

From Despairing to to Delighting in God!

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[0:01] Take your Bibles and go to the book of Psalms. You might be, why are you going to Psalms? I thought we were going to start Judges. Okay, there's a story behind that. Keep your shirt on.

That's the Psalms. So I'll tell you Psalm 13. Psalm 13, if you're visiting with us and you pulled out, I need a Bible, you can pull that black Bible in the chair in front of you. Pull that out and go to the middle. Find page 397, Psalm 13. Psalm 13, page 397 in that black Bible. Psalm 13. Okay, so here's my story. So basically, the short version is, I didn't realize Resurrection Sunday was April 4th.

Because last year, you know, the whole shutdown thing, crazy. So now I was thinking 2019. Well, 2019, it was like the third Sunday. So I'm like, oh, and then like, oh, holy cow, it's April 4th.

[1:12] Oh, no. So I was going to do, I was going to start Judges next week. Well, that's not going to work. Because then I started one week and then we have Resurrection Sunday. Because, you know, I'm going to do a Judges sermon on Resurrection Sunday.

I guess I could have. So I was like, ah. So I'm like, okay. What am I going to do? So I decided I'm going to do two Psalms. Psalm 13, Psalm 4.

Then I'll do a Res day message. So we'll start the book of Judges April 11th. That's official. You can hold me to it as well. I'll tell you what.

I'll give you the theme for Judges. God's never-ending, overwhelming, relentless love for His people.

Not reckless. Remember that song, Reckless? I can't stand that. I can't stand that word. It's not reckless. God's love is not reckless. That's a poor word for that. It's not reckless.

[2:08] It's not arbitrary. He's got a plan. It's relentless, though. So the theme of Judges, the overwhelming, never-ending, relentless love of God for His people.

That's the theme of the book of Judges. So you're like, oh, really? Mm-hmm. So you can take that to the bank. There's also some subtitles, but I'm not going to tell you that yet. You have to come April 11th.

You know, you have to keep coming back, right? There's a whole thing. Anyways. So there's Judges April 11th, two Sundays in the Psalms, Res Day Sermon, April 4th.

Today, Psalm 13. I'm going to read it, and then we'll jump in. How long, O Yahweh, will you forget me forever?

How long will you hide your face from me? How long shall I take counsel in my soul, sorrow in my heart, all the day?

[3:11] How long will my enemy be exalted over me? Consider. Answer me, O Yahweh my God.

Enlighten my eyes, lest I sleep the death, lest my enemy say, I have overcome him, lest my adversaries rejoice when I am shaken.

But, I have trusted in your loving kindness. My heart shall rejoice in your salvation.

I will sing to the Lord because he has dealt bountifully with me. There's a hymn that I don't, it's not a repertoire of songs that we sing.

It's by Paul Gerhart, G-E-R-H-A-R-D-T. It's titled, Why Should Cross and Trial Grieve Me?

[4:21] Listen to these words. Why should cross and trial grieve me? Christ is near with his cheer.

Never will he leave me, who can rob me of the heaven that God's Son for my own to my faith hath given. God oft gives me days of gladness.

Shall I grieve if he gives seasons too of sadness? God is good and tempers ever all my ill and he will wholly leave me never. Death cannot destroy forever.

From our fears, cares, and tears, it will us deliver. It will close life's mournful story and make a way that we may enter heavenly glory.

Lord, my shepherd, take me to thee. Thou art mine. I was thine. Even ere I knew thee, I am thine. [5 : 24] For thou hast bought me. Lost I stood, but thy blood free salvation brought me. Thou art mine.

I love and own thee. Light of joy. Ne'er shall I from my heart dethrone thee. Savior, let me soon behold thee face to face.

May thy grace evermore enfold me. Paul Gerhart lived in the 1600s.

He was a Lutheran minister, I believe. Talk about a guy who faced great trials. He lost both parents before he turned 14.

Three out of his five children died in infancy. One more followed later. Then, to top it off, his wife died, leaving him with his six-year-old son.

[6 : 36] And yet he found comfort in Christ. When trials come, to whom do you go?

When faced with the temptation of despair, brought on by the circumstances of life, whether they're consequences or not, whatever, where do you go?

To whom do you look? Does it drive you to despair? Or to delight?

You see the difference of the emotion. We looked at a psalm last week, Psalm 24, and there's such excitement and joy that David had.

The Ark of the Covenant was coming into Jerusalem. And here, emotions change. He's in pain.

[7 : 48] He's in despair. And yet, as you see David, as we walk through this passage in Psalm 13, you're going to see David despair towards God, moving towards delighting in God.

And then, in so doing, he teaches us how we, when we are despairing in ourselves with God, how we should do the same.

