

Psalm 27

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[0 : 0 0] And as Jordan said, this is one of the scariest things for me to do. So as the kids are out there, or as they're going back to Shoreline Kids,! I'm going to wander over to where Brad was standing because it's more comfortable for me over here.

Brad, remind me to give you your pick back. This is a comfort for me, so I'm going to hold it while I preach to remind me that I'm up here doing something that the elders have asked us to do. So I've been coming to Shoreline since the beginning. My wife Megan and Owen and Ellis, our two kids, can't be here right now. But I've got the tremendous privilege, as Jordan said, to talk about Psalm 27.

In general, the Psalm series this far has been really cool, right? We've seen a lot of men proclaim and preach on Psalms that mean something to them, that have brought them through something, that remind them of who God is.

So this morning I hope to be able to do the same thing. Psalm, that has meant something to me and our family. So let's pray. And hopefully these next two hours are going to be okay as we get through this.

[1 : 0 3] Thank you, Rob. God, I pray that this morning you'd be with my words. Lord, you are a good God, a God that we desire to magnify here this morning, to glorify with our words.

A God that has sent his son to live a life that we could not live, to die the death that we deserve. A God who encouraged David to write this psalm.

This psalm is not, you know, a song that's written by the sons of Korah for a choir master. But this is a psalm that David wrote in the midst of a suffering time in his life, in the midst of turmoil in his life. A psalm that, as we'll see, draws us to you. Encourage us to remember that your presence is with us. That you are a God who loves us. A God who cares.

A God who does not depart. So, God, as we dive into this sermon, may my words be words that are not mine but yours.

[2 : 0 7] May the words that are heard by the congregation and those listening to the archives in the future, as my pride wants to think. Thank you for the laughs. God, that my words would be words that come from you, not from me.

That the hearers of this word would hear your word proclaimed. That the gospel of Jesus Christ in the midst of the psalm 27 would be seen. God, that you would be with the kids next door as the shoreline kids, teachers, proclaim the same truths.

Lord, the truth is real no matter where you are in scripture, no matter who it's being spoken to. God, I pray that you would calm any anxiety and fear in my own heart, recognizing that your presence is with us, right?

My goal of this sermon is to talk about your presence and I pray that your presence would be revealed to me even this morning. God, we thank you. We praise you.

In your name I pray. Amen. So, my goal of this sermon is to remind us of God's goodness in his presence with those who know him. And to encourage us to ask for his presence and then to wait on the Lord. So, before we read this psalm, I want to set the stage, right?

[3 : 1 8] Psalm 27 is written by David while he's fleeing from Saul. This is the king of God's chosen people. So, it's not just like some guy that's chasing him. This is a king of God's chosen people.

Saul has, the spirit of God has been removed from Saul. The spirit of God has left Saul. David has already been anointed king, but he's fleeing. He writes this psalm. It's a psalm of lament.

But it's also a psalm of trust. I've been reading, doing a chronological study through the Bible. So, it was cool when I picked this psalm to study. It was actually at the same time when I was going through 1 Samuel 21 to 27.

And so, you're reading and you see David's physical position. But then you read a psalm and you see his heart position. And it's cool to see how they juxtapose each other. I think that's the right word. So, I encourage you to use a chronological study through the Bible.

I'm going to look at Rob a lot because he gets my jokes and he's laughing the whole time. It's an encouragement to me. So, I encourage you to do that, right? You see, you can read through Psalms.

[4 : 18] You can read through 1 Samuel. And you'll read like 1 Samuel 21 and then it'll jump to Psalm 7, 31, 52. You see where David was physically and then where he is spiritually or mentally. So, I've enjoyed that.

And as far as the structure of this book goes or this chapter, it's called a chiasmic structure. Who knows what that means? Yes. Dave, of course, a pastor, knows.

So, a chiasmic structure is like a pattern. A, B, C, D, C, B, A, or A, B, B, A. So, we'll see this as we go through. I'm an engineer. So, the chronological study is a linear thing.

Patterns are patterns. I'm an engineer. I like that. Those who appreciate the literary side a little bit more have a different perspective on that. So, let's read this. Remember, this is a psalm of lament. It's a psalm of trust. This is a psalm that's written as a prayer, not necessarily a song, though. Shane and Shane does have an awesome song called Psalm 27. So, I encourage you to listen to that as well. But, not right now.

