

“Our Times are in God’s Hand’s”

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“My times are in thy hand; deliver me from the hand of my enemies, and from them that persecute me.”Ps.31:15
Being our fellowship Sunday, I decided to take a break from our studies on Revelation 3 and to speak on Psalm 31 this morning for our encouragement and edification. I would like to speak on “***Our Times are in God’s Hand’s.***” If you think that I enjoy preaching on sin, hell, death, repentance and so forth, you are sadly mistaken. I speak on these subjects because I must preach on the whole counsel of God and deal with these issues and because I must also be faithful to your souls.

This is one of those encouraging Psalms that soothes the soul as the child of God goes through difficulties, troubles and trials. It reminds us that God is in control and has not lost one bit of His Sovereignty. It teaches us that God is still in command of all things in our lives, though at times difficult to appropriate especially when going through adversity.

David is engaging in fervent prayer before the Lord His God. As he pours out his heart to God, he also opens it to us as we read this Psalm. It becomes very clear that he is going through a very strenuous and challenging time and his prayer is for the LORD not to fail him. His desire is to be delivered and vindicated even before the presence of his enemies.

Faith is Confidence: Confidence is Believing: Believing is Trusting: Trusting is Hope: Hope is Expectation: Expectation anticipates Mercy!

But as you read this Psalm you see more than a plea for help and deliverance. What we also see is that great confidence and conviction of David’s faith and trust in His God. We see David’s faith saturated and established in the living Hope he had. David has a great hope because he has great faith in a Great God.

Faith is set forth in the expectation of our hope. In other words our trusting God is done on the basis of our faith and hope. Remember Hebrews 11:1 says, “*Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*” Faith is the **substance** or **confidence**, yea **foundation** of things hope for, the **evidence** or **conviction** of things not seen. Faith and hope are the twin sisters that make up our confidence and conviction in our Christian walk. We see this so clearly in Psalm 31 as David exhibits his faith, hope, his belief, his expectation which is seen in his love for his God. This is not an in-depth study of Psalm 31, just an overview of this blessed Psalm. If you are going through a difficult time this morning, that is, a season of trials; may this Psalm help and encourage you.

There are 6 things I would like to share with you out of this Psalm:

I. David’s Confidence (1-6)

- II. David's Consideration (7 & 8)
- III. David's Concern (9-13)
- IV. David's Consistency (14-18)
- V. David's Confession (19-22)
- VI. David's Command (23 & 24)

The first thing we want to consider is, **I. DAVID'S CONFIDENCE** in verses 1-6. Here we see David's faith and trust. We see the certainty of his confidence in the 20 pronouns that he uses in verses 1-6. He uses such possessive language. He uses over and over I, MY, ME to authenticate and substantiate his assurance and confidence in God. Let's read these 6 verses. Spurgeon says, "*Let us therefore shun mistrust; doubt is death, trust alone is life. Let us make sure that we trust the Lord, and never take our trust on trust.*" David's confidence was in God and not in himself. This is where we fail and make our mistakes when we go through trials, we reason with our wisdom, our own understanding as the trial unfolds, we set our thoughts on what can I do? This is why in Psalm 46:10 we are instructed to "*Be still, and know that I am God...*" Because we don't know how to stand still, we complain, we murmur, we blame God, but what we need to do is be still. David never looked to himself he set his eyes and his faith in God, he boldly declares with such confidence, "***IN THEE, O LORD DO I PUT MY TRUST...***"

David is applying the principle set forth by the Apostle Paul in Phil.3:3, "*For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.*" Brethren let us have no confidence in the flesh, let us put our confidence in God. Eph.3:12, tells us, "*In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.*" Notice the warning of Jeremiah in Jer.17:5, "*Thus saith the LORD; cursed be the man that trusted in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD.*" Jeremiah gives good instruction, if you trust in yourself or another person your heart and faith departs from the Lord. In other words, instead of trusting and having confidence in the LORD you put confidence in your wisdom and strength and you depart from trusting and having confidence in God. Micah tells us, "*Trust ye not in a friend, put ye not confidence in a guide...*" Solomon reminds us, "*Confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble is like a broken tooth, and a foot out of joint*" in Prov. 25:19. He continues in Prov.3:25, "*For the LORD shall be thy confidence, and shall keep thy foot from being taken.*" David echoes in Ps. 118:8, "*It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man.*" The Apostle John faithfully assures us in 1 John 5:14, "*And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us.*" Proverbs 3:5 & 6, "*Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.*" David clearly exhibits these actions in his heart.

