

Psalm 27 – “Faith Over Fear”

1. Confidence in the Lord’s Protection – 27:1-3

27:1 - *The Lord is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; Of whom shall I be afraid?*

David is the writer of this Psalm. We’re not sure the particular context or period of his life in which he was writing this. But we see in these first few verses the confidence and assurance he has in the Lord protecting him.

David has had many opportunities where he’s had to rely on the Lord and have God protect him.

- He’s faced wild beasts that he had to take down.
- He took down the giant Goliath when he was but a young lad and when no one else was willing to step up.
- He’s been on the run from Saul who was trying to kill him.
- He faced threats from his own son Absalom.
- The Philistines were a constant adversary against David.
- David has faced many trials and episodes where his life was in danger.

But what has David come to know through each of these things? The Lord has been his protection. What does he ever need to fear!?

Fear can be a very strong emotion that can cause you to react in ways that are sometimes helpful, and other times not helpful.

The phrase “Be afraid, be very afraid” was a tagline from the 1986 movie, “The Fly” with Jeff Goldblum. Google the phrase and you’ll get about 183 million results for that phrase. But the trick is to be appropriately afraid of the right thing. What people commonly fear is not always what should be causing that spike of adrenaline. Here are some examples:

- Are you afraid to fly? You have a 0.00001 percent chance of dying in an airplane crash. On the other hand, the car insurance industry estimates that the average driver will be involved in three or four car crashes in their lifetime and the odds of dying in a car crash are one to two percent.
- Are you afraid of heights? It’s the second most reported fear. Your chance of being injured by falling, jumping, or being pushed from a high place is 1 in 65,092. The chance of having your identity stolen is 1 in 200.

- Do you fear being killed by a bolt of lightning? The odds of that happening are 1 in 2.3 million. You're much more likely to be struck by a meteorite—those lifetime odds are about 1 in 700,000.
- How about sharks? You're much more likely to be killed by your spouse (1 in 135,000) than a shark (1 in 300 million).
- Are you afraid of dogs? Their bark really is worse than their bite: Your chance of suffering a dog bite is 1 in 137,694. On the other hand, your chance of being injured while mowing the lawn is 1 in 3,623.

You see, it's good to know what we should and should not be afraid of.

I used to be terrified of elevators, but I took steps to resolve the issue.

David doesn't look and dwell on the things that he *could* fear over, he looks to the Lord and recognizes that if God is with him, what *does* he have to fear over or be afraid of? There's nothing!

What did David see the Lord as? His light, his salvation, and the strength of his life.

God was **light** to David. What's one of the first fears people have? Fear of the dark. It's the unknown. You don't know what's going on in the dark. But God is light.

- Interestingly this is the first time in Scripture that the Lord is referred to as Light. We know that God is light and Jesus Himself proclaimed in **John 8:12**, *"I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."*
- And David so rightly recognizes that God is not just light, but God is **my** light!
- When things didn't make sense, when David didn't know the outcome, God would be his light and illuminate the way for him. What did he have to fear?

And the Lord was his **salvation**. David was delivered time and time again because God saved him.

- Have you experienced the deliverance of the Lord today? Maybe you're still wrestling through things, and facing challenges, but has the Lord delivered you from the greatest threat in your life – sin?
- We should all be able to take confidence in the Lord knowing that He has delivered us from the curse of sin and has saved us from eternal death.

And the Lord was the **strength** of his life. This word is translated in other passages as *stronghold* or *fortress*. This is who God was to David. This is why he could take confidence in Him. When pressures mounted, when threats were on the horizon, David knew that the Lord was his strength. So, who should he ever be afraid of?

27:2-3 - *When the wicked came against me To eat up my flesh, My enemies and foes, They stumbled and fell. ³ Though an army may encamp against me, My heart shall not fear; Though war may rise against me, In this I will be confident.*

David's confidence was reinforced based on what He's already seen the Lord do. There's been times when the wicked came against David with the intent of destruction. They weren't just trying to put a little scare in him and rough him up. They wanted to devour him like a pack of wolves on a wounded fawn. And yet as they came against David, it was they that stumbled and fell. Why? Because God was with him.

David has no worries even about being outnumbered. Even if it's an army camping against him, he doesn't need to fear because no matter how many are against him, if God is with Him, he's on the majority side.

- **Romans 8:31**, *"What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?"*

I love the accounts we have in the Bible of how God worked through greatly outnumbered people to show His strength and might. Gideon comes to mind. He had an army of 32,000 who were up against 135,000 Midianites. And yet God said there's too many of you. He let those who were fearful return home. 22,000 left. Gideon now had 10,000. The odds just went from 4 to 1, to 14 to 1. And then Gideon's army got reduced again down to 300 men! Outnumbered 450 to 1! And yet God gave a great victory to those 300 men.

Another time Israel found themselves surrounded by Assyrians who had laid siege to Jerusalem (2 Kings 19:35-37). But in one night the Lord took out the entire 185,000 person army.

What do we have to fear?

- **Matthew 10:28**, *"And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."*

In this I will be confident. David's confidence was not in his skill, his schemes, or his strength. His confidence was in the Lord and in the fact that God has already shown Himself strong on David's behalf.

Hasn't the Lord done that for each of us? Let us take confidence in Him when fear tries to creep in.

Here's another thing that kept David from fear and worry...

2. Communion in the Lord's Presence – 27:4-6

27:4 - One thing I have desired of the Lord, That will I seek: That I may dwell in the house of the Lord All the days of my life, To behold the beauty of the Lord, And to inquire in His temple.