[5 : 18] So, here we go. Let's read the psalm. The Lord is the light in my salvation. Whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life. Of whom shall I be afraid? When evildoers assail me to eat up my flesh, my adversaries and foe is they who stumble and fall.

Though an army encamp against me, my heart shall not fear. Though a war arise against me, yet I will be confident. One thing I have asked of the Lord that I will seek after. That I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life.

To gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his temple. For he will hide me in the shelter in the day of trouble. He will conceal me under the cover of his tent. He will lift me high upon the rock. And now my head shall be lifted up above my enemies all around me.

And I will offer in his tent sacrifices with shouts of joy. I will sing and make melody to the Lord. Hear, O Lord, when I cry aloud. Be gracious to me and answer me. You have said, seek my face. My heart says to you, Lord, your face do I seek.

Hide not your face from me. Turn not your servant away in anger. O you who have been my help. Cast me not off. Forsake me not. O God of my salvation. For my father and mother have forsaken me. But the Lord will take me in. Teach me your way, O Lord.

[6 : 20] And lead me on a level path because of my enemies. Give me not up to the will of my adversaries. For false witnesses have risen against me. And they breathe out violence. I believe that I should look upon the land of the living.

Or I believe that I should look upon the goodness of the Lord and the land of the living. Wait for the Lord. Be strong and let your heart take courage. Wait for the Lord. So, do you see the chiasmic structure in this?

Yes. I got a nod. Yes. Yes. It worked. Okay. So, one writer or one commentator says it's trust, position, seeking God, praise, response, seeking God, position, trust.

Or another put so simply, confidence, seeking God, seeking confidence. So, now that we're all overwhelmed with the beauty of the structure, let's dive through this. We'll reach back to the structure as we go through and we'll see God's goodness in his presence with us.

So, for simplicity's sake, 14 verses, I broke it down into nine sections. Thank you, Tyler. Since we're a Southern Baptist church, I pared down the three. And then I added alliteration because Matt Landick would do that.

[7 : 21] Or that's what Jules would tell Matt to do. So, as I was sitting here thinking, I'm like, Matt came in with a blue shirt. Dang it, he's in kids. My premeditated bad joke about Matt Landick is going to fall flat because he's not here right now.

So, hopefully he listens to it. Hopefully he can hear me. Knock two times if he can hear me. No. Okay. So, verses one through six, the principle or the knowledge. So, this is a principle, not like a guiding mantra, right?

We can think of principle as like, this is how I live my life. This is a principle to my life. But principle as the truth that you root your life in. Verses seven through 12 is the plea. And then verses 13 to 14

is the plan.

So, principle, plea, and plan. Within this, you see David's heart cry and the proclamation of truth and how that's impacted his heart. In the words of Piper, his knowledge fuels the white-hot affection of his soul.

So, let's start with the principle. This also aligns with the trust part of that chiastic structure. This is a prayer. And just like many of us start our prayers to God with adoration, David does the same thing. [8 : 20] He says, the Lord is. The first six verses are filled with the Lord is. The Lord is these things. His light, his salvation, his stronghold, his resting place, his shelter, his lifter-upper.

David's hiding in a cave, running from the king of God's chosen people. And he's able to say, the Lord is these things. In the midst of kind of some major turmoil in his life, David says, I'm not going to fear.

The Lord is these things. And I know that. In fact, I've got the utmost confidence that they will stumble and fall. When they come against me, I will be confident. Verses two and three. Right? You see, when evildoers assail against me to eat up my flesh, my adversaries and foes, it is they who stumble and fall.

Though an army encamp against me, my heart shall not fear. Though war arise against me, yet I will be confident. I don't know if I could say this if I was surrounded by a similar thing. Our community group went through this psalm.

This was before we picked out what psalms we were going to preach. Which, at that point, the elders were trying to get people to preach and I was avoiding it. But our community group went through this psalm and it was right about the same time Russia started attacking Ukraine.

[9 : 25] And we were looking at this and we're like, I can't say verses two and three. I can't say that me growing up in Ohio, moving to Connecticut 12 years ago, that I've been surrounded by people that are trying to kill me and destroy me.

And it reminded us that these truths that David's proclaiming, the confidence that he has, the future stumbling and falling of adversaries of God, is true no matter where you are.

