

# Confidence in Opposition

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[ 0 : 00 ]     Would you turn with me to Psalm 140? We're actually going to skip one Psalm 39, and Pastor Trent's going to pick that up when he returns. We'll get back to that Psalm eventually.

But tonight, I'm excited to bring to you a message from this chapter where we find confidence in tribulation. Confidence in tribulation. Now, why does this matter?

I think we know why this matters, right? I intuitively realize that there are times in our lives when there's oppression, there's difficulties, there's trials that we face.

And we'd like to opt out of them. We'd like to pass them by. Can we just take a detour from this thing? I don't know if me, I don't want to deal with, what do you call that?

Like conflict, right? Or opposition. Opposition, you know, somebody's going to come up to me and say, man, you need to, you know, move your cars. I'm like, all right, all right, I'm moving the car. Like, I'm good.

[ 0 : 55 ]     It's all good, man. I'll get out of the way. Even though, hey, I have a right to be here. Sometimes I might want to say that, but I probably won't. Now, you might not be like me. You might be the person that says, bring it on.

You're going to come over here and tell me what I'm going to do. No, you're not. Okay, and you might want to fight back against that because you're going to find a way to win. But the idea of tribulation in the Bible is something that you enter into most often not by your own choosing and not by your own fault.

And there's not a way out of it. As hard as you would fight back, as strong as the arguments and the words, whatever you're going to try and do to push opposition back, you simply cannot.

That's the idea of tribulation. I read this quote that I thought was so good. Tribulation is an oppressive state of physical, mental, social, or economic adversity.

Something that is just crushing. That you're not going to get away from. You can't opt out of it. You can't take a detour. You're just not going to get away from it. That's tribulation.

[ 2 : 08 ]     And we might not like it, but Jesus did tell us that's how things would be. He told his followers, he said, listen, this is John 16, 33. These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace.

In the world ye shall have, can you read that word with me? Ye shall have tribulation. All right. Tribulation. You're going to have it. But be of good cheer. I have overcome the world.

So there's a place we're going to have peace, but it's not in this world. This world is not our home. We are temporary residents in this place. As believers, our home is in heaven.

Our citizenship is in heaven. And so this lifetime in this world, within this world system, is going to have tribulation. And the only place that we're going to find peace is in Jesus.

And that's something we just need to come to terms with, receive from Jesus, believe, and then turn to Him for peace. And stop trying to find it in circumstances. Because He says, listen, there will be tribulation that you can't opt out of.

[ 3 : 11 ] It's just going to be part of it. So if that's the case, then how do we get a hold of that peace? How do we get a hold of confidence when we're in something that we just can't fight and we can't get out of?

Well, I think that's what we see in Psalm 140. We see David in a place where just all around him, he's being attacked. He's being hunted. He's being oppressed. He's being opposed.

And he exhibits a rock-solid confidence in this prayer. And I think there's a few things that we can learn about how we can come into tribulation, we can come into opposition, and not have our world rocked.

Because is that not what usually happens? We're not expecting it. And so it comes in, it just rocks our world. But I don't think it has to be that way. I think the Bible shows us a way that we can have deep-rooted confidence in tribulation.

Would you read with me Psalm 140? Let's look at what the Scripture says here. It opens and it brings us to a verse that says, Let's look at what the Scripture says here.

[ 5 : 12 ] Let burning coals fall upon them. Let them be cast into the fire, into deep pits, that they rise not up again. Let not an evil speaker be established in the earth.

Evil shall hunt the violent man to overthrow him. I know that the Lord will maintain the cause of the afflicted and the right of the poor. Surely the righteous shall give thanks unto thy name.

The upright shall dwell in thy presence. Would you bow with me as we open up this message tonight? Father, we come to you. And Lord, we ask your help as we open up your word.

Lord, I pray that you'd give us understanding, give us eyes to see, ears to hear. That we might gather the truth that you would have for us tonight. That it would find its way deep into our hearts.

