

How God Heals A Wounded Soul

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: 14 July 2024

Preacher: J.D. Edwards

[0 : 00] it's been humbling and refreshing to put ourselves under one psalm each week. Amen.
And so the psalm for today is Psalm 13.

For the choir director, another psalm of David. I want to give you something to listen for as I read our sermon text for today. I want you to figure out who it is in David's life, from what you know, that is most likely causing him this severe pain.

As I prepared and tried to understand the context and our best guesses at David's context, there are two men in David's life who inflicted the most intense personal pain on David.

One was early in his life, and you know who that was, who was it? King Saul. In the psalms where David is bold about his righteousness and the vileness of men within Israel, that's a very likely guess that Saul is the one causing this deep personal pain.

But much later in David's life, when he's an old man, after he sinned, he committed the sin with Bathsheba. He neglected to use his office as king to execute justice on his own son.

[1 : 22] Another son of his led a rebellion from within Jerusalem against David. Do you remember his name? Absalom. So as we're reading Psalm 13, try to decide from the tone and the way David talks about his own standing before God, do you think it's earlier in his life or later in his life?

As I read our sermon text, we read it receiving it as God's inspired, inerrant, infallible, clear, and sufficient word.

It's God's very own word for you, his people. When I'm done reading, I'll say this is the word of God. If you receive it that way, please respond with confidence. Thanks be to God. Psalm 13.

For the choir director, a Psalm of David. How long, O Lord, will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me? How long will I store up anxious concerns within me?

Agony in my mind every day? How long will my enemy dominate or be exalted over me? Verse 3. Consider me and answer, Lord my God.

[2 : 28] Restore brightness to my eyes, otherwise I will sleep in death. My enemy will say, I have triumphed over him, and my foes will rejoice because I am shaken.

Verse 5. But I have trusted in your faithful or steadfast love. My heart will rejoice in your deliverance.

I will sing to the Lord because he has treated me generously. This is the word of God. Amen. Thanks be to God. You may be seated. The grass withers and the flower fades, but the word of the Lord endures forever.

Amen. Let's pray. Amen.

Amen. to new life that bears fruit. We pray that you will do all of this, Lord, in your timing, according to the means that you have ordained for your people.

[4 : 07] For your glory alone we ask. Amen. Imagine that it's your first day on a new job. You're working in the emergency room.

You've donned your PPE. You put on your personal protective equipment. And you see the fire lights coming and the EMTs rush this person on a cot with wheels through the doors.

And you just hear more experienced staff say, this one is probably not going to make it. The charge nurse does some triage quickly, sends this patient right on through to the doctor.

And you're amazed at watching the doctor take these steps. Diagnosing, providing a swift, intense treatment, stitching up layer of layer of tissue, taking all the steps and precautions so that infection won't develop inside, and then programming out what are all the steps to the deepest level of healing and rehabilitation.

There was an old pastor that lived in the 4th century, so the 300s, named John Chrysostom. And he used a wonderful metaphor about the church that shows the influence of Christ on the apostles and the tone that set for hundreds of years, and it should be the tone of every generation.

[5 : 38] And it's this. Chrysostom said, the church is not a courtroom for souls. It's a hospital for souls. Amen? The church, you and me, we're here as patients that God has healed and he's healing and rehabilitating, and he brings in more sick and wounded souls into his hospital.

And we get to be a very small part of that and watch him, the great physician, work on one soul after the other. And bear witness, great is his faithfulness for you, for you, for you, for you.

Great is his faithfulness. In Psalm 13, David is the patient. He comes in and the description, it's a wounded, a severely wounded man.

He's not wounded on the body this time. I think he's old. He's contrite. He's aware of God's abounding grace to him. And he's conflicted internally, probably because he still is wrestling with his own guilt.

And he's a wounded soul that needs the doctor to heal him. And so that's my invitation to you this morning as we walk through Psalm 13. Let's watch God work.