Whether it's in your life and your physical situation here and now with something that's physically impairing you, or a physical situation that you're in where you're a Christian in Ukraine and you're surrounded by people legitimately trying to kill you.

So David looked at his situation, sorry. David looked at his situation, he looked back at the covenant, the promises that he had. And Brad talked about this a couple weeks ago, right? It's beautiful how like, I'm going to reference a couple of the other guys that have preached this morning, or preached over this past month and it's cool, the past couple months, and it's cool to see how the psalms like coexist, they coincide.

And there's a lot of common themes even though they're separate authors, or could be separate authors. So David looked back at the covenant, the promises that God had provided him. And he held his confidence there.

[10 : 33] He held his confidence in what God said he would do and the promise that he would bring up a future Messiah. David had already been anointed king, so he has confidence that he's going to have some sort of kingship role at some point in the future. There are two times in scripture where David could have taken out Saul, but he decided not to.

He said, no, I'm not going to because you are the Lord's chosen person. Yeah, the Spirit of God has left him, but you are the Lord's chosen person, so I'm not going to kill you because that's wrong. So David looked at the covenant and the future Messiah.

And what we have here in the 21st century in 2022 or whatever year you're happening to listen to this, we have a Messiah who's knowing Christ is fulfilling those Old Testament texts. A Messiah who has fulfilled what Christ said or fulfilled what God's told David would happen.

He did a crazy thing coming to earth to live that life that we could not live, to die the deaths that we deserve. And Rob said it a couple weeks ago, quoting Shailen. And the Old Testament, we're saved on credit, saved on a future payment.

New Testament, Christians, us, we're saved on debit, a payment that's already been paid. So do we have confidence in the redemption of Christ to be able to say, the things that surround me will stumble and fall, and my strength is in the Lord?

[11 : 38] I know a lot of us can't say that there's armies out there in downtown New London or wherever you live that are trying to eat up your flesh, to encamp against you. But there's a lot of people in this community that have been through a lot of physical situations where it feels like

there's something trying to destroy them, that the devil is after them, that culturally there's people attacking them.

But do we fall back on God and say, the Lord is my strength? It's easy to say yes, right? We're in church. It's easy to nod your head and say, yeah, I can say that. But I encourage you to really think about that.

Really look inside and ask, do we say these things and mean it? Let's keep going, right? This is still all part of the principle. David's proclaiming who God is on the basis of what he knows God to be, on the basis of his presence with him as he's gone through life.

So David in verse 4 says, One thing I have asked of the Lord that I will seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his temple.

And I think this is probably the verse that sticks out to most people when you read this psalm. It's the chorus to Shane and Shane, Psalm 27. It's got to be the best one, right? This is the verse that you read and you feel the utmost conviction because you say, you know what?

[12 : 55] I don't know if I could say the one thing that I ask of the Lord that I will seek after, that my desire, my one desire is to dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his temple.

So what does David want? David wants nothing more than to dwell with God. In the midst of the suffering that he's in, right?

Remember the position that, the physical position that David's in right now. He's surrounded, he's most likely in a cave being chased by an army and his prayer to God is not, God, get me out of here.

He's actually already proclaimed that he finds his resting God. He knows God's presence and he wants to be there. That's what it means to dwell in the house of the Lord.

One writer put it, he knows that he finds no place more satisfying, no sites more gratifying, and no information more edifying than what he experiences in God's presence. So where is God's presence?

[13 : 50] What does that mean? What does it mean to dwell in God's temple? So David's been, David's experienced God's presence in his life. He's been to the tent. He's gone, and he's been, you know, gone up to the tent when the high priest goes in at the day of atonement and offers the sacrifices, and God's presence come down on the mercy seat in the temple or in the tent.

Jesus, fast forward a couple thousand years, right, is sitting in Samaria, and he's with a Samaritan woman at the well. And she says, did you say we can only worship God in the temple?

Because that's where God, that's where the Jewish people thought God's presence was. But the Samaritans say we should worship God on the mountain because that's where they thought God's presence was. What does Christ say? Jesus tells her the time is coming.

The time is now. It's here where the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth.

What's Christ saying? What does it mean to do that? What is Christ saying when he's, you know, essentially flipping the historical notion of God's presence or where people thought God's presence would be?

