

Waiting for God Alone

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[0:00] Psalm 62 verses 1 through 12. For God alone my soul waits in silence.

! From him comes my salvation.! He alone is my rock and my salvation. My fortress! I shall not be greatly shaken.

How long will all of you attack a man to batter him like a leaning wall, a tottering fence? They only plan to thrust him down from his high position.

They take pleasure in falsehood. They bless with their mouths, but inwardly they curse. Selah! For God alone, O my soul, wait in silence.

For my hope is from him. He only is my rock and my salvation. My fortress! I shall not be shaken.

[1:10] On God rests my salvation and my glory. My mighty rock. My refuge is God. Trust in him at all times, O people.

Pour out your heart before him. God is a refuge for us. Those of low estate are but a breath. Those of high estate are a delusion.

In the balance they go up. They are together lighter than a breath. Put no trust in extortion. Set no vain hopes on robbery.

If riches increase, set not your heart on them. Once God has spoken, twice have I heard this, that power belongs to God, and that to you, O Lord, belongs steadfast love, for you will render to a man according to his work.

Here ends this scripture reading. Thank you for reading for us, Joan. It's funny, I want to begin by asking you a few questions.

[2:31] And you don't need to answer them out loud. Just raise your hand to answer, and I'll do the same. How many of you enjoy traveling? How many of you enjoy barbecued food?

Anybody that's prepared. Chicken, pork. No, I don't. I was just gesturing. I don't enjoy it. How many of you enjoy eating fish?

And how many of you enjoy eating fish head? How many of you enjoy reading? How many of you enjoy eating? Now here's what's interesting about all those questions.

I was pretty sure that at least one person would raise his or her hand to say they enjoyed one or more of those things.

But I have a final question. And here's what I know about this question. Not a single hand will raise.

[3:47] And that's not unique to us. If this question were asked in any church, indeed among any group of people, but in particular, among Christians, not a single hand would be raised.

except perhaps a random person who didn't listen or someone who just wanted to draw attention to themselves.

So here's the question. How many of you enjoy waiting for God to answer your prayers and act on your behalf?

How many of you enjoy lingering prayers that you have prayed, time passing by, and there has been no answer?

And perhaps to bring it closer to home this morning, how many of you, even at this very moment, find yourself waiting for God?

[5:01] Waiting for God to act on your behalf in some situation and change some circumstance?

Is there any of us who can honestly raise our hand and say, we enjoy waiting for God to act?

And the truth is, there's nothing we can do to change or to speed up the waiting process. And so we must learn to wait for the Lord.

As someone who's served the Lord for more than 50 years now, I've reflected on the Christian life. I've reflected on the values and the virtues that we need to cultivate to live the Christian life successfully.

You know what I found? Learning to wait for God ranks very high on the list. in living the Christian life successfully.

[6:10] And so this morning, as we conclude our Summer in the Psalm sermon series, we've come to a psalm about waiting for God, Psalm 62.

And I pray that the Lord will use this psalm this morning to help us, to teach us how to wait for Him to answer our prayers and to act on our behalf.

So let me take a moment and pray for us before we do that. Heavenly Father, we bow our hearts before you this morning as people who regularly find ourselves waiting for you to answer our prayers and to act on our behalf.

And so we ask that you would help us to be able to do this in a way that honors you, the God who is trustworthy and keeps all of His promises.

Father, even now, you know where each one of us is in some situation to one degree or another who's waiting for you to act on our behalf.

[7:46] Would you draw near to us? Would you help us to hear as we ought to hear and then to respond as you would have us to? We ask and pray in Jesus' name.

Amen. A common feature of the Psalms is that there's often a superscription or some background information at the top of the psalm that tells us the context in which it was written.

In the case of Psalm 62, although we know it was written by David and we're told that he wrote it to the choir master according to Jeduthun, who was one of the musicians, the chief musicians, we don't know the exact circumstances under which David wrote this psalm.

We can survey the psalm and when we do, what we see is that David certainly found himself in a difficult set of circumstances and he was quietly waiting and trusting of the Lord and David wrote this psalm to help us to teach God's people to learn to quietly wait for him.

