

## Psalm 27

It's a simple truth. The more life goes on, the older we get, the more life in this sinful world throws at us. This week, with the floods and the deaths of so many people (even young people, like those girls at a Christian camp in Texas) the world questions the sovereignty and especially the goodness of God. Kristen and I (and many of you) have these kinds of conversations. In this life, trials and tribulations abound. But God is still on his throne. NOTHING catches him by surprise! And for this we are thankful! This week, I would like to explore Psalm 27, which is God's Word for us. And I know it will be helpful. I would like to preach this Psalm a little differently than I normally do. I hope it can serve as a model as a way to consider any passage in the Bible, and especially the OT. I want to ask 4 questions: 1) What does this passage teach us about **God**? 2) What does it teach us about **ourselves** (man)? 3) What does it teach us about the **Gospel**? 4) What do we **do** (application) in light of these words? So let's begin.

1. What do we learn about God? This is a Psalm written by King David. We aren't sure exactly in which part of David's life he wrote the Psalm. It could have been written at a time of great difficulty; or at a time when he was recalling those times of difficulty and how God helped him. And, there is so much here. In order to get through the entire Psalm I will focus on the big themes.

In v. 13 we see that God is good! David says, **"I believe that I shall look upon the goodness of the Lord . . ."** Ps. 25:8 says, **"Good and upright is the LORD . . ."** Ps. 86:5 says, **"For you, O Lord, are good and forgiving, abounding in steadfast love to all who call upon you."** Ps. 136:1 says, **"Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever."** David knew that no matter what happened in this life he could rely and count on the goodness of God. Ps. 34:8 says: **"Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good! Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him!"**

In v. 4 we see that God is beautiful. **"One thing I have asked of the Lord, that will I 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 . . ."** There is no one more beautiful, more lovely than God! To behold the beauty of God, FOR US, must be our deepest desire! David narrowed all his desires down to ONE THING: To be with God. And to be with him is to behold his beauty.

God is our light. Look at v. 1. David says, **"God is my light . . ."** Humanly speaking, there is no "life" without light. If there is no sun to light and give warmth to our world, there is no life as we know it. Gen. 1:2-3 says, **"The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. <sup>3</sup> And God said, 'Let there be light,' and there was light."** In this way, light is life. But from another perspective, light means revelation. We cannot see without light. God is light in that He reveals Himself to us. He is a God who speaks. In this way, He is my light. Ps. 18:28: **"For it is you who light my lamp; the LORD my God lightens my darkness."**

God is our salvation. Look also at v. 1. David says, **"God is my salvation . . ."** The immediate context is salvation from danger. Look at 2<sup>nd</sup> part of v. 1: **"The Lord is the stronghold of my life . . ."** Another translation is "refuge." God saves his people from danger. Look also at vv. 2-

3: **“When evildoers assail me to eat up my flesh, my adversaries and foes, it is they who stumble and fall. <sup>3</sup> Though an army encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war arise against me, yet I will be confident.”** And again in v. 5: **“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.”**

Today, God is our salvation. And we must remember, our greatest need is not physical salvation, but the salvation of our souls. Yes, God will deliver his people physically. On the last day, we will get new bodies. But, for now we wait. And though our bodies are wasting away (2 Cor. 4:16), our souls are being renewed. As sinners, our greatest need is to be delivered from our sin. And this, God will do, for those who look unto Christ.

Let me briefly mention a few more truths about God in this Psalm.

God hears and answers when we cry out to Him; and this is by grace. Look at v. 7: **“Hear, O LORD, when I cry aloud; be gracious to me and answer me!”**

God is angry with sin. Look at v. 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!”**

God sometimes hides his face. Also v. 9.

God will not forsake his people. **“For my father and my mother have forsaken me, but the LORD will take me in.”**

2. What do we learn about ourselves? One thing we see here is that in and of ourselves, we are fearful people. David speaks of evildoers, adversaries, and foes (v. 2). He mentions an army that might surround him (v. 3). He speaks of days of trouble (v. 5). He speaks of enemies all around him (v. 6). He even says that mothers and fathers may forsake their children (v. 10). In v. 12 he speaks of false witnesses and violence. Today, there are a lot of things to be afraid of. And in and of ourselves, we are fearful. We fear what our next trip to the doctor may uncover. Many may fear the real threats of war. Mostly, I think we fear the uncertainties of life, particularly the things we can't control. The fear of the unknown is real. And these fears can cause great anxiety and doubts, followed by physical consequences. The effects of fear on our lives are great!