How do we move from despair to delight in God? How do we do that? And the psalm, that's the title for the psalm, from despairing to delighting in God.

From despairing to delighting in God. When we are in despair ourselves, how do we respond?

That's the great thing about these songs, in the psalms, and if it teaches us by way of a song, and you feel the emotions that he feels.

[9 : 09] What should we do when we are completely desperate? How do we go from despair with God to delight in God? And you see, before we go to the text, at first his feelings ran high.

I mean, he's dealing with raw emotion, and maybe it was, because Saul was running after him. Saul was always running after David, running to kill him.

So when you think things are bad for you, at least you don't have anybody coming after you to kill you. At least I don't think anybody here, or maybe somebody's trying to kill me.

At least you have nobody coming after you to kill you. David did. And yet, his feelings are high, and then you see it gradually subsides.

The calm is restored at the end of this song, this prayer. And you see, it goes from crashing waves, to like just waves, and then to like a serene sea.

[10 : 19] You see, it changes so fast. His agitation is brought into a place of intercession, and then emerges into exaltation. He goes from perplexity to praise, from sinking, almost drowning, to singing, and to delighting in God.

You see this happen in the psalm, and just these, what, six verses. So there's three points, progressions that you see.

And the attitude from David that we're gonna take away from here. So first, our attitude, oh, I didn't put that up there, sorry. Our attitude begins with despair. See that verses one and two.

Our attitude begins with despair. Despair. And notice, how he begins this, you've forgotten me. Four times.

How long? How long? How long? How long? Four times he says this. Indicates the extremity of his deep misery.

[11 : 31] How long, oh Yahweh, will you forget me forever? God has forgotten me forever. God has forgotten me forever. It seemed that way to David.

It was how David felt at the time under these circumstances. He felt like God had forgotten him. He felt like he was alone.

You've forgotten me. Notice, he also says, you've hidden from me. Next part of verse one. How long will you hide your face from me?

Heidi, the experience of God's gracious goodness was gone. At least that's how he felt. And when he says here, how long will you hide your face from me?

Face denotes the presence of God. God. Connection. Fellowship. Friendship. Togetherness.

[12:40] Community. Community. He felt like God was gone. Yahweh was no longer with him at all. You've forgotten me.

You've hidden from me. And notice the feelings that come out. I'm discouraged. Verse two. How long shall I take counsel in my soul? Sorrow in my heart all the day.

He was putting his plans into a place where they are stored up and uttered out deep grief and agony. I'm so discouraged because I'm so alone. I'm discouraged and alone.

I'm defeated. He saw his distress all day long. So much so his sorrow had filled his heart.

Look at what he says. The end of verse, the middle part of verse two. Sorrow in my heart all day long. And then the next part of verse two. How long will my enemy be exalted over me? Maybe this was from Saul's attack on him.

[14:01] He's discouraged. He feels defeated. His enemy rose to position over him and arrogantly flaunted it. Spiritually, at a loss.

Personally, at a loss. Directly, at a loss. He didn't know what else to do. Have you ever felt that way? Have you ever been in that type of position?

In that state of feelings? Have you ever been in a position where you are at a total loss? Did you ever feel, notice the verb feel, that God's goodness is gone and you cry out to God out of desperation but it feels like he's not there?

You know, you can take a ball, right? And then you just, you throw it up in the air inside the room and it hits the ceiling and it bounces back down. You ever feel like that's your prayers? You're praying, it goes, you ever feel like that?

I have. You feel like your prayers are going nowhere. God's not listening to you. You get the feelings here? Our attitude begins with despair.

[15:25] You see despair here from David. You feel so alone. And yet, in the midst of that despair in these first two verses, the attitude begins to move to desire because notice, that's number two, our attitude moves to desire and here, that first part of verse three, remember me.

Consider, answer me, O Yahweh, my God. Hear me, please. moves to desiring God, interceding, praying.

God had done nothing to indicate that he had heard his child, so David cried out to him in desperation, please rescue me, God. Remember me, and then notice, illumine me.

Enlighten me, he says, enlighten my eyes or cause my eyes to shine. About what? His life's lamp could go out completely.

They're dim, ready to break. So what's he asking for? He asks for divine wisdom and understanding to see the situation from God's perspective.

[17:02] He asks for divine wisdom and understanding to see the situation from God's perspective. We don't do that so well.

But that's what we need most. That's what we need, I call this, that's what we need to not do and to do. Don't let our feelings or emotions get the best of us.

Instead, ask God to help us see the situation or situations from his perspective. Romans 8.28 called according to his purpose for our good and his good.

Genesis 50.20, what we mean for evil, God means for good. God's plan and purpose is being worked out.