Because, again, this is our reality. Our reality is that sometimes we find ourselves waiting for God and one of the things that tends to happen is we can get weary. We can get weary in waiting for God and when we get weary in waiting for God, what we tend to do as people is we turn to plan B.

[9:40] We have plan B in our back pockets and we pull it out and we act on plan B. So, Psalm 62 calls us to wait for God alone.

And the only way that we can wait for God alone is if our trust is in God alone. And so, the central and surprising truth that we find in Psalm 62 is that waiting for God alone is rooted in trusting in God alone.

And we grow in waiting for God alone through learning to trust in God alone. And brothers and sisters, the reality is that the degree to which we trust in God alone is the degree to which we will quietly wait for God alone to act, to do whatever he wills, even in our hardest and darkest hour when we are tempted to resort to some plan to help ourselves.

In Psalm 62, what we see is that we as people, Psalm 62 addresses some of the idols that we tend to turn to rather than trusting in the Lord.

God is waiting for God to act in some situation. And I think this is relevant for all of us this morning because again, all of us, in one way or another, is waiting for God to act in some situation.

[11:37] of some of the circumstances in your lives, I'm also aware of the temptation to grow weary and to seek to do for ourselves really what only God can do.

I'm aware that there are some of us this morning that are faced with health situations that have lingered for a long time. Some of us are waiting for God to act in the area of marriage, marriage, whether it is the desire to get married or whether it is to have a better marriage, the marriage to be healed and that hasn't happened.

Perhaps he's waiting for children and that hasn't happened. God hasn't granted that desire yet.

Some of you are waiting in the area of work and career and business, waiting for God to act and to intervene in your work situation, your business situation.

Some of you are looking forward to higher education and you don't see the resources to enable that to happen.

You find yourself having to wait for God. Again, one of the realities of waiting for God is that we sometimes grow weary and we sometimes take matters into our own hands.

[13:16] I think most of us know the iconic example of growing weary while waiting that we find in the Bible is the story of Abraham. In Genesis 16, we're told that Abraham and Isaac, Abraham and Sarah, had lived 10 years in the land of Canaan.

10 years after God promised Abraham a son and it hadn't happened yet and they took matters into their own hands and had a child by Sarah's slave life and produced many problems.

What's interesting about this account of Abraham in Genesis 16 is one chapter earlier in Genesis 15, we're told when God told Abraham that he was going to have a son of his own, it says Abraham believed God and God counted it to him as righteousness.

Abraham who believed God in Genesis 15 is the same Abraham who in Genesis 16 turns to another route to accomplish what God had promised.

He believed God but he grew weary in waiting for God to act. Psalm 62 exhorts us to wait for God and it also warns us against looking to and trusting in substitutes that we believe will enable us to not have to trust in God.

[15:12] In particular Psalm 62 as I mentioned earlier warns us against three popular idolatrous substitutes that we human beings tend to place our trust in instead of waiting on and trusting in God.

And so this morning in our remaining time I want us to consider how Psalm 62 exhorts us to trust in God alone as we wait for him and how it warns us against trusting in these three idolatrous substitutes that we oftentimes turn to in times of weariness.

And the first one is that Psalm 62 calls us to trust in God alone not power. Verses 1 and 2 David resolutely declares for God alone my soul waits in silence.

From him comes my salvation. He only is my rock and my salvation, my fortress. I shall not be greatly shaken.

Notice the exclusivity of the one to whom David places his trust. It's in God alone. David says in verse 1 that his soul is waiting in silence for God alone.

[16:46] And the point is not waiting without saying anything, not talking, that's not what David is saying. And that's very clear from verse 8 where he calls God's people to pour out their hearts before him.

which is a way of calling them to pray to God as they wait for him. So he's not saying you're to be mute, you're to be silent before the Lord.

He says no, you pour out your heart to God. So he says in verse 8, but when he says that our souls are waiting in silence, the waiting in silence is not murmuring and not complaining.

again, it's not not to pray, because we wait better for God when we pray to God. The New International Version, I think, picks it up really helpfully in the translation in verse 1, and it says it this way, my soul finds rest in God alone.

