

The Lord Is My Light

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Tonight we're going to be looking at Psalm 27. Psalm 27. So if you will go ahead and turn there this time. And this is one of the most beloved psalm. I preached from Psalm 23 last week. This is one of another treasured songs of David. Psalm that breeds courage, breeds confidence, breeds longing and unshakable trust in the Lord. It is a psalm for the weary. And it is also a psalm for the waiting. For the waiting. Now, before David ever speaks of his enemies, we see that often, he speaks of his God first. He speaks of his God first. Before he ever mentions trouble, he declares his trust. Before he ever cries for help, he confesses his hope in the Lord. This is the pattern of faith, by the way. We began with who God is, not with what we face. Let me repeat that. We began who God is, not with what we face. And this is where David begins.

Tonight, I'm going to do something a little bit different. I will not be asking to stand to read scripture, but rather I will go verse after verse after verse. And so this time we're going to read through verse one. So if you will look with me at Psalm 27 verse one, it reads, "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." Here we see David saying, "God is everything he needs." That God is everything he needs. The Lord is my light and my salvation. Whom shall I fear? That's how David begins. David begins with three confessions. And there are three great confessions, by the way. Let's go by one by one. The first one, the Lord is my light. The Lord is my light. One commentary puts it this way. David uses God's personal name, Yahweh, Lord. And boldly says, he is my light. Psalm 23, he is my shepherd. Shall not want. Remember that same idea. This is the Lord, capital L O R D, and he is my light. See there the characteristics of light is revealed in this way. Light comforts, light guides, light exposes danger and light dispels darkness. This is not David shining for God but rather this is God shining upon David. Different makes all the difference. You see, we often think we need to generate our own optimism in dark times. But the text says, "The Lord is my light." Light is not something we create. It is something that reveals what is hidden in the shadows, namely darkness, sin. He does that for us. God illuminates our path not because we are smart enough to find it but because he shines. He shines. That's his characteristic.

I don't have too much time to go into each section but I will just hit the main things next. The Lord is my salvation. The Lord is my salvation. Salvation is not something David achieves. Not something that David maintains that David improves upon. No, salvation is something God is. You see that God is salvation is rescues, deliverance and relief. That is what salvation means. We've been rescued from sin. We've been delivered out of darkness. We've been relief from the wrath of God Almighty. What can you ask for that you need when he is everything for us? See, God himself is the one who is the one that rescues. He's the one that delivers and relieves. He's the main thing that we need to deal with at the end of the day, isn't it? Whether in this life or when we meet him face to face. Next, the Lord is the strength of my life. Notice the direction of

the action here. We do not save ourselves by being fearless. Again, God is the Lord is the strength of my life. God is the one that strengthens David and you as well. God is the one that opposed David and you as well. And he's the one that sustains David and he sustains you this evening. Matthew Henry says it this way. God who is a believer's light is the strength of his life. Not only by whom but in whom he lives and moves. Think about that. He enters into our life and he becomes our very strength and he is the one that lives and moves in us by the Holy Spirit. Therefore he says whom shall I fear when I have this kind of strength? Whom shall I fear? See, fear evaporates. Not because the danger disappears. That doesn't happen with David, nor does it happen in your life. Dangers are still there. But here it is. But because God is greater than the danger. That's always the case, isn't it? We always want to make the dangerous things, what is happening in our lives, bigger than God. I said that this morning and I repeat it this evening. What God does when he comes into our lives, he magnifies himself and he makes the problems small. In many ways, he says, "I'll take care of that." Is that how you are comforted? Time and time again. See, if God is the light, then darkness cannot exist. If God is the salvation, danger cannot claim the final victory. He will always be victorious. Always. Always. That's why he can say whom shall I fear? Because we fear the very thing that we focus on, don't we? So he changes, reorients us to fear God ultimately because who is for him, right? Who can be against him?

