

Call To Worship.

Psalm 27:14

Hymn 1. 10,000 reasons

Hymn 2. There is a Fountain

Doctrinal Teaching.

Isaiah 40:31 (Waiting on the Lord)

Hymn 3. Turn your eyes upon Jesus

Hymn 4. His Mercy is more

Hymn 5. Psalm 90

Offering Prayer.

Pastoral Prayer.

Sermon Text.

Psalm 13|How Long, Lord?

"How long, O LORD? Will you forget me forever?

How long will You hide Your face from me?

How long shall I take counsel in my soul,

Having sorrow in my heart all the day?

How long will my enemy be exalted over me?

Consider and answer me, O LORD my God; Enlighten my eyes, or I will sleep the sleep of death, and my enemy will say, 'I have overcome him,' And my adversaries will rejoice when I am shaken.

But I have trusted in Your lovingkindness; My heart shall rejoice in Your salvation. I will sing to the LORD, because He has dealt bountifully with me."

Intro.

Fatigue makes cowards of us all.

To be pressed down on every side. To see no end in sight. It makes a man doubt himself and doubt God.

Under the weight of adversity, who can measure up? Under the onslaught of adversaries, who can endure?

This 6 verse Psalm, a prayer, in itself, contains numerous truths that play out practically in our lives.

Like clock work, we look at our lives and ask; How Long?

How much longer, will I have to put up with this?

How much longer, will I have to endure this adversity?

How many more days will pass by and i have to endure these misfortunes?

Has God forgotten me? Have my prayers not reached Heaven?

It has been said before that the best gold must undergo the hottest fires.

The purest gold goes into the deepest and longest trials in order to remove its dross and prove itself.

‘Long sorrow seems to argue abounding corruption; for the gold which is long in the fire must have had much dross to be consumed’ The Treasury of David, Spurgeon

It is in our nature to complain about the events of our life and state ‘How Long’ ‘Oh, who Me?’ and miss the point that the situation was hand-selected for our own hand-crafting by God.

God did not forget you. God did not miss what was going on. God saw it all.

God saw the misfortune. God saw the injustice. God coordinated the calamity.

Is. 45:5-7 ‘I am the LORD, and there is no other; Besides Me there is no God. I will gird you, though you have not known Me; that men know from the rising to the setting of the sun that there is no one besides Me. I am the LORD, and there is no other, The One forming light and creating darkness, causing well-being and creating calamity; I am the LORD who does all these.’

Everything that happens to us in our life is a gift from God.

And just like the child, who did not want to get clothes for Christmas, the good parent, knows the child needs a new winter coat and a new pair of boots.

In like manner, the Good Lord, knows we need certain adversities to clothe us in humility. The Good Lord, knows we need certain pains to quite our arrogance.

The Good Lord, knows just how tight to lace the boots, and just our to tailor the coat to make use clothed in His grace and mercy.

And so the Good Lord is good to give us bad things circumstantially to bless us ultimately.

We can often perceive difficulties as a lack of God's presence or the absence of God, yet, for the Christian that couldn't be further from the truth.

Rom. 8:28 'all things work together for good for those who love the Lord'

Even what men will do for evil, God can still use for ultimate good.

'What man meant for evil, God meant for good' Gen. 50:20

The Good Lord is good to give us trials and adversity because He knows how to keep us in His will and salvation for our lives.

Body.

Now David's distress is most likely coming from a family member. It happens to be his father-in-law. A jealous, insecure, egomaniac. A maniacal monarch, King Saul.

The first commission king of Israel after the period of the Judges. And Saul swiftly turned to human wisdom and self-righteousness.

As David's ascendancy began, Saul degeneracy began.

When David had killed Goliath, his fame grew immensely. David grew to be a figure of national notoriety.

And as Proverbs 27:4 states 'wrath is cruel and anger is outrageous, but who can stand before jealousy'

Jealousy creates the most wicked of circumstances, especially with regard to family members.

The Psalm, flows from the internal, to the external, to the Eternal.
The Psalm flows from the sighing, to the supplication to the song.

David's analysis goes from inside, to outside, to upside.

And that's how it always goes.

If we look in we see sin, if we look out, we have doubt, but if we look up, we're a happy pup.

But this isn't unique to David; this is specific to all people.

We all become overly emotional. We all are prone to evaluate reality off of how we feel.
We all look out at the world and say the sky is falling.