[6 : 53] Let's see how God heals a wounded soul. Number one, symptoms of a severely wounded soul. Symptoms of a severely wounded soul.

Verses two and three. It's a big word. So kids, what is a symptom? It's a sign, something we can see that's pointing to something.

And it's a sign of illness, a manifestation of a problem, an ailment, a malady, or a disorder. Something that needs fixing. It needs treatment. Look at verse two.

David cries out, how long must I take counsel in my soul and have sorrow in my heart all the day? David is deeply cut.

Have you been deeply cut before in your life? You can only be deeply cut by those about whom you care deeply, those whom you have loved deeply.

[7 : 55] They're the ones who can cut so deeply. So those you know best and those who know you best are the ones positioned to make you hurt the worst.

In David's heart, as every father here knows, he had to have been full of joy watching Absalom grow. As Absalom learned to talk and take a few steps, eventually grow up and learn to ride a horse, what a joy that brings a father.

Parents feel that the days go too fast with their little ones. But now David says, how long must I have sorrow in my heart? All the day. David has been deeply cut by someone within his own family.

In verse 2 he says, how long must I take counsel in my soul? So David as king, he's got councilmen, he's got generals and financial advisors and all kinds of counsel about running an empire.

That's not what he's talking about in this case. It has nothing to do with the outward blessings he's looking for. He is cut on the inside. And he's taking counsel with his own soul.

[9 : 20] You're taking counsel with your own soul when you feel stuck. In your mind, in your heart, your spirit, you're spinning. You picture a tire in the mud or snow where it's not even getting traction, it's just spinning.

There's nothing for it to grip onto, to move you out of that. He's consumed by the complications of this conflict. If, in fact, Psalms 13 comes at the end of David's life because he says, Lord, you have dealt bountifully with me.

Then David, at this point, had lost his moral high ground. He couldn't be taken seriously by anyone in the kingdom. He had disqualified himself as a spiritual leader.

His sin was horrible, hurtful, and public. To be more specific, David's firstborn son, who was the crown prince, the one who was supposed to become the next king of Israel, had violated Absalom's sister, Tamar.

From Absalom's perspective, David did nothing about it. So Absalom goes to the gates and stirs up others to say, if I were king, I would deal justly. I would do everything that my dad's done wrong correctly.

[10 : 40] And David is taking counsel in his own soul. He's consumed because this is complicated. There's no easy way out of this one. In verse 3, we have Hebrew poetry that's concise, so I don't want to read more into it that's there.

But in verse 3, he says, Light up my eyes, Lord, lest I sleep, the sleep of death. Lord, my soul is going to go to sleep.

I'm going to die. Maybe he's contemplating, how can I even escape this situation? And if I can't escape this in body, maybe my soul can escape my body.

I can't take it any longer. How long, oh Lord? These are symptoms of a severely wounded soul. How can a severely wounded soul get out of that?

What makes it even more complicated is being wounded so deeply, it changes how you feel about two different parties. How you feel about God changes, and how you feel toward your abusers also changes.

[11 : 52] Notice how a severely wounded soul in Psalm 13 feels toward God. You feel like God is making you endure more than you can bear.

He says, How long, oh Lord? You feel like God does not care that you continue to suffer. In verse 1 again, Will you forget me forever?

God, it feels like you have forgotten me right now. Are you going to never bring me back into your mind and do something? You feel like God has made himself distant from you. Verse 1 again, How long will you hide your face from me?

And you feel like God, if he is good, then he must be powerless. In verse 3 he says, Consider, look at my situation, God, and answer me.

Because if you really look at what I'm in right now and consider this, how could you not act? So if you are good and you're considering this, then act. If you don't act, I'm going to feel like you're powerless.

[12 : 59] A severely wounded soul, it's changed in the way you feel about God. And also, a severely wounded soul has strong, intense feelings that you can't shake about the one who is hurting you or who has hurt you.

a severely wounded soul feels differently toward those enemies. He says, It's like they've taken a God-like place over my mind.