What else do we learn? We learn that the world is against us. We see this especially in vv. 2, 10, 11, not to mention the rest of the Psalm. The world includes the forces of evil and everything/everyone that oppose God and his truth. There are Christians being killed for their faith every day, in many parts of the world. Ungodly cultures opposes those who follow Christ. I think about a football coach somewhere in the Midwest that lost his job a few years ago because he refused to give up his habit of praying openly on the football field. There are many such stories in this world. But, we must remember: **“We do not wrestle against flesh and blood, 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”** (Eph. 6:10).

We are a frail and needy people. Throughout this Psalm, David is humble. He recognizes his need. He recognizes God is in control of the outcome of his battles, his struggles, the consequences of his sin.

Brothers and sisters, this is not Disney Land we live in. Sin, death, and a fallen creation is our home . . . for now. And life is a constant wrestling match. We must take heed to the lessons of this Psalm.

3. What do we learn about the Gospel? In other words, how does this passage point to Christ? The obvious truth is that what we can say about God can also be said about Christ. But, Let me mention 3 specific truths.

This Psalm looks forward to the death of Christ. You might say, “How?” Look at v. 6. **“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.”** This is so beautiful! In the midst of all David’s trials and tribulations, David is glad! He is glad about offering sacrifices. Can you believe that? Dead animals? Who can say this but the children of God? Why would the nasty, bloody, system of sacrifices bring joy to David’s heart? Because he knew that God had provided a substitutionary sacrifice for his sins. David offers sacrifice for sin. And all he knows is the blood of bulls and goats. Today, Jesus says, **“*This is my body broken for you.*”** **“For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh”** (1 Pet. 3:18).

We see the resurrection. Look at v. 13: **“I believe that I shall look upon the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living!”** In the midst of his life, David looked forward to a better day, a day of life, a day when He would see God in the land of the living. David knew he would die; as we ALSO will die. But, there is hope. This Psalm pictures the resurrection of Christ. If no one completely and totally satisfies the curse of death, and conquers this reality, no one will see God. And the animals David sacrificed were killed. They did not come to life. Today, Jesus has conquered death. He is alive! He is alive FOREVER! He is risen from the dead. And as those who take the Lord’s Supper every months, we are reminded of his death and resurrection. His death was the perfect death in that only his death can accomplish the wrath of God. And since he is God in the flesh, death could not and cannot hold him. Today, we are victorious because our Lord conquered death!

Finally, we see the consummation. The consummation is the making new of all things. Look at vv. 13-14: **“I believe that I shall look upon the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living! <sup>14</sup> Wait for the LORD; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the LORD.”** This is heaven! We will SEE Him as He is! David looks forward to that day. Brothers and sisters, in this Psalm we see the Gospel! It is ALL throughout this passage. His death, his resurrection, and his coming again. ALL the blessings David spoke of are found in CHRIST!

Now, we’ve seen truths about God, ourselves, the Gospel. Now what do we do in light of these words?

4. Applications.

Abide in Christ! - Do ONE thing! (Abide in Christ - See v. 4) As David looked unto the temple, we look to Christ. There is no difference in principle. Abiding looks like this: seeking, gazing, meditation upon the Word, which is really to look upon Christ in the Bible. WE NEED CHRIST! We need him today, tomorrow, next week, next year! Also notice that this abiding in Christ goes deep into our souls. Verse 8 says, **"You have said, "Seek my face." My heart says to you, "Your face, LORD, do I seek."**

Be confident in the Lord! Look at v. 3: **"Though an army encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war arise against me, yet I will be confident."**

We sing and make melody to the Lord! Those whose hearts have been changed by the grace of God sing and make melody to the Lord. Look at the 2<sup>nd</sup> part of v. 6. **"I will sing and make melody to the LORD."** A lot can be said about a person's heart, especially why we sing and how we sing.

God may sometimes hide his face? Yes, sometimes God looks away. But, He will not forsake his people.

Wait for the Lord. Look at v. 14: **"Wait for the LORD; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the LORD!"** Heaven is coming! In the meantime, even if his face is hidden. He will not forsake you! God will make all things new. And He will now always keep his face hidden. He will give comfort and support in time of need.

Therefore, Be strong and let your heart take courage. It is one thing to have courage in the head, but another altogether to have courage in the heart.