He's flipping that on its head. After Christ's death, burial, and resurrection, Jesus left earth, earth, earth, earth. He made a way for the spirit to come. Right?

[15 : 03] The spirit came down at Pentecost, and he is now residing within Christians here. In Acts, we see the spirit come down and dwell within the believers, and you see some pretty crazy things happening. So that spirit is God's presence.

So Christian, this morning, when I say that you want to dwell in the house of the Lord and gaze in the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his temple, those things are representative of God's presence.

That's where David wants to be. David wants to be in God's presence. But as a Christian here, right now, God's presence is in each one of you that proclaims Christ. Does that mean much? Do you recognize that the presence of the holy living God resides within you?

This isn't just like some, some, I don't know, some encouragement, but this is a promise that the spirit of God, the spirit of the holy living God resides within you.

That God's presence is with you now because of what Christ did on the cross. So how does what Jesus did hit us? Do we remember what happened? Do we desire to behold, to gaze on the beauty?

[16:04] David wants nothing more to be in God's presence, to dwell all the days of his life, to gaze and to inquire in his presence. And gaze here, I think, I can't remember if it was Jordan or Brad, gaze here is like to behold, to sit in awe and wonder.

I was trying to think of an example here, and I was talking to Megan, my wife, she's great. And I'm like, is it like sitting in front of a Rembrandt and admiring that? And she said, no, it's not a Rembrandt, it's a Monet, Rembrandt's too dark.

Got it. Okay. Gaze here is to dwell, to sit there and to behold, to look at God and say, God, you're amazing. The beauty of the Lord. This is something that we can sit and we can look at who God is. And right now, we have that opportunity to do that, right? We're singing songs about who God is, to behold the beauty of God. So we as corporate, in a corporate worship setting, have the opportunity, with God's presence here physically with us, to look upon the words of Scripture, to behold the beauty of God because of how He's blessed each one of us, right?

We're here right now, that's a blessing. We're here right now, we're not at home, we're not in the hospital. Those of us that are here right now, and even if you are at home, even if you are at the hospital, the fact is that you're alive and that God has given you this life and He has indwelt Himself with you and that you have the opportunity to praise God where you are, no matter what your physical position is, because your true position is with Christ.

[17:32] And to inquire here is like study, right? It's to inquire is to study, to know, to pray. So what you're doing right now, I hope, is that you're listening to the Word of God proclaimed.

And it's not just me talking. This is to inquire like you're sitting in corporate setting, listening to a preacher proclaim His Word, God's Word. It's sitting under the teaching of God's Word.

Behold is an active thing, it's not just sitting. It's sitting and proclaiming. David wants to inquire, like a Bible study. He wants to know God. He wants to be filled with who God is. And how he does that is to sit and to go and to worship God, to listen to God's Word proclaimed, to read God's Word.

David wants to constantly behold the beauty of the Lord, and his beholding is fueled by his constant study of God's Word. And his constant study of God's Word fuels the beholding, and the beholding fuels the study, because he wants to be with God.

He wants to know God. And Christian, here this morning, that's what we want. That's what I want. That's what I want for you to be able to do, is to proclaim who God is, and your proclamation fuel your study, and your study fuel your proclamation.

[18:40] The Sunday gathering is a high point of corporate worship for us here. We get the opportunity to sit in this Holiday Inn, or hopefully future, someday in a church building down Route 32, or wherever God leads us.

And we as a church get together with however many people are here to proclaim the goodness of God together, to behold and to gaze on the beauty of the Lord together, to inquire together.

And that's what we want to do. So does my study of God's Word fuel the proclamation of his character? And does my knowledge fuel that white, hot affection in my soul? So as we move to verses 5 and 6, David remembers all of this, and proclaims that God will do a bunch of things.

He proclaims not that I hope God will do these things, but he proclaims that God will lift him up, but not only lift him, hide him, keep him safe, shelter him. This isn't just a promise that God gave David to eventually be king, but this is a promise that David has seen play out in his own life.

He took care of flock, he destroyed lions, he destroyed Goliath. They sang that he destroyed tens of thousands of Philistines. God's protected David. He remembers what God has done, his past presence, and reflects on the truth that he knows to be true through his experiences.