They're above me. In verse 2, How long shall my enemy be exalted over me? To be exalted, that's the place of God. And they have pushed me so low with their power.

They've taken a God-like place in my mind, in my heart. It's consuming all my thoughts. He's concerned with what that abuser or that enemy will say or think about him.

In verse 4, he says, Answer me, O Lord, my God, lest my enemy say I have prevailed over him. That's the worst thing that could happen. They'll brag about this position they've got over me.

[14 : 07] They've got more power and they're going to brag about it. Obsessing, thinking about how that person is going to talk about them. And in verse 4, he says, Lest my foes rejoice because I am shaken.

His main reason for wanting God to act, to bring revenge, it seems to be to protect his own pride. He's been wounded. He's felt the injustice.

And he wants to protect his own pride and so he's calling on God because to be wounded in this way, it changes how you feel about the enemy. Well, we see a turn in verse 5.

What's the first word in verse 5 in your translation of God's word? But, but I have trusted in your steadfast love.

We don't get more context, we don't get more hints of how this came about, but we do see another safe center bearing witness. When I was so severely wounded, God caused me once again to trust in his steadfast love.

[15 : 23] Lord, I feel like you are making me endure more than I can bear, but I am trusting in your steadfast love. are you needing some healing?

Are you needing God to heal you in a deeper way to undo some of the wounds you've had to suffer in your life with the sin all around us?

All of that suffering was his providence for you so that he can heal you and you can bear witness of his steadfast love. 1 Corinthians 10, 13, God is faithful.

He is true to who he is and he will not let you be tried or tested beyond what you can bear, but when you are tested, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under the testing.

In Psalm 13, it's like David was praying, Lord, I feel that you don't care whether I continue to suffer, but I am trusting in your steadfast love.

[16 : 27] We see this steadfast love in Hebrews 2, 18, how our Lord Jesus Christ, he suffered, was tried, and so he is able to help those who are tried now.

In Hebrews 13, 12, our Lord Jesus Christ was taken to suffer outside of the gate so that he might sanctify you, his people, through his own blood.

Lord, Lord, I feel like you made yourself distant from me, you've hidden your face from me, that's how it feels, but I am trusting in your steadfast love. You, Lord, in the person of the Son, you took on the role of mediator, you accomplished what your own justice requires, and now as representative of your people, you turn around and you mediate grace, the grace of God to me.

Our Lord Jesus stands like the high priest in heaven and he blesses you. In the words of Numbers 6, he blesses you for God to bless you and keep you and make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you and that God will lift up his countenance upon you and give you his own peace.

So trust in his steadfast love. David cries out, Lord, it feels like if you are good, then you are powerless, but I am trusting in your steadfast love.

[17 : 53] 2 Thessalonians 1, 8 and 9, God one day will punish all those who don't know him, not for your pride and mine, but he will do it for his own glory.

All those who reject the good news of Jesus Christ, they will pay the penalty, which is eternal destruction. And 2 Thessalonians says that this eternal destruction, it comes from the very face of the Lord and from the glory of his might.

That's how God healed this severely wounded soul. And when a soul is healed by the grace of God, it changes how you feel toward God.

How does a healed soul feel toward God? In the words of Psalm 13. Look at verse 6. I will sing to the Lord.

He was crying out, desperate, lamenting, and now he's singing to the Lord. And why? Verse 6, because God has dealt bountifully, abundantly, graciously with me.

[19 : 07] David had prayed, how long will you hide your face? And God has shown him, David, if I were to approach you in all the splendor of my holiness and my glory, by the gracious blood of the covenant, without that blood to protect you, you'd be like a snowflake thrown onto a massive bonfire.

You would melt before the face of God. I've not hidden my face from you, David. I've covered you with my grace. You don't want what you deserve.

