

Wait On Him Boldly!

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[0 : 00] If there are any other children zero to three who'd like to take advantage of the nursery,! You're certainly welcome to do that. And they're welcome to stay in here as well. We love having them! In here as we worship together and hear the word. Our passage this morning is Psalm chapter 27.

Let's turn in God's word to Psalm chapter 27. We've been walking through the Psalms this summer, as we tend to do in the summer months, and we've come to Psalm chapter 27. So when you've found that in your copy of God's word, let's stand in honor of the reading of the word of the Lord. David says, the Lord is my light and 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 my 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. 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 his shelter in the day of trouble. He will conceal me under the cover of his tent. He will lift me high upon a 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, your face, Lord, do I seek. Hide not your face from me. Turn not your servant away in anger, O you who have been my help.

[2 : 08] Cast me not off. Forsake me not, O God of my salvation. For my father and my mother have forsaken me, but the Lord will take me in. Teach me your way, O Lord, 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 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.

Grass withers and the flower fades, but the word of the Lord endures forever. Father, we praise you for this passage, the psalm of confidence, confidence in you, and we pray that as we open it up together, Father, Father, that you would give us that same confidence that David has here in these words.

We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. You may be seated. What is the secret of Christian confidence?

King David, here again, as he's done so many times before in so many psalms, he's facing terrible enemies, and yet here again, as we've seen over and over and over again, he's facing his enemies with unmistakable confidence. Do you ever wonder what is his secret?

How can someone like David, even as a young boy, go and stand in front of the giant Goliath and go into battle with a man trained for war with just a sling and a few stones? How can he be so confident? And it's not just David, is it? The entire history of the church is filled with example after example after example after example of this bold, fearless, seemingly unreasonable confidence of God's people. What compels the Apostle Paul to go from city to city, town to town, facing hardship and beatings and imprisonment and rejection and harassment over and over and over again, and yet continue on going and preaching the gospel? What is his secret?

[4 : 24] And maybe you think of the reformers. What compels the reformers? Men like Latimer and Ridley. I've shared their story before. Latimer and Ridley, who were burned at the stake for preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ in Oxford, England. Tied up and ready to die. At this point, a normal response would be panic, right? It would be fear. It would be anxiety. But history tells us

Ridley turns to Latimer and says, be of good heart, brother, for God will either assuage the fury of the flame or else strengthen us to abide it. As the fires rise up, Latimer turns to Ridley and says, be of good comfort, Master Ridley, and play the man. We shall this day light such a candle by God's grace in England as I trust shall never be put out. What's the secret of their confidence? Maybe you think of missionaries, men like Adoniram Judson to the Burmese or Hudson Taylor to the Chinese or women like Amy Carmichael to

India. What compels Christians to go out and be so bold and face uncharted territories, dangerous territories in the face of danger for the sake of Christ. Let's bring it a little bit closer to home. How in the world can an aging saint face death with confidence? How can a Christian husband or a Christian wife walk alongside their spouse through a diagnosis like cancer or dementia and yet do so with confidence in the Lord? You know, this is strange behavior, isn't it? In a world that's so marked by anxiety and worry and panic, how can God's people remain rooted in confidence? What is the secret to the confidence of God's people? I want us to see three answers to that question this morning. This will be our outline if you're taking notes. Three answers to the question, what is the confidence of God's people? What's the secret of their confidence? First, our confidence is in God. David makes this plain right at the beginning of the psalm, doesn't he? His confidence is a God-centered, God-anchored, God-rooted confidence. Look there to verse one. He says, the Lord is my light and 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 my foes, it is they who stumble and fall. And though an army encamp against me, my heart shall not fear.

[7 : 24] Though war rise against me, yet I will be confident. This is fearless confidence in the face of great danger, isn't it? Now, look what David's up against here. He says that evildoers, he's facing evildoers who want to eat him up. And we've seen before, haven't we? Countless times throughout the Psalms, David uses animalistic language to describe his enemies. You remember from Psalm 22, how he compares them to dogs and bulls and lions. They're vicious, dangerous, bloodthirsty enemies.

