



**Looking for and Resting in God  
Praying for and Resting in the Protection of the Lord  
Psalm 61 & 62**

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Psalm 61:title–8

“For the music director; on a stringed instrument. A Psalm of David. Hear my cry, God; Give Your attention to my prayer. **From the end of the earth I call to You when my heart is faint; Lead me to the rock that is higher than I. For You have been a refuge for me, A tower of strength against the enemy. Let me dwell in Your tent forever; Let me take refuge in the shelter of Your wings.** Selah For You have heard my vows, God; You have given me the inheritance of those who fear Your name. You will prolong



the king's life; His years will be like generations. He will sit enthroned before God forever; Appoint faithfulness and truth that they may watch over him. So I will sing praise to Your name forever, That I may pay my vows day by day." (NASB 2020)

We are not told the circumstances behind this psalm. You could make an argument that it was written while on the run from Saul and you could also say the same about David being on the run from Absalom. That would all be a guess as the text provides no hint for us.

This short psalm is meant to be sung and was written while David was far from where he wanted to be, the physical presence of the Lord as seen in the Tabernacle. Thinking like a Jew of his time, there is this idea of cosmic geography and certain lands belonging to God and once you leave that land, it belongs to someone else. This is a world view that would have come from the Torah.

Deuteronomy 32:8–9

**"When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance, when he divided mankind, he fixed the borders of the peoples according to the number of the sons of God. But the LORD's portion is his people, Jacob his allotted heritage."** (ESV)

The Old Testament therefore describes a world where cosmic-geographical lines have been drawn. Israel was holy ground because it was Yahweh's "inheritance," in the language of Deuteronomy 32:8–9. The territory of other nations belonged to other elohim because Yahweh had decreed it. (Heiser 2015, 116)

When David fled from Saul as well as Absalom, and he also experienced this in some of his combat operations as well, he wound up leaving the land of Israel. This would indeed come up at a point in time while still on the run from Saul. After coming upon the camp site and sneaking into it, finding everyone asleep, David takes Saul's spear and his water jug then leaves the camp. After successfully leaving unobserved, David, once safe, calls out to Abner and to Saul.

1 Samuel 26:17–20

"Saul recognized David's voice and said, "Is this your voice, my son David?" And David said, "It is my voice, my lord, O king." And he said, "Why does my lord pursue after his servant? For what have I done? What evil is on my hands? Now therefore let my lord the king hear the words of his servant. **If it is the LORD who has stirred you up against me, may he accept an offering, but if it is men, may they be cursed before the LORD, for they have driven me out this day that I should have no share in the heritage of the LORD, saying, 'Go, serve other gods.'** Now therefore, let not my blood fall to the earth away from the presence of the LORD, for the king of Israel has come out to seek a single flea like one who hunts a partridge in the mountains." (ESV)

David was concerned over being forced to flee from the land of inheritance, the land that God had given to His people. He knows he can still worship the Lord from anywhere, but it is just not the same as doing so on the land which God gave to His people.

We see here, David, apparently outside of the borders of Israel, seeking the Lord. This means he is also outside of his comfort zone and around some folks he would prefer not to be around. He is not home and he is not in familiar surroundings. He is in stress, most likely involved in operations connected with escape or combat in one form or another.

When you and I find ourselves outside of our comfort zone, and that does not have to mean being in another city or county or state or nation, it could be right where you live but events are taking place to remove the comfort from you. This would be a psalm to turn to.



How do I know David is under stress? Hint, who does he ask to listen to him. We have seen David do this before.

Psalm 61:1–2

**“Hear my cry, God; Give Your attention to my prayer. From the end of the earth I call to You when my heart is faint; Lead me to the rock that is higher than I.”** (NASB 2020)

When we are praying and under stress of some type, it is indeed appropriate to ask the Lord to listen to our prayer. When we have those times where everything is going well, we pray, but when we are under a trial and the stress increases, we find ourselves doing just like David and asking Him to hear us.