And that it would give us an anchor, a stability as we daily face a world that is not for you. Lord, we recognize that there will be tribulations.

[ 6 : 16 ] There will be difficulties. There will be opposition for the believer in this present world. And Lord, I pray that you would help each person. Because whether we are in those seasons right now or not, we will encounter tribulation.

And Lord, we need your strength to walk through it with grace. And to walk through it with confidence. And to walk through it with stability. Lord, we ask you to teach us this evening.

Praise things in Jesus' name. Amen. So Psalm 140. This is a Psalm of David. And you saw where he starts out and he just looks around and says, There are so many problems.

There's so much going on. There's so many who are attacking me. Let's read those first few verses once again. Verse 1 down to 5. And just consider these things with me as we read. Look at all the ways that this opposition is described.

It says, Deliver me from the evil man. Preserve me from the violent man. Which imagine mischiefs in their heart. Continually are they gathered together for war.

[ 7 : 18 ] They have sharpened their tongues like a serpent. Adder's poison is under their lips. Selah. Keep me, O Lord, from the hands of the wicked. Preserve me from the violent man. Who have purposed to overthrow my goings.

The proud have hit a snare for me. And cords. They have spread a net by the wayside. They have set jins for me. Selah. In those first two sections, he really opens up just the problem.

What is he facing? What is he dealing with? And he's dealing with wickedness. Wicked men. He's dealing with violence. He's dealing with warring people.

He's dealing with those that are planning evil. He's dealing with those that are speaking evil. And he's dealing with those that are preparing traps for him. I mean, that's pretty rough, is it not?

I mean, usually the worst thing that we have to deal with in a day is maybe things don't go well in traffic. Right? Or there might be something that's frustrating at our job. But what's going on in David's life, it's likely that this is written during the time that Saul is after him.

[ 8 : 23 ] You might remember that story where David, he was the one who grew up in the sheepfold. And then he goes out onto the battlefield and he slays Goliath. And from there, he's kind of promoted and he grows in stature.

He becomes this war hero in Israel to the point where they're singing songs about him. And at the place where David's reputation is going up, Saul has been rejected from being king.

He was the king. David is coming up. And God had already said, David is going to be king. And Saul is going to be going out. And that is when things started to get dicey.

Because Saul says, I can't stand this guy, David. I need to do something about him. I need to protect my kingdom. I need to protect my throne. And so Saul just goes after him.

And there's all kinds of things that happens. He's throwing spears at David. David, he is waiting for David to come to a banquet where he can kill him. One day, David is trying to escape.

[ 9 : 26 ] And they say, listen, David's sick. And so he says, you know what? Just bring his bed up here so I can see him and so I can kill him. David's on the run. And Saul, just everywhere David goes, Saul is right after him, going through caves and forests and just all over the place.

Now, think about these things that are being said. They have like these links back to other places in the Bible. Now, follow with me for a second.

I want us to meditate on these first few verses for a moment. Think about the phrases that point back to the flood. That point back to the flood, okay? Remember what happened right before the flood?

And when Noah finds grace in the eyes of the Lord, it says that the earth was filled with violence. It says that man imagined evil in his heart continually. Did you notice the things that are said here?

He says these violent people, they are violent. They imagine mischief in their heart. And continually are they gathered together for war. It pulls from the flood and says there's some flood imagery here.

[ 10 : 30 ] There's some hyperlinks where it's like this is just as intense as that moment. That all around me, David is saying, they are imagining evil. They are full of violence.

And I'm on the run. Look at the snake imagery. Did you notice the snake people? I'm putting my notes, the snake people are coming. Because look at what he says about those who are opposing him.

When you get to verse number three, it says, They have sharpened their tongues like a serpent. Adder's poison is under their lips. He says, the snake people are here. They have venom. They have sharp tongues.

They are after me. Even think about how he describes these people much like Satan. Because Satan, he is a liar. He's a deceiver. He works in traps and in deceptions.

