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Having a God-centered View of Life; Psalm 11

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Introduction - psalms are songs of life, for life. The 150 psalms touch on every element of our human experience. Joy and trial. Youth and age. Dark and light. Unbelief and faith. At any given time in your life, if you read through the psalms you will find yourself. You will cry with the psalmist and you will rejoice with him. You will beg for mercy with the psalmist and you will declare the glory of God with him. These songs are about real life.

And they are for life! The psalms are meant to boost the faith of believers. To sing hope into hopelessness. To sing light into dark. To sing salvation into the soul of man. The psalms do not stop short at just describing our human condition; they are songs for Life! The beauty of the psalms is that they do not leave us where we are but they take us to God! The psalm will often begin with the state of man and end in the presence of God. That's what occurs in this psalm which addresses hopeless, frightening situations.

The main lesson for us today is to not leave God out of the equation!! If we face fearful circumstances with nothing more than the human perspective of man, the results can only be discouragement, depression, fear, withdrawal, and as we see here, flight, avoidance.

However we must pray and learn to train our faith to never forget the sovereign love and care of our Heavenly Father when facing fearful circumstances. God is always in control. God is always your Father if you are in Christ. God is always doing you good. God is always in the equation!!!! We don't have to give way to flight, depression, or fear. We can rather give way to faith in our sovereign good wise loving God and Father.

I. Man's Perspective when All Seems Lost (vv1-3)

A) The Context of Psalm 11.

1. There is considerable consensus that this psalm was written to describe the events taking place when Saul, king of Israel, was trying to kill David found in 1 Samuel 16-the first part of chapter 19.
2. Saul has failed to follow and please the Lord, and as a result, it's only a matter of time before he will lose the throne and he knows it.

3. He becomes acquainted with a brave, talented shepherd boy, David, who has secretly been anointed as the next king of Israel. Saul meets David when he slays Goliath. Saul enlists the service of David, not as a military captain but rather because of David's ability with the harp to soothe Saul's frantic, anxious, miserable spirit.
4. It doesn't take long however before Saul notices that David is more than a giant slayer and harp player. Saul begins to realize this brave, talented young man is highly favored. He has the blessing of God and the blessing of the people. Why he might even think to become king! And as the people's love for David grows, Saul's hatred for David grows, and its not long until he means to kill him.
5. David's first clue that Saul meant to do him harm came when Saul launches his spear at David while he was playing his harp! Now, the first time that happens one might think, "Boy, the king must really be having a bad day, or he really didn't like that last song." But when it happens again, one begins to think, "He might be trying to kill me!"
 - a. David must flee because he has been targeted. He's a marked man. His enemy is ready and will take the first available shot. He must Run! There is no recourse for him. The foundations are destroyed. The system is corrupt. There is nothing the righteous can do. He must run for his life!
 - b. Times of Fear in Our Lives.
 1. We may not have a king after us, hurling spears at us, but we do have situations arise in our lives that render us hopeless, that give rise to fear, that call on us to run, to escape, to avoid, to withdraw.
 2. As our culture grows intolerant of God's truth, many of us will be tempted to be silent, to avoid hard conversations, to withdraw from society, to create distance between ourselves and those standing for truth. As the media, academia, political, governmental, and even segments of the religious world begin to align themselves more against the Gospel of Christ, it would appear that the foundations are destroyed and there is nothing more the righteous can do but to flee. But that perception is merely perception; it's not true!
 3. Our outlook begins to appear hopeless and fear begins to arise in our hearts when our faith is challenged, when our job is on the line, when relationships are threatened, when truth is being trampled, our flesh counsels us, our friends counsel us to be quiet, to flee, to avoid. Don't speak up. Don't stand up, lest you become a target.
 4. There are other circumstances in our lives that cause fear and counsel us to flee. If we view life solely from our human perspective

then there is truly nothing that can be done and our best and only option is to flee. But man's view is not the only view!