And whatever it is that David is going through at the moment he is praying, he is not feeling too secure. That could be from Saul seeking him, Absalom doing the same or the uncertainty of military operations. Whatever is happening in his life, he needs and deeply desires to be protected. Who is this rock?

1 Corinthians 10:1–4

“For I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that our fathers were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. **For they were all drinking from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ.**” (NET 2nd ed.)

David is wanting to be led to the rock that is higher than he could ever think about being. The rock that is the Lord. David is praying this and seeking this based on past experience with the Lord.

Psalm 61:3

**“For You have been a refuge for me, A tower of strength against the enemy.”** (NASB 2020)

The faith we place in Jesus Christ to save us is not blind faith but faith in a person. He has demonstrated His trustworthiness to us more than we can ever even begin to comprehend. When we find ourselves reacting like David, asking the Lord to hear us, to provide us refuge we know he can do this. He has done it for others with David as a primary example, and He has also done it for us as well. As we grow in Christ, we arrive at the same place David was at. We know He is our refuge and He is the one who protects us from the enemy.

He provides us the armor to wear, the weapons to use, and the Holy Spirit to empower, enable and help us to know how it all fits together.

Proverbs 18:10

**“The name of the LORD is a strong tower; The righteous runs into it and is safe.”** (NASB 2020)

And His promises of protection extend to the time we live in, the end of the age. We know that Jesus will take us to be with Him and that we will not be subjected to the wrath of God.

1 Thessalonians 5:9

“For **God has not destined us for wrath**, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,” (ESV)

Isaiah 26:20–21

**“Come, my people, enter your chambers, and shut your doors behind you; hide yourselves for a little while until the fury has passed by.** For behold, the LORD is coming out from his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity, and the earth will disclose the blood shed on it, and will no more cover its slain.” (ESV)



Sometimes we have to wait for God to answer our prayers, but in this case David experiences God's spiritual help even as he prays. No sooner does he ask to be lifted up to the rock than he begins remembering the ways that God has helped him before. (Phillips 2019, 199)

Psalm 61:4

"Let me dwell in Your tent forever; Let me take refuge in the shelter of Your wings. Selah" (NASB 2020)

David not only wants a safe place, but he also wants it to be where he can have close communion with the Lord while being protected. This is indeed what he has promised to His church for the Tribulation, that we will be protected and be with Him. It is okay to long for the time where He comes to take us to be with Him.

Saying that, we also need to be just like David and continue to engage in what the Lord has him to do while still here. We want that ultimate protection, but it is based on His timing, not ours.

To dwell in His tent is to have fellowship with the Lord and for David, that would have been the Tabernacle. But for us, God Himself in the person of the Holy Spirit is in each of us. We have a much more secure relationship than David would have considered. He has made His home in each of us and wherever we go, is sacred ground because the same one who was in the Holy of Holies now dwells inside of each of us.

David then draws a picture of something he had seen before, that of a bird placing her wings over her young to protect them and to keep them comforted and warm.

When the young birds are like that, they can't see the danger of the storm or whatever their mother is protecting them from, their fears are gone. They are safe. "Likewise, as we draw near to God and direct our thoughts to him, the terrors of worldly dangers recede, and our hearts are brought to peace." (Phillips 2019, 201)

As followers of Jesus Christ, there are indeed going to be those times where we feel like we are a million miles away from the Lord.

Even if you feel as if you are at the end of the earth and He can barely hear you, rest assured, He does indeed hear you. David asked Him to listen and since he was confident in the Lord, he knew his prayers would be answered and he would indeed be lifted up to the Lord.

As we pray, unlike David, we now enter directly into the throne room, the barrier has been eliminated thanks to the work Jesus Christ did on the cross and the veil, the barrier between God and man, has been torn in two from top to bottom (Mark 15:38).

1 John 5:13–15

"These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God. **Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.**" (NKJV)

There were indeed times where David was not real clear as to what to pray for other than help and protect me Lord. There are those times we wind up in the same place. We also have the Spirit helping us.