And so let's look at verses two and three. Two and three says this. When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell. Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear. Though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident. I want you to look there in that verse in those verses. When the wicked came upon me, they stumbled and fell. I want to focus on in that. David remembers, by the way, past deliverances based on this text. He's not saying I defeated them. He's not saying I outsmarted them. He's not saying I overcame them here. What does he say? He says God caused them to stumble. He says God caused them to fall and God is the one that protected David. See, notice that David's enemies were like wild beasts. The way he expressed enemies who came to eat up or devour my flesh. That's what a wild beast does. But notice he says they failed not because David was strong but because God was faithful. When David recognizes that David says thou though an host host means an army. Okay? Not just one person in the army like the whole army whoever it is whatever side they come from. He's saying though an host should encamp against me. He says my heart shall not fear. No matter how the numbers are, however intense the danger is, my heart shall not fear. In this will I be confident even before they come. Even before the danger is close to home as it were. He already in his in his trust in the Lord. My heart shall not fear. Shall not fear. Why? Again? Because the God who delivered before will deliver again. Amen. That's Isn't that your life as a Christian? You've seen him delivered again and again and again. And so David's doing the same thing here. He's saying, "He delivered me in the past. He will deliver me again. Whom shall I fear?"

Let's look at verses four and six now. Four and six. One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life. And behold the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his temple. For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion. In the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me. He shall set me up upon a rock. And then verse six. And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me. Therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy. I will sing. Yea. I will sing praises unto

the Lord. Here we see that God is the one thing worth seeking. God is the one thing worth seeking. Just want to pull out this phrase. He says, "One thing have I desired of the Lord." David reveals here the desire, the deepest longing of his heart. He's saying, "All the things that I can desire," right? He's a king. He has everything he can possess. Think if that was you. Got all these things. He has all these things that he can think about. And he goes, "The one thing I desire is of the Lord." Remember I talked about this morning, I preached about putting God first. This is David's heart. This is David's heart. And David says the first thing is that he's not ask He does not ask for safety. He does not ask for victory. He does not ask for revenge. He does not ask for comfort. He doesn't even ask for success or even relief because those are things that he could easily get as a king. Instead, he asked for God himself. God himself. One thing he says that will I seek after. You see, it's beautiful what he says in his heart. He can go through all these things in his life and go, I just need God himself. He's the only one that can help me in all situations, in everything that I'm going through. Can you say that about yourself this evening? Because that's what David is speaking about here for our edification. One commentary puts it this way, that one thing signifies the exclusive nature of faith. When God is your one thing, everything else finds its place. Everything. You see, God is a God of order. God is a God of order. And you know what? There's clarity in order, isn't there? Let me explain it this way. This is something I remind myself. Many pastors have told me the same thing. Number one, God of order. I am first a Christian myself. I'm a Christian. Number two, I'm a husband. I'm a husband. Number three, I'm a father. And then number four, I'm a pastor. How many times have I've seen so many mistakes? When those things are out of order, you realize why is my life so chaotic? Because my life is out of order. Chaos is the opposite of order. And this is how God wants us. Now, you might not fit in that, of course, but some of you are Christians. Some of you are husbands, wives. Some of you are fathers and mothers. Where are you in your order? God is a God of order. He brings clarity. He gives peace in order. Amen.

See, David's desires is three things. He says to dwell in the house of the Lord. Continuing on in the verse, he does not say occasionally here. Notice that he doesn't say seasonally, you know, when I'm done with battles, I'll go visit or spend time with the Lord rather. Nor does he say when it's convenient for me. He not none of that. He says all the days of my life. All the days. This is not talking about Sunday worship by the way. This is talking about everyday devotion unto the Lord. You see that it's an all day occurrence. Is that your personal devotion time? That's what I ask myself. Is it over when Sunday's over or does it continue on to Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday? Faithfulness, faithfulness, faithfulness. Because they were faithful, right? What ends up happening? You'll be faithful as a husband, as a father, as a wife, father, mother, right? For me, as a pastor, that's what happens. Faithfulness. And we know that God is faithful. That's where we can be faithful. Amen. This is not David living in a building like I mentioned. It's not a one day occurrence inside of a building on Sunday. It is David living in God's presence all the days of his life. We often view this as our duty, don't we? This passage many people just right away go to Sunday. It's talking about Sunday. No, it's not. It's not going to church once a week. It's not talking about we seek God even first. He says that will I seek after. So the question is where does this desire come from? Where does it come from? Well, Philippians 2:13 says this, "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." You see, the desire to dwell in God's house is a gift planted by God. He planted that. He planted that desire. And then David goes on and says, "To dwell, to sit down, to remain." He's saying every day I want to sit down. I want to remain in the presence of the Lord. Psalm 23 says,