My soul finds rest in God alone. We're literally resting in God, we're not complaining, we're not murmuring, we're praying, we're trusting, we're believing, but we're not complaining, we're not murmuring.

[18:14] We're confident that our salvation and our deliverance comes from the Lord. And when we believe this, we can rest, even in the midst of great and extended trials and adversities.

things. In verse 2, David describes God as his rock, salvation, and fortress. And again, he uses the word alone.

And these words speak about what God is to his people in times of trouble. He's a rock. He's one that we can firmly stand on in the times of trouble.

He's a source of salvation, one who delivers his people. He's a fortress. He's one who defends and guards his people from the enemy.

The very last sentence of verse 2, we're able to see that David was under attack and about which he says, I shall not be greatly shaken.

[19:38] And in verses 3 and 4, it makes it ever so plain that David was under attack. He addresses his enemies and he says, starting in verse 3, how long will all of you attack a man to batter him like a leaning wall, a tottering fence?

They only plan to thrust him down from his high position. They take pleasure in falsehood. They bless with their mouths, but inwardly they curse. This is a picture of ruthless people who beat a man, even when he's weak and vulnerable like a leaning wall or a fence that is about to fall down. And their aim is to bring him down from his high position, something that they don't want him to have, some circumstance that they are not pleased with.

And they will do that by any means necessary, by lying, by hypocrisy, by blessing with their mouths and their hearts are cursing. And the face of this kind of wicked oppression, David, the powerful

king of Israel, says, for God alone, my soul waits in silence.

From him comes my salvation. I think it's helpful for us to notice that how David begins Psalm 62 and how he ends it.

[21 : 08] He begins and ends it the same way. He begins with God and he ends with God. It would have been so easy for David to begin with the people who were attacking him, but he does not.

He begins with God and affirms his trust in God alone to the very end. Brothers and sisters, we cannot both trust in God and at the same time be fearful of man.

We can't do the two. We cannot at the same time as we trust in God also fear man. When we fear man, our souls will not rest in God alone.

One natural response that we have when we are attacked is a desire to fight back. I'm sure we've all heard the worldly wisdom, fight fire with fire, which is folly.

You fight fire with fire, you just have a bigger fire. You have a fire. But in times of weariness, the folly of the world can appear to be wisdom.

[22 : 35] And we who walk in the light sometimes can fall prey to it. When we get weary of waiting, foolishness can appear wise.

And we can find ourselves wishing that we had more power. We can find ourselves wishing that if we had more power, we would deal with people who just would not leave us alone.

Brothers and sisters, when we are unjustly attacked and mistreated, if we're not trusting, if we're not entrusting ourselves to God, it becomes so easy to trust in human power and long for human power instead of longing for God's salvation.

When we lose sight of God's power and his ability to save us, we will desire human power as a substitute. Again, we don't know the context of Psalm 62 for David because he had many different situations where he was under attack.

But one such time is in 2 Samuel chapter 16 when David was fleeing from his son Absalom, who had overthrown him as king. And the account tells us that David was in such a bad condition that David was fleeing from the wrath of Absalom, barefooted, weeping with his head covered.

[24 : 19] And as David fled, he came to a city where one of King Saul's relatives lived, a man by the name of Shimei. And Shimei came to David and to his men and he cursed David continually and threw rocks at him and his men.

one of David's fighting men, Abishai, said to David, why should this dead dog curse my lord the king?

Let me go over there and take off his head. And how did David respond? Here's how David responded, beginning in verse 10, 2 Samuel chapter 16.

So the king said, what have I to do with you, you sons of Zeruiah? If he is cursing because the Lord has said to him, curse David, who then shall say why have you done so?

And David said to Abishai and to all his servants, behold, my own son seeks my life, how much more may this Benjamite leave him alone and let him curse, for the Lord has told him to.

[25 : 50] It may be that the Lord will look on the wrong done to me and that the Lord will repay me with good for his cursing today.

So David and his men went on the road, while Shimei went along on the hillside opposite him and cursed as he went and threw stones at him and flung dust.