And he knows that he faces the possibility, even the probability, of looming war. There's this looming threat of armies rising up against him, of war coming against King David. And again, it's not just physical attacks. See, either, is it? He's just like he was in Psalm 26. We see here he's also facing false accusations. His enemies want to discredit him. They want to question his integrity. They want to tear down his influence by questioning his integrity. Verse 12 says, false witnesses have risen up against me. David's facing enemies that want to discredit him, defeat him, destroy him, and devour him.

None of this is very good, is it? And yet, he says, even in light of all of this, I am not afraid. Why? And what's his secret? Well, you think about maybe what the natural answer to that question might be.

The natural, fleshly answer might be, well, I have an army too. Sure, they have an army. The army's coming against me, but we have an army. Their army's strong, but maybe our army's stronger. I like my chances.

I have trained men around me that are trained to protect me. I can trust in my army. He could look to his surroundings and place his confidence there. Or maybe he could say, well, I evaded Saul. [9 : 29] I conquered Goliath. I'm smarter than them. I'm stronger than them. What can they do to me? He could look to his own skill and place his confidence there in his own ability. Or he could look at his track record of success up to this point. I mean, just think about all the enemies that have stood in his way to get there. It's where he is now, but here he is. And now they think that they'll be the ones to strike me down. Come on. You know what all of this sounds like? All of this is self-confidence.

You know, some people think that that's what they need in order to face their problems. You just need a little bit more self-confidence. And then you can conquer whatever enemy it is that stands in your way. If you just maybe believe a little bit more in yourself and have a higher view of yourself, if you just try harder and reach higher and dig deeper, you can do anything you put your mind to, right? David doesn't talk that way, does he? What does he say? He says, the Lord is my strength. The Lord is my confidence. Not my army, not my strength, not my wit, not my success. The Lord is my confidence. Therefore, I will not fear. His secret isn't self-confidence. It's confidence in the Lord. Look how he describes the Lord here. He says, the Lord is my light in the darkness.

I used to watch a show as a kid called, Are You Afraid of the Dark? Anybody ever seen that show? Familiar with that? Might be past your time. Are you afraid of the dark? The answer for me was yes. Okay, I was afraid of the dark. Why? Well, one, after I watched the show, it's creepy, so that puts some ideas in my head. But the darkness, you can't see what enemies are out there.

The enemies that are there, you don't know what they're doing, where they're moving, how they're approaching. But then there's also imagined enemies that you come up with in your own mind. Sometimes that's even worse. David says, the Lord is the light who illuminates my path, who reveals the dangers and the threats, who causes those enemies in the dark to scatter, who calms all my fears. The Lord is the light in the darkness. He says, the Lord is my salvation, not my strength, not my skill, not my track record of success, not my army, not my surroundings. The Lord is all my hope. If I'm going to be saved from this situation, the Lord has to be my salvation. He says, the Lord is my stronghold.

[12:09] Where will I turn when my enemies come? When those armies come and approach, what will protect me? Where will I take refuge? David says, I take refuge in him. You all know right down the road here is Fort Sumter, where the first shots were fired in the Civil War. The Confederates attacked the Union. It continued for about 34 hours there as they barraged the fort. And yet there were no casualties that day.

Why? Because they were sheltered in the stronghold. David doesn't have the luxury of taking refuge in Fort Sumter, but it doesn't matter. He says, I have something even better. The Lord himself is my stronghold. Do you hear his confidence? His dependence? It's not in himself. It's entirely in the Lord.

You know, this is meant to be the posture of every redeemed heart. But God's people place all their confidence, not in self, but in the Lord.

You know, we may not face a physical army, but you realize, don't you, that our enemies, our true enemies are far greater and far more numerous and far more vicious than any physical army that David ever faced.

Paul tells us, we don't wrestle against flesh and blood, brothers and sisters, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. What's our confidence in that battle?

[13:51] On top of that, all of us are guilty of sin. We stand guilty before a holy God. We are sinners and we face an accuser who accuses us day and night, who wants us to be declared guilty.

