

Psalm Ch27v1-14

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Date: 06 September 2026

Preacher: Tyler Howard

[0:00] Well, good morning. As Alex said, if you have your Bibles, you can go ahead and open them up to the book of Psalm. I recently found out that I pronounced that incorrectly. I've heard that it's actually Sam or something like that.

So you'll just have to forgive my pronunciation throughout. I'm from Southcourt, actually. So my pronunciation isn't perfect. But yeah, if you have your Bibles, we're going to be reading here from Psalm 27 in just a moment.

But before I begin, I just want to express my thanks to the elders here at Carrigline Baptist Church for inviting me to come and open God's Word with you this morning.

For those of you who don't know me, as Alex shared, my wife and I, we have the privilege of serving at Carrig Tool Baptist Church. But it's always such a joy and a privilege to be able to visit with our sister churches to see what God is doing in all the churches around the Cork-Carrig Project.

So thank you so much for having us and for being so welcoming. Well, as you know, this summer in Ireland was uncharacteristically hot.

[1:13] And when it gets hot, people like to find the nearest body of water, something they can jump into to cool themselves down. And honestly, you can't really blame them.

I was actually pretty miserable this summer. My wife loves the heat, but I was made for cooler temperatures. So it was not for me. But one of the things you're likely to see if you hang around a dock or a swimming pool long enough is a parent waiting in the water with their arms extended, coaxing their child to jump in.

And it's pretty cute if you've ever seen this unfold. Because you have those kids who are naturally fearless, jumping into the water with reckless abandon. But then you have those kids who are more tentative.

So they're slowly making their way to the edge. And they require a bit more convincing. I'm not going to ask which of those groups you belong to. But have you ever thought about what goes through a child's head just before they jump?

So I asked my wife, Monica, this question recently. And she said, I just wanted the adrenaline rush. That's certainly one answer.

[2:30] I don't know if that would have been my answer. But she gave another answer as well. She said, trust. She had confidence that her mom and her dad were both willing and able to take care of her if she made that leap.

And in our text this morning, we're going to see a similar kind of trust. We'll see that the psalmist's confidence in the face of hardship, it comes from knowing that God is able and willing to take care of him.

And it's my prayer that as we leave from this place this morning, we'll do so with a greater degree of trusting God. No matter the circumstances in which we find ourselves this morning.

And that we would have a greater desire for God's presence in our own lives. So I want to begin by working verse by verse through the psalm before turning to a few points of application.

But before I dive in, let's just take some time once again to pray together before we turn to God's word. God, thank you so much for your word and for the privilege of sharing it with the folks at Karageline Baptist Church this morning.

[3:55] Would you help me to explain the message clearly? The message that you intended to convey, God. Not something from me. And would you help that message to take root in our hearts?

For those who are here this morning who have not placed their faith in you, would you reveal to them by your Holy Spirit that you are good and you are trustworthy? And God, would you give me

clarity of speech, clarity of thought, calmness of spirit?

And I ask all these things in Jesus' name. Amen. So let's read the text together. Beginning in verse 1, it says, the Psalm of David.

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? When the wicked advance against me to devour me, it is my enemies and my foes who will stumble and fall.

[5:03] Though an army besiege me, my heart will not fear. Though war break out against me, even then I will be confident.

One thing I ask from the Lord, this only do I seek, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze on the beauty of the Lord and to seek him in his temple.

For in the day of trouble, he will keep me safe in his dwelling. He will hide me in the shelter of his sacred tent and set me high upon a rock.

Then my head will be exalted above the enemies who surround me. At his sacred tent, I will sacrifice with shouts of joy. I will sing and make music to the Lord.

Hear my voice when I call, Lord. Be merciful to me and answer me. My heart says this of you. Seek his face.

[6:10] Your face, Lord, I will seek. Do not hide your face from me. Do not turn your servant away in anger. You have been my helper. Do not reject me or forsake me, God my Savior.

Though my father and mother forsake me, the Lord will receive me. Teach me your way, Lord. Lead me in a straight path because of my oppressors.

Do not turn me over to the desire of my foes. For false witnesses rise up against me, spouting malicious accusations. I remain confident of this.

I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait for the Lord. Be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord.

This is the word of the Lord. Well, just to give a little bit of background to our text this morning, you may have noticed at the outset that in our text, we're given a simple inscription of David.

[7:20] Now, the Hebrew construction that translates to the English phrase of David, it can mean that David is the author of this particular psalm, or possibly that David is just the subject of this psalm, that the psalm is written about him.

And there are other potential translations as well. But while it's difficult to know with certainty, I think it's likely the psalm was written by David. I think the evidence points in that direction.

But beyond this simple inscription at the beginning of our text, we aren't given any additional information about the circumstances that gave rise to it. The sort of information we find, for instance, in Psalm chapter 51, where we're told that David had composed that particular psalm after he had been confronted in his adultery with Bathsheba.