I don't want what I deserve. But God, he deals abundantly, graciously, bountifully with his people. And it changes how we feel. We sing to one another, come, oh sinner, come and mourn, for he calls your sin his own.

Do you feel the weight of justice served? He suffered the wrath that you deserve. So David says, I trust in your steadfast love.

I do long for your presence, for your deliverance, your free, gracious face shining on me. I long for that. Your countenance lifted up and welcoming me.

[20 : 29] And the Lord heals him with that cry. would you turn a few pages forward to Psalm 30, verse 2. Psalm 30, verse 2.

Another Psalm of David. A similar cry coming from his lips. And listen to his testimony in Psalm 30, verse 2. Oh Lord, my God, I cried to you for help and you have healed me.

Oh Lord, my God, you have healed me. If this resonates with you, I encourage you to memorize that short, powerful little verse.

When we memorize God's word, we hide it in our heart. The spirit draws it up in those moments where our emotions are too weak. He ministers it to us over and over again. David said, my heart shall rejoice in your salvation.

What was David reflecting on? God promised to save his people. God promised also to heal his people. In Exodus 15, 26, God said, I am Yahweh who heals you.

[21 : 49] Do you want to know who is this God who's redeeming you from slavery to be his people? It's the God who heals you. When our Lord Jesus Christ came to the earth, God the Son took on flesh.

We read in the four Gospels of 37 miracles. And John says there's so many more that can't even be recorded. 24, no, 26 of the 37 miracles recorded in the four Gospels are God healing people.

Our Lord Jesus Christ healed an official's fatally sick son in Luke 4. And he cleansed the soul of a demon-possessed man in Mark 1. To show us, I am Yahweh who heals you.

Trust in my steadfast love. Our Lord Jesus Christ cleansed a man with leprosy, Mark 1. A man with a withered hand, Luke 6. And he healed Peter's mother-in-law in Matthew 8.

To show us, I am Yahweh who heals you. Trust in my steadfast love. Our Lord Jesus Christ, he healed the centurion's paralyzed servant in Luke 7.

[23 : 03] When the sun was setting in Luke 4, our Lord Jesus Christ healed all the sick with various diseases and those oppressed by demons so that you would trust in his steadfast love.

Our Lord Jesus Christ healed the paralytic who was let down through the roof in Mark 2. to show you, I am Yahweh who heals you. A widow's son in Luke 7, Jairus' daughter Luke 8, Lazarus in the tomb, they were all already sleeping the sleep of death.

And our Lord Jesus Christ lit up their eyes. He brought them back to life to show how great the power of his might. Our Lord Jesus heals.

through the person of Jesus Christ God will heal you. He will heal your soul. He will prepare your soul for eternity with him.

We read in 1 Peter 2 23-25 this is quoting Isaiah 53-5 how Jesus Christ himself bore our sins in his body on the tree that we might die to sin and live to righteousness by his wounds you are healed.

[24 : 22] Amen. Beloved congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ, my exhortation for you today is trust in his steadfast love.

He is God who heals you. The church is a hospital for souls. If you're wounded today, go to God through Jesus Christ.

If your soul feels sick today, go again to God through Jesus Christ. If you need deeper and deeper healing, go to God through Christ.

Trust in his steadfast love. That's the simple message, the simple melody, that's the sound your soul needs over and over again. to illustrate this on a super simple level, I've learned recently about a type of treatment for deep scar tissue called shockwave.

It's a sound, a blast, and that never changes. But it has an effect on that scar tissue below the skin, below the surface, and that same shockwave, the same message, the same sound, it works over time, months, years, but it brings about healing by God's grace.

[25 : 40] Why would God have designed our bodies to heal in these powerful ways if it wasn't to teach us a deeper truth that he is God who heals his people?

Only God can heal your wounded soul. Go to God through Christ and trust in his steadfast love. Amen? Let's spend some time in prayer, receiving this truth, and praising God for his faithfulness.

Thank you.