

When Enemies Attack Us

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 19 July 2026

Preacher: Clarence Rolle

[0:00] Good morning. It's always amazing to me how God providentially teaches us and leads us into truth.

! And this pastor had to deal with an enemy of his.

This particular enemy had threatened the pastor. Not only the pastor, but the pastor's wife, the pastor's children, and his grandchildren.

And the pastor, after hearing these threats, did not have a particularly Christian response. My friend told me about it, and I had to confess to him that, you know, after that, if that had been happening to me, I probably would have had the same response.

And then I read Psalm 56. I had already agreed to bring a message from it, but I hadn't thoroughly gone through the passage.

[1:25] And when I went through it thoroughly, I was then thoroughly convicted, seeing how wrong I would have been to react in the way that this particular pastor reacted.

Psalm 56 talks to us about dealing with our enemies. And in this psalm, David outlines a very different response to enemies than I first would have anticipated from him.

Because I told my friend, can you imagine how King David would have dealt with an enemy like this, with these threats? Come to find out that David would not have done that at all.

In fact, he did not do what I predicted. He would do. So, hopefully, as we go through Psalm 56 today, this will be a blessing to all of us.

And God will add wisdom to our ways. So, let's begin with prayer. Father, we are amazed by you, by who you are, and how you lead us into truth, how you add wisdom to us.

[2:55] And Lord, we pray that in this psalm we would indeed find wisdom. Lord, we pray that in this psalm we would have been told to us, how you lead us into truth, how you lead us into truth. And Lord, we pray that in this psalm we would have been told to us, how you lead us into truth.

In particular, those who show themselves to be our enemy. And Lord, may you give us the strength to walk in newness of life in the manner that you have prescribed for us to walk.

May we hear your words clearly today. And may we truly be transformed with the mind of Christ. In this area of our life, we pray. Amen.

So, as I said before, Psalm 56 is helpful to us in dealing with enemies. Now, some of you may say you have no enemies.

And I'm going to respond to that. I will say, if you say you have no enemies, just wait until they attack you. And then it will be clear. I think we all have enemies, even if we don't realize it.

[4:03] They may be in the workplace. They may be in our service clubs that we are part of. And I hope you haven't had some of the experiences that I've had.

And I might share a few of them. I hope I don't share too much. But I know something about enemies. Have you ever had the experience where you walk into your office the start of a week? And everyone in the office has brand new supplies, brand new furniture, bright and spanking. Everyone except you. I've had that experience.

That's when you know you have enemies at work. Or maybe there's a big meeting. One that no staff member can miss. It's so important.

But somehow, you're the only one who didn't get an email to notify you of the meeting. Maybe there's an enemy at work.

[5:04] Or maybe there's someone who constantly disagrees with you, opposes you. Maybe there's someone who talks about you behind your back.

Or even directly to you, contradicts you and embarrasses you even openly in public. Maybe they ridicule you.

Maybe they're not. So we may have enemies who do all this. And some of them are powerful. And the thing is, we don't have any choice about it, really.

We don't choose who our enemies may be. I mean, we can choose them. But the point is, we don't have control over anyone else. Sometimes people decide to make themselves our enemy.

And we just have to deal with it. Definitely, as believers, we all have enemies. Because the world is an enemy to us.

[6:10] Now, Psalm 56 is relatively short. But even though it's short, there's a lot going on in it. And David writes this at a very tumultuous time in his life.

He had enemies all around him. King Saul was supposed to be his friend. But as it turns out, he was a great enemy.

Saul and all his men were looking to kill David. And at the same time, David ends up in the hands of the Philistines.

Who up to this point had been his great enemies in battle. And the Israelites had written songs about David's battles, his conquests.

They said that he killed so many of these Philistines. And now he was in their hands. Not only was he captured by the Philistines, but he was captured in Gath.

[7:11] The hometown of a very famous Philistine named Goliath. Now, we know that, humanly speaking, it was David's slaying of Goliath that gave him his fame.

And Goliath was a hero. He was a champion of the Philistines. And now David was in his hometown. And I am sure the people there were anxious to get revenge on him.

And all these things are reflected in Psalm 56. There are so many enemies that seem to be closing in on David. And it looked like there was no escape for him.