II. God's Perspective when All Seems Lost (v4)

- A) God's perspective is much different than that of man. Man's perspective is limited by time, convoluted by emotion, distorted by the hypothetical, and restricted to his own experience and wisdom. God's perspective has no such boundaries. He knows the beginning, the end, everything in between. Anything that can be known, is known by Him. He not only is aware of all true reality, He ordains it. He orchestrates it and guides it to fulfill His own purposes. From God's Perspective, nothing is ever lost!
- B) Look at the first part of v4. He is in his holy temple-that speaks to His unalterable, untouchable nature. We might be threatened by foes or circumstances, but God is never threatened. His throne is in the heavens-this means that He rules over us, above us. This speaks to the sovereign omnipotence of God. He is never moved, nor is He ever shaken. He is never upset, nor is He ever fearful.
- C) Then the verse addresses His sovereign omniscience-by describing his all-seeing, all-observing eyes.
1. He sees-He sees it all. We see only today, He sees tomorrow. We see ourselves in light of the strength of our enemy; God sees our enemy in light of His strength. We see only the immediate; God sees the outcome. From David's perspective and that of his friends, he was going to die by Saul's spear. From God's perspective, Saul was going to die by his own sword. No matter how frightening or fearful our circumstances may appear to be, we can take great comfort and rest in knowing that we do not see it all, but our loving, sovereign God and Father does!!
 2. His eyelids test the children of man-you know when you carefully observe something, you kind of squint your eye, you kind of strain your eye-that's the picture here of how God looks upon us. He carefully observes us with a very keen eye. He searches. He scrutinizes. He sees and knows every single thing about us, right down to the hidden motives and intentions of our hearts. Nothing about us goes overlooked or unnoticed by God. He sees. Now we can take much comfort in the all-seeing eye of God because while we can only assume the intention of others, he knows it absolutely.
 3. The point here is that man's perspective is inherently skewed and God's perspective is inherently true. Therefore, we can trust God in times of fear, and He has a word for us as well.

III. A Word for the Wicked and the Righteous (vv5-7)

A) A Word to the Wicked.

1. God's plan will prevail and your plans will fail. What is happening here would appear to be that Saul is going to overpower David and retain his throne even against the will of God and God's purposes for David. That's the way things seem to appear - but that's not the reality at all. It's simply a test for David, but it will prove to be judgement for Saul. We must stand upon this truth in our hour of temptation and fear. The way things appear to us is not the way they appear to God. And He has the final say, not the enemy!

a. v5 says that God's soul hates the wicked. Does God love the world? Yes! Does He hate the wicked? Yes! And He's not schizophrenic or psychotic. The hatred in v5 is meant to highlight the vast difference between it and the love of v7. Wickedness, evil, sin arouses the wrath of the holy, just God who is over all. Good deeds prompted and pursued by faith in God stir within Him His eternal delight in His own glory. He delights in His works of grace displayed in our lives!

2. You will not get by with your rebellion against God and your harm of His people (v6). The wicked are arrogantly deceived into thinking that they are autonomous enough to set their own agenda, their own course, and their own end.

3. What do we do with that? First, we examine our faith to not be numbered among the wicked. Second, we warn the wicked of the coming judgement. Third, standing in the truth of God's sovereign kingship, we will not be shaken or filled with fear of the unknown or the assumed.

B) A Word to the Righteous.

1. God tests His people for their good. He's not absent. He's at work....for your good (v5)! Even when the days grow so dark that it would appear as if God is against you, if you are in Christ, He is actually working for you through the dark! Why does God put us through the strain and struggle of tests? How are these for our good? First, the test of faith will strengthen your faith. A faith untested is weak. Second, the test of faith will increase your dependence upon God. Third, the test of faith will increase your delight and joy in God.

2. God infinitely loves His people (v7). When God sees His work reflected back to Him in His people, He takes great delight in His work and in His people. This word will surely ground us in our moment of trial-when life calls for a faithless reaction, let us cling to God to react in faith and not fear.

Knowing that while the world and the enemy would love to see us dwindle down on fear; God loves to see us rise in faith toward Him!

3. There is no greater description of the joy and thrill of our eternal state in Christ than this - the upright shall behold His face! That is salvation. Rev 22:4. This is what is known as the beautiful vision. To see Him is life, life overflowing, life abundant, life everlasting. This is the joy of heaven. This is what we were created to behold. This is what will move us to praise Him forevermore. This is what no eye has seen or has even entered into the heart of man all that God has in store for those who love Him - this is it! We will bask in His thrilling, infinite, glorious presence! These temporary, trying, fearful circumstances are not our end - God is our end! Take hold of what God has in store for you and that will sustain you. The grace and truth of Eternal glory will stabilize our soul in the horrifying trials of life.

Conclusion - now there would come a time for David to flee, but that was in God's plan as well, to prove His anointing of David by David's mercy upon Saul. Twice David could have killed Saul, and didn't. You see, it was God's plan.

The final word for us today is lean into God, cling to God in times of temptation and fear. He will strengthen you to stand firm or He will provide a means for you to escape. But we trust not in our feelings or assessment of the situation. We trust in His Word and we rely upon His Spirit.