

Psalm Ch55v1-23 - The Burden of Betrayal

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Preacher: Fredrik Sandberg

[0 : 00] Thank you.

So it's great to have you here with us, Frederick, this morning. Just tell us, you're not from Ireland originally. Where do you come from? My name is wrong. It should be Sven because I'm Swedish. But I am from Sweden and my wife is Irish. Very good. And you have children? Yeah, we have two boys and one daughter. And you come from Douglas Church, one of our partner churches today. And how do you serve in Douglas Church? Just whichever way we can help. So do some teaching and do some hosting and just helping wherever we can.

That's great. And tell us just briefly how you came to faith in Jesus Christ. It was in the June of 2015. We were very blessed.

[1 : 19] My wife came to know the Lord and one month afterwards I came to know the Lord. Hearing a man sharing his story about spiraling out of control and I realized that was me.

Wonderful. Well, it's great to have you with us today. So we look forward to you sharing with us. Thank you, Frederick. Thank you, Johnny. I'm not used to this thing, so if you can hear me, then I'll just nod. Perfect.

All right. Because I will also try not to be too loud. But I'm just very thankful to be here with you this morning. It's a joy and a privilege to open up the Word of God.

And we're going to talk about something quite heavy today. It's Psalm 55, which is a lament about how we handle burdens.

And it sure seems, as we look around today, that there are many people who have burdens. Whether that's relationships, finances, mental health, spiritual or physical challenges.

[2 : 29] And the title of today is The Burden of Betrayal. We're going to go into a quite deep journey of looking at our emotions and how the burden of betrayal can lead to depression, despondency and despair.

But how do we cope with such pain through the glory of God? So when I say betrayal, I refer to someone turning against you or turning others against you.

And when I talk about the burden, let me give you a short example from I work in agriculture. So I always think about things to do with agriculture because it helps show us pictures.

So as we go to harvest a lot of hay bales in the land of Ireland, that's a profitable business because you always have grass. It never seems to stop growing. And when we consider who might be able to help us with that harvest, we look at our adults here in the room, for sure.

We look at the teenagers here. I'm sure they will help for a little bit and then they won't have a break. We look at our toddlers. They will try and they will keep trying and they will keep failing until some nice mother or father steps in to prevent them from hurting themselves.

[3 : 47] Our infants, those guys, they don't even try. They just sit down, lean up against that hay bale and because they know it's too heavy for them.

When it comes to carrying your own burdens, your deepest inner emotions, who do you act like? Do you act like a toddler?

Do you act like the infant? Do you act like a toddler? Do you act like a toddler? I'm confident that I probably speak for many here, including myself, that quite often we behave like the toddler. We try and carry burdens that are far too big for us.

And when we do, we can often hurt ourselves in the process. Overwhelming emotions place us in a place of crisis.

Crisis can mean many different things to many people. To a young child, crisis can be the death of a family pet. To a teenager, it can be the rejection of their friends or even betrayal of their friends.

[4 : 53] To an adult, crisis can be not having enough money to go around, illness or a marriage going wrong. Crisis means many different things to different people.

And I know that crisis and turmoil will mean different things to the people that are here today. And that some of you may be going through crisis right now.

And it can be a burden that feels like it's impossible to carry on your own. My prayer for today is that you steady your minds and hearts, put distractions away from you, and embrace this psalm, this lament of David.

Consider how crisis impacts you and how you respond when crisis cause your emotions to rage like a storm. In crisis, do you run to God or do you run from God?

Let us pray and ask God for his help before we look at his word. Father God, we thank you for your word. It is truth, Lord. It's a truth that we can trust.

[5 : 55] Help me speak clearly and accurately. And Lord, in the power of your spirit, help us be comforted. Help us be steadied that we can see a path to safety.

In your precious name, Jesus, we pray these things. Amen. So let's take a quick look at the life of David. The Psalter is an individual collection of psalms.

And there are five books, and they are all basically prophetic literature pointing to the future Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The psalms are written a thousand years before Christ, so they're some of the earliest foretelling literature for the Lord and Savior Jesus.

And today we're going to look at Psalm 55, which is in the second book of the Psalter. And it's interesting that that second book celebrates the greatness of the King David's dynasty.

Yet this is a lament. This is King David on his knees, pleading with God. And King David was a mighty man.