What's our confidence in the courtroom of God? God's people don't place confidence in themselves, in their track record, in their upbringing, in their skill, in their goodness, in their ability, in their surroundings. The confidence of God's people then and now is the Lord. Ultimately, we know on this side of the cross, it is the Lord Jesus Christ.

As God's people walk in the midst of darkness, our confidence is in Christ, who is the light of the world. As we face our enemies of sin and death and the accusations of the devil, the Christ Jesus is the salvation of all God's people, all who cry out to him in faith and in confidence.

Who do we lean on? Who do we depend on to protect us in this battle? Who will guard us? Who will shelter us? In whom do we take refuge? It is Christ the King, who is the stronghold of our life.

The Lord Jesus himself is the confidence of God's people. That's the first secret. You know what happens when you begin to understand the Lord in this way and to view the Lord in this way?

[15:23] When you understand that God himself is the light, your salvation, your stronghold, you know what happens inside of you? You want to be where he is. Look there to verses 4 through 8. Here's the second secret.

Verses 4 through 8. Second, it's that our desire is for God. Our desire is for God. David shows us starting here in verse 4. God has given him a singular desire for one thing above all else.

What is it? Verse 4. One thing I have asked 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.

More than anything else, David wants to be where God is. More than anything else, David wants to live in God's presence.

He wants to gaze at his beauty. He wants to seek him. He wants to inquire of him. He wants to worship him. He wants to ask questions of him. He wants to seek his wisdom. He wants to be with the Lord.

[16:39] This is the desire of his heart. Why? Again, it's because he is confident in who God is. He says, I want to be with the Lord. Why? Verse 5.

For he will hide me in his shelter in the day of trouble. He's my stronghold. He will conceal me under the cover of his tent. He will lift me high on the rock. He's my salvation.

That's why I want to be with him. And now my head shall be lifted up above all my enemies around me, and I will respond to the Lord. I will offer in his tent sacrifices with shouts of joy.

I will sing and make melody to the Lord. If you have seen him for who he is, you will want to be with him where he is.

Think about this image of David sitting there. Armies are approaching. His enemies are attacking. The opposition is out there falsely accusing him of wrongdoing. Everything that could go wrong is going wrong.

[17:38] And what is David doing? He's not scribbling out some battle plans. We're sharpening up his sword. He's not packing up his belongings. He's not locking away his treasures.

He's not out there doing damage control against these false allegations. What is he doing? He is daydreaming about being with the Lord. It's almost like he's saying, God's going to figure all this other stuff out.

He'll deal with the enemies. He'll lift me up. He'll take care of that. I'm not concerned about that. All I want is to be with him. That type of heart desire for the Lord gives the believer a sort of confidence, a sort of steadiness that nothing in this world can shake.

You want to know why believers can face death with confidence? It's because we know that if we are in Christ by faith, all death can do is give us what we already want.

All death can do is bring us into the presence of the Lord, which is the greatest, deepest desire of our heart already. So Paul says to live is Christ, to die is gain.

[18:54] It says elsewhere in Corinthians, the sting of death has been removed. It's gone for those who are in Christ. We have this deep heart desire to be with the Lord that anchors us in times of trouble.

To know who God is is to desire him. And to want more of him, to know him is to want more of him. I wonder, does your heart cry out for more of the Lord?

Is that the desire of your heart? Amanda made a mistake the other day, and that's rare, so I get to talk about it. We were on the way home from Trader Joe's, and we were on the way home and we stopped at Trader Joe's.

And when we go there, she always wanted these gummies. And so I went in, I got what was on the list, and then I also picked up the gummies, and came back to the car, and of course the boys saw that we had the gummies.

And so the boys wanted some, and Amanda being generous, opened it up and distributed a few to each kid. But as she did that, the baby saw that the boys had the gummies, and now the baby wants some gummies, right?

[20:06] And she was kind enough to tear off just a little piece and just give him just a little taste. And it was great. He was satisfied. He was happy. He loved it until it was gone.