Even later on in verse 20, for those whom he foreknew, he predestined to be conformed to the image of his son. He knows you. He's decided to love you before you were even born, before anything ever existed he decided to love his own.

[18:25] You might say, well what if I can't do that? You need to trust God and move forward in light of his promises.

It's gonna be hard. It's not easy. Remember, David's writing this possibly while he's hiding in a cave thinking of he's gonna die.

And remember too, he was anointed to be the next king of Israel. And yet, he went out of his way and he loved the man who should have been the next king.

He loved Jonathan so much. We gotta come to a place where we see things from God's perspective and not allow emotions to overwhelm us, which is hard to do.

Notice, he says, the next part here into verse 4, verse 3, excuse me, lest I sleep death. He faced death, maybe from Saul's pursuit.

[19 : 45] Lest I gonna die. Verse 4, lest my enemies say I've overcome him. His enemies had overtaken him. They've taken over.

And then, last part of verse 4, my adversaries rejoice when I'm shaken. They triumph over him in arrogance to the point where he cried out, God, really saying, take out my enemies.

You do it. This is what's called in the Psalms, the imprecatory Psalms. The imprecatory Psalms is when, oh, I have it up here.

These are called imprecatory Psalms where the psalmist called upon God to judge and destroy his enemies. And there's a sense in which we pray this too. We call on God to judge our enemies knowing that vengeance belongs to him alone, not to us.

Vengeance is mine, Romans chapter 12. I will repay. Hey, you don't allow yourself to be overcome with evil. You overcome evil with good, says Paul. You heap burning coals upon your enemy's head, says Paul.

[20 : 52] And you let God deal with the justice. You say, God, you're gonna deal with this. And that's what David did, right? He said, I will not lift up a finger against the Lord's anointed.

I will not kill Saul, even though he was the rightful heir to the throne. Take out Saul. I'm king. Bam, bam, bam. Right?

He could have done that. And he could have taken out Jonathan too. He loved Jonathan. And even we watch, learned this from last week from the first hour.

Oh, Aaron, you're just on top of it, man. This guy, I love this guy. Aaron, you're just awesome. If you go anywhere, we're gonna smack you. Because we won't know what to do.

What do we do? Aaron's not here. No, I'm just kidding. We learned this from the first hour last week with Shibbeth. That was Jonathan's son. David took care of him.

[21 : 59] He didn't have to do that. He didn't have to do that to Meshbeth. He didn't have to do that at all. He took care of him. He took care of Jonathan's son. He loved him.

So you see this progression. The attitude goes from despair and then into delight. And then our attitude climbs to delight.

Aaron's almost done getting this back online. Thanks, Aaron. I appreciate you doing that. Look at verse 5. But I have trusted in your loving kindness.

Our attitude climbs to delight. I've trusted in your loving kindness. Calm confidence has returned to his heart. faith clings fast to God.

Notice, first, I trust. I trust. You're going to see, I trust. I rejoice. I sing. Faith clings fast to God. Faith clings fast to God.

[23 : 12] He did not know when God's help would arrive. But he will trust him no matter what. We need to come to the place where we'll trust God's sovereign plan and let the chips fall where they're going to fall.

That's why we sing, what e'er my God ordains is right. It's right. And we've got to believe that. I have trusted in your chesed, your loving kindness, which means God's covenant keeping, steadfast, loyal, faithful love for his people.

You're always covenant keeping, steadfast, faithful love for his people and the covenant was sealed with the blood of Christ and it was confirmed by the resurrection.

How do you know God's going to keep his promises to you? How do you know God's going to vindicate you? How do you know God's steadfast love is going to be there for you? Because it's there for his son.

How do you know that? He brought him back to life. The resurrection that seals it for us. This is why if we proclaim a gospel without the resurrection, physical resurrection of Jesus, it's no gospel at all.

[24 : 43] Because it means God doesn't vindicate his people. He vindicated his son so he will vindicate you. That's his covenant love. I trust.

I rejoice. Look at the next part of verse 5. I rejoice. My heart shall rejoice in your salvation as opposed to what his enemy was going to do when he was shaken.

It's confidence that hides itself in the Lord believing that God has heard his prayer because he trusted in God's salvation. Dr. Stephen Lawson, he says, quote, when endangered and discouraged, Christians must turn to God in humble prayer.

Discouraged souls often internalize their struggles rather than casting their burdens on the Lord. God will eventually deliver.

Just maybe not how you expected it and maybe not when you expected it. I mean, here's David. He had no idea. He didn't know when that was going to, he didn't know when he was going to be brought in as the king of Israel.

[26:01] He didn't know that. I mean, it's easy for us. You know, we could flip the pages over. Oh, it's right over here, right? He's living it. He's hiding in a cave fearing his life.