But, if we are wise, we pass through the shortcomings and come to the Truth.

The truth that God loves you. The truth that His mercies are new every day.

The truth is that life is tough.

The truth is we don't like to endure difficulties, but the truth is they come.

The truth is people do things wrong to us. The truth is we don't like to see bad people succeed or seemingly get away with their wrong-doing.

Paul says, leave room for the wrath of the Lord.

Rom. 12:16-21 'do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly. Do not be wise in your own estimation. Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men.

If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men.

Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay" says the Lord.

But if your enemy is hungry, feed him, and if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap burning coals on his head. Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

The truth is, they won't get away with the things they have done, as a matter of fact, these adversaries are going to have to give an account to God for what they have done to His servant.

After a long process of sinful, self-destruction, Saul dies fighting against the Philistines, and all but one of his son's dies with him.

1 Sam. 31:2,9,12 'The Philistines overtook Saul and his sons; and the Philistines killed Jonathan and Abinadab and Malchi-shua the sons of Saul. The battle went heavily against Saul, and the archers hit him; and he was badly wounded by the archers. Then Saul said to his armor bearer, "Draw your sword and pierce me through with it, otherwise these uncircumcised will make sport of me" But his armor bearer would not, for he was greatly afraid. So Saul took his sword and fell on it.'...the Philistines came and cut off his head and stripped off his weapons, and sent them throughout the land of the Philistines, to carry the good news to the house of their idols and to the people....they took the body of Saul and burned it.'

BUT - later, David had their remains found, removed their remains from Jabesh and placed them in a family burial grounds.

When the Bible says that David was a man after God's own heart, he was exactly that.

David was an honorable man. David was a flawed man like any man, but David had integrity, he had compassion, and he had God's hand on his life.

David had a calling on his life.

As a leader of Israel, David was decisive and effective. He was highly capable. God had developed David through years of private training.

David had the heart of a Shepherd. David had the mind of a General. David had the tactical acumen of a battle-tested Soldier.

But more than this, David loved God. David's love and devotion to God drove his effective decision making.

Before Goliath, David said to the Israelite Army 'What will be done for the man who kills this Philistine and takes away the reproach from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should taunt the armies of the living God?' 1 Sam. 17:26

Yet, David's valor isn't met with encouragement, it is met with disdain.

David's own brother, Eliab, says 'Why have you come down? And with whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know your insolence and wickedness of your heart; for you have come down in order to see the battle.' 1 Sam. 17:28

David's own brother hated him for the calling upon his life. All David wanted to do was defend the honor of God and his nation, Israel.

David came to Saul and says 'Let no man's heart fail on account of him; your servant will go and fight with this Philistine.'

Saul said to David 'You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for you are but a youth while he has been a warrior from his youth.'

But David said to Saul, "Your servant was tending his father's sheep. When a lion or a bear came and took a lamb from the flock, I went out after him and attacked him, and rescued it from his mouth, and when he rose up against me, I seized him by his beard and struck him and killed him. Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; and this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, since he has taunted the armies of the living God."

And David said "The LORD who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine." 1 Sam. 17:37

David always saw himself as a servant of God. Whether as a Shepherd or a King, David served God's will.

It didn't matter to David the task, it matter who was the master of the task.

It didn't matter to David of being in the lime-light, it matter if he was walking in the Light.

David's desire was to be in union with God and to live in the overflow of God's love.

'My cup runneth over' is what David says in Psalm 23.

Exposition.

V. 1-2 'How long, O LORD? Will You forget me forever? How long will You hide Your face from me? How long shall I take counsel in my soul, Having sorrow in my heart all the day? How long will my enemy be exalted over me?'

How long?

That's the premier question. - How long is this going to last? How long am I going to have to put up with this?

How long am I going to be sick?

How long am I going to have to deal with these neighbors, and co-workers, and family members?

How long am I going to have too much month at the end of the money?

How long is this going to go on?

With God Time is relative and Truth is absolute.

Time is relative to God because **God is Eternal**. With God 'one day is as if 1000' as Peter says.

Whether it is a minute or 10,000 years it makes no difference the duration to the Divine Creator.

But what does matter is the Truth. The entire world orbits by Divine Truths by which God has created everything.

The whole earth sings His praise; and whether they sing 4 songs and a chorus on Sunday or a 4000 year Hallelujah chorus in Heaven that amount of time is relative to God.