At least no escape within keeping his life. So this was definitely an intense time for David. But in the midst of it all, David shows us under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

That the believer calls on the Lord to defend him against his enemies. So this morning I want us to work through Psalm 56.

[8:22] Under two main headings. And they are the believer's attacker. And the believer's defender. So let's have a look at the believer's attacker.

The attacker is our enemy. And right away in verse 1, we see the disposition of David's enemies toward him. And we see that they have absolutely no regard for him.

He says that man tramples upon him. They are cold hearted. And this isn't an accidental trampling. This is intentional, willful trampling.

They intend to do serious harm to him. And they have no remorse for it. And I recall a time when an enemy trampled on me.

And just picture it now. I don't know if you've ever had this experience. But I'm doing a major conference. And I am the emcee of the event. 200 people from all over North America in the Caribbean in the room.

[9:29] And in the middle of introduction, my big monologue, this person comes up to me and removes me from the mic in front of a crowd and instructs me to have a seat.

That's embarrassment. But above that, there was no remorse. Can you imagine that years later, there was never a hint of being sorry for that?

Not one apology. That's when I know I had an unremorseful attacker who showed themselves to be an enemy to me.

And this is the type of unrepentant attacks that David is talking about. He goes on in verse 2 to show that these vicious attacks are constant.

They don't let up. And all day long, these attacks continue. They continue to trample on him, looking to injure him and even to take his life.

[10:39] And not only are they not remorseful, but he says that they do it proudly. There's a certain arrogance in their attacks.

They would boast about it. They do it with joy. And I can imagine that as these people come after David, they have a smile on their face.

Because it pleases them to injure him, to try to rip him to pieces. When our enemies attack, we feel that they're the most evil person on the face of the earth.

Being pushed from a microphone with 200 people watching. Some of them leaders of countries. I felt like this person who did that to me was the most evil person on the face of the earth.

That's how we can feel. That's how David felt in that moment. He says they stifle him all day long. They want him to make no progress.

[11:47] That's how we read in verse 5. It seems to him that he has no rest from them at all.

That every moment, there's something. He has to be looking around all the time. He has to be so cautious. He has to guard his steps. He can never let his guard down.

And we especially get that sense when we consider the footnote from verse 5. The footnote B that says that verse can be translated as they twist my words.

And many of us have had experiences with people twisting our words. Even outright lying on us. So imagine having to be careful in every moment.

Even with what you say. You have to choose your words carefully. You have to protect yourself from someone intentionally misrepresenting what you say.

[12:54] And some of us don't have to imagine. Because it might have happened to some of us. We can relate to that. And maybe you have experienced it on the job or someplace else.

But when enemies attack. You seem to feel as though causing problems for us. Is their full time job. Like they don't have an actual job. Like they do except to concentrate on us. Like maybe they have no bills to pay. That's the way. That's the way David felt.

He talks about their constant attacks. And it says to him that all of their thoughts are on him. Not some. All the time.

And these are not good thoughts. These are vicious thoughts against him. I've been watching for the last few days.

[13:57] The women's ministry. And they have a program going on now. That they call the Summer Secret Sisters. And they're all excited about it.

I mean I get a kick out of watching them. Carry it out. And what it is. It's very secret. And what it is. Is they all have. It's no secret.

Pastor Moth didn't know about it. What is this justice? You might have a secret salad during Christmas time. They have a particular sister. That they're responsible for.

Reaching out to. And encouraging. But they keep their identity secret as they do it. And. I just watch them all day long. It's only been a few days. But like all day.

They're sending messages to each other. Encouraging. You know. Sending well wishes. Well that's not what. David. Is seeing here. No one is selling him well wishes.

[14:55] They're selling him what they call hell wishes. They. They wish. His life. To be ended. They want to make his life. First a living nightmare. And then to end it.

So that's how we feel. We feel like our enemy. Is always out to destroy us. Every thought. Is how they're going to trample us. And here.

David knows. That his enemy. Clearly intends. To destroy him. And in verse 6. We see how sinister. This enemy is.

We see again that. David's enemy. Is not coming against him. In the heat of the moment. This is planned. He says they lurk. They're watching for him.

