

Focus on The Lord

These are indeed challenging days... Yet, Christians need to simply remember that there is no such thing as a *challenge* to God! He is never surprised. He never frets, or worries about what is going to happen next. He is bigger than any challenge we may ever face and we need to fix our focus upon Him...

In fact – our faith – is a focused faith! Our glance may be on our circumstances – but our focus is to be upon the Lord!

Psalm 62:1-2 (NASB)

¹ My soul *waits* in silence for God only;
From Him is my salvation.
² He only is my rock and my salvation,
My stronghold; I shall not be greatly shaken.

Psalm 62:5-8

⁵ My soul, wait in silence for God only,
For my hope is from Him.
⁶ He only is my rock and my salvation,
My stronghold; I shall not be shaken.
⁷ On God my salvation and my glory *rest*;
The rock of my strength, my refuge is in God.
⁸ Trust in Him at all times, O people;
Pour out your heart before Him;
God is a refuge for us.

The most basic characteristic of the psalms – is the expression of continual, complete and exclusive trust in God... And we see this element fully expressed in Psalm 62.

Psalm 62 – along with Psalms 4, 16, 27 and 131 – are Psalms of trust. Each one expresses the same firm hope in God's ability to help His faithful ones – to become what the Apostle Paul will say in –

Romans 8:37 (NKJV) “Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.”

Psalm 62 in some Bibles has at its heading: “God Alone a Refuge from Treachery and Oppression”.

This is a psalm written by King David when he was facing opposition and even attacks from enemies... Yet, in this psalm, we will see guiding principles that God has revealed through David that are to be applied in a child of God’s life – no matter the circumstances... In other words – these are not only principles to guide us when the world is opposing us – but even when the threat of the *Novel Coronavirus – Covid 19* is threatening, or attacking you...

Remember – whenever we are facing challenges that are bigger than us – we need to fix our gaze upon God!

The psalms are poetic in nature – but they are not to be treated as a mere source of entertainment literature. They are not for our amusement – they are for our encouragement! The psalms contain examples to follow, instruction to obey and warnings to avoid. They are filled with divine directives that we should heed.

In the selected verses of Psalm 62 that we are looking to today – we see:

1. A Declaration of Trust

David doesn’t use the term trust until verse 8 – but as he begins this psalm, he is describing for us exactly what *trust* looks like with a simple and calm statement.

:1a, :5a “My soul *waits* in silence for God only”

Notice that this is – and must be –

➤ A Personal Declaration

“My soul”

In other words – David had to declare what he was doing... You and I must declare a similar declaration... This is a declaration that no one else can make for you. Nor, even as much as you may desire it for someone else, this is a declaration you cannot make for another.

This declaration is –

➤ **A Peaceful Declaration**

The phrase “*waits in silence*” is a translation of a single term (דָוְמֵיָה dûwmîyâh / doo-me-yaw'). There are a few different facets to this term... It is a term that has the idea of “*silence, still, repose, or still waiting – waiting in stillness*”.

When it comes to this season of facing the challenge of “staying home” for a few weeks in an attempt to avoid this pandemic – each of us are facing it... And we must each decide how we are to face it... Will it be with anxiety – or will it be with *stillness*... Oh that the Lord will grant each of us the grace of a calm heart as we learn to wait upon Him...

At this point – we should ask – what do you do when you just can't be calm? Let me offer a few practical principles from God's Word:

- **Cast your care upon the Lord**

1 Pet. 5:7 (NKJV) “casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.”

1 Pet. 5:7 (NASB) “ casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.”

When it comes to this “casting” – be literal... “God – here it is!”...

For example when you are feeling discouraged, get still in prayer, and tell the Lord that you trust Him to move on your behalf. There is no required etiquette, or protocol here. Just be yourself and tell God all your burdens.

When we learn to do this – this is how we begin to experience “*rest*”.

- **Rest in the Lord**

Psalm 37:7a (NASB) “Rest (Be still) **in the Lord** and wait patiently (longingly) **for Him; Do not fret ...”**

You may say; “That’s easier said than done!”... But it doesn’t have to be so stressful – to rest!

We begin to “rest in the Lord” when we *lean on* Him... It is actually possible to enjoy life no matter what is going on around us.

Let’s face it – worrying is useless... Did you know that worry only causes more stress in the mind and body? Don’t wear yourself out by trying to control what you can not!

Worry is actually counterproductive. Worry has been described as one who is sitting in a rocking chair, frantically rocking all day, and only wearing yourself out and getting nowhere...

So – what’s the solution?... “Rest in the Lord” ...