[7 : 04] Most people, whether Christian or not, would know that he slayed Goliath as a child, and he went on to be one of the greatest warrior kings of all time. However, King David was also a person like you and me.

Fallible. A sinner. Living in the same fallen world where we do. And he committed adultery. He committed murder. Yet God forgave him.

And God forgave him because God had made a covenant with David. First and second Samuel, we can see the progression of David's life.

And I just read briefly second Samuel seven. When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you who shall come from your body.

And I will establish his kingdom. King David was to give the line of the future Lord, Lord Jesus. King David was to give the line of the Lord, Lord Jesus. And he also lived through a revolt where we can read about Absalom, his son, and one of his personal counselors, scheming, plotting, even standing at the gates of Jerusalem, turning people against him.

[8 : 22] And through this, David had felt what it feels like when those very closest to you betray you, turn against you, and persecute you.

David's own son and his closest personal counsel turned to enemy and prosecutor. So if we look at Psalm 55, we can see it in three parts.

First, we see David's struggle and his intense pleading, verses 1 through 5. Second, we'll see David's crisis, 6 through 15.

And finally, we see David's response to crisis. So first, let us consider David's struggle and his intense pleading. Look with me at verses 1 through 3.

David is pleading to God in prayer.

[9 : 41] He is crying out his request to God, pleading that God will hear him and not ignore him, that God will answer. We see that David is deeply upset and that his inner thoughts and emotions are in upheaval, to the point of not knowing whether he is coming or going.

It is like when emotion overwhelms us, and I'm not sure if you've ever been here, trying to do a simple task that you have done many times before, and it suddenly becomes the most impossible task ever.

David is in intense pain. Look with me at verse 4 and 5. The Hebrew word for within is our entrails. At times when emotions overwhelm us, you can describe it as having a knot in your stomach. The terrors of death can also be read as the dread of death.

The threats of merely words is making the great warrior king absolutely terrified. David was fearful, trembling, in horror, and overwhelmed.

[11 : 03] And one of the great dangers about emotional suffering is that emotions on the inside are not visible on the outside. It makes me think about eggs, and I eat a lot of them.

From the outside, the egg looks perfect. And then you crack them open, and you find one of those annoying blood spots. Or worse, we crack an egg open that looked absolutely perfect on the inside, and is absolutely black and rotten.

This is the great danger of our emotions. People around us cannot see what goes on on the inside. Let us now look more closely at the second part of this psalm.

David's crisis. David was in such emotional distress that he wanted to do nothing but to escape, to run away. Far away from his crisis.

Look with me at verse 6 through 8. David was at the end of his rope.

[12 : 25] He was just wanting to get away. Most of us would admit that we have tried to run away at some point in our lives. But especially our inner emotions, they stay with us.

We cannot run away from them. And if we see here the language used by David for emotion and crisis. Far from the tempest and storm.

A tempest is like an extreme storm. So he's saying, I'm running far away from the storm of storms. But David resists the temptation to run.

And instead of running away, he prays to God for help. Look with me at verse 9 to 11. Lord, confuse the wicked.

Confound their words. For I see violence and strife in the city. Day and night they prowl about on its walls. Malice and abuse are within it. Destructive forces are at work in the city.

[13 : 29] Threats and lies never leave its streets. This was not an ordinary military attack. David was not facing an army of swords and arrows.

David knew how to win those. It was an attack from within. It was an attack of words. And lies and threats.

It was a coordinated attack. David knew there was no benefit in calling his best soldiers. No, instead he appeals to God.

Confound their words. God, intervene for me. Instead of running, David calls out to the Lord for help. Look with me now at verses 12 and 15, 12 to 15, where we can see why David is in such crisis.

If an enemy were insulting me. If an enemy were insulting me, I could endure it. If a foe were rising against me, I could hide.

[14 : 36] But it is you, a man like myself, my companion, my close friend, with whom I once enjoyed sweet fellowship at the house of God, as we walked about among the worshippers.

Let death take my enemies by surprise. Let them go down alive to the realm of the dead, for evil finds lodging among them.

David was being deceived by those very closest to him. And these words of betrayal may run deep in many of us. At one point in our lives, or even maybe right now, we have had someone close to us turn against us.