Romans 8:26–28

**“Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God. And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.” (NKJV)**

As we pray, we can have the same confidence that David has the Lord hears us.

Psalm 61:5

**“For You have heard my vows, God; You have given me the inheritance of those who fear Your name.” (NASB 2020)**

God has heard his prayers. David is confident of that fact. He knows that those who follow the Lord have a specific inheritance, and he wants that for himself. “As one of “those who fear your name,” David is confident the benefits include God’s protection and safety.” (Platt, Mason and Shaddix 2020, 104)

Charles Spurgeon lays out for us where those of us who follow the Lord, wind up having.

Saints are described as fearing the name of God; they are reverent worshippers; they stand in awe of the Lord’s authority; they are afraid of offending him, they feel their own nothingness in the sight of the Infinite One. To share with such men, to be treated by God with the same favour as he metes out to them, is matter for endless thanksgiving. All the privileges of all the saints are also the privilege of each one. (Spurgeon n.d., 41)

Psalm 61:6–8

**“You will prolong the king’s life; His years will be like generations. He will sit enthroned before God forever; Appoint faithfulness and truth that they may watch over him. So I will sing praise to Your name forever, That I may pay my vows day by day.” (NASB 2020)**

David is very much aware of the promises made to him by the Lord. He may even, by the time he writes this, be aware of the promise to have a dynasty and the redeemer coming from his line. Whether he is fully aware of this or not at this point is not important. What is important is where his heart is. He refuses to sit on the throne over Israel unless he is also in the presence of the Lord.

As we do life today, we also can have the confidence that the Lord hears our prayers. Even those when we are under stress and are relying heavily on the Holy Spirit as we pray.

This is also teaching us something as well, that a relationship with the Lord is personal. As we grow to be more like Him, we discover that, just as David discovered, we do not want to do life without Him.

And like David, we too simply praise Him daily.

Psalm 62:title–12

**“For the music director; according to Jeduthun. A Psalm of David. My soul waits in silence for God alone; From Him comes my salvation. He alone is my rock and my salvation, My stronghold; I will not be greatly shaken. **How long will you attack a man, That you may murder him, all of you, Like a leaning wall, like a tottering fence? They have planned only to thrust him down from his high position; They delight in falsehood; They bless with their mouth, But inwardly they curse. Selah My soul, wait in silence for God alone, For my hope is from Him. He alone is my rock and my salvation, My refuge; I will not be shaken. My salvation and my glory rest on God; The rock of my strength, my refuge is in God. Trust in Him at all times, you people; Pour out your hearts before Him; God is a refuge for****



**us.** Selah People of low standing are only breath, and people of rank are a lie; In the balances they go up. Together they are lighter than breath. **Do not trust in oppression, And do not vainly rely on robbery; If wealth increases, do not set your heart on it. God has spoken once; Twice I have heard this: That power belongs to God; And faithfulness is Yours, Lord, For You reward a person according to his work.**” (NASB 2020)

Psalm 62 is the absolute natural follow on to what we just experienced in Psalm 61. In this psalm, we see the clear peace and confidence in the Lord that just cannot be shaken. David is relying on the Lord, and yes, bad stuff is happening around him, but in this psalm, there is not one single request, not one single petition he makes to the Lord.

What he is demonstrating for us here is the peace of the believer who knows beyond a doubt who they trust in and are relying on the Lord, filled with the Holy Spirit and doing life with the Lord. Perowne tells us what to expect in this psalm.

Scarcely anywhere do we find faith in God more nobly asserted, more victoriously triumphant; the vanity of man, of human strength and riches, more clearly confessed; courage in the midst of peril more calm and more unshaken, than in this Psalm, which is as forcible in its conception and its language, as it is remarkable for the vigorous and cheerful piety which it breathes. (Perowne 1883, 498)

We learn, along with David, and celebrate with him our security in the Lord.

Is David under attack? Yes, he is. Is he concerned? No, he is not. He is providing us a real time example of what Jesus talked about that faith in Him and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit would accomplish in our day-to-day life. Welcome to the peace that passes understanding.

