

Psalm 27:1-4. "How to overcome when you are overwhelmed"

Vs 1 *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?*

Psalm 27 is about fear, worry and anxiety.

- Fear about circumstances, finances, concerns of the future, elections and state of our country, relationships, friendships, marriage, career, romance, family, children? Are you anxious, stressed, nervous?
- There's nothing wrong with a little anxiety or stress from time to time...but there is something wrong when its unbearable and debilitating.
- We think this is a new problem, but it really isn't. The Bible actually addresses it and gives us a vivid antidote to our anxiety. It teaches us how to overcome when overwhelmed.

David fights fear and anxiety and worry in three ways:

1. Seeking God's presence.
2. Gazing upon God's beauty.
3. Inquiring in God's temple.

Vs 4 *One thing have I asked of the LORD, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to inquire in his temple.*

1. Seek His presence.

4 *One thing have I asked of the LORD, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life...*

8 *You have said, "Seek my face." My heart says to you, "Your face, LORD, do I seek."*

- Seeking the Lord means seeking his presence.
- "Presence" is a common translation of the Hebrew word "face."
- To be before his face is to be in his presence.
- But aren't we always in His presence? "I thought God was omnipresent – everywhere?"
 - Yes and no
 - Yes, He is omnipresent – He is near and His power is ever-present in sustaining and governing all things.

- Yes, He is with His people in the sense of his covenant commitment to always stand by us and work for us and turn everything for our good. “Behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age” (Matthew 28:20).
- No, It’s why God’s word constantly tells us to seek Him and seek His presence. **Psalm 105:4 (ESV) 4 Seek the LORD and his strength; seek his presence continually!**
- We go through seasons of when we become neglectful of God and give him no thought and do not put trust in him and we find him “unmanifested”
- Our affections are for other things that we have placed center of our lives and their powerless inability to give us what only God can ultimately leads us to anxiety.

One way we become fearful is we seek his hand more than His face

- If you want to get dismayed with the Lord then just seek his hand (provision) only. That will do it.
- Joni Eareckson Tada says, "I always go by a 20% / 80% way of praying – 20% for physical stuff and 80% for increased faith, an embrace of Jesus and his promises, bright spirits, a singing heart, sure hope, the ability to endure, patience, concern for others in greater need, and thinking on things that are praiseworthy and true."
- When I get to a place of anxiety because I’ve sought his hand more than his face, I have to carve out time to be with him, confess my sin and anger at God, and ask for his mercy and His presence.

2. Gaze upon His beauty.

4 One thing have I asked of the LORD, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to inquire in his temple.

- Beauty means desirableness –
- “God’s beauty is that attribute of God whereby he is the sum of all desirable qualities,” Grudem.
- Gaze is from the Hebrew, chazah, which means to see, perceive, to contemplate with pleasure, look, behold. This idea of gazing or beholding requires more than a passing glance; it is purposeful contemplation of something so magnificent that you just can't take your eyes off of it.
- Gaze – to behold, feast your eyes upon, mesmerized by, caught up in,

- “You know what it means to gaze on the beauty of something. You turn it over in your imagination, the thing you want. It may be a career. It may be a house at the beach. It may be a particular person, and you think what life will be like if you get it.” Keller
- Everyone is gazing at something that they believe is desirable – its either Creator or creation.
 - Job and career, politics and country, family, money, security, personal looks, image, lifestyle – ideal life, relationships, sex, travel, etc.
- Notice – NONE of those things are bad things – I would venture to say most of them are good things.

• When the good things become the one thing, anxiety becomes a real thing.

- Anxiety is always the collapse of a false god we fixed our gaze upon – when the good thing becomes the One Thing and it seems to slip away, get crushed, die, collapse, diminish, we are anxious and overwhelmed.
- We all attempt to dwell in the presence of what we think will give us peace. We think we will find peace in those things... but we don't.
- ANYTHING but God is vulnerable BUT nothing can take God away from you... he won't slip away, get crushed, diminish, collapse or die. No matter what is happening to you or around you when you dwell in His presence, practice being in His presence, you can be fearless and at peace
- But anything else you set your heart on like this can be taken away. When there's a threat to it, you go to pieces.
- You can always follow your worries to those things which enslave you.

a. He is an infinite and all powerful God who holds all things together

"And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together." - Colossians 1:17

When you can't hold it together, He is.

We have an inherent desire for things to be held together so we can have peace and rest.

Gazing at idols gives us the opposite – turmoil and restlessness.

b. He is unchangeable

"I the Lord do not change. So you, the descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed." Malachi 3:6

In a world of constant change, God stays the same. This means He is dependable, His promises are the same, He is the same yesterday, today and forever.

c. He is wise – He Is Full of Perfect, Unchanging Wisdom

“Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways!” – Romans 11:33

God sees the end from the beginning, so there no guess work with Him. His wisdom sees everything in focus – including your whole life from beginning to end. That means all your sin past, present and future, yet He still died in your place so that you are forgiven.

d. He is good

“O, taste and see that the Lord is good” – Psalm 34:8

Tozer said, “By His nature He is inclined to bestow blessedness and He takes holy pleasure in the happiness of His people.”

This also means, no matter your plight, no matter what the enemy means for your demise, God turns it into good. *And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.* - **Romans 8:28**

e. His is just, merciful, kind, full of compassion, gracious, forgiving

These attributes of God are desirable for humans – we were designed for them, but our fleshly, sinful nature keeps swapping our gaze for good things rather than the one thing.

3. Inquire in His Temple

Vs 4 One thing have I asked of the LORD, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to inquire in his temple.

The word inquire means to meditate, to remember, to reflect.

David is a busy man – He’s leading a country and fighting battles
What is his temple?

a. Jesus as the Temple

John 2:18–19,21 (ESV) 18 *So the Jews said to him, “What sign do you show us for doing these things?” 19 Jesus answered them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” ...21 But he was speaking about the temple of his body.*

- What is it that made the temple holy? What made the temple, The Temple? The presence of God in that place! This Jesus is now where God dwells - Immanuel, God with us, the one in whom Paul says all the fullness of the deity dwells bodily.
- If David was able to gaze at the beauty of God through the tabernacle and the temple worship, how much more of the beauty of God will we see if we gaze at God through the face of Jesus?

b. The Local Church as the Temple

Ephesians 2:18–22 (ESV) **18** *For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. 19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, 20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, 21 in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. 22 In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.*

- Spurgeon called the local church the dearest place on earth – not because of how great the people are, not how good the music, preaching, and liturgies are – but because God’s plan for his dwelling presence is now the church –
- He in fact calls the church – the Body of Christ.
- If you are fearfully angry or anxious – you need to prioritize your engagement with your local church, the preaching, the people, the singing hymns to God and one another, communion, and liturgy.

Inquire – meditate, remember, mull over what Christ has done for you.

- The Bible is giving you an antidote to anxiety, but it’s not a patch. It’s not a Band-Aid. It’s regeneration. It’s a new heart, a new way of life, a new way of doing everything.
- Don’t let the good things be your one thing because those Legos will eventually collapse -infusing you with anxiety – Instead, trust the One God who is the best ONE thing – the sum of everything desirable, who will never slip away.

QUESTIONS FOR GROUPS:

- 1 Do you find yourself anxious or angry often?
- 2 What does it mean to seek God’s presence (to gaze upon his beauty, to inquire in the temple)?
- 3 Do you have some ways you can seek his presence? What are they?