Betray us. Persecute us. Put us down. Had something to say about us that was not true. Psalm 55 paints such a powerful picture of how hard it is to hide from the words of those close to us.

That can cause such great pain. Finally, let's look at David's response to this crisis.

[15 : 56] King David, in his crisis, in his turmoil, shows us the path of escape.

As for me, I call to God, and the Lord saves me. Evening, morning, and noon, I cry out in distress, and he hears my voice.

He rescues me unharmed from the battle waged against me. Even though many oppose me, God, who is enthroned from overhold, who does not change, he will hear them and humble them, because they have no fear of God.

David shows us that there is only one path to safety when we are in a crisis, and that is the Lord. I call to God, and the Lord saves me. Praying, praying, and praying to our Lord God. He is coping with this crisis by trusting in God.

[17 : 10] He is coping with turmoil because of his complete faith in God. David is resisting the pain by fixing his prayers and appeal and lament directly on God.

Often, when we find ourselves in a crisis, being lost, feeling confused, we find ourselves praying to God less, not more.

Trusting in God less, not more. David is saying, pray to God without ceasing. And David has a very, very big view of God.

He has a massive view of God. And in our troubles, in our emotional turmoil, God must become big, and we must become small.

In crisis, it can be very difficult to keep a balanced view of our own strengths. The strength of God, and the strength of God. But please, Christian, know this.

[18 : 15] Our God is eternal. And he has been enthroned forever, and will be forever. Our own pride in the world around us, and I'm speaking especially to the many teenagers that are in the room, the world around us tries to say, you'll be okay.

It's easily one of the least helpful things anyone can say to someone who is in a crisis. You're strong enough. You can do it. You can fight this. It's all around us.

Yet, when those types of phrases are said, without God in the center, they have greatly hurt many people. Please look with me at verse 20 and 21, when we see a description of the deceitful companion that has such a close resemblance of Satan.

My companion attacks his friends. He violates his covenant. His talk is smooth as butter, yet war is in his heart. His words are more soothing than oil, yet they are drawn swords.

This is exactly what Satan, the greatest deceiver of them all, wants you to do when in crisis, to run further away from God, instead of running to God.

[19 : 36] To be listening to words that sound nice, and sound helpful, yet they are complete poison. Or, as King David puts it, they are drawn swords.

And we cannot miss violating his covenant. This is someone who walked with God, yet now have broken the contract that they entered with God.

Violating a covenant is the highest form of treachery. And as we think about how Satan is stirring up the world around us, media, news, false teachings, and so much more.

We are walking in a world of confusion. And a world of confusion that pushes down and suppresses people of faith through the things that they are saying. So when we fight these dark forces in the world, even the deception of those closest to us, how can we fight?

Please look with me at the words in verse 22. Cast your cares on the Lord, and he will sustain you.

[20 : 50] He will never let the righteous be shaken. Casting our cares is literally throwing our concerns to the Lord. When we throw something away from us, it is a picture of completely letting go.

Handing it all over to God. God wants it all. Not just a part, but all. And this can be an intense area of struggle in our hearts because we don't want to let go, especially hard things.

But we want and we need to hand it all over to God. When we fully hand over the burden to the Lord, there is a promise he will sustain us, and he will never let the righteous be shaken.

If we give the burdens to the Lord, fully he will sustain us. It is like we're skating on ice in our own regular shoes, trying to cross a big wide lake, and there are weak spots in the ice.

And if we fall, we're going to go underneath the ice. But when we fully trust in God, it's like God comes and holds us around the waist, and he gets us to the other side.

[22 : 08] When we trust in God, he will get us to the other side. But there is a severe warning to those who reject God.

Look with me at verse 23. But you, God, will bring down the wicked into the pit of decay. The bloodthirsty and deceitful will not live out half their days.

There is a price for rejecting God. That price is death. If you are rejecting God in your life, don't ignore this warning.

It is a severe warning. David finishes Psalm 55 with a statement that I wish we could all say with such confidence.

Can you say with such confidence that God, Lord Jesus, I trust in you?

[23 : 16] I trust my relationship with you. I entrust my life to you. And even when someone close to me betrays me, I will hold on to you and I will trust you.

So to finish today, let's look at some practical ways that we can use this psalm to walk in our everyday life. To fight against raging emotions, fear, depression, despair, and despondency.