God is patience. His patience

Let me ask this; Does it matter? Does it even matter how long it's going to go on?

If I say a day, will you endure?

If I say a week, is that tenable?

If I say a year, will you bear up under the adversity for one more year?

What about this; What if I said, it's never going away! That's how long.

What if I said this; this is how long - however, long it takes you to learn the lesson that God is teaching you through the adversity. That's how long?

“How long, O LORD?”

It's like the child on the long car ride; Are we there yet? How much long?

It's like the child in the drive-thru, 'Oh this is taking for ages!'

How often is our patience like a toddler?

David's acknowledgement of time was often on a much more extended scale than our own.

Prepared during waiting.

Noah waited 100 years for the promise of rain and deliverance.

Abraham waited 90 years for the promise of a son.

Jacob waited 7 years for his wife and endured an additional time delay do to Laban's deception.

Joseph waited years in slavery and indentured servitude. Joesph waited in a dungeon.

All the while during this period of waiting, God was preparing them. Q: Don't ask how long, ask what God is doing during this period of waiting.

Will You forget me forever?

Really? God forget! No. God has not forgotten you. God is fully aware. God is fully cognizant of your circumstances.

However, our flesh often causes us, in our circumstances, to draw conclusions that are false.

If the man, David, who was delivered from the lion and the bear, can forget the attributes of God.

If the man, David, who killed the Uncircumcised Philistine, through the Mighty hand of God, can forgot who God is.

If the man, David, who killed 10,000's of God's enemies can forget the power of God....

Then how much do we need to be regularly reminded of the Attributes of God.

God has not forgotten. It is impossible for God to forget.

God is not unaware. God is fully aware.

Of course, God, who is Omniscient, cannot forget, cannot learn. God is already All-knowing.

But further, God only does things to His children that are expressions of His lovingkindness to them. God cannot and does not forget His children.

John 6:37 'All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out.'

John 6:39 'This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day.'

John 10:28 'I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of my hand'

John 18:9 'Of those whom You have given Me I lost not one.'

Will you forget me forever? Jesus hasn't forgotten you at all.

How long will You hide Your face from me? David says.

Does it seem like you have 'lost the presence of God'? Friends, that is a perception. It is impossible to lose the presence of God.

You cannot go anywhere, and evade the presence of God. What is the Psalmist talking about here?

David is experiencing the agony of an absence of God's grace in His life. This is what life is like without the perceived Grace of God.

Without the grace of God in our life, life is Miserable! Without the Grace of God in our life, Life is intolerable.

Without the acknowledgement of God's grace we fall into anxieties that cause anguish and depressions that cause doubt.

Living Corem Deo. In the Face of God.

Jesus Christ does not lose any of His sheep.

V. 2 'How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart all the day? How long will my enemy be exalted over me?'

For starters, don't take counsel in your own soul.

That's where most problems arise.

Most people, get themselves in trouble when they begin taking up their own counsel in their own soul.

V. 3-4 'Consider and answer me, O LORD my God; light up my eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death, lest my enemy say, "I have prevailed over him," lest my foes rejoice because I am shaken.'

O LORD my God.

A very similar expression to what Mary Magdalene said to Christ at the resurrection. A very similar expression to what Thomas said to Jesus when he saw the evidence of His resurrection.

Consider and answer me.

It is so often and so easy for us to look at our life and our present circumstances and evaluate those things in light of our perspective.

But we must be wise and know that God has considered us. God will answer us.

God is faithful to see us.

God is faithful to answer our prayers.

'This is the confidence that we have, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us'

1 John 5:14

'Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God; and whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do the things that are pleasing to His sight' 1 John 3:21-22

'Now, little children, abide in Him, so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming' 1 John 2:28

'The desire of the righteous will be granted' Pro. 10:24

The Psalmists confidence is shaken, but it only takes him 4 verses to get out of it.

Where does David return and place His confidence.

David places his confidence in the steadfast love of God.

David had forgotten in the present, but he remembers from the past, that God has always shown His love to him, and that will sustain him into the future.

V. 5-6 'But I have trusted in your steadfast love; my heart shall rejoice in your salvation. I will sing to the LORD, because he has dealt bountifully with me.'

This steadfast love is called in the Hebrew, chesed.

It is an enduring and active love of God to His people.

It is an unbreakable bond of love from God.

It is a promised love of God.

It is the love of God that delivered David from the hand of the lion and the bear.