John 14:25–27

“These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. But the Helper, **the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.**” (ESV)

Philippians 4:4–7

“Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice! Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand. **Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.**” (NKJV)

Leupold relates “There is scarcely another psalm that reveals such an absolute and undisturbed peace, in which confidence in God is so completely unshaken, and in which assurance is so strong that not even one single petition is voiced throughout the psalm. Men who were in distress have often longed that they might manifest a spirit of undismayed calm such as this writer possessed.” (Leupold 1959, 458)

Psalm 62:1–2

“My soul waits in silence for God alone; From Him comes my salvation. He alone is my rock and my salvation, My stronghold; I will not be greatly shaken.” (NASB 2020)

David has grown, when the events connected with this psalm took place, to the point where he now relies only on the Lord.



When I worked in management, there were always those around me who wanted me to react in a certain way to situations. They would want me to react the way they would react. But here is the thing, as a follower of Jesus, you and I do not have to react to situations in life like the world does.

Even as a pastor, there are those who want to provide me advice on how to do what the Lord has called me to do. I have been advised to cease doing all outreach and focus only on determining and fulfilling the needs of the community. But the community needs Jesus so I think we are there.

I have had others advise me to borrow money and incur debt in order to grow the church, yet it is not my church, it is the Lord's and He will grow it His way and at His speed. I have also been advised to hire a music leader and again, determine the needs of the local community and tailor the church to align with those.

All great advice and none of which is in the Bible. I have also been told, point blank, by another pastor that I used to respect, that unless I do what he tells me to do I will fail and do so quickly.

Here at Calvary Chapel, we trust the Lord and lean on Him for wisdom and guidance.

David did the same. His soul waited for God alone for He is the one who has saved Him. For David, others might say what he was going through was a huge defeat and he needed to be freaked out over it like anyone else would be, but he made a decision rely on the Lord as his rock. His advisors may be freaked out, but he is not.

That is what having peace in the Lord does, you're resting in Him while everyone else around you is in freakout mode. For David, this is reminiscent of what is taking place as he evacuates Jerusalem because of Absalom. He looks at those who are with him, and he see Zadok with the Ark of the Covenant.

2 Samuel 15:25–29

"Then the king said to Zadok, "Carry the ark of God back into the city. If I find favor in the eyes of the LORD, he will bring me back and let me see both it and his dwelling place. But if he says, 'I have no pleasure in you,' behold, here I am, let him do to me what seems good to him." The king also said to Zadok the priest, "Are you not a seer? Go back to the city in peace, with your two sons, Ahimaaz your son, and Jonathan the son of Abiathar. See, I will wait at the fords of the wilderness until word comes from you to inform me." So Zadok and Abiathar carried the ark of God back to Jerusalem, and they remained there." (ESV)

David is at peace with the Lord and with what is going on, he is not freaked out and unlike others who want him to bring the Ark, he says no. There are those who would say if you have the Ark then God must defend you. The reality, nope. Why would anyone even want to test the Lord that way?

We have those around us today who tell us we must pray in this formula or that otherwise God will not answer your prayer. If that were the case, then why would He give us the Holy Spirit to pray for us when we can't (Romans 8:26)?

What is the reality for David?

Psalm 62:3–4

"How long will you attack a man, That you may murder him, all of you, Like a leaning wall, like a tottering fence? They have planned only to thrust him down from his high position; They delight in falsehood; They bless with their mouth, But inwardly they curse. Selah" (NASB 2020)



David is at peace and now we see why everyone else is so seriously freaked out around him. In the world of business, there are those who for whatever reason, want your job and position and they will stop at nothing to try and get you fired. I didn't think that was the case until I had someone who had tried unsuccessfully for five years to try and do that to me actually tell me when they got cut loose from the company what they had been doing.

I have learned that if someone thinks that they can obtain an advantage over you or through you, then they will do whatever they can do to you in order to get there. We tend to define those actions as treachery.

