

Pastor Daryl Diddle

Sermon Series: *Now, Wait Just a Minute, No. 2*

Still Confident

May 1, 2022

Psalm 27 (NIV)

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?

² When the wicked advance against me to devour me; it is my enemies and my foes who will stumble and fall.

³ Though an army besiege me, my heart will not fear; though war break out against me, even then I will be confident.

⁴ One thing I ask from the Lord, this only do I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze on the beauty of the Lord and to seek him in his temple. ⁵ For in the day of trouble he will keep me safe in his dwelling; he will hide me in the shelter of his sacred tent and set me high upon a rock.

⁶ Then my head will be exalted above the enemies who surround me; at his sacred tent I will sacrifice with shouts of joy; I will sing and make music to the Lord.

⁷ Hear my voice when I call, Lord; be merciful to me and answer me. ⁸ My heart says of you, “Seek his face!” 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 helper. Do not reject me or forsake me, God my Savior. ¹⁰ Though my father and mother forsake me, the Lord will receive me.

¹¹ Teach me your way, Lord; lead me in a straight path because of my oppressors. ¹² Do not turn me over to the desire of my foes, for false witnesses rise up against me, spouting malicious accusations.

¹³ I remain confident of this: I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. ¹⁴ Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord.

We’re in the book of Psalms this morning, if you’d care to turn there with me. Psalm 27.

I’m sorry for alarming some of you last Sunday. In talking about the virtues of waiting, my little illustration at the very beginning of the message [in which I hesitated between words] caused several to think that I was having a stroke or an aneurysm or something.

I guess I’m glad, though, that even as you wondered what was going on, you did...wait...to act...No one rushed up here to give me medical attention – that would have been interesting.

So, even though the best thing you can do for a stroke victim is to act FAST, right? Face, Arms, Speech, Time: FAST. In this case, anyway, your waiting proved wise, which is the theme of these next few weeks: the wisdom that Scripture speaks of in learning the discipline of waiting – but not randomly waiting. That’s just procrastination. This waiting is specifically waiting on God.

And again, as I said last week, our culture, our society, does not do this well. We don’t like to wait at all, and certainly not on God’s timing and wisdom, so we who are Christ-followers need to understand right from the start that if we adopt Scripture’s urging to practice

patience, we *are* going to be out of step with most of the world around us.

We have to get used to – we have to be OK with – being the weirdo in the room. Can you do that? That’s really just part of being a Christian in our society, especially with regard to waiting.

But it’s good to know that we’re far from alone in our weirdo-ness. We’re actually in very good company.

King David, in fact, joins us in our waiting weirdness, which we see in Psalm 27.

There are three distinct sections of this psalm, easily identified. The first is verses 1 through 6, where David expresses all this trust in, and praise to, God. In fact, that first verse there speaks of a confidence in God that is as profound as any in the Bible:

“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?”

“Why on earth should I be afraid of anyone when God, who is the very light by which to see, is with me?”

To fear, when the God of light is with you, is senseless to David, the soldier, the warrior – especially since his enemies, there in verse two, don’t have God’s light, and so they are able only to clumsily stumble around and fall in the darkness.

David might as well have written, “The Lord is my night vision goggles,” you see, “so whom shall I fear?”

That’s how David understood God, so naturally, the greatest thing for David – the one thing he asks, in verse four there – is that he might *“dwell in the house of God all his life.”*

What does that mean? Does that mean David wants to sit in the Temple all day and all night? A perpetual church service?

Well, only inasmuch as in David’s day the Temple was the dwelling place of God, you see?

What David wants – what He longs for – is uninterrupted union with God. (Which, I might add, he could only have in his day in the physical temple. But you see, we have the actual firstfruits of that with the presence of God’s Holy Spirit, and we’ll have it completely when Jesus returns to reign here.)

Uninterrupted union with God; to David, that’s the ultimate thing, to always be wherever God is. Because wherever God is, that’s where perfection is, you see?

Wherever God is, that’s where absolute beauty is.

That’s where complete safety is.