[19:47] He wants to dwell in the house of the Lord, and then says that he knows in the day of trouble he's going to hide him there, that the Lord will hide him in his temple, in his shelter. David's psalm of lament is fuel of his recognition of the promises of God.

David's lamenting because of his situation, but he's praising because of his true position. David will dwell and be protected. There's no guarantee that David's going to come out of this cave alive. I'm sure he thought he might. He's been anointed king. There's a promise of potential kingship, or kingship, but I'm sure there's some doubt in David's mind. You're surrounded by an army trying to kill you in a cave.

I feel like you would, I would be scared, and I think when I look at that, I'd say, you know what? Yeah, I would be scared, and then I look at my own life and I say, my language is more frequently, I hope God will do these things.

I hope that he will hide me. I hope that he will conceal me. I hope that he will do these things, and if he does these things, I'm going to make sacrifices with shouts of joy, and I think what's cool about this text here is that David says, he will, he will, he will, and I will.

[20 : 52] It's not a, if this happens, then I will do it. No, it's God has promised these things, and this will happen. David wants nothing more to dwell with God, and then wants nothing more to offer than to offer in his tent, in his temple, in the tabernacle, in the presence of God, sacrifices with shouts of joy.

I think Brad said something about singing loudly, singing, shouting. I can't remember what song it was, but. So I think we have a beautiful picture here of the promises of God.

David remembers his presence, looks at his physical situation as remembered, remembers what God has told him, and holds his confidence there. And it's not just David, right?

David's the anointed king, so I'd imagine he would think he would have some pretty good confidence. God told him he was going to be king. Samuel anointed him. But if we look at Romans, right, Romans 8, verses 35 through 39, we'll read this.

This is Paul. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written, for your sake we are being killed all day long.

[21 : 58] We are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered. Knowing all things, we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Jesus Christ our Lord.

David expresses his confidence in who God is. Paul expresses his confidence in the midst of some pretty crazy things, right? He says, I'm sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, a lot of things that are surrounding him, nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Why is that? Because Christ, or because Paul recognized that in him was the presence of God. That the devil can't reach inside your soul and take out the presence of God because that's not something he can do.

The presence of God is something that is with us, those that have professed who Christ is and have trusted in his, in the sacrifice that he provided. His presence is with us.

So David expressed his confidence in the midst of a pretty crazy situation. Paul expresses his confidence after he's been in a bunch of crazy situations. So do you, do you express that same confidence?

[23 : 15] So the next section, so verse five and six is like the pinnacle of this ladder, right? We haven't really talked too much about the caistic structure, but that's his praise, that's his response. And so we go back down the ladder, not in like a negative way, just kind of themes reflecting themselves.

And this next section is what I call the plea, verses seven through 12, but it also corresponds with the seeking. Seven through 12 is that plea. He moves from reflecting on the knowledge of God.

He moves from adoring who God is and what he's done to pleading. David says that he knows that God calls him to seek his face, right? Verse eight, you have said, seek my face.

My heart says to you, Lord, your face do I seek. I've said that before, have you? Right? Lord, I'm seeking you. I'm doing these things. I want to do these things, but I don't feel you.

He feels a distance between who he knows God to be and who in a moment he feels God to be. I don't want to get those two things separated, right?

[24 : 14] Knowing God and feeling God are not individual pursuits. We're not a church that pursues the knowledge of God for the sake of the knowledge of God. If you pursue fully the knowledge of God, you're going to get burnout.

You're going to get to a point where you're like, what else do I need to know? What else do I need to know? And then you're going to get to a point like, well, maybe I know everything, which you can't know everything about God. But we're also not a church that pursues the feeling, the emotion. Because if you pursue that feeling and emotion, if that emotion's not there, if that feeling isn't there,

then you'll be like, well, I guess God doesn't exist because I don't feel these things. And so that's what David says here. He's seeking. He's pleading for God. He's pleading for God's presence. So we can learn and know God and we can learn and know Christ yet until our knowledge fuels that white-hot affection, what's the purpose? David knows he's supposed to seek God's face. It's almost as if he sees he's doing something but isn't getting back what he expects. He isn't sensing God's face. So what does David do? He's pleading, God, where are you? You say seek my face. My heart says to you. The depths of his soul says, God, that's what I'm doing. What is his plea? Hide not your face from me. Turn not, cast me not off, forsake me not. [25 : 21] He's scared out of his mind that God is hiding, turning, casting, forsaking. So he pleads for God to come back for his presence. And then verse 10, for my father and mother have forsaken me is what the ESV says.