Brothers and sisters, this is the posture of one who is entrusting himself to God, who is trusting in God alone amidst a great personal difficulty.

And in a situation where he could have taken matters into his own hands. In a situation where he could have just said to Abishai and to his men and understand these were men who defeated armies.

And so there's no question that David could have dealt with him. There's no question that David could have dealt with Absalom. He doesn't do that. David entrusted himself to God and left Absalom to God and left Shimei to God that God would deal with them.

[27 : 05] And you read the rest of the story God dealt with them. It's because David waited for God. Brothers and sisters, when we have the desire to have personal power to deal with personal injustices that we've experienced, it's an expression that we're not putting our trust in God alone instead.

We're putting it in power. We're called to trust in God alone, even when we are unjustly treated and attacked.

In addition to being tempted to trust in power than in God alone, sometimes we are tempted to trust in position or in status in life.

This brings you to my second exhortation warning in Psalm 62, which is trust in God alone, not position. In verse 8, the psalmist exhorts God's people and he says, trust in him at all times, O people.

Pour out your heart before him. God is a refuge for us. This verse is the heart of Psalm 62. This is the heartbeat of the psalm.

[28 : 38] This is the appeal of the psalm to us. Trust in him at all times. Not just in the bad times. Not just in the hard times.

At all times, we're called to trust in the Lord and to pour out a heart for him because he's a refuge for his people.

In verse 9, David points to the second idolatrous option in which we can sometimes trust our position or our state, our status in life.

We might be tempted to think that because of our status, we don't need God. Or, we might grow wary of trusting God, and be tempted to think that things would be different if we just had a higher position, a higher state, a higher status, than the low position or the low status that we occupy. And we think to ourselves, as some people say, then I could do some things to myself. Because we believe it's rooted in our state.

[29 : 59] We believe it's rooted in our circumstance, high or low. The common experience that I believe all of us have lived long enough to have experienced is being treated unfairly and being able to do nothing about.

And it's easy to wish to get a more influential status or position or that you knew someone who was in position to do something about it. And when we find ourselves in such situations it can cause us to despise low position.

Despise a lack of influence and power and to esteem high position for power and authority. In verse 9 David says the poor and the lowly those of low estate and the rich and the lofty those of high estate are all nothing.

because those of the lowest state are breath which is the word that the preacher in Ecclesiastes uses when he talks about vanity.

It's a mist. It's a breath. It's a vapor. Now it's not surprising that David would say that those who are of low estate are but a breath.

[31 : 44] The surprise is what he says about those who are of a higher state. He says those of higher state are a delusion. Those of higher state are a delusion.

David says it's artificial. A delusion is a firm belief in something that is not true. David says this idea that being or having higher state is something that it gives you something you can trust and something that you can hold on to.

said that's delusional. It's not anything that's worthy of trust. In verse 9 David says if you place the weak and the lowly those of low state and the strong and the lofty those of higher state together on one side of the scales he says they'll go up because they're all a breath they're nothing and the picture that he has in mind is you probably know that the two pan scales the scale that has a balance two pans on either side the way they worked those scales was they had certain standard weights and measures and they would put the standard weight on one side so for example you were going to buy a pound of meat they would put a one pound weight on one side of the scale and then they would begin to put meat on the other side of the scale and then the two were balanced and you got a pound there

David says if you lofty and the weak and the lowly and put them on one side of the scale they're so light the scale would just go up the other weight will just bring it up because it has no weight or value all of them and these estates that he's talking about these are really people these are the people who occupy these estates and he's saying it's nothing at the end of the day and have it we shouldn't crave it that is high estate and if we have it that is high estate we shouldn't worship it because either way it is nothing and if we're in low condition we shouldn't despise it because it doesn't matter at the end of the day so the point is don't look down on or despise low position and don't look up to idolize high position instead trust in

God alone brothers and sisters I don't know how these words are landing on your ears this morning are you despairing because you consider your circumstance!

[34:59] your estate to be weak are you wishing for what you perceive to be a higher and a better estate better circumstance!