"He maketh me to lie down in green pastures." That's what it means to dwell. That he is the one that makes me. He put that desire in me and I want to do that all the days of my life. And then secondly, he says to behold the beauty of the Lord. See, David wants to gaze upon God's character. Now, he's spending time with him. And what is he spending time with? Thinking about his character. Thinking about his character and what are his character characteristics? He's holy, his holiness, his mercy, his goodness, his glory. That's just to name a few. You see, beauty in the Hebrew, it refers to the entire being of the character of God. Not just saying God is like this and God is like that, but all of God. You see, it's not picking choosing God's character, is it? It's not saying he's God of justice only or God of love only, but it is God of love and justice. It's God who is holy, his mercy, his goodness, his glory, all of these things is that's what he's sitting down and thinking upon. God put that desire to think about God's character. You can spend much time in that, can't you? We can spend much time thinking about his beauty because after all, we can't see him anyway. So by faith you think about his character. You think about his character, all aspects of him. And then third, he says to inquire in his temple. That means to meditate in his temple. By the way, this is not David figuring things out or this is not him trying to come up with, you know, I got to do this mentality. No, this is God revealing himself to David. So as he's thinking upon God, God is just shedding his character, literally his character upon him. It's not just here. It's enveloping his own life. And it's the idea of embodying his characteristics in himself. He's saying, I am a sinner. I need to not only think about him, but I need him to literally dwell in me. That's what it means. And he's saying meditation is not this human effort here. No, by no means it is giving God all of his time to give us the insight of him to give an awareness of him of his presence and then ultimately his assurance that he is what he is. When he says he's good, he is good to you. Right? When he's mercy, he's actually showing mercy to you. Right? When he's his glory is in you, you actually see his glory in your life. So there's that connection. It goes deeper to not just mentally understanding him and sitting down, but actually living God's presence in you.

And what God does is he wants you to do one thing. Well, let me take that back. He says he hides them. It's him that hides him in his pavilion. You see that in verse five. He hides them in his pavilion. This is the key. We don't hide ourselves. He hides rather us. He hides us. God is the active protector here. He conceals us in his tabernacle. You see a good father, right? What does he do? He hides, right? He puts himself first when the child's in danger. That's the idea. He puts himself in front and he hides us behind him. That's a beautiful picture, isn't it? Because many of us know as fathers, that's what we want to do for our children when there's active danger. And that's what he does. And so this word pavilion mentioned here refers to a royal tent in the center of an army where the king resides and to be hidden there to be protected by the king's own guards. So you do not protect yourself. It is the king's tent. It is his place and the king protects you. So think about that. He is there and he is ready to protect you. Do you see that in your own life consistently? And then he goes on, he says he sets them upon a rock. Rock is a picture of stability. It's a picture of security. And also here's it's talking about lifting up because a rock if you're on top of it, it lifts you up where you are. And so we don't see David climbing the rock by his own strength, do you? He sets them upon a rock. He sets us up. God places us on a rock. Matthew Henry puts it this way. God is the firm foundation. We do not build the rock. We stand on what he provides. He provides the rock. Amen.

And then verse six, just reading verse six says this. And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me. Therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy. I will sing. Yea. I will sing praises unto the Lord. Here we see emphasized and now shall my head be lifted up. Who lifts the head you might ask? It is God. It is God who vindicates it. Our role is simply the response. You see that? And what is our response? We offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy. That was with David and that is with what we do, don't we? And he says, I will sing and acknowledge. Yea. I would even sing even more energetically in a sense. I will sing praises unto the Lord. So the idea is when we're being delivered, our worship is this is that we sing. We sing and we sing praises unto the Lord. That is our reaction when he delivers us. Have that happened to you in your life. It sure has helped me in my life. When he has delivered me in so many ways, I can go and praise him. That's the first thing I want to do. Thank you Lord. Thank you for what you have done in my life.