David would as well as he encountered Ziba who lied about his master Mephibosheth in order to obtain land (2 Samuel 16:1-4). Saul had already taught him about treachery, so what Ahithophel did (2 Samuel 15:31) was not new.

The behavior that David discusses here is simply sinners doing what comes naturally.

I learned years ago that there is no value in complaining about some of the things that take place in the world and in our culture. It is the world just being the world. David is now seeing it as that.

But David is at peace and stops to reflect on the peace of the Lord versus the madness of the world. As he picks up again, he is no longer reflecting on the world, but is once again reflecting on who the Lord is and why he is at peace.

Psalm 62:5–6

**“My soul, wait in silence for God alone, For my hope is from Him. He alone is my rock and my salvation, My refuge; I will not be shaken.”** (NASB 2020)

David has not moved from the beginning of this psalm. He was confident in silence before, now, as he prays, he remains confident in the peace of the Lord. He is still waiting on the Lord. The same Lord who brings salvation in verse 1 is also the Lord who brings hope for those who are waiting on Him and trusting in Him.

When we are confronted with things that should freak us out, as we wait on the Lord and remain in His spirit, they don't.

We have hope in Him and we also have even more as David reflects.

Psalm 62:6–7

**“He alone is my rock and my salvation, My refuge; I will not be shaken. My salvation and my glory rest on God; The rock of my strength, my refuge is in God.”** (NASB 2020)

There are multiple things David goes over here that the Lord means to Him. This is why he can have peace and be resting in the Lord while everyone else is freaked out.

These are also those things that we can point to as well as we go through a trial or test of some kind. We have decided to wait on the Lord and as we do, we encounter the same.

He is:

- My hope, who can even possibly change that?
- My rock, who is higher than I so what can possibly upset me?
- My salvation x2, He is my all and all, He is the overcomer. No one can take that from him.



- My refuge, what weapon can even reach me if He is my refuge and strong tower, none would be the right answer.
- My glory, so who could even possibly shame me.
- My strength, He is strong when I am not, and He will never fail.

David's resolve shows what a difference it makes when a believer fixes his or her salvation on God alone. If we rely on money, a worldly reputation, high positions, or other earthly resources, then we can never have the peace of which David speaks. These things are often lost or taken away. But by committing all that we are and hope for into the care of God, the Christian enters into the peace of his perfect security. (Phillips 2019, 211)

Because God is his refuge, David knows He can be ours as well.

Psalm 62:8

“Trust in Him at all times, you people; Pour out your hearts before Him; God is a refuge for us. Selah” (NASB 2020)

When we have peace with God and we are able to rest in Him and wait on Him in full confidence, it does indeed impact others. I learned many years ago that we are always being watched, especially when we are going through a trial. Years ago, I pulled a muscle damaging the nerves to my leg and for a few weeks, I lost all feeling in my leg as well as being able to even move my leg. Weightlifting is loads of fun, but when you develop muscles to a certain point and then pull one, it has an impact.

I had to use a walker for pretty much three months and then a cane for another two or three months and it never really did get back to normal, but close enough. After I stopped using the cane, someone from church cornered me and said they had been watching me the entire time. He told me I never complained. I know I did, he just never heard it. I learned from that though, he wanted to know how he could have faith like that, I think I told him just pull a muscle and find you too have to rely on everyone else for a few months.

Here in verse 8, David has moved from encouraging himself, to encouraging others.

And yes, that is indeed a natural progression. As we rest in the Lord, we talk to ourselves and encourage ourselves in the Lord and rest in Him. As we continue on with Him, He then begins to use that as a means to reach others. What was your trial then becomes your ministry.

David tells us to pour out our heart to Him and hold back nothing. “Turn the vessel of your soul upside down in his secret presence, and let your inmost thoughts, desires, sorrows, and sins be poured out like water. Hide nothing from him, for you can hide nothing.” (Spurgeon n.d., 51)

Romans 8:31

“What then shall we say to these things? **If God is for us, who is against us?**” (NASB 2020)

If God is for us, then He is indeed our refuge. If He is for us, and He is our refuge, who could be against us and for those who would dare, can they even come close to prevailing against us if God is for us? It is not an “if” proposition. God is for us. That is a fact that David relishes in here in verse 8.