They're plotting. And they're planning. They're lying in wait for him. They're calculated. I mean this is. Cold-blooded stuff. So we see a clear picture.

[15:58] Of evil. Intent. And when enemies. Like this attack us. We could easily be afraid. David initially was afraid here.

And we're afraid because. We really can't put anything past them. It's like they would stop at nothing. Because their one purpose. Is to destroy you.

Nothing is off limits. There's no debt. Low enough. That they wouldn't sink to. They would use whatever method they need to. To harm us.

And so here we really see. David's great. Conflict. Yes his. Enemy is stirring up strife in his life.

And. His very life is in danger. But the strife is not just limited to his physical danger. We see David battling.

[16:57] Mentally. Emotionally. The enemy is thinking of him all day long. And so that. Gives him no choice. We have to think of.

The enemy. As well. All day long. Do you ever feel that way? Like you know someone means you. Ill.

And you can't get. Them off of your mind. Your mind is always going. You have to stay a step ahead of them. You have to plan. If they do this.

I'm going to do that. And if that doesn't work. And they do this. I will counter with that. And it goes on. And on. You don't have peace of mind.

You have no rest. And this is David's situation. In addition to having his life.

[17 : 52] Constantly in jeopardy. He's in mental. And emotional turmoil. So David has gone through. All this explanation.

Of how cruel. This enemy can be. And. And then he asks. In verse 7. Will they escape.

Their crimes. In other words. David is asking. Are they going to get away. With all this. All this hatred for me. All they have.

Done to me. Are they going to go. Scott free. Now. Knowing all we know. About David. How do you think.

He would respond. To such an unfeeling. Uncaring. Unremorseful. Enemy. Remember now. This is David. Who slew the great.

[18 : 54] Goliath. He took off his head. With. Goliath's own sword. God. He's a mighty. Man of valor. You know.

We. I referred earlier. To the song. That they used to sing. Of David. Saying that. Saul has killed. His thousands. And David has killed.

His tens. Of thousands. My. Reaction would be. That David would turn on these people. And he'd go after them violently. That he would. Rip them the shreds.

And they'd have to rewrite that song. And say that David has killed. Hundreds. And hundreds. Of thousands. But although. That's what I expected. That's not what we find. In verse seven.

What we find. In verse seven. Is that. David takes. No direct action. Against these enemies. Doesn't pick up. His usual weapons.

[19 : 51] And go after them. Instead. What we see. Is that. David turns. To the Lord. And ask the Lord.

To fight. On his behalf. And that leads me to. The second and final point. The believer's defender. From the very beginning of.

This psalm. David acknowledges that. God is not. Like man. God. When we look back. At verse. One. We. See a stark contrast.

That David makes. Between God and man. While man. Can be heartless. And cruel. And trampling. Upon David. David appeals. To God's. Gracious.

Character. He cries out. To God. That's what we need to do. When our enemies attack. We need to cry out.

[20 : 50] To God. Our. First and main thoughts. Ought not to be. About. The attacker. And the attacks. Not ought to be.

Thinking of. What we can do. With our own strength. But we ought to look. To our gracious God. David asked God. To.

Be different. From his enemies. And he knows. Already. That God is different. Because he'd. Walked with God. He'd experienced. God. And that.

Informed. His belief. That God. Was definitely. A gracious God. And here's what. A gracious God. Had. Done for David.

As he walked with him. He had protected. Him. He'd watched over him. As David cared for. The animals. That were in his care. And he had. Taken him from being.

[21 : 46] A humble shepherd. To being a leader. Of mighty armies. He'd moved him. From being the least. Of his father's sons. To being a chief.

In the king's court. So when enemies attack. We can consider. Similar evidences. In our life. That point to.

That we. We are in the care. Of a gracious. God. So David has. David has this confidence. In God's grace.

And in contrast. To. The enemy who. Tramples upon David. All day long. This gracious God has. Been considerate. And mindful.

Of David. And we see. In verse 8. That. God has kept. Track. Of David. He has been.

[22 : 46] Showing particular. Concern. With his life. David says. You've kept. Count. Of my tossings. He had been. Wandering alone.