It is the love of God that was planted in his heart, that resulted in his own faithful love toward his sheep as a Shepherd.

It is the love of God that inspired his own confidence to stand against the giant, Goliath and fight him.

It was this loving kindness that has been planted into David's heart, by God, that has inspired all goodness in his life.

It was this loving kindness of God that caused David to overcome.

It was this loving kindness of God that caused David to see past present trials.

It was this loving kindness of God that caused David to express loving kindness to others.

Older man to younger pastor.

There once was an Older man that told a Younger Pastor 'Pastor your sermon so greatly reminded me of the Love of God!' the young Pastor said 'Oh why is that' - the Older man said, 'because it seemed to just go on without end.' LOL.

The Lovingkindness of God.

Now I'm not talking here, nor is the Psalmist talking about the love of mankind for mankind. The Psalmist, David, is not even talking about his love for God.

How often do we come to church or hear Christian teaching about our obligation to love one another. Or our obligation to love God. BUT that is not what this Psalm is talking about.

This is talking about the confidence that we have because God loves us!

Deut. 7:7 'the LORD did not set His love upon you, nor choose you, because you were more in number than any other people; for you were the fewest of all people; but because the LORD loved you, and He will love you and bless you, and multiply you'

Why would you do this for me? Why would you bless me? Why would you increase me?

David says to God in prayer, when God makes a covenant with him,

2 Sam. 7:18-20 'King David went in and sat before the LORD and said, 'Who am I, O LORD GOD, and what is my house, that you have brought me this far? And yet this was a small thing in your eyes, O LORD GOD.'

Q: Do you know that God loves you? Do you know that God is watching you and caring for you?

Do you know that God intends to do good to you?

1 John 4:8 'God is love'

1 John 3:10 'By this the children of god and the children of the devil are obvious; anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother'

1 John 4:7 'Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God'

1 John 4:16 'We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.'

What a great reminder.

Application.

The Boy and His Father.

Once there was a Young boy. A studious young man. Focused. Hard working. Loyal. A good young boy.

That young boy got in in his mind that he was going to take on a challenge. And he told his Father 'Dad, I'm going to take on this challenge if it's alright you.' The Father, said what is it that you want to do?

Dad, I want to move that huge builder right there. And I know it is big, but if I put all my energy into it, I believe that I can move that enormous rock.

That Dad said, ok, do you mind if I watch.

The boy said, I'd be happy for you to watch.

So the boy went over to the boulder. He pushed. He pried. He grunted. He groaned. He gave that boulder everything he had.

He took a break and came back to his Dad and said. Whew, I don't know if I can do this.

The Dad said, are you using all of your strength?

The boy said, yes dad I'm doing everything I can.

Are you sure, that you are doing everything you can?

Yes Dad. I don't have an ounce of strength left in me.

The Dad, looked at the boy and said, 'so you are confident that you have exhausted all of your strength?'

The boy said Yes Dad!

The Father said, 'Son, come with me.'

They both walked to the boulder and stood in front of it.

The Father said, brace yourself, get your feet planted, put your hands back in the position that they were in.

The Dad said start pushing again.

Then the Dad, braced His feet, and placed his hands on the outside of the boys, and with relative ease the boulder rolled right away!

The boy looked at the Dad with the biggest smile and said 'We did it!'

The Father looked at the Son and said, 'don't ever forget that all the strength I have is yours as well!'

Friends, we've never exhausted all our resources if we have placed our confidence in God's resources.

Don't ask 'How long' - Ask God for help! Ask God for strength! Ask God for patience! Ask God for mercy! Ask God for grace! Has God for His love!

But there's no use in asking God how long.

Conclusion.

God's love is given to us in Christ.

'For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son' - the extent to which God loves us is seen in the sacrifice that He made for us.

The extent of God's love is seen in His kindness to us that is seen in our life daily.

Pastoral Prayer.

Hymn 6. Seek Ye First.

Benediction.

Psalm 130:5-6

Closing Prayer.

Small Group Questions.

1. How often do we struggle with waiting on the Lord? Asking 'how long'?
2. What helps us in the midst of waiting on the Lord during trials? Notice David re-focused on the loving kindness of God.
3. How can we encourage each other through trials and facing adversaries?
4. Why does God allow us to have trials and adversaries? What is the purpose of all this trouble?
5. How can we pray for God's loving kindness in each of our lives?