This is real. This is raw emotion. You know, nor do you. I trust.

I rejoice. I sing. Verse 6, I will sing to Yahweh. The storm-tossed soul has finally been calmed.

So he could sing. See the emotional difference from verse 1 to verse 6? The stark contrast.

Instead of despair, he delighted in God. I sing. Did I put that up there yet? No, I sing. He was loving, adoring, worshiping, glorifying, honoring, desiring, delighting, and relishing, and basking in God alone.

[27:16] He came to that place. And an emotional song just came out of David's heart of praise.

David would have liked that song, Lift High the Name of Jesus. He wouldn't like that. He would dig it. He would like that song. I trust. I rejoice. I sing. Why? Why could he trust?

Why could he rejoice? Why could he sing? Notice the last part of verse 6, Because he has dealt bountifully with me, he was sure that Yahweh would not fail him ever.

David knew Yahweh determined to repay a recompense on his behalf. Because you read that dealt bountifully, wait a second, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, time out.

Wait a second, I thought you were in a cave, man. What do you mean dealt bountifully with you?

Yahweh would not fail him ever. He was confident of that.

[28:28] Because in the end, God will always deliver his people, all who put their trust and hope in him. Notice how this points us to the gospel.

This points us to the great display of God's deliverance which is found in his son. You see, that's the whole meta-narrative of the Bible.

That's the theme of the Bible. God's people suffer and yet God vindicates. God's people face heartache and struggle and yet God will deliver his people, those who trust him, those who love him.

And the way you see that displayed is in the son. The greatest example of God's deliverance is the example of Christ Jesus when it seemed like all had failed.

Jesus on the cross, the eternal son took upon himself all the sin of those who would ever trust him alone and God did deliver him. He raised him from the dead.

[29:48] God vindicates his people and if you're here and you're not a Christian, you need to understand this. You need to come to a place where God's justice should come upon you because you are a sinner gone against God's word and his law.

You've rebelled against him and he should condemn you and yet God shows his compassion, mercy and grace in Jesus who took that upon himself what you deserve.

The wrath of God was poured upon him so that when you turn from your sin and put your trust in Jesus, what flows to you is the grace, mercy and chesed, the loving kindness of God.

Come then, repent, trust Christ. God always vindicates his people and you know that to be true because he brought them back to life.

That's the whole meta-narrative of the Bible. That's the whole point of the scriptures telling you the story. Creation, fall, redemption and then consummation.

[30:54] That's what he does, what God's gonna do. The gospel tells us this. So David is looking forward to what Messiah was gonna do for him.

So Christian, wait patiently for God to act because his timing is always perfect though it doesn't feel that way. When we're waiting patiently for him, it will show itself by us praising him, exalting in his grace and singing of his goodness.

Even though your feelings may say otherwise. So there's no need to be in such despair, Christian. And that's hard. Emotions are there, aren't they? They're real. Do you know that? We're all dealing with different things in this room.

Different aspects. Some great, some not so great, maybe smaller. But there's emotions that are raw there. Struggles. And maybe some of you are feeling like, I feel no love from God.

[32 : 15] So may the promises, goodness, and faithfulness of God drive us to delight ourselves in him alone because eventually he will deliver his people, his chosen ones.

Hey, if he did it for Christ Jesus, don't you think he's going to do that for you? Why should cross and trial grieve you?

Christ is near with his cheer. Never will he leave you. Who can rob you of the heaven that God's son for your own to your faith hath given?

God oft gives you days of gladness. Will you grieve if he gives seasons too of sadness? God is good and tempers ever all your ill.

He will wholly leave you never. Death cannot destroy forever. From your fears, cares, and tears, it will you deliver.

[33 : 27] Death doesn't mean that God hates you. Death means he's ready to take you home. His love for you has come to a place where he wants you with him.

It will close life's mournful story. Make a way that you may enter heavenly glory. Lord, your shepherd, make it for yourself.

Take me to thee. Thou art mine. I was thine even ere I knew thee. I am thine. You hast brought me. Lost I stood, but thy blood free salvation brought me.

Make this your prayer. Thou art mine. I love and own thee, light of joy. Ne'er shall I from my heart dethrone thee.

Savior, let me soon behold thee face to face. May thy grace evermore enfold me. Why should cross and trial grieve you?

[34 : 33] Let's pray. Let's pray. Let's pray. Let's pray. Let's pray. Let's pray. Let's pray. Let's pray. Let's pray. Thank you, Father, for just what, past 30 minutes.

You were merciful to have us forget the pain that maybe some of us are feeling even now. Let's pray. Let's pray. Let's pray. Let's pray. Let's pray. Let's pray. Let's pray. Let's pray. Let's pray. Let's pray.