Psalm 56:3 (NASB) “When [Lit *In the day*] **I am afraid, I will put my trust in You.”**

Alexander MacLaren (19th Baptist Pastor in England)— “Faith, which is trust, and fear are opposite poles. If a man has the one, he can scarcely have the other in vigorous operation. He that has his trust set upon God does not need to dread anything except the weakening or the paralyzing of that trust.”

And what if we still don’t know how to do that? What if you are experiencing what MacLaren called “the paralyzing of that trust”?... Then do the next thing –

- **Surrender Yourself to the Lord**

Resting in the Lord / Trusting in Him – involves giving up the ego and all pride – and even the desire of having your own way.

Surrendering ourselves to God – and to His will – is a surrender that will truly help us to rest.

Surrendering to God is actually the path toward spiritual maturity!... Spiritual maturity is not easily mastered – because maturity doesn't happen overnight. It's like getting in shape physically. You have to keep working a muscle in order for it to get stronger...

Don't beat yourself up and be upset when you find that you keep on failing in this area of life. It is all part of the process. Dying to self is a daily thing!

Jesus said –

Luke 9:23 (NASB) “And He was saying to them all, ‘If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me.’”

Paul learned this – as so can we –

Gal. 2:20 (NASB) “I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.”

Such surrender can be made when we are truly convinced that God has the best of plans – in all circumstances in His children's lives –

Rom. 8:28-29 (NASB)

²⁸ And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to *His* purpose. ²⁹ For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to *become* conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren;

Genuine surrender to God is simply a matter of laying it all out on the line.

Rick Warren wrote – “Father, if this problem, pain, sickness, or circumstance is needed to fulfill your purpose and glory in my life or in another's life, please don't take it away.”

Let's go back to our main text:

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⁸ Trust in Him at all times, O people;
Pour out your heart before Him;
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We have considered how this is a Declaration of Trust. Now consider how it is –

2. A Declaration of Truth :1-2, 5-7

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⁶ He only is my rock and my salvation,
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⁷ On God my salvation and my glory *rest*;
The rock of my strength, my refuge is in God.

Notice –

➤ **The Source of truth**

“God only”

David waits on God only – because God only – is the Source of all he needs! God only – is the Author of life... God only – is the source of truth – all truth God only – is the One you and I need!

Next consider –

➤ **The Truth of Salvation and Hope**

Notice how verses 5 and 6 are a repeat of verses 1 and 2 with this one exception: Verse 1 declares that our salvation comes from the Lord and verse 5 say our hope comes from Him.

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When it comes to the personal nutrition we need to receive from God’s Word today – this is the meat of the meal!

Salvation and Hope!

Salvation comes from the Lord – only!

Genuine Hope – which in the Bible is better understood as “assurance” – not mere “wishful thinking”... Hope comes from the Lord – only!

First consider how –

- **Salvation and Hope are personally applied**

:1 “my salvation” ... :5 “my hope”!

Next—

- **Salvation and Hope are Sovereignly given**

:1 “From Him is my salvation”

:5 “For my hope is from Him”

Psalm 3:8 (NASB) “Salvation belongs to the Lord;
Your blessing be upon Your people! Selah.”

Psalm 37:39 (NASB) “But the salvation of the righteous is from
the Lord; He is their strength in time of trouble.”

Jonah 2:9 (NASB) “But I will sacrifice to You with the voice of
thanksgiving. That which I have vowed I will pay. Salvation is from
the Lord.”

1 Peter 1:3-9 (NASB)

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ to *obtain* an inheritance *which is* imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, ⁵ who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. ⁶ In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, ⁷ so that the proof of your faith, *being* more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ; ⁸ and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, ⁹ obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls.

We see in our focal passage a Declaration of Trust, a Declaration of Truth – and finally – we must hear –

3. A Personal Appeal :8

⁸ Trust in Him at all times, O people;
Pour out your heart before Him;
God is a refuge for us.

Verse 8 is a turning point in the text. David has been expressing truth – declaring it. Now he is calling for application of that truth to our lives...

There is no where in God's Word where you will find a “believe-in-yourself – you-can-do-it” type of philosophy... That message is found all around us in this fallen world – and it is a lie!

You and I can not merely “stiffen the upper lip” (as the old-timers used to call it) – “grin and bear it” – or “pull ourselves up by our own bootstraps”... We can not overcome the challenges in life by focusing on ourselves!...

Focus on the Lord!

⁸ Trust in Him at all times, O people;
Pour out your heart before Him;
God is a refuge for us.

There is no salvation apart from Him. There is no sustaining grace for the Christian apart from Him!

A.W. Pink – “Just as the sinner's despair of any hope from himself is the first prerequisite of a sound conversion, so the loss of all confidence in himself is the first essential in the believer's growth in grace.”

Think deeply upon the last verse of our text:

⁸ Trust in Him at all times, O people;
Pour out your heart before Him;
God is a refuge for us.