Notice the confidence in his God:

- (1). He is sensitive in seeking not to be a reproach to God, *“let me never be ashamed.”*
- (2). He believes God will hear him, *“bow down thine ear to me.”*
- (3). He expects deliverance, *“deliver me speedily.”*
- (4). He knows he has a solid foundation, *“be thou my strong rock.”* GIORASAVPHIT
- (5). He knows God will protect, *“for an house of defense to save me.”* (an house – not just momentary or transitory protection or shelter, David wanted a place to stay, to rest continually in God’s means of deliverance, i.e., David wanted to DWELL under God’s protection, he wanted to be in a place of safety)
- (6). Knowing his fortitude and fortress he seeks God’s guidance, *“For thou art my rock and my fortress; therefore for thy name’s sake lead me, and guide me”*
- (7). He confesses his strength is in God, *“Pull me out of the net that they have laid privily for me: for thou art my strength.”*
- (8). He commits himself (spirit and soul) into God’s hand, *“Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O LORD God of truth”* (Spurgeon says, *“These living words of David were our Lord’s dying words.”* How often we need to commit ourselves to Him. Notice how David uses the word hand in the aspect of a contrast. He speaks of God’s hand in verses 5 & 15 and his enemies hand in verse 8. David in glorious faith and confidence says his spirit is in God’s hand and his times are in God’s hand. Both the person and providence are in God’s hand. David and time are in God’s hand. This helps us to understand God overseeing us and our times in trials, {remember it’s IF NEED BE, in 1 Peter 1:6})
- (9). He re-emphasizes his faith and trust, *“I have hated them that regard lying vanities: but I trust in the LORD.”*

This great act of faith and confidence by David does not in anyway diminish the pain and agony of his trial. The pain and anxiety is still there but he is able to set his eyes upon God. What faith, what trust, what hope, what CONFIDENCE! Let’s learn from this seasoned saint of God.

II. DAVID’S CONSIDERATION in verses 7 & 8. The second thing we see is David’s consideration. Here we see David’s reflection as he expresses his thankfulness towards his God for mercies received. David gives a two-fold acknowledgement of God’s mercy. He says, *“I will BE GLAD and REJOICE in thy mercy...”* The more true Christianity is tried, the more it is found to be a hope of joy.

He was rejoicing in past mercies which encouraged the expectation of greater mercies to come. David says three things that set forth the hope of future expectation of deliverance:

(1). *“...for thou hast considered my trouble...”* David was mindful of God’s careful attention to his trouble. God considers the whole trial not just a part of it. He considers the beginning, the middle and the end of our trial. He is completely concerned and aware of our troubles. Even our Lord Jesus Christ knew what it meant to be troubled, in John 12:27 notice it says, *“Now is my soul trouble; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.”* David had confidence and assurance that God was considering his trouble. This is why he could say with such confidence in Ps.46:1, *“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.”* David knew that God took an interest in his troubles. So what ever trouble is ailing you now dear sister or brother, God is considering yours trouble or troubles! He is very aware of your situation. Look at the hope we have in God in 2 Chron.15:4, *“But when they in their trouble did turn unto the LORD God of Israel, and sought him, he was found of them.”* God does two things for us when in trouble, he hears us and he will defend us, Ps. 20:1, *“The LORD hear thee in the day of trouble; the name of the God of Jacob defend thee.”* Ps.27:5 also remind us, *“For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock.”*

(2). *“...thou hast known my soul in adversities.”* Not only does God consider our troubles but he also knows our adversities. Spurgeon reminds us, *“God owns his saints when others are ashamed to acknowledge them; he never refuses to know his friends. He thinks not the worst of them for their rags and tatters. He does not misjudge them and cast them off when their faces are lean with sickness, or their hearts heavy with despondency. Moreover, the Lord Jesus knows us in our pangs in a peculiar sense, by having a deep sympathy towards us in them all; when no others can enter into our griefs, from want of understanding them experimentally, Jesus dives into the lowest depths with us, comprehending the direst of our woes, because he has felt the same. Jesus is a physician who knows every case; nothing is new to him. When we are so bewildered as not to know our own state, he knows us altogether. He has known us and will know us.”* David by faith lays hold of God in the midst of his troubles and adversities, notice the blessing of Ex.3:7, *“And the LORD said, **I have surely seen** the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and **have heard their cry** by reason of their taskmasters; for **I know their sorrows.**”* Notice how God sees our afflictions, hears our cry and KNOWS our sorrows.

(3). Therefore by faith David says, *“And hast not shut me up into the hand of the enemy: thou hast set my feet in a large room.”* Spurgeon again says, *“To be shut up in one's hand is to be delivered over absolutely to his power; now, the believer is not in the hand of death or the devil, much less is he in the power of man. The enemy may get a temporary advantage over us, but we are like men in prison with the door open; God will not let us be shut up, he always provides a way of escape.”* Trials can

sometimes feel like a prison as though there is no way out, but David says in Ps.124:7 & 8, *“Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers: the snare is broken, and we are escaped. Our help is in the name of the LORD, who made heaven and earth.”* He has set our feet in a large room, that is, he gives us space when we go through trials, plenty of space and freedom for action, God has not cramped us or hindered us in any way, but given us a way of escape. (Not only David’s Confidence and Consideration but thirdly)

III. David’s Concern verses 9 - 13. The third thing we see is David’s concern as he goes through this particular trial. David continues his prayer by pleading for mercy. As he pleads mercy he also confesses some things.