Or perhaps in your highest state your desirable circumstances you're trusting in that rather than trusting in the Lord Psalm 62 exhorts us against both options and calls us to trust in God alone and then third and finally Psalm 62 exhorts us and warns us to trust in God alone and not possessions look at verse 10 put no trust in extortion set no vain hopes on robbery if riches increase set not your heart on them the reason that people engage in extortion and robbery!

through blackmail and other forms even outright stealing is that they value money more than money is to be valued they make much of money too much of money more of money than they should you know we regularly read in the news or hear in the news stories of people who are being brought before the courts police officers immigration officers politicians people who engage in extortion who engage in stealing some people stealing by reason of employment you see the other day I read a story of a lady who'd stolen some money from the place she worked at spent large sum of money some thousand dollars and spent half of it and they found the other half in her freezer strewn away so much of her life because she made more of money than she ought to have setting their hopes on it it's very interesting in the sermon on the mount that Jesus said you cannot serve

God not and Satan you cannot serve God and money money is one of the primary substitutes that we employ to put our trust in rather than God the truth is this is not just an issue for unbelievers and we should see that because Psalm 62 is written to believers and we as believers are being exhorted and we are being told not to put our hope in money we are being told don't trust in extortion don't set your hopes on robbery if riches increase don't set your heart upon it this is relevant for believers as well some of you may remember some years ago the sad and highly publicized story of a

Christian who worked in a bank and who while giving testimony in court because she stole from the bank she admitted under oath that she stole the money to give into the offering for her pastor's anniversary service what kind of pressure what kind of pressure would have had to come to bear upon that woman do such an unnecessary act to give in an offering to feed a pastor's greed and that's what it is because that's what all of those things are anniversary here some of them have five six anniversaries a year and people are expected to give into those anniversaries and so we're not exempt and even sometimes in a moment of poor judgment and see brothers and sisters this is why we have to settle this beforehand we can't wait to find ourselves in the temptation to find out what we're going to do by the grace of

[40:27] God let's settle our hearts and say I will not set my heart on money I will set my heart on the Lord and trust in him that's what all that David says in verse 10 he also says to us if riches increase don't set your heart on it why why shouldn't we set our hearts on riches well first and foremost because our hearts are to be set on God alone and trusting in God alone the other reason is that it can take wings and fly away and that's what Proverbs 24 4-5 tells us do not toil to acquire wealth be discerning enough to desist when your eyes light on it it is gone for suddenly it sprouts wings flying like an eagle toward heaven not like a pigeon swiftly like an eagle swiftly like an eagle and so the practical wisdom is if riches increase don't set your heart on it because it is not certain there is no certain riches on this side of eternity some of the largest fortunes have been lost just by one event and so when riches increase you ought not to set our hearts on it the apostle

Paul in first Timothy chapter 6 verse 10 tells us that the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil and throughout scripture we are warned again and again that we must not love money we have to guard ourselves Jesus says guard yourselves against covetousness Paul tells us in Hebrews 13 we have to keep our lives free from the love of money and that is an ongoing duty that we have brothers and sisters that we guard our hearts we are not exempt our world is filled with evil and you take the time to think about it at the root of it is the love of money you see the wars that are going on in the world today you know what's under them economics you go back and study the wars in the past all about land and property and resources it's the love of money it is the root of all evil and riches are nothing to put our trust in because it's unstable it changes hands instead we are called to put our trust in the

Lord so brothers and sisters let me ask where are you concerning this third exhortation your trust in God alone and not in possessions whether monetary or otherwise is you waiting for God in relation to financial matters demonstrating that you're trusting in him or does it reveal instead that you're trusting money again verse 8 is the heart of the psalm the psalmist wisely calls us to trust in God at

all times again because our general tendency is only trusting God and we think we need to trust in him none of the substitutes that we see in Psalm 62 not power not position not possessions none of them are worthy of trust because none of them is permanent so how do we trust in God at all times whether we're being attacked as David was or whether it's an issue of unjust treatment in the hands of someone or maybe some kind of financial trial where we lack resources or even in a season of blessing where we might be tempted to set our hearts on money and possessions as he concludes this psalm

