 : 23] I want to be like a child I want to live with humble trust and then he calls on the worshipping people of God to learn that lesson with Him as he says in verse 3 Israel put your hope in the Lord both now and forever more he has found security he has found a solid basis for his hope and he wants to pass that on God is his centre of gravity God is the sun around which his life orbits not himself as the king and he's found that to be a place of peace and a place of rest he's been weaned off false ambitions he's been weaned off misplacing his desires he's been weaned off an anxiety from fighting against those proper limits and he's found rest and so he calls the church to trust as the king he says trust in the much greater than me trust in the Lord

God now and evermore it's a wonderful testimony from King David and it's a testimony echoed perfectly by King Jesus while David's heart at times would waver Jesus never did how do we see the humility of King Jesus we see it in his willingness to leave the glory of heaven to become one of us in order that he might be the promised suffering servant he lived a humble life as the man of sorrows and died in our place for our sins how do we see the contentment of Jesus with his father in heaven we hear him so often talking about his delight in doing his father's will he didn't ever want to say or do anything outside of his father's will at all points in his life he was fully obedient and had joy in that even when it took him to the cross and his trust again was absolute so that even as he was dying having completed his mission of coming to be the once for all sacrifice for sinners he prayed to his father into your hands

I commit my spirit trust from first to last the great king who gives that testimony and who calls us to follow in his path so as we leave this psalm and indeed as we leave the book of psalms for a time and there are so many trust psalms to explore are we trusting God as our father have we come to know and are we looking to experience that love in an ongoing way are we making that active choice and all the busyness and all the fear and all the stuff buzzing around in our head to come and to quiet ourselves before him do we hear his call to come and rest to come with that childlike faith to enjoy him