Next, look at verses 7 to 10. 7 to 10 says, "Hear, O Lord, when I cry with my voice, have mercy also upon me and answer me. When thou saidst, seek ye my face, my heart said unto thee, thy face, Lord, will I seek. Hide not thy face far from me. Put not thy servant away in anger. Thou hast been my help. Leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation. When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up." Here in these verses, God invites us to seek his face. I want to emphasize where it says, "When thou saidst, seek ye my face, my heart said, thy face, Lord, will I seek." This is one of the most beautiful moments, by the way, in this psalm. God himself initiates the relationship. God is a God of order. He spoke first and he says when thou saidst God says seek my face and then David responds your face Lord will I seek. This is not David pursuing God. This is God drawing David. See when you rightly observe it that way. God must begin with us before we can close with him. God must seek us before we can seek him. Our heart's cry is merely an echo of his voice. You see that we hear his voice and we repeat what he says. First John 4:19, we love him because he first loved us. This is not David finding God. This is God revealing himself to David. This is not David holding on to God. Rather, it is God that's holding on to David. David pleads in verse 9, "Hide not thy face. Put not thy servant away. Leave me not. Forsake me not." Why does he say this? Because David knows he has no merit in himself. He has no righteousness in himself. He has no strength. He has no claim of victory. None. He says God is the one that's merciful. He's the one that's merciful. He's the one that doesn't leave or forsake me. And then David says something astonishing in verse 10. Look at it with me. He says, "When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up." You see, even the strongest human love is limited. For David, it was his mother and his father. But God's love is limitless. And he goes, "This is the highest, greatest relationship in this world, and you, God, are limitless. He's the one that takes me up." That's a language of adoption, by the way, in care. He took me up. And it means he lifted me up. He carried me. He comforted me and received me as his own. God becomes the perfect father. He becomes the perfect father.

Verses 11 to 12. Teach me thy way, O Lord, and lead me in a plain path because of mine enemies. Deliver me not over unto the will of mine enemies. For false witnesses are risen up against me, and such as breathe out cruelty. Here we see that God leads and protects and delivers David. He says, "Teach me thy way. Lead me. Deliver me." Notice again, David does not rely on his own wisdom or his own strength or strategy. David admits his inability to navigate the dangers. You see, he does not say, "I will figure out this path or I will fight my enemies. I will

defend myself." Instead, he says three things here, and it's all for our edification. Number one, teach me. Number two, lead me. And number three, deliver me. That's all that God wants from us. Teach me, God, in this moment. God, lead me in this moment that I feel stuck or hesitant. God, deliver me where I'm at. I need rescuing, Lord. I can't rescue myself because only God is the one that can. He's the only one. And so the plain path here refers to a level road, a level road free from stumbling blocks. We cannot pave this road ourselves. We need God to smooth the way for us because the enemies are watching for us to fall. They're waiting and watching. That's what he's saying here. They just want to see us fall. They just want to see us fall. Then he says, or rather my explanation of this is that if left to our own walking, we will stumble. If we go ahead of God without him teaching us, leading us, and delivering us, we will stumble. This is really important for us to pause and think of what David is saying here, how important it is. And he says, God leads us. He leads us. God shows that he does not forsake his own. As long as he teaches and leads them, as long he does. So, it's implying here that as long as you're willing to be taught by him and to be led by him, he will not forsake you. He will never forsake you. Just continue on that path. Our safety is not in our cleverness, but in his leadership. We want to be taught by him. Amen.