I think that for my father is more better translated even if my father and mother forsake me. David's relating something that would be pretty difficult for him, right? We don't think to Jesse, we don't see anywhere in scripture that Jesse has actually, Jesse, David's dad, has actually forsook him. But he pleads for something, he recognizes that something here on earth physically so difficult for him would result, but the Lord will take me in. David's relating something pretty rough. He goes from pleading with God and expressing the fear of being forsaken and he ends with the Lord will take me in. His knowledge informs his pleading, his principles inform his practice. So how do we deal in those times when we feel distant, when you feel distant, when you feel like God's face isn't, like you're seeking his face but you're not getting it, you're not feeling who God is. How do you deal when God is hiding his face from you where you feel that something or someone we appreciate or enjoy will be taken from or turn on us?

[26 : 35] So, past two years for the Spivey family has been a bit of a doozy for those that know us, know that it's been some crazy times, some suffering, really cool things happen, right?

The birth of our kid, our second kid, Ellis, was the beginning of 2020. But Ellis, within a couple weeks, got RSV, was right at the beginning of COVID. A couple weeks later, a couple months later, Megan got bit by a tick, didn't realize it, and we've had two years of suffering pour out because of Lyme disease.

Put Megan in some, some of the darkest times in her life. Both Megan and I were fortunate to have grown up in Christian homes.

I think since we're live streaming, my parents and her parents will see me crying, but that's okay. So, both of us were rooted in scripture growing up. I grew up in a Christian home. Megan grew up, for those of you who don't know, at a Baptist camp in North Carolina.

If you've never been to Fort Caswell, North Carolina, I highly encourage it. But she was rooted heavily in scripture. You know, if you've gone to Christian camp, you have that speaker that one week during that summer, and you go, and you experience God's goodness in his presence that one week that summer.

[27 : 53] Megan experienced that every week, every summer of her life growing up. And so, fast forward to now, that Lyme, she got like shingles, depression, a lot of things.

The knowledge of who God is and who we knew him to be just kind of fell from us. God didn't fall from us, we know that. When faced with the adversity due to the past two years, we turned in on ourselves.

We looked sideways, we looked down looking for our bootstraps to pull ourselves up with. And I can say that we said, the Lord be gracious to me and listen to me, right? David says, oh hear, oh Lord, when I cry aloud, be gracious to me and answer me.

David's next words are, you say, seek my face. My heart says to you, Lord, your face do I seek. And I can say that when I said, Lord answer me when I cry aloud, I couldn't say, your face do I seek.

We didn't let our knowledge inform our position. The principles, the truth that we've been rooted in over the 20 years of Megan's life, the 30 years of my life, it's a joke, truly inform our physical position.

[29 : 05] Right? The position that we were in was dominated by our brain. It was not something that we looked to God and to say, Lord, your face do I seek.

We didn't let the knowledge of who God is and what he's done and the spirit that dwells richly within us inform who we truly are. We've since looked back and see the grace of God and the hand of God in all these situations.

We still have questions, right? Questions why, doctors said this, doctors said that, this thing happened. We know he didn't really hide his face. It felt like he did at times. It felt like, Scott, like why, why are we doing this?

Why are we here? Why are we, you know, not feeling these things, not getting help, not getting support, not doing this, not, you know, not getting better. But we know that God didn't cast us aside, that our faith, that our knowledge of who God is reminds us that his presence is presently with us, that the presence that David has while he's being pursued to be killed is the presence that God has within each of us, within each, Megan and I as we went through the suffering, that he really is, as David says in verse one, the Lord is the light in my salvation.

Whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life. Of whom shall I be afraid? And then we move to verse 11.

[30 : 31] Still in the plea of who, you know, in the pleas of David, he began, he says, teach me your way, O Lord, and lead me on a level path because of my enemies.

And I read this and I was reading it a couple weeks ago, I'm like, what is this? Teach me your way, O Lord, lead me on a level path. So David's in the midst of being surrounded by an army. He's proclaiming the truths he knows of who God is.