And then on the way home, we got to listen to him cry the whole way home because he wanted more. He had tasted something good, and he wasn't getting enough.

You know, one evidence of God's grace in your life is a desire for more of the Lord. That your heart has tasted that the Lord is good, and that it cries out for more and more and more.

We are satisfied in him, and yet it's a dissatisfied satisfaction in the Lord that we have in this life.

We are fully satisfied in the Lord, and yet our heart cries out, God, I need more of that.

I need more of you. I want to be where you are. I want to gaze upon your beauty. I want to inquire of you. I want to worship you. I need more of you.

[21:11] Do you desire the Lord like this? And if it is the desire of your heart, are you actively seeking him?

Look there to verse 7. David turns again to pray. He says, 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, your face, Lord, do I seek. To know God is to desire him. To desire him is to seek him.

Maybe you're not sure really what that looks like or how to do that. I'm glad that you asked, because I have 11 ways to seek the Lord this morning. Okay? I dug into the word this week.

I wanted to understand what that phrase, seek the Lord, meant in the rest of Scripture. And so here's 11 ways. Y'all try to keep up. The Bible says we are called to seek him totally.

[22 : 09] Seek the Lord with all your heart and all your soul. Deuteronomy 4.29. Seek the Lord your God and you will find him if you search after him with all your heart and with all your soul.

This is total, all-encompassing. No part-time Christians. No lukewarm, half-committed, on-again, off-again Christians. This is totally devoted to seeking the Lord.

We're called to seek him continually. 1 Chronicles 16.11. Seek the Lord in his strength. Seek his presence continually. You could add joyfully.

The verse right before it, 1 Chronicles 16.10. Glory in his holy name. Let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice. Here's one we don't think about often.

We must seek him urgently. Seek the Lord while he may be found. Call upon him while he is near.

[23 : 07] Isaiah 55, verse 6. Non-believer. You may think that you have all the time in the world to think things through. That may or may not be true.

The call to seek the Lord, to turn from your sin, to repent and put all your faith, all your confidence in the Lord, that call is urgent for you. You might say you could seek him observantly in nature.

All creation bears witness to the glory of God. The heavens declare the glory of God. There is baked into every square inch of creation a witness to the glory of our God. But of course that witness only goes so far, so we must seek him prayerfully and biblically.

The good news is God has given clear ways for us to seek him and communicate with him. These are called ordinary means of grace by which Christians grow and commune with the Lord.

We must seek him both privately as well as corporately, in your prayer closet and with the church. Ultimately, we must seek him Christianly, for lack of a better word.

[24 : 17] If you would seek him, friend, you must seek him in Christ. Where else can we look? Jesus himself has said, if anyone has seen me, he has seen the Father.

Christ Jesus is the image of the invisible God, Paul says in Colossians. We seek God by seeking him in Jesus. One more. You keeping up? We're at 11. Friend, we must seek him confidently.

Confidently. As God told the exiles in Jeremiah, he said, you will seek me and you will find me. When you seek me with all your heart.

Here's some really good news. We don't believe that David's desire, is just wishful thinking. We believe that a genuine desire for the Lord will one day be satisfied.

Now in part, but then in full. To know him is to desire him. To desire him is to seek him. And to seek him with all your heart is to one day see him.

[25 : 30] And be satisfied in him for the rest of eternity. This is the third key to our confidence, church. The third key to the Christian's confidence is that our hope is from God.

Our hope is from God. You want to know what lies beneath the believer's confidence? It's that we have a certain hope that is from God himself.

It is God guaranteed. First Peter tells us, according to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

To an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you've been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith, more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to result in praise, and glory, and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

[26 : 51] This glorious, certain hope is the confidence of God's people. Nothing on earth can take this away from us.

Imperishable, undefiled, unfading, kept in heaven for you, what God has given to us in Christ. No man, no danger, no threat, no sickness, no disease, no enemy can take it away.