David tells us how we are able to trust in God at all times in the final two verses in verses 11 and 12 he tells us he says once God has spoken twice have I heard this that power belongs to God and that to you oh Lord belong steadfast love for you will render to a man according to his word what does David mean when he says once God has spoken twice have I heard this it's it's a manner of speaking to show the certainty of what God spoke it's almost saying God said you would take this to the bank it's as if

God spoke and it was so strong and profound it echoed in his soul once God has spoken twice have I heard this and then he makes three statements he makes three statements which I believe enabled him to trust in God alone and it should enable us to trust in God alone the first thing that he says is power belongs to God and here David is speaking about all power ultimate sovereign power belongs to God this is why we can trust in God alone because power belongs to him and nobody else the wicked who are oppressed really have no power those of highest state really have no power those with great possessions really have no power this means that God is able to do for us whatever he wills to do for us and no one can hinder it it means that every single time we are dealing with

[47 : 45] God we are never dealing with people we are never dealing with people we are always dealing with the one who holds ultimate power the people who make decisions over our lives and concerning our lives right in front of us we are not dealing with them the heart of the king is in the hand of the Lord he turns into the devil where he wants to turn it power belongs to God and see brothers and sisters when this settles in our souls we will remember that ultimately in every situation and every circumstance we are dealing with God and not people God is about people and our lot is in his sovereign hands love the second statement David makes in verse 12 is he says steadfast love belongs to God God's steadfast love is his unconditional never ending covenant love that he sets on his people that never changes never changes love is just a unbevering commitment to do us good forevermore and it's based on his unchanging character it's not based on our fickle ways

God's steadfast love towards us enables us to trust in him alone and then third and finally as he closes Psalm 62 David says judgment belongs to God he says God will render to every man according to his work and brothers and sisters this is a statement that scripture reminds us of again and again and again that one day the great judge of all the earth will judge all the earth in righteousness and in justice and this should encourage us because here's the truth the truth is that some of the justice that we desire and seek in this life we won't see it in this life but we will see it we will see it and David reminds us that God will render to every man according to his judge we truly believe that God is indeed the judge and that he will judge and we will wait for him to judge whenever we find ourselves being tempted to try to take situations in our own hands it's a clear indication that we don't believe that God is going to deal with it we don't believe that God will judge we believe with absolute certainty in our hearts that this is true that God is going to judge brothers and sisters if God overlooks any injustice in the entirety of human existence he is unjust but he's not unjust and so he will render to every man according to his mind now here's how I want to conclude this morning I think it's fair to say that trusting in God is easier said than done none of us perfectly trusts in the Lord but we can and should be growing in trusting in the Lord and that should be the prayer of all of our hearts this morning

Lord help me to grow in trusting you more help me to grow in trusting you more but here's our encouragement this morning our encouragement this morning is that we have one who is our savior and our substitute who is perfectly trusted God also Peter tells us that when Jesus was reviled he didn't revile again but what he did was he entrusted himself to the righteous God who judges righteously so when we fail let us remember that we have a savior and a substitute who didn't fail God credits his perfect trust in the Lord to all of us who belong there there are some who are present or perhaps even watching online for whom trusting in

God is not just difficult but trusting in God is impossible because the only way that we can trust God is to know God and until we know God until a person knows God that person cannot trust God you may attend church you may quote scriptures you may claim promises but if you don't know God then you are what the Bible says you are lost and without hope in this world and you are under a deception that all is well because sadly that is so widespread among us that the only way to trust in God is to come to know him so that's you this morning I say to you come to Jesus and turn from a life of sin and put your hope your faith and your trust in him that's what it means to repent it means to turn away and to turn to turn away from sin and turn to Christ and I pray that you would do that this as pray

[54 : 57] Father thank you that you are trustworthy you've given us your word to remind us and to call us to trust in you alone Lord you know where each one of us is you know what we need so would you draw near to us and help us that we would grow in trusting you I pray for any who don't know the Savior oh Lord would you convict them of sin would you open their eyes would you have mercy on them would you save them pray this in Christ's name may may