At this point. Being pursued. By his enemies. He is. He is miserable. He was suffering. David was in. Emotional. Agony.

But throughout that. He still had the sense. That God. Still had regard. For him. David knew that his tears.

Even his tears. Were precious. To the Lord. God. He tells the Lord. To put his tears. Into your bottle. If the tears.

Were to fall to the ground. They would be lost. But. David appeals to God. To take. Particular. Note. Of his suffering. And to.

[23 : 44] Symbolically. Put his tears. Into a bottle. As if. They were a memento. To be a constant reminder. Of David's hardship. Peter. He asks.

Are my tears. In your book. In other words. Have you kept. A record. Of them. Have you taken note. Of my pain. And suffering. And that question.

Is. A rhetorical question. David knows. Very well. That God. Knew every tear. That he shared. Is. Just as we are. Assured. In. The gospel of Luke. That every. Hair on our head. Is numbered. God knew.

Every tear. That David shared. And for every reason. And likewise. He's mindful of us. So we know.

[24 : 43] We have a. Personal God. Give a God. Who is intimately. Aware of us. And everything. That's happening. In our lives. And he is concerned. With our lives.

When enemies attack. We should not. So much. Have. Them in focus. That we should.

Focus much more. On our compassionate. God. And it's this knowledge. Of a compassionate God. That.

David. Concentrates on. It's this knowledge. Of God. That. God is his champion. That God is his defender. That gives.

David. The confidence. To call. On him. Beginning in verse 7. He calls. For God. To fight on his behalf. He calls on God.

[25 : 40] To cast down. Those people. Who become his enemies. The people. Who are plotting. On his life. In verse 9. Again. We see. This unwavering.

Confidence in God. He knows. That when. He calls on God. His enemies. Will have no choice. But to turn back. From their attack. They will have to.

Break off their attack. And. And stop. From plaguing him. When enemies attack. We have to consider. Are we trusting.

In God. Yeah. We see the example of David. David. Trusted. In God. He knows. That God is on his side.

And he makes. His trust in God. A refrain. Refrain. Of this sound. We first see the refrain. Beginning in the latter part.

[26 : 38] Of verse 3. And it continues. To the end. Of verse 4. This is what it says. I put my trust. I put my trust in you. In God.

Whose word I praise. In God. I trust. I shall not be afraid. What can flesh. Do to me. And he essentially repeats this.

In verses 10 and 11. In God. Whose word I praise. In the Lord. Whose word I praise. In God. I trust. I shall not. Be afraid. What can man. Do to me. Here again. We see. David draw a contrast.

Between God and man. First. God's word. Is trustworthy. But man's word is not. God. We can't really rely on.

[27 : 40] Man to fulfill. Any of his promises. Even a man's. Most sincere. Promise. Is easily broken.

Simply because. We don't always have. The power. To keep our word. I hope this is not. Too touchy. For anyone. But I'm going to use an example here.

Just think of BPL. How many times. Have they promised us. That we'd have a summer. Without blackouts. That they'll keep.

The lights on. And similarly. Every government. Probably for the last 40 years. That's been in charge of BPL. Has made that promise. And even if we don't believe.

That some of them. Are sincere. We have to know that. Some of them. At least some of them. Truly meant to keep that promise. They really wanted our lights. To stay on. But.

[28 : 37] We may have the desire. To do many things. But in our limited strength. We don't always. Deliver. It's so different with God.

What he promises. He always. Always delivers. He never misses. He's faithful to his word.

And he is the one. Who has unlimited power. No one. No circumstance. Can stand against his purposes.

And in fact. God. God orchestrates. Everything that happens to us. To fulfill his purposes. Even the bad things.

Think of the situation. That David was in. Saul. Who was David's king. Should have been his friend. [29 : 37] Turned out to be his enemy. He should have been. Safely. In Saul's court. But he was not. So what does he do? He flees.

To the Philistines. Who were. An even greater enemy to him. All through his military life. And instead of being safe with them.

They seize him. They capture him. They intend to take his life. And to top it all off. During this time. David is actually carrying the very sword.

With which he took Goliath's head. In his hometown. Now you could. Look at all these things. And think they are a series. Of ironies.