And since David is now encouraging others, he moves to instruction for those he is encouraging.



Psalm 62:9–10

**“People of low standing are only breath, and people of rank are a lie; In the balances they go up. Together they are lighter than breath.** Do not trust in oppression, And do not vainly rely on robbery; If wealth increases, do not set your heart on it.” (NASB 2020)

When David uses this term, he is speaking about most of the nation. Not everyone is a King, not everyone is in an administrative, military or governmental role. In fact, most are not. Today, we would call this the popularity of certain members of the crowd at a point in time.

For those who want to listen to the internet influencer, or the celebrity, or others who gain the attention of the culture, nothing is there.

You and I gain nothing by relying on the popular press, or the sayings of the culture at all. Their impact is fleeting at best; a breath is what David says.

So, instead, you turn to the experts, those who are learned and have standing in the culture as folks who know what they are talking about. Leaders. Here is what Spurgeon says.

We gain little by putting our trust in the aristocracy, they are not one whit better than the democracy; nay, they are even worse, for we expect something from them, but get nothing. May we not trust the élite? Surely reliance may be placed in the educated, the chivalrous, the intelligent? For this reason are they a lie; because they promise so much, and in the end, when relied upon, yield nothing but disappointment. How wretched is that poor man who puts his trust in princes. The more we rely upon God, the more shall we perceive the utter hollowness of every other confidence. (Spurgeon n.d., 52)

This is indeed the problem of our age today. We flit around from one thing to another as the culture can't decide on anything.

Meanwhile there are “experts” who try and draw our attention away to listen to them and what it is they are trying to sell. Whoever who can capture the ear of the culture for a few minutes then becomes a voice of the culture, no matter how wrong it is.

And what have we seen take place when the culture is not watching or being told to look over here rather than at truth? A little bit more of our freedom is taken away. Six years ago, we witnessed a blatant form, from our so-called experts and affirmed by the influencers, of oppression. Churches were closed, freedoms were curtailed and millions subjected to the job all in the name of what.

In retrospect, we now see it for what it was, government overreach, a test run of the coming rule and reign of the Beast, applied oppression under the guise of “good” government.

On top of that, those who stole our freedoms, came up with new scams to still our funds in the form of taxes or penalties. All in the name of “public safety.” David is clear.

Psalm 62:10

**“Do not trust in oppression, And do not vainly rely on robbery; If wealth increases, do not set your heart on it.”** (NASB 2020)

And this, money isn't everything. Solomon, who had everything, agreed.

Ecclesiastes 1:1–2

“The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem. **“Vanity of vanities,” says the Preacher; “Vanity of vanities, all is vanity.”**” (NKJV)



We have seen this all too recently in our culture. First, those in government rely on oppression and at the same time, take advantage of programs designed to alleviate the oppression they have imposed, thereby robbing the funds intended to ease the pain. Then, as their riches grow, they also grow in their arrogance and pride as they set their hearts on increasing their wealth even further through oppression and theft.

1 Timothy 6:9–10

“But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap, and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.” (NASB 2020)

David instructed those around him not to trust in extortion or robbery, both of which are an exertion of power over others to increase one’s wealth. He also instructed them not to make wealth the center of their lives should their wealth increase for any reason. (Futato 2009, 212)

Psalms 62:11–12

“God has spoken once; Twice I have heard this: That power belongs to God; And faithfulness is Yours, Lord, For You reward a person according to his work.” (NASB 2020)

We look to the Lord and trust Him completely, because He omnipotent. He is God and He can do anything. David was a King, but he knew he did not have the power that God had.

What is the one thing we see people all over the planet try and do? To acquire power over others. In the Greek this word is φιλοκρατία (philokratia) the love of power. Power belongs to God, but there are many today who have turned from that to wanting power themselves.