And look at what it said there in verse number four. It says, Keep me, O Lord, from the hand of the wicked. Preserve me from the violent man who have purpose to overthrow my goings. I'm walking. I'm trying to follow the Lord.

[ 11 : 29 ] And they're trying to overthrow me. Verse five. The proud have hit a snare for me. And cords. They have spread a net by the wayside. They have set djins for me. He says, Man, I'm just trying to follow the Lord.

But they're putting traps in my way. And they want me to fall off the path. And they just want to take me down. And so what do we do in that type of circumstance? Well, the first thing is we have to entrust ourselves to God.

Entrust ourselves to God. What do you need to do? You need to entrust yourself to God. Because there's no other help that you're going to find. There's lots of other places that we might want to find help.

But there's no other help that is going to work. There's no other anchor. There's no other place that we can stand other than with the Lord. Now, this is one of those things where it's like, Man, you guys are here on Thursday night.

It's fall break. It could be tons of places. But we're here studying the Bible together. Is this new for us? No. I think you've probably heard this. Trust in Jesus. But friends, be very careful that when you come into the place where you're in tribulation, you're being opposed, and you can't get out, that you don't try to anchor your heart and stabilize yourself with other things.

[ 12 : 46 ] Because what happens? We get into difficult situations. And one of the first strategies we use is trying to get out of them. Right? There's somebody at work who maybe opposes us or is toxic or is difficult.

And we do have the option. Thank God we have the freedom that if we need to make a change, we can make a change. But often, it may be that what the Lord really wants to do is for us to remain there in that place and to show Christ.

And we can't find our safety in running. Right? We find our safety in Christ. And we stand firm on Him. And we stand firm on the truth.

And if God is leading us to do other things, then we do that. But you don't find safety in running. You find safety in Jesus. You with me? And I think we could go through a whole other list of things where we could say, you know, I could try to find safety in this or that or the other thing.

And you can, you know, pray through those and meditate through those and think about all the ways that we anchor our hearts. We try to find safety for us other than in Jesus. But look at some of the things that he says real quick.

[ 14 : 03 ] What he says about this. He says that, God, I'm asking you to deliver me. God, I'm asking you to keep me. God, I'm asking you to preserve me.

And each of those have kind of their own little nuances to them. And deliverance is really this idea of God, you know, remove me. Grab me out of difficulty. Grab me out of trouble. Deliver me.

He says keep me, which is like be a bodyguard for me. He says preserve me, which is like watch over me and take care of me right where I'm at. And so he turns to the Lord and he completely trusts in Him facing this opposition.

Now, before we go to the next thing, I do want to make a comment about where does this opposition come from, right? Because I think it's fair to say that in our day, we are maybe not facing metal objects being thrown at us, right?

We're not dealing with spear opposition or hunting, right? We're not hiding in caves and on the run and out in the woods and out in the wilderness, just on the run for our lives.

[ 15 : 08 ] There are believers throughout history that have faced that and that is a very real reality. But there are things in our world, in our lives, where we can be lulled to sleep thinking that there is not opposition and that opposition will not come.

And opposition comes in different ways. We can never forget that there are good people who aren't godly and there are nice folks who are darkness. And when you stand upon the Word of God, sorry, this is the Word here.

Those are my notes, right? They got some verses. When you stand upon the Word of God and when you are, as Jesus says, a light in this world, a light that is blazing with the glory of God, the holiness of God, the truth of God, darkness recoils from light.

And darkness opposes light. And darkness wants to extinguish light. And you've maybe even faced some of this where it's maybe not spears, like we said, but it might be pressures.

Social pressure, financial pressure, pressure to conform, right? You can have your religion as long as you want. Just don't tell me about it.

[ 16 : 25 ] Just don't make me feel bad. Don't make anyone feel, like, uncomfortable. Right? And that's the world that we live in. But we have to decide that, you know what, no matter if it means missing a promotion, which is a very real thing, we've heard stories about that, whether it is being excluded from some group or not being accepted, not being welcomed, whether it is not being seen as of good status, right?