If God has given you a desire for Him, that's a work of His grace, and if He's put that desire in your heart to seek Him, and to seek Him in Christ, you can be certain that He Himself will make sure that that desire is met for the rest of eternity.

It is our hope that leads us to cry out to Him in faith in times of trouble. As David does here in verse 9, 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 my mother have forsaken me, but the Lord will take me in. It's our future hope that fuels our present obedience.

[28 : 10] Our future hope shapes our present paths. And because we have this promise from God Himself, we want to follow Him and walk in His ways. And so we pray like David.

Verse 11, Teach me your way, O Lord. 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.

Our hope is what gives us confidence. In all circumstances. So what is our hope? Look with me to verse 13.

Here's the key. David shares with us a picture, just a small picture, of the believer's hope in verse 13. Look there. He says, I believe that I shall look upon the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.

You see that? Even if armies come, even if my accusers prevail, even if my father and my mother forsake me, even if everything else around me falls apart, yet this one thing will come to pass.

[29 : 24] And it's the only thing that matters in the end. I believe that I will look upon the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.

I know that each and every one of us faces all sorts of troubles in this world. God never promised to keep you from trouble. But if you are in Christ, you can say with confidence, I believe that I will look upon the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.

God has given me a desire that nothing in this world can satisfy and nothing in this world can take away. Because Christ has come for me.

Christ has suffered for me. Christ has died in my place and risen in my place because all my faith and all my confidence is in Him.

I believe one day I will go to be where He is. And I will look upon the goodness of the Lord in the new heavens, in the new earth, the land of the living, those who live in resurrection glory in the presence of their King.

[30 : 37] That's our hope. And friend, please don't misunderstand me when I say that's our hope as if I'm talking about just wishful thinking. Like we're hopeful, maybe that'll come to pass, maybe it won't.

The Christian's hope is not wishful thinking. The Christian hope is absolutely certain because it's guaranteed and given by God Himself. J.I. Packer says, optimism is a wish without warrant, but the Christian hope is a certainty guaranteed by God Himself.

Optimism reflects ignorance as to whether good things will actually ever come, but Christian hope expresses knowledge that every day of His life and every moment beyond it, the believer can say with truth on the basis of God's own commitment that the best is yet to come.

Friend, if you are in Christ, whatever trial you endure, whatever enemies come against you, whatever opposition, whatever sickness, whatever temptation, if you are in Christ, glory is ahead. No pain, no sadness, no death, no tears, no sin, no darkness, no enemies, no accusations.

[32 : 05] We will see Him face to face and gaze upon the glory of the Lord together in the land of the living. That's our hope in Christ. Nothing can take that away from us.

So Paul says in Romans 8, if God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but gave Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him graciously give us all things?

Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died.

More than that, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?

As it is written, for your sake, we are being killed all the day long. We are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered. No. In all these things, we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.

[33 : 19] For I am sure, Paul says, 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 Christ Jesus, our Lord.

Lord, is that your confidence? Is that your hope? Or do you share David's desire?

If not, friend, your response this morning is, come to Christ in faith. Seek Him now, urgently, by repenting of your sin, and putting your faith in Him, crying out to Him for salvation, seeking Him as your light, your salvation, your stronghold, your only hope in the face of your opposition.

If this is your confidence, what do we do? David closes out this psalm with a call to God's people. Here's our application, friend. Verse 14.

Wait for the Lord. Be strong and let your heart take courage. Wait for the Lord. You want something to go do this afternoon?

[34 : 40] Wait for the Lord. Wait for the Lord. And as you wait, friend, remind yourself often of the truth that we just sang together.

What is our hope in life and death? Christ alone. Christ alone. What is our only confidence? That our souls to Him belong.

Who holds our days within His hand? What comes apart from His command? What will keep us to the end? The love of Christ in which we stand. Father, we praise You for the confidence that You've given Your people in Christ.

Not in ourselves, but in You, Lord. Our salvation is Your doing. It is from You and it is for You. Lord, I pray that You would give every heart in this room a deep desire to know You and to seek You.

Father, that we would find You in Christ. We love You, Lord. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Amen.