Whether it's caused by someone close to us or whether it's caused by those things away from us. How to truly cast our cares on the Lord. First, we need to recognize what our burdens are so that we can cast them to the Lord.

David understood where his attacks were coming from. He didn't go to arrows or swords. He prayed to God because he knew what he needed to fight.

Sometimes we need to pause and understand or even pray to God to help us understand what the burdens in our life truly is. especially as we consider words and words spoken to us.

[24 : 38] And a great caution from this text is whether we ourselves are a burden to others. This one is hard. There's many times when I've seen something leave my lips and I see it leaving and I know that that should not have left my own lips.

is our tongues setting other people on fire? The book of James chapter 3 is a focus on this issue. It's hard to think about because we don't want to think about that something we said could have set someone else on fire.

But managing the tongue and managing what we say is so important. And in this we should not walk alone.

And this is an important part of how we carry burdens. Galatians 6.2 says bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ.

Talk to your brothers and sisters in Christ. Talk to your elders. Share these burdens together in Christ-centered speech.

[25 : 53] Christ-centered love. We are meant for fellowship. I realized I got carried away and forgotten about my slides. It's okay as long as I have the last one.

Secondly, we need to have a big view of God. You cast your burdens on the Lord by believing that he knows you. In a way that goes beyond our comprehension. That he's all-knowing and all-powerful.

As David said, but as for me, I trust in you. When we are in a battle, we must become smaller and God must become bigger.

For only then will we have the right perspective. Our Lord Jesus was betrayed and persecuted. He was betrayed of one of his own disciples.

He was persecuted by the Jewish leaders through their words and their accusations. Betrayal and persecution placed Jesus on the cross. Even though he lived a perfect life and he never sinned.

[27 : 04] And when he died on that cross, he felt every betrayal, every sin of all of us. But we have good news that we can hold on to.

Death did not keep him down, did it? He conquered death by rising again as we sang about in that beautiful song. If you are someone who has never put your faith in Jesus, if you have never submitted to him as a master in your life, then please consider doing so today.

Or if you are not ready, ask yourself why. Romans 10.9 says, If you declare with your mouth, Jesus is Lord, which is Kyrios in Greek, Masters, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

Let us look at verse 21 from our psalm again. Cast your cares on the Lord and he will sustain you. He will never let the righteous be shaken.

It is only through the blood of Jesus that we can be called righteous. 1 Corinthians 5.21, which is hard not to become tearful when I read it because this is one of the verses that saved my wife.

[28 : 25] 1 Corinthians 5.21, God made him who had no sin to be sin for us so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Keeping the gospel in clear sight gives us a big view of God. Finally, we need to pray like David. Hear how David describes prayer. My prayer, my plea, hear me, answer me, ask for me, I call to God. Evening, morning, and noon, I cry out to God.

Is this a picture of your prayer life? Do you pray morning, noon, and night? Do you call out to God for help?

Do you appeal with your whole being? Do you have a personal conversation with your Lord and Savior? Do you have a personal conversation if you don't?

[29 : 35] My prayer for you and my appeal to you is pray like David. And dear brother and sister, Jesus hears us in our very darkest moments.

As someone who, before becoming a Christian, I was crippled by depression at many times in my life. And I have seen darkness, true darkness, darkness that I didn't think that I could make it through.

But since becoming a Christian, I know that that will no longer hold its power over me because I know that God is in control. I know that Jesus is the master of my life and that he can hold my

burden that I cannot hold.

And I want to say very carefully, it does not mean that hardship won't impact us.

Even challenge us to our knees. But follower of Jesus, the Lord Jesus is there with you. Call out to him. Cast your burdens on the Lord and he will sustain you.

[30 : 51] Amen. And I want to do something slightly different and hopefully you guys will be okay with that. But this is another verse that my beautiful wife came to know the Lord through and she had some hard things in her upbringing.

If you would join me in reading out loud this scripture, because this is our hope, friends. This is what we can hold on to, that the Lord Jesus can carry our burdens that we cannot.

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me.

For I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.

Let us pray. Father God, thank you for your word. Thank you for this psalm. Help us walk away from here having a big view of you, laying all of our burdens at your feet, and trusting fully that we can trust in you.

[32 : 16] In your name, Jesus, we pray. Amen. Amen. Thank you, Frederick.

We're going to sing in response.