That’s where protection is – and victory.

And joy.

And so that’s where David’s confidence is.

King David did not take confidence in his own gifts or talents, or in his money or position, or in his strength or strategies – which were all substantial.

David possessed all those things – in spades!

But David knew that although he was richly blessed in all of those ways, his security, his *confidence*, was in God alone.

At the same time, David also knew that surrounding that inner experience of God's presence where all is well, there were armies of enemies bent on destroying him. That's what he realizes and admits beginning there in verse 7.

David is not one to bury his head in the sand and simply ignore the reality around him, and neither should we.

There are times when the evil around us weighs especially heavy.

There are times when that which surrounds us and seeks our destruction closes in upon us especially tightly.

In David's case, since he was a warrior king, it was probably, mostly enemy *armies* that he felt closing in around him.

But that which surrounds *us* and seeks our destruction is usually different, isn't it?

The enemies that close in around us may be more like those who persecute us for our faith in Jesus.

It may be the devil himself trying to drown us in shame and false guilt.

That which surrounds and threatens us may be the consequences of past mistakes – poor choices.

It may be addictions and other unhealthy habits – or past relationships and behavior patterns.

All these things and others like them, they can close in upon us, from time to time, can't they? And they threaten us. They threaten our peace, our joy, our purity, our confidence, our faith.

They make us feel insecure and exposed and vulnerable, and that tempts us to strike out on our own, in our own defense – in our own strength, you see?

They tempt us. And instead of waiting on God, who is our light to see by, we are tempted to join *them* in stumbling in the *dark*, in lashing out, swinging blindly – trying to fight them without our "Night Vision God," you see?

And sometimes they convince us, don't they? To jump into the fray and try to handle things in our own way.

They even convinced King David a few times.

And yet, here, David sings about the right response to those sorts of temptations. That's the third part of this psalm, beginning in verse 13.

Even though all this is happening around me, David says, I am still confident in God. Because, you see, even though his enemies, whatever their form, surround *him*, David remembers that those very enemies of his are, *themselves*, surrounded by the *Lord*.

Beginning in verse 7, David realizes his outward circumstances have changed. He's moved from a carefree sort of praise to a keen awareness of trouble very close-by.

And though he's tempted to do otherwise, we see by his response in verse 13 there that his response remains the same:

Don't lash out.

Don't stumble in the darkness.

Don't lose confidence in God.

Wait for Him. Wait for the Lord. Let the Lord work.

Keep your cool. Keep your confidence.

Let the Lord set the course and the timing.

His way of handling things will likely be different than we'd think.

Steven Lennox says that the Lord is the slowest one who is always on time.

He'll likely seem slow to us, but He will be right on time – Kairos time. The right time. The appropriate time.

So, we can trust that the God who was faithful before will be faithful again.

The God who defended us before will defend us again.

The God who brought truth before will bring truth again.

The God who was our light to see by before will give us light to see by again.

The God who was our confidence in days of calm is equally worthy of our confidence in days of chaos.

Ours is simply to believe that, to know that – to know these things about God in times of trouble.

Ours is to wait on Him with confidence. As David says there in the closing verse, "*Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord.*"

Theologian Michael Eaton mentioned how Jesus once said to Martha, "*Martha, you're concerned about many things, but only one thing is worth being concerned about – and Mary has figured that out.*" (Luke 10:42)

You see, of all that goes on in life around us – the good and the bad, the glorious and the threatening, the easy and the difficult – of all that goes on in life around us, our primary concern as followers of Jesus must be to be near Him and listen for Him to speak and wait on Him to act.

That's what Jesus said to Martha about Mary.

That's what David is telling us here in Psalm 27.

"Have we figured that out?" That's what God wants to know today.

Are we waiting on God, or are we reacting to circumstance?

Are we as confident in God in times of trouble as we are in times of peace?

We have every reason to be – even more than David, because we see the evidence of God's love for us right here before us – at this table.

Service of Holy Communion

Closing Song: *Be Strong in The Lord*

Benediction