At one time, it seems like in our society that to be a Christian elevated your status. But it may be that today, to be a Christian is to lower your status, to be ridiculed, to invite questioning, to invite scrutiny.

How do you say that? Scrutiny. That's it. Thank you. To invite scrutiny, right? In the right ways, we need to be counter-cultural. We need to be Bible people. And we need to understand that there is a silent, polite war against truth.

And sometimes it's not silent, sometimes it's not polite. But we can never be caught off guard by that. One more passage on this. 2 Timothy 3, 12-14.

Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. And listen to this. But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.

[ 17 : 56 ] Does that sound like what we read in Psalm 140? Laying traps, sharpened tongues, spewing lies. Verse 14. But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them.

So a couple thoughts on this. What do we need to do when we're opposed, we're attacked, when there's that pressure to conform and to say, no, you should not be one of those Bible-thumping Jesus-free Christian people.

All right, what should we do? We need to recognize that there's only one who can deliver us. We need to recognize that there's only one who can ensure our security. That's Jesus. We can pray expecting God to take care of us.

As I read David's prayer right there, he says, God, deliver me. God, preserve me. God, keep me. And he's fully expecting that God is going to do that. When? I don't know. How? I don't know.

But I expect that's going to happen. Pray it simply. You know, one of my favorite things has been Matthew 6, 13, where it says, And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

[ 19 : 04 ] That phrase, for some reason, that's stuck in my heart and mind. Deliver us from evil. We live in a fallen, broken, evil world. Isn't it any wonder that Jesus taught his disciples, said, what do you pray?

Deliver us from evil. You might pray that for your family. You might pray that for your kids. You might pray that for yourself. Pray it simply. Jesus, deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever.

Amen. And pray it again. Pray it again. I think we see David crying out often, saying, God, I'm in this mess again. I'm being attacked and opposed again.

And so he asks, and he asks. We can pray it again. Now, what's the second thing we do? What's the second thing? So the first thing is we entrust ourselves totally to the Lord, expecting that, yes, there is going to be opposition.

There is going to be difficulty. There's going to be tribulation in this life. Second thing, pray that God will humble the proud. Now, we're going to read the next few verses and look at this for a second, because this one stumped me as I was studying through it.

[ 20 : 05 ] Let's look at verse number six. I said unto the Lord, Thou art my God. Hear the voice of my supplications, O Lord. O God, the Lord, the strength of my salvation.

Thou hast covered my head in the day of battle. Now, before we go to the next few verses, consider he starts with two statements of confidence. Two statements of confidence in the Lord.

What does he say? He says, Thou art my God. That's just like a settled fact. God, I'm here, I'm in this place, and I'm looking up to you. You are my God.

And then look at the second statement of confidence he makes. He says, Thou art my God. And in verse seven, he says, O God, the Lord, the strength of my salvation. Thou hast covered my head in the day of battle.

What does it mean that his head is covered? It means that he's protected. Whether it's by a shield held up over him, whether it's by a helmet. Even think about New Testament. We have the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation.

[ 21 : 06 ] He says, you've covered my head in the day of battle. I'm in the battle, and you have protected me. Now, consider, that's not a prayer, right? It is a statement. You have covered my head.

But now look at the next thing, because he makes two statements to the Lord, confidence in him. And he makes two supplications before the Lord. Would you look at verse eight and consider these? He says, Grant not, O Lord, the desires of the wicked.

Further not his wicked device, lest they exalt themselves. Selah. Now, I said a moment ago, the second thing, pray that God will humble the proud. The first time I read that, I thought, wait a minute.

This sounds more like he's saying, God, stop the proud. God, stop them. Stop what they're doing. Don't let their desires happen. Don't let their devices be furthered.