Let's continue with verse 13-14. This is where we're going to close. Verse 13 and 14. I had fainted unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait on the Lord. Be of good courage and he shall strengthen thine heart. Wait, I say on the Lord. Here we see that God is the one that sustains us while we wait. So I mentioned this is another part of the sermon and that's why we wait. Why we wait? What is our attitude? Where are we supposed to be when we are waiting? You may ask. Well, he says David here says, "I had fainted unless I had believed." It starts with believing. Believing that God is wanting you to wait for a reason. Have you ever come to that place where you said, "I'm just going to believe. God wants me to wait. I'm just going to believe like David." You see, because David admits his weakness here in this way. David is saying, "What would have happened to me if God hadn't held me?" He's waiting for God to hold him. In a way, he's saying, "God, I need your strength to get me to the next part of my life. Whatever that is that I need to be taught and led and delivered from, I need you, Father, to carry me through this. I'm willing to wait until you teach me and do all the things that's necessary for you to clear up that path for me because if I go I will fall and the enemies will watch." And so he says he would not have fainted rather he would have fainted if he didn't. He would have fallen and he would have failed. And so that was in his mind. And unless God gave him faith, he would not be enabled to believe. So he was able to believe because he knew who God was. All this is building up to this part of this text. You see that? All these passages that we just read over all the parts that he's shared spending time with God knowing his character seeing his character in his life all of this was developing to this part in his life or rather in the text where it encourage it comes to one word I believe you I believe you I believe you what you say I believe what you have done in my life I believe you. And then he's essentially he says these words. I love it. He says to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. That's what he's believing in. That's what he is believing in. So, are you seeing right now anything bad in your life? Well, if that's not good enough, wait till it's good. Wait till it's good. That's what we're waiting for. Or waiting for that thing, whatever you're going through, to wait to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. That literally means what is going on right here on this planet, on this earth, where we are sitting, wherever we're going, we want to see the goodness of the Lord. Of the Lord. And so David ends with a double exhortation after this. Says, "Wait on the

Lord. Wait on the Lord. Be of good courage and he shall strengthen thine heart. Wait, I say on the Lord." Every time you see in the Hebrew repetition, it's like an exclamation point. It's like, this is really important. I want to remind you, wait, wait until he strengthens thine heart to see every bad situation that you might be conceiving of and you see that it's good. That's when you are strong. That's when you have courage that you see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. That is the key to what David wants us to believe in while waiting. See, waiting is never passive. Waiting is not human endurance. Waiting is not self discipline. Waiting is God strengthening the heart. Waiting is God sustaining the soul. Waiting is God keeping his people.

I'm going to end here with a quote from Spurgeon. Spurgeon said this, "Faith is a sovereign cordial. A cordial is a medicine given to the weak. We do not create the medicine. We receive it. God provides the vision of his goodness that keeps us from fainting." That's so good, isn't it? He gives us the good medicine for our souls to not faint but to believe in the God of the living and to see the goodness of God that comes of the Lord. So God is enough. Amen. God is enough. Psalm 27 is speaking not about David's courage. Many people misinterpret it that way. It is not about David's devotion even though it is there. It is not about David's strength even though it's there but it is first and foremost about God's character. You can trust him. You can trust his word and you can trust his character because God's presence is available. God's protection is available. God's invitation to be with him is available. God is ready to deliver. God's goodness is available and God's faithfulness endures forever. This psalm teaches us so much. May his words, David's words, lead you from wherever you are that you need to be delivered from by what he has taught us here in the text. And by doing so, the darkness that surrounds you, God is your light. When danger threatens, God is your salvation. When weakness overwhelms, God is your strength. When enemies rise, God is our defender. When loneliness strikes, God takes us up. When confusion comes, God teaches and leads. When waiting feels long, God strengthens the heart. What is the next step? You may ask. Your next step is to wait on the Lord to cease your striving and allow him to strengthen your heart. Let him be the light. Let him be the salvation. Let him do the work in your life. And as David says, and I'll repeat it here as we close. The Lord is my light and my salvation. Whom shall I fear?

Let us pray. Father, we thank you for this instruction so clear that was once taught to David that led him out of many things that could have been his own fault. God, you delivered him. You made the path plain and straight. God, you were the one that mattered the most to him. But, Father, it started with you. You said, "Lord, seek my face." And then it was David that just said what you wanted him to say, to seek your face. I pray, Father, that we would do that even now, Lord. Grace us with your presence. God, you must come first. We must wait upon you. Before we ever react to anything, we must respond to you and to you alone. Father, I pray that you would grant to us this kind of presence within all of us here this evening. And as we do, Lord, we will be strengthened and we will be able to believe that there is goodness in the land of the living. Even now, Lord, I pray blessed this end in Jesus name. Amen.