But I don't think they are. Random at all. I take them as. A clear indication. That these are events. Orchestrated by God.

[30 : 39] In a way that only. He could bring about. And so. When our enemies attack. We should look at our situation.

Look at our circumstances. Let's think. God. Is this. Something that you have ordained. To bring about.

Your purposes. Let's ask. What's your will in all this? What would you. Have us to do. How we are to. Respond.

God. By God's grace. David knew. That God. His purposes. That's what allowed him.

To overcome. The fear that he initially felt. He knew that trusting. The all-powerful. All-wise. God of the universe. The God who is.

[31 : 38] On his side. Would only lead. To something good. For him. And he says. What. Can man.

Do to me. Well after all I've spoken about. Today. If we were to. Really answer that question. You probably can't put a lot of things.

That man can do to us. They can. Harass us. They can. Victimize us on jobs. They can embarrass us.

In front of our. Colleagues. And pairs. They can even take our life. But David.

Is not concerned. By all that. He has no fear of that. He started off being afraid. But after placing his trust in God.

[32 : 32] He's no longer afraid. Because he has a. Clear view. He has everything. In proper perspective. In the big picture.

As awful. And as. Hainous. As our enemies. Can be to us. Ultimately. We don't have any power. Over our eternal soul.

It's God. Who has power. Over our. Eternal life. And this is what Jesus tells us.

In Luke chapter 12. Verses 4 to 7. And he uses very similar words. As David. It's almost as if he is referencing. This. This psalm here.

He says. As I tell you. My friends. Do not fear. Who. Kill the body. And after that. Have nothing more. They can do. But I will warn you.

[33 : 32] Whom to fear. Fear him. Who after. He has killed. Has authority. To cast into hell. Yes. I tell you. Fear him.

I'm not five sparrows. Sold for two pennies. And not one of them. Is forgotten. Before God. Why even.

The hairs. Of your head. Are all numbered. Fear not. You are more value. Than many sparrows. God has the power.

To cast. Into hell. But he's not like. David's enemies. He's not like the ones. David writes about. In Psalm 56. He doesn't seek.

To trample us. But he's a compassionate God. He's extended grace. To his elect. He's numbered. [34 : 30] The very hairs on our head. He's taken account. Of our tears. He has regard. For our lives. We can count him.

To defend us. And he's promised. To defend us. We can trust his words. And even more. He's already come to our defense.

In Psalm 56. David asked God. To defend him. Against human enemies. But God has already. Defended us against. An even greater enemy. He's defended us.

Against the enemy of sin. And it's power in our life. We're born into sin. And we. Suffer the consequences of sin. We die physical deaths.
And if we're not regenerate. If we die. In our sins. We are eternally separated from God. And that fight. That fight against.

[35 : 32] The sin we are born in. It's an enemy. We. We really can't fight on our own. In fact. Scripture says. In our natural state. The state we are born in.

We're spiritually dead. And we can do nothing. For ourselves. Much less fight. Against our enemies. Let's think about it.

As mighty as David was. It made no sense for him to. Fight against the Philistines. In God. One. He was. On his own.

He had no army. No men with him. It would be him. Against an entire. City. And that fight. And that fight. Would only end. In him.

Losing. Those enemies. Are too great for him. It's the same with us.

[36 : 31] We cannot overcome. The sin we are born in. On our own. We need a savior. America. So God the father.

Set his son. Jesus Christ. To fight. On our behalf. And he fought by. Laying down. His life. The innocent Christ.

Suffered for. Us. The guilty ones. We were the ones. Who lived in sin. He did not. But he won us. Victory over sin. Through his. Substitutionary death. On the cross. And his resurrection. So we know that we have.

Eternal life. That's not something. That we worked for. It's not something. That we won. For ourselves. It's a gift. Of God. To us.

[37 : 30] In Christ Jesus. And we can be sure. That we. Already have this. Eternal life. We've been delivered.

From sin. We have assurance. Of that. Just as David. Was sure. Of his deliverance. From the Philistines. And he was sure. Even while he was.

Still in captivity. Verse 12. Of Psalm 56. References. David. Giving a. Thank offering. To the Lord. God. But Bible scholars.