And information like that, it helps to set the stage and to provide some useful context. Psalm 27 doesn't give us that sort of context, but that certainly doesn't take away from its significance or its usefulness in the life of believers today.

In our text, we see the psalmist, David, that he begins and ends with expressions of his confidence in God. And expressions of great difficulty sprinkled in between.

[8:52] So I want to break the text into four main sections this morning. In verses 1 to 3, we'll see David's initial expression of confidence in God.

In verses 4 to 6, David's desire for protection in God's presence. In verses 7 to 12, we'll see David cry out with pressing needs.

And finally, in verses 13 to 14, we're going to see David's confidence revisited. So let's begin with the first section, David's confidence.

In these opening verses, David proclaims his confidence in the face of extreme hardship, and he gives us the reason for it.

Let's look again at verses 1 to 3. David says, The Lord is the stronghold of my life.

[9:53] Of whom shall I be afraid? When the wicked advance against me to devour me, it is my enemies and my foes who will stumble and fall. Though an army besiege me, my heart will not fear.

Though war break out against me, even then I will be confident. Why is it that David is able to remain confident in the face of extreme hardship?

It's because of who God is. And what he is capable of. David recognizes that God is able to save and to defend, no matter the situation.

And I don't know about you, but when I look at this list of things that David says he has no reason to fear, I can't help but think about how uniquely terrifying some of them are.

So we have an army making war against him. We have enemies who are intent on David's destruction. Now you and I, we might have forgiven David for thinking, Yeah, you actually have really good reason to be afraid right now.

[11:10] But David doesn't go that way. David voices his confidence in God. God is up to the task of taking care of David. He's even able to make the plans of those wishing to do David harm come to nothing.

And this is certainly a reality that David would see outplay or play out in his life time and time again. To give just one example, you may remember David's encounter with a little guy named Goliath. We're told in 1 Samuel that David was brave when even the king, Saul, shrunk back in fear. David says to Saul in 1 Samuel 17, verse 37, The Lord who rescued me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will rescue me from the hand of this Philistine.

And if you remember that story, God did rescue David that day. Goliath, the enemy intent on destroying David and the peoples of God, was the one who stumbled and fell that day.

And turning now to verses 4 to 6, we see David's desire for protection in God's presence. So let's read those verses again.

[12:39] One thing I ask from the Lord, this only do I seek, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze on the beauty of the Lord and to seek him in his temple.

For in the day of trouble, he will keep me safe in his dwelling. He will hide me in the shelter of his sacred tent and set me high upon a rock.

But look at verse 6. Then my head will be exalted above the enemies who surround me. At his sacred tent, I will sacrifice with shouts of joy.

I will sing and make music to the Lord. In these verses, David uses these two phrases, the house of the Lord and in his temple.

And these two phrases, they speak to the period of redemptive history where God's presence was specially connected to place. In David's day, that place was the tabernacle.

[13:50] This is the place where God's people, they would go to worship, to offer sacrifices, to connect with God in a special sort of way. Things are different with us now as members of a new covenant, but this is the way they sort of interacted with God's presence in the old covenant.

In verse 4, we're told that this is the place that David wants to stay forever. And why? Because he knows that God's presence means God's protection.

And when, by God's hand, David is protected, he's going to worship God for what he's done. So turning to verses 7 to 12, you may have noticed that the tone of the psalm begins to change.

We see David cry out to God with what seemed to be very pressing needs. And again, we don't know the specific circumstances that occasion this psalm, but we can see that David is really in some sort of trouble here.

Let's look again at verse 7. Hear my voice when I call, Lord. Be merciful to me and answer me. My heart says of you, seek his face.

[15:10] In your face, Lord, I will seek. Do not hide your face from me. Do not turn your servant away in anger. You have been my helper.

Do not reject me or forsake me, God my Savior. Though my father and mother forsake me, the Lord will receive me.

Teach me your way, Lord. Lead me in a straight path because of my oppressors. Do not turn me over to the desire of my foes, for false witnesses rise up against me, spouting malicious accusations.

Note David's response to this trouble, but also the ground of his hope in this difficult circumstance. How does David respond to this hardship?

By seeking God. By asking for direction, God's guidance, and protection. David chooses to turn to God in the midst of these difficulties because God has come through for him time and time again.

[16:26] And he trusts that God is able to do it once more. What is the extent of God's care for David expressed in this psalm?

Even if he's abandoned by his own father and mother, God will not abandon him. So finally, let's look at verses 13 and 14, where the tone of the psalm seems to shift one final time.

David ends the psalm in a place of confidence once more. I remain confident of this. I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.

Wait for the Lord. Be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord. In verses 7 to 12, David lets us know that he needs God to come through.