But then I noticed that last portion. And this is what's been on my heart and mind. Lest they exalt themselves. Saying, God, put a stop to their desires. Don't grant them. Don't further their wicked devices.

[ 22 : 09 ] Why? Why? And it's not to protect me. It is so that they don't exalt themselves. What is it when someone exalts themselves, lifts themselves up?

It's pride, right? It's pride. What's the opposite of pride? Humility. Lowering themselves. Could it be that what David is doing here is he's saying, God, don't let their...

He's not necessarily praying, stop the wicked. But God, save the wicked. Right? Because what's going to happen if the wicked is humbled? They have an opportunity to turn to the Lord.

All right? Because we know that God opposes the proud. Pride goes before destruction. But with the humble, there is what? There's forgiveness.

There's mercy. God is near to the humble. God is near to those who would humble themselves before him. I think it's almost like David is saying, you know, I know something about God.

[ 23 : 12 ] I know that God is long-suffering. I know that God is patient. I know that God will receive those who humble themselves. It's almost like he had an idea of what Jesus would say in Matthew 5, 43 through 45, where Jesus was saying, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you.

I think David knew some things about God. I think he knew that God was loving, that God is long-suffering. I think he also knew that if Saul was going to continue in his pride, he was going to be destroyed.

And remember, David didn't attack Saul himself. He had lots of opportunities to. He had a number of times where Saul was right in the palm of David's hand, and David could have taken him out, but he doesn't.

And he comes to him and says, why are you attacking me? I have no ill will towards you. I'm not trying to kill you. These people are telling you that I'm this evil guy that's after you. He said, I'm not.

I'm not. I'm going to do you good, even though you're hunting me down and causing me to run for my life. Could it be here that he's praying, God, would you humble these so that they might have an opportunity to turn, so they might have an opportunity to repent?

[ 24 : 32 ] He knew the law of sowing and reaping. He knew that when man chooses his own way, God eventually will give man over to what he has chosen.

Would you continue with me a little bit further? Look at what it says down in verse number nine. He says, as for the head of those that come past me about, let the mischief of their own lips cover them.

Consider that for a second. Remember, these are the snake people. These are the ones that have sharpened tongues. They have poison under their lips. He says, God, let the mischief of their own lips cover them.

Now, this is not the same covering as when God covered the head of David in the day of battle. It's more like let their own mischief flood over them and crush them and destroy them because they have chosen to deal in mischief and sin and evil.

And so the mischief of their own lips is going to cover them. Continue on. Verse number nine. As for the head of those that, we just read that. Verse 10. Let burning coals fall upon them.

[ 25 : 37 ] Let them be cast into the fire, into deep pits that they rise not up again. Consider this. Doesn't that sound like the traps? Like they were laying traps before David. Pits and fire. They're trying to, you know, what do you call that?

Like when they would siege a place, sometimes they would burn what could be burnt. You know, they're trying to starve them out. Or even you think about like medieval times.

This is at least the imagery that comes to my mind when, you know, the defenders are on the wall. The enemy has come up to the gate. What do they want to do? They want to throw stuff on them. Shoot fiery arrows at them.

Pour boiling oil on them. Anything to like destroy them. He's saying these people have worked in traps. So you know what's going to happen to them? They're going to be trapped. Continue reading.

He says, let not an evil speaker be established in the earth. Listen to this last bit. Evil shall hunt the violent man to overthrow him. Who was the one who was hunting David?

[ 26 : 34 ] Saul. Saul was on his tail. He was hunting him. He was going after him. He was trying to kill him. And he says, you know what? The evil that they've exercised is going to hunt them.

That is the law of sowing and reaping. If you're going to choose to walk in pride, if you're going to choose to walk in mischief, to ignore God, the very things that you choose are going to come upon you and destroy you.

Would you read verse 12 with me? This is where we come down to the last bit where he turns to the Lord and he says, Lord, I just trust that you have got me.

Here's the final thing I wrote down. Stand firm in God's care. Verses 12 and 13. Look at this. Again, remember, these aren't prayers.