Like. Alexander McLaren. They've commented that. David was nowhere near. An altar. Where he could give. A sacrifice. And that means that.

David had faith. That he would make it. Out of this predicament. And he would go. To a place. Where he could give. This thank offering. He had faith. That he would be delivered.

[38 : 30] From these enemies. Likewise. Likewise. We could have faith. That we are delivered. From sin. And from his consequences. David.

Trusted. God. God. And we should also. Trust. In him. When it comes to human enemies. We need to.

Turn to the Lord. We need to ask him. To be. Our defender. We should have confidence. That the Lord cares for us. We should have confidence.

That the Lord will. Work for us. In ways that we cannot work. For ourselves. And when it comes to. Our ultimate enemies.

Of sin. And death. And separation. From God. He's already defended us. To the work he has done. Through Jesus Christ.

[39 : 37] And he's defended us. And he has saved us. For a purpose. Look at how David puts it in. Verse 13. In the light. For you have delivered.

My soul from death. Yes. My feet from falling. That I may walk. Before God. In the light. Of life. God saves us. For his good works. He saved us. To live. For our savior. And here's how. Paul puts it.

In this familiar passage. From Ephesians 2. For by grace. You've been saved. Through faith. And this is not your doing. It is the gift of God.

Not a result of works. So that no one. May boast. For we are his workmanship. Created in Christ Jesus. For good works. Which God prepared beforehand.

[40 : 38] That we. May walk in them. I start off this message. Talking about. A pastor. A Christian man.

Who had an. Un-Christian. Response. To his enemies. And in the end. That brought. Shame on him. And that should be.

A cautionary tale. To us. Let's not. React to our enemies. In ways that lead us. Into sin. In fact. Not only should we. Pray. That God will fight. On our behalf. Against those enemies. But we should pray. For those enemies. Remembering that we were once.

Enemies of God. And he through his. Gracious character. Has. Has brought us in there. He has. Made us his. And we are no longer enemies.

[41:37] But we are friends. Of God. God. And we can pray. That those who show themselves. To be our enemy. Those who. Show that they are.

Not walking. In the light of life. Will also come to be friends. Of God. When enemies attack. Let's remember.

Ephesians 2. As much as we want to. Hit our enemies. Let's remember. Ephesians 2. It was Christ. Who fought on our behalf.

Against sin and death. And similarly. Let's not look. At human enemies. And fear them.

Or fight fire. With fire. And. And I know this is.

[42:36] This goes against probably everything that's in us naturally. We want to hit out against our enemies. And. And I'll confess this one last thing. I'm. I'm one who.

Was once a very vengeful person. I'm so vengeful. I could. I could. Recall. The first time I got revenge on someone. My.

Older sister. She hit me. And I was about three. I could have been more than four. And I just. I just. I knew I would get revenge on her. You know.

And I thought of all sorts of things. And in the end what I did was. You know. Back then. We didn't have a lot of. Stuff. But she had one pair of shoes.

And I took those pairs of shoes. I threw it on top of the roof. And then I. I turned and I said. Now go for it. Naturally. That's who we are.

[43:37] We. We want that revenge. And that's probably the nicest story I could tell about revenge. For me. But when we look at Ephesians 2. When we look at how God treated us.

When we were his enemies. And he graciously brought us to ourselves. We will not fight fire. With fire. Instead.

Let's follow David's example. Let's trust. In the Lord to preserve us. And he will preserve us. From those who.

Wish to do evil to us. Let's trust the Lord. Our gracious. Lord. To be the defender of our lives. In every way.

And he will show himself. To be the defender that we cannot be. For ourselves. Let's pray.

Heavenly Father. The Heavenly Father.

[44:36] Lord. We turn to you. And look to you. And Father. We ask that you would arrest our hearts. That you would indeed. Make a change in us.

Lord. Naturally we are. Vengeful. Naturally we want to hit out. Lord. And Lord. Give us the conviction that. We are saved to do.

Your good works. And not to follow our own passions. To do this for us Lord. Would you transform our minds.

Transform our hearts. And would you be our. Gracious God. Who defends us. Against our enemies. In ways that we cannot.

So we trust. You for this. May this be your will. In Christ's name. Amen.