There are people who wish to do him harm, people who have sought to destroy David's reputation. But in spite of all of those difficulties, he's confident that God is going to work, even if some waiting is required.

[17 : 50] Charles Spurgeon, as he was reflecting on verse 13, he had this to say. According to our varied experiences, we must all subscribe to the declaration that this earth is more or less a valley of tears.

That is not our rest, for it is polluted. There are too many thorns in this nest for us to abide comfortably in it. But faith comes into this unpromising field and believes she will see the goodness of the Lord even here.

She rushes into the fiercest fight that ever rages, fully believing she will see the banner of the Lord's mercy and truth waving even there.

She bears the burden and heat of the earthly toil and expects to experience the Lord's faithful love beneath it all. She knows she will see more of her God in the land beyond the flood.

But still she expects to see the goodness of the Lord even in this land of the living that is so distracted and disturbed with sorrows and cares, trials and tribulations.

[19 : 10] This is the confidence in which David rests, that he will see the goodness of God once again. Now before we bring our time together to a close, I want to leave you with just a few points of application.

I know I'm preaching to the choir here. I don't have to tell you that as Christians, we're not immune to hardship. In fact, you could argue that in some cases being a Christian invites even more hardship.

In a congregation of this size, I'm sure that there's been experiences of real difficulty. Experiences of pain, of hurt, and threat.

In our own church back in Carrad Tool, we've seen battles with debilitating illness. We've seen infertility. We've seen the loss of job, the loss of home.

Don't answer out loud, but if those have been some of your experiences, what has been the basis of your hope when difficulties like that arise? Just think about that for a moment.

[20 : 32] What grounds your hope as a believer in those difficult moments? Friends, if God is able to take care of David, he is able to take care of you.

How different would the trying seasons of our life be if we could learn to rest in that truth? If you're here this morning and you're in the middle of an extreme hardship, how have you responded to it? I know it can be so easy to point the finger at God, to spiral, to become paralyzed by our griefs, our fears, and our anxieties, but what if instead we turn to God immediately, believing that he is both able and willing to come through for us again, believing that he will never abandon us, believing that he is able to lead us down a level path?

As I was preparing the sermon, I went through the text and I tried to make a sort of inventory of the ways in which God is described by the psalmist in this passage.

I just want to share with you a few of the things I noticed. The psalmist says of God that he's a savior and he's a defender. He's powerful and he's in control.

[22 : 02] He's a helpful guide and teacher. If you're in Christ here this morning, this is the one, to use a boxing analogy, this is the one you have in your corner this morning.

Now one great difficulty of the Christian life that's reflected here in David's words in verses 13 to 14 is that God does not work on our timeline.

His ways are not our ways. He's able to come through for us, we know this, but sometimes that requires waiting.

And this is a lesson that many of us here today have learned or are in the process of learning. If necessary, brothers and sisters, wait on the Lord.

Now, if you're on the back end of hardship and difficulty, if God has led you through, again, what has been your response? In verses 4 and 5, David voices his desire to remain in the Lord's presence forever because he knows that God is able to protect him.

[23:20] But remember verse 6, then my head will be exalted above the enemies who surround me. At his sacred tent, I will sacrifice with shouts of joy.

I will sing and make music to the Lord. You see, David says here, when by God's hand I am protected and I am taken care of, I'm going to worship.

I'm going to give thanks for it. Yes, members of this body have experienced real difficulty, real trials and tribulations, but I also know God enough to know that you've seen God come through in big ways.

at our own church, we've seen God provide housing for people who needed it. We've seen God provide treatment and healing to give children when it seemed impossible.

impossible. And as we reflect on these things, let this be our desire to praise God for the way he has and continues to care for us.

[24:39] Now, finally, if you're here today and you haven't placed your faith and trust in Jesus or you don't even know what that would look like, I'd ask you to consider the words of the psalmist today.

It's my prayer that you would see that faith and trust in God will never be misplaced. In one of my favorite verses, the author of the book of Hebrews, he tells us in chapter 7, verse 25, that he is able to save completely those who come to God through him because he always lives to intercede for them.

Friends, if you don't know where you stand this morning, let me assure you, you can depend on him both for your salvation and to help you navigate a life that is so often filled with hardship, difficulty, threat, and discouragement.

Let's pray together. God, what a wonderful privilege it's been to share your word this morning.

None of us are immune to hardships and difficulties, God, but this is our hope that you are able and willing to come through for us.

[26:04] Even if that doesn't look the way that we think it should look, even if that isn't at the time that we think it should be, God, you have been faithful before you will be faithful again.

God, if there are those here this morning who have not placed their faith and their trust in you, I ask that by the power of your Holy Spirit you would draw them into relationship with your Son who loves them, who gave his self for them.

and we ask all these things in his name. Amen. Amen.