David didn't get distracted with all the things that he could fret over. He saw the blessing of having a single focus. He had ***one thing*** on his mind. One thing that was truly driving him and motivating him. And this ***one thing*** was to dwell in the house of the Lord.

David's ***"one thing"*** was really about being with God and having access to God!

Being in communion with God was David's priority. And that priority was being driven by his passion. You see this was more than just a religious duty or feeling of obligation, David had a passion for the Lord.

Our priorities aren't going to be kept in line unless we're passionate about those things.

What are the things you're passionate about? What's that *one thing* that really excites you?

David writes here that his passion was to ***dwell in the house of the Lord*** and to ***behold the beauty of the Lord***...

His passion was not in an act, it was in a person. His one desire was to be with the Lord.

I'm reminded of other places we see this term 'one thing' in God's Word. And it's reflective of the passion of the worshipper to the Lord.

Luke 10:41–42, *"And Jesus answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. ⁴² But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her.""*

Isn't this often how we operate? We're like the Martha's running around and getting distracted and troubled over many things. But as Jesus said, there's one thing that is needed, and Mary chose that one thing. And what was it? Just being with Jesus!

Mary was so passionate to just be in the presence of Jesus and sit with Him, that everything else was just put on hold. She didn't worry about if the appetizers were all out, if people had been offered drinks, or if the place was tidied up. Those aren't bad things to be concerned about, but the priority at that moment was just to be with Jesus! And Jesus says she chose the good thing.

I think about Paul and the desire he had that grew out of that passion to know the Lord.

Philippians 3:10–14, *"that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, ¹¹ if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. ¹² Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. ¹³ Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; **but one thing I do**, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, ¹⁴ I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."*

Paul had experienced much in life. But he says in this passage that he considers all of it rubbish in comparison to the greatness of just knowing God. And so, everything he did was funneled through this singleness of mind – **one thing I do**, forgetting everything that was behind, not getting distracted by the things of this world, he was simply pressing forward to lay hold of Jesus.

- Think about what life would look like if we had that kind of passion?
- Now don't get me wrong, I'm not saying to forsake all your responsibilities. Or quit your job so you can just be with Jesus.
- I'm talking about making Jesus your chief passion. Where He is the focus of all you do and why you do it.

David's passion for communion with God led to a greater peace with God...

27:5-6 - For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion; In the secret place of His tabernacle He shall hide me; He shall set me high upon a rock. ⁶ And now my head shall be lifted up above my enemies all around

me; Therefore I will offer sacrifices of joy in His tabernacle; I will sing, yes, I will sing praises to the Lord.

Notice 3 times in verse 5 David says ***He shall...*** David's faith isn't just based on what God did (as mentioned in the beginning of this Psalm) but it's also based on what God will do. Since God will do this, David responds 3 times with what he will do. His faith led him to action. He's not waiting for the Lord to do it, he believes He will, and he responds appropriately.

- ***I will offer sacrifices of joy...***
- ***I will sing...***
- ***I will sing praises to the Lord.***

David isn't being driven by his circumstances. He's being led by what He knows God to be and what He will do, and so David responds with what he will do in faith.

Are you being led by the goodness of God and a desire for simply more of Him?

27:7-10 - Hear, O Lord, when I cry with my voice! Have mercy also upon me, and answer me. ⁸ When You said, "Seek My face," My heart said to You, "Your face, Lord, I will seek." ⁹ Do not hide Your face from me; Do not turn Your servant away in anger; You have been my help; Do not leave me nor forsake me, O God of my salvation. ¹⁰ When my father and my mother forsake me, Then the Lord will take care of me.

3. Courage in the Lord's Promises – 27:11-14

27:11-12 - Teach me Your way, O Lord, And lead me in a smooth path, because of my enemies. ¹² Do not deliver me to the will of my adversaries; For false witnesses have risen against me, And such as breathe out violence.

How we need to learn the Lord's ways because His ways are always better. David here is asking the Lord to lead him onward in His ways, which he hopes are smooth ways. He's had lots of rough terrain, but now he would love a little more of a smoother path for a change.

- That is always better. But even if we encounter uneven terrain, or a rough road, if God is leading us, it will always be the better path. We need to trust Him in that.
- That's what David reveals next.

27:13-14 - *I would have lost heart, unless I had believed That I would see the goodness of the Lord In the land of the living. ¹⁴ Wait on the Lord; Be of good courage, And He shall strengthen your heart; Wait, I say, on the Lord!*"

What held David together? His faith. He believed that God was at work and though David was facing some hardships, he knew that wouldn't be the end. He knew he would ***see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.*** This gave him great hope and peace in the midst of difficulty and despair.

Listen, this should be the reality for every believer. The question is what are you believing in? If you're believing your situation isn't going to get any better, then that's how you're going to feel.

If you believe the Lord will see you through, then you'll face that difficulty with courage and calm.

So be of good courage, hope in the Lord, and you will find Him strengthening your heart!

We know ultimately how it ends. We're sitting on greater revelation than David had. No matter what may come our way, the end result for every believer is heaven! That's reason enough to be of good courage and to be daily beholding the beauty of the Lord.

What a difference our outlook becomes when we focus on the uplook.

Points to Ponder:

1. When fear rises, where is my focus? Am I looking at the size of the threat or the strength of my God?
2. What is my "one thing"? Is Jesus truly the central passion of my life, or am I distracted by many things that matter far less?
3. Am I living from past victories only, or am I trusting God for future deliverance? David's faith was based both on what God had done and what He promised to do.