It is this love of power that has and continues to lead to all sorts of false teachings and heresies. What is more intoxicating than to have the power, in your mind, of a person's eternal destination.

Chrysostom said, ““Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold.” It is this that has been the occasion of all heresies. For those who do not love their brothers and sisters easily come to envy those in high repute. From envying, they have become eager for power, and from a love of power have introduced heresies.” (Gorday 2000, 133)

The author of Simony wanted power. Simon the Sorcerer is an individual we meet in the book of Acts. He is someone who is supposedly converted under the ministry of Philip, but when Peter shows up, we discover he was in it for the power and the money.

Acts 8:18–24

**“When Simon saw that the Spirit was given when the apostles laid their hands on people, he offered them money to buy this power. “Let me have this power, too,” he exclaimed, “so that when I lay my hands on people, they will receive the Holy Spirit!”** But Peter replied, “May your money be destroyed with you for thinking God’s gift can be bought! You can have no part in this, for your heart is not right with God. Repent of your wickedness and pray to the Lord. Perhaps he will forgive your evil thoughts, for I can see that you are full of bitter jealousy and are held captive by sin.” “Pray to the Lord for me,” Simon exclaimed, “that these terrible things you’ve said won’t happen to me!”” (NLT)

Prior to his alleged salvation, Simon had power and position and money. That all went away as the people who were coming to Christ realized he was a charlatan. So, he “converted.” Yes, the heresy of Simony comes from him.



Tim Perry tells us “Simon’s heresy was not so much the content of his teaching—though it was false—as it was his disposition. His portrayal in Acts is the embodiment of the false teacher in 2 Peter 2. He is greedy (2 Pet 2:3), bold and arrogant (2:10), and his teaching is proffered not as a claim upon truth but to part people from their money (2:15). The gospel, and indeed the Holy Spirit, were mere means to the end of Simon getting his audience and his comforts back. Simon’s tragic tale warns readers against the reduction of the gospel to a product, the elevation of the preacher to its pitchman, and the goal of evangelism to a full wallet and belly.” (Perry 2025, 37-38)

The nepotism we see taking place in some corners of the church these days, is not all what it seems. First of all, there are indeed those who are children of a man of God who are also called as well. But then there are those situations where the church becomes a vehicle to employ family members and make sure they are all gainfully employed on the back of the “gospel.” This comes from the middle ages application of Simony, “a powerful family would seek to increase its influence by placing key members in key ecclesiastical positions, greasing the proper palms all the way up the curial ladder.” (Perry 2025, 38)

When you see a church have family filling the majority of the paid staff roles, questions arise and one of the questions is that of Simony and the desire of the senior pastor to obtain and retain power, especially as they venture into the political realm either for approval or to grow their kingdom. Tim Perry continues. “Simony is the rendering unto Caesar what belongs to God in order to obtain or retain Caesar’s status and approval...Simony is but the beginning. Heresies, like demons, are never content to remain alone. Once churches surrender to the siren call of political power, their gospel becomes an eccentric hobby, a mere add-on to an otherwise happy life (gnosticism), their ethics to self-improvement (Arianism), their mission to social action (Pelagianism), and their self-righteousness obvious (Donatism).” (Perry 2025, 58-59)

As King, David indeed had the trappings of power and the temptations that go along with it, but he relates that twice he has heard “power belongs to God.” That is still the truth today as well no matter how many slick scam artists are out there performing “ministry.”

When God uses power, we can trust Him since He is not intoxicated by it, he is omnipotent as well as righteous, as such He will never misapply His power. “With humans as Lord Acton’s adage states, ‘power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely’ but with God his absolute power is exercised along with his faithful love to recompense (‘render’ or ‘repay’) everyone according to their works (see Deuteronomy 7:9–10; Proverbs 24:12; Matthew 16:27; 2 Timothy 4:14; Revelation 22:12).” (Eveson 2014-2015, 382)

Psalm 62:12

“And faithfulness is Yours, Lord, For **You reward a person according to his work.**” (NASB 2020)

Let’s pray.



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