And I don't see anywhere in this text that he says, God, get me out of this situation right now. What he says is, teach me your way and lead me on a level path because of my enemies. Give me not up to the will of my adversaries for what false witnesses have risen against me and they will breathe out violence.

I'm reminded that David, when he was running from God, when he was, not running from God, running from Saul, was not a result of his own physical situation.

It was not a result, this thing's stolen. It was not a result of his own physical situation. This was a result of something else coming against him. Megan was most likely enjoying the backyard when the tick bit her.

[31 : 41] Jim Elliott was most likely, or he was bringing the good news of Jesus Christ to a remote tribe in Ecuador when he was killed. And many other people were doing normal things that resulted in changing their circumstances. So in our lives, are we asking God to get us out?

Or are we asking God to help us stay rooted in a level path with him? David's pleading ends with lead me on a level path. And so church, I ask, do your prayers for healing include prayers for leading?

Or has been said previously at Shoreline, do your prayers, are you praying past your circumstances? Are you praying to say, God heal me because God wants us to be healed. God wants us to feel okay. But truly, what God wants is for us to ask to lead him in holiness and righteousness in the midst of oppression.

Right? This has been mentioned before. We wait, we pray, we wait, but how do we wait? We wait actively. We'll talk about that here in a minute. I think Rob mentioned this a little bit with Psalm 130. God calls us, or we're called, and I think Shoreline does a pretty good job of it, to pray not just for the circumstance, but to pray past the circumstance and to pray for God's leading in holy and righteousness.

[32 : 54] And that's how David ends his pleading. He ends with, the Lord will take me in and God lead me on a level path. So we've gone from his principle to his plea. Right?

His plea ends with a promise. So what's next? How does David end? Does he end with, Lord, lead me. Lord, take me out of this circumstance. He doesn't end there. Verses 13 and 14 get to the core of the psalm.

It says, I believe that I shall look upon the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait for the Lord. Be strong and let your heart take courage. Wait for the Lord. David's knowledge and his principles and his pleas are rooted in the hope that he has in God.

David knows that sooner or later he will see the goodness, the never-ending, never-changing goodness of God. He has a hope for a future in the land of the living. But for David here, he also remained confident that God would remain good towards him while we leave, while he lives.

And so we look at this and we say, what does it mean to look upon the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living? Right? So church, as we think here in 2022, what does it mean to look for the

goodness of the Lord in the land of the living?

[33 : 59] I think this is one of those things we call like an already-not-yet principle. So we can see God's goodness here on earth. We can walk out and we can see the beauty of God in creation. We can see Harkness, go to Harkness and see the beautiful flowers that are there.

We can taste eastern North Carolina barbecue and see the goodness of God, you know, who God is there. But that pales in comparison to the true goodness of who God is. The goodness that causes the angels to proclaim, holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty.

David's confidence and his hope that he had in his situation was rooted in who God is, that his presence was with him. But we have Christ who promised a future land where we, in perfect, sinless harmony, will be in the physical presence of the Lord.

Right? We're here right now. We're gathered as a body of believers. We can see the goodness of God here in this holiday and ballroom. We can see the goodness that's brought people from all over the country here together for this morning to proclaim and to listen to who God is.

But that's nothing compared to the true goodness of the Lord in the land of the living where we, here, church, will also be gathered with the churches that Randy Matthews goes to teach, the churches that Franklin, one of the guys in our community group, is off in Honduras proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ, that those Christians there, that we will all together proclaim the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.

[35 : 16] Thank you, Tyler. So David's in the midst of the cave. He's running from Saul. He remembers the goodness of his God because he's seen the goodness of his God. He ends the psalm not with, for I'm going to see this thing in the future, but he ends the psalm with wait.

Wait for the Lord. Be strong and let your heart take courage. Wait for the Lord. David's conclusion to the psalm isn't that the Lord will take him now. It isn't that David will see God's goodness at some point, though he knows that's true.

His ending is to wait, to be strong and have courage. That's his plan. His plan is not to run around and try to kill people. His plan is not to try to do things by himself. His plan is to wait. To wait for the Lord.

Be strong and let your heart take courage. So what does that mean? Be strong and take courage are the same words that God told Joshua right after Moses died. Probably the worst time for somebody to say, hey, the leader that's led you through the wilderness for the past 40 years is gone, so be strong and take courage.