At the beginning, he starts off with some prayer. He says, Lord, deliver me. Lord, help me. Lord, preserve me. But now he gets down to the end and he says, I know some things. I know some things about God. I know that the Lord, he's going to maintain the cause.

[ 27 : 47 ] What is the idea? It's that God is going to follow through. God sees those who are cast down. God sees those who are afflicted. God sees those who trust him and are oppressed.

And God is going to maintain the cause. He's going to come through. He's going to accomplish what he said. He's going to put his plan into effect entirely. For the present, I know that God sees, he cares, and he will maintain the cause.

And then for the future, verse number 13, look at that. He says, surely, surely, I know this. This is something else that I can count on. The righteous shall give thanks in thy name.

The upright shall dwell in thy presence. For the future, I will dwell with thanksgiving before the Lord. Isn't that something? He looks forward and he says, you know what?

No matter what's happening around me, no matter how long I'm going to be chased by this guy, no matter how many traps they're going to set out, I know that God's going to maintain my cause, and I will dwell with thanksgiving before him.

[ 28 : 53 ] And so what do we need to know? Do you know tonight that God sees you? He knows exactly what you face. He knows the pressures and the stresses and the opposition that you come into contact with today and in the future.

He knows all of it. And he cares about you and about where you are. Do you believe that he will accomplish his work? He hasn't left us alone no matter how long it goes that we might face tribulation.

We can have peace in him. Do you know that you will dwell with him? Think about that. That should be one of those things that is our hope, right? That is our hope that one day we will be with him.

We will dwell in his presence. We will rejoice in his presence. And that hope should sustain us and can sustain us right now. And one day you will give thanks to him. Something that hit me was like, let's start giving thanks now.

Why can I start giving thanks now? Because he already has done so much. And even David, as he's going through this, he says, you've covered my head. You are my God. You will preserve me.

[ 30 : 03 ] You will deliver me. I am coming to you and entrusting myself to you. So take heart. Entrust yourself to the Lord. Pray that God will humble the proud and stand firm in God's care because he does care for you.

Would you bow with me as we close out tonight? We'll stand and sing in just a moment. But before I pray and close, I want to highlight something that is so, so important.

This confidence that we've been talking about tonight is based on knowing God. Did you hear those things that David said? He said, you are my God and I will dwell in your presence. It might be that tonight, that's not you.

That's not you. You know, the Bible tells us in Romans chapter 1 and many other passages that all of mankind has turned against God. We've chosen our own way.



We've rejected the truth that we know about God. We've turned to wickedness. We've chosen sin. And you can hide it.

[ 31 : 07 ] You can cover it up. You can pretend like it's not real. You can cultivate a persona and a reputation of being a good, polite person. But the fact of the matter is that the holy, pure, blazing light of Jesus, it will expose your heart.

And it will expose the darkness that is you, that is in your heart. Ephesians said that before someone gets saved, before someone believes in Jesus, that we are darkness.

We've rejected the light. And the question is, will you measure up to a perfect and holy God? The answer is no one will. No one will.

And that's why Jesus came. That's why I died on the cross for your sins, so that you could be forgiven. And tonight, if you realize that maybe you're not saved, maybe you're not a believer, there are many people here that would love to talk with you and to share with you how much God loves you and how you can call out to Jesus and He can be your Savior too.

Dear Jesus, we come to you tonight. Lord, we thank you for your word. Thank you for your goodness. You are a good God. You are a loving God. You've told us, you've prepared us to face difficult days, to face opposition.

[ 32 : 33 ] Lord, you've given us everything we need. I pray that tonight our hearts would be anchored in only one place, upon Jesus. Lord, I pray that you'd encourage your people, that their hearts would be still before you.

Their worlds wouldn't be rocked when things go crazy, when opposition comes. But that we'd stand firm upon your promises. Praise things in Jesus' name. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Euabel. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. teeny.