Okay. I guess I can figure that out. So Joshua verses 1, 6, 1, 9, and 1, 12 say be strong and courageous. And this is when God is telling Joshua to get people together and then go on a promised land.

[36 : 23] The strength and courage is not something that comes from the inside but from above. Right? This is the courage. If the God of the universe, the God that just led the Israelites through the wilderness for 40 years, says be strong and take courage, I'm going to be strong and I'm going to take courage because the God that just sustained me, that didn't let the sandals wear out, that fed me every day, if he says be strong and take courage, I'm going to be strong and take courage because that's a promise that God has proclaimed.

And we have that same promise here. We have that same promise in our life because God is good. He's never ending. He's never changing. And it's a wait. I'm going to quote Rob Buttermore.

I don't know why that's funny. As he said a couple weeks ago, the psalmist in Psalm 130 as Rob was talking is so captivated with the one he adores that he says, I trust you.

I know your word and your promise is good because you are the one who made it. I can now wait in peace. I can now wait because this hope will not fail. So church, how do we wait? What does it mean to wait?

Waiting is not a passive thing. We're not just like sitting here in the pews asking you to wait and then sit here and go home and wait and just don't do anything. We wait actively. We are waiting for the return of Christ.

[37 : 35] How do we wait for the return of Christ? We wait for the return of Christ by being active and proclaiming who he is and what he's done to our coworkers, our families, our neighbors. Right?

We have, Kent talked about missions a couple weeks ago. It's like, we're going and doing things. Franklin, like I said, is in Honduras right now proclaiming the good news of who Christ is. So then I ask this question to the non-Christians.

If you don't know who Christ is, what does it mean for you to wait? If you don't wait, what are you waiting for? If you don't know who Christ is, what are you waiting for? What you're actually waiting for is for the eternal wrath of God that was meant for you to be poured out on you.

God is patiently holding back that wrath. And the time will come where he will no longer wait. This is the same wrath that Jim Gancar has talked about last week when he talked about Korah, the earth opening up and Korah being swallowed in because he went against God's people.

It's the same, the wrath of God that you see Elijah call down on one of the king's armies as they're coming against him. That eternal wrath of God, Christ stood in your place.

[38 : 40] Thousands of years ago, Christ stood on the cross, was hung on the cross, took that eternal wrath of God in a moment and is offering himself to you. So I encourage you to ask, what does that mean?

If you want to ask more questions, talk to myself, talk to Jordan, Mike, anybody that looks like they know what they're talking about. And then Christian, how do you respond to adversity? How do you wait? How do you respond to situations in life?

Do you turn, do you hope and trust and confidence in the knowledge of who God is or in a mushy pile of ice cream and brownies? Does your knowledge of who God is and the promises that he has made inform your position or does fear take hold and bury you?

When in the depths of sin do you turn to yourself or do you do what Colossians 3 says and work to kill sin in your life? Right? This is not killing sin by yourself. This is killing sin with the work of the spirit, with the God whose presence is with you.

David was hopeful, surrounded by an army of soldiers based on who he knew God to be. We as followers of Christ, as Christians, are more hopeful not because we are promised to get out of something right now, right?

[39 : 44] We hear what Paul says in Romans 8. There's no promise to get out of the physical situation. We're promised suffering. But God's presence with us in the spirit is greater than anything that we could ever come up against.

And God promises the future land of the living for those who call on his name where we together with all the saints of all time will proclaim the goodness of God to him physically in front of him. So I'll close with a summary as one commentator put it.

This prayer, this psalm is appropriate for those facing difficulties who know that they need God's help and that God's help is available to them because they are convinced of his goodness towards them and his presence with them.

Thus they can ask and then wait. Not in desperation but with courage. So let's pray. God, this morning we thank you that you are a good God that you are a God who is here.

A God who has proclaimed the world to be yours that you spoke this world into existence. Not only that but you have sent your son to redeem the world.

[40 : 48] And those that call on your name God can turn to you and have confidence that your presence with them will be with them forever. That there's nothing that we can do nothing that anyone else can do that can take your presence away from us.

So God, I pray that we as a church would stand rooted in who you are. God, that we would wait for you but would not wait passively but wait actively proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ to those who need it.

Lord, we thank you. We love you. Amen.