(1). The first thing he confesses in this section is, *“Have mercy upon me, O LORD, for I am in trouble.* Earlier he had said, thou hast considered my trouble now he says, **FOR I AM IN TROUBLE.** He is hard pressed in his situation; he confesses what God already knows. Sometimes it’s good just to tell God, I am in trouble. Better to confess our troubles than to make excuses! Spurgeon says, *“Misery moves mercy—no more reasoning is needed.”* These words express the sore trouble he was in. He communicates the greatness of his trouble. He is distressed in both body and soul.

(2). The second thing he confesses here is, *“mine eye is consumed with grief, yea, my soul and my belly.”* His trial was so great that his weeping was just as great. His weeping was so massive that his eye was consumed or eaten away. When he says his soul and belly he is speaking about his inward and outward affects, his emotions inwardly and his physical appearance outwardly.

(3). The third thing he confesses is, *“For my life is spent with grief, and my years with sighing.”* The Psalmist’s grief is not something new. He has spent much time in grief. It might be that this was his daily activity to mourn. Have you ever wept where your weeping was every day for days? Spurgeon suggests, *“he spent all his days in the dungeon of distress.”* David says, *“mine eye is consumed with grief and my life is spent with grief,”* no question he is acquainted with grief. One of my favorite texts when I go through difficulties is in Hebrews 4:14-16, *“Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”* What Paul is saying is that, it’s not like we don’t have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, the double negative is used to emphasize that we have a glorious high priest who does sympathize with us. He knows what it means to be tempted in every way but without sin. He knows what it feels to be troubled and to have grief. Notice the words of Isaiah 53:3, *“He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief...”* He knows what it is to feel and experience grief. David continues, *“...and my years with sighing.”* The

word sighing here speaks of groaning and mourning, being sorrowful and vexed. Spurgeon says, *“Better spend our years in sighing than in sinning. The two members of the sentence before us convey the same idea; but there are no idle words in Scripture, the reduplication is the fitting expression of fervency and importunity.”*

(4). The fourth thing David says is *“my strength faileth because of mine iniquity, and my bones are consumed.”* Other things had cause in contributing to produce the awful depression he was in, but nothing was equal as this. It basically caused his strength to utterly fail. That which has caused some of his sorrow was his sins. Again Spurgeon says, *“Sinful morsels, though sweet in the mouth, turn out to be poison in the bowels: if we wantonly give a portion of our strength to sin, it will by and by take the remainder from us.”* Speaking about his bones being consumed means that he felt pain that gnawed at him and that he was weak physically. Ps. 51:8, *“Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice.”*

(5). Fifthly, David says, *“I was a reproach among all mine enemies, but especially among my neighbours, and a fear to mine acquaintance: they that did see me without fled from me.”* David felt that his character was blackened. He felt as though all his enemies made the most of this and it was a reproach to him, so much so that they avoided him.

(6). Sixthly, David says, *“I am forgotten as a dead man out of mind: I am like a broken vessel.”* I am disregarded or given up like one that is dead, out of sight out of mind. I’m like a broken vessel, of no value to any one only fit to be thrown away. Good for nothing which can be made of no use, no one cares if it is thrown away. You can sense and feel the depression of David.

(7). Seventh, David says, *“For I have heard the slander of many: fear was on every side: while they took counsel together against me, they devised to take away my life.”* The slander against him had reached his own ears and this so affected him that he felt as what is mentioned in verses 9 and following. Fear was everywhere it seemed as though every path was filled with danger. (David’s Confidence – D’s Consideration – D’s Concern – D’s Consistency)

IV. David’s Consistency verses 14-18. (This where I wanted to get to.) The fourth thing we see is David’s consistency, that is, his firmness, his steadfastness, his endurance, his firmed resolve to trust God even in the midst of a severe and intense trial. Verse 14 is the key to the whole chapter; this is the essence of faith and hope in trusting God in our circumstances and difficulties. I love the way David exerts such great faith in trusting God in the midst of a devastating trial, notice the language of faith: ***“BUT I TRUSTED IN THEE, O LORD...”*** Consider everything he has said up to this point, it seems to sound worse and worse and then, POW! ***“BUT I TRUSTED IN THEE, O LORD...”*** (He also used it at the end of verse 6) May I borrow our Lords own words in Luke 7:9, *“When Jesus heard these things, he marvelled at him, and turned him about, and said unto the people that followed him, I say unto you, I have not found*

so *great faith...*” Regardless of how terrible the trial was, David’s faith was greater, because he serves a GREAT GOD! David’s faith was greater than his trial. May God help us to emulate David as we go through our difficult times. *“But I trusted in thee, O LORD: I said, Thou are my God.”* Let’s hear from Spurgeon again, *“He proclaimed aloud his determined allegiance to Jehovah. He was no fair weather believer, he could hold to his faith in a sharp frost, and wrap it about him as a garment fitted to keep out all the ills of time.”* God to David was real, thou are MY GOD! *“How much it is more worth than ten thousand mines of gold, to be able to say, God is mine! God’s servant is apprehensive of it, and he seeth no defect, but this may be complete happiness to him, and therefore he delights in it, and comforts himself with it. David’s God was personal.”* John Stroughton. David is saying in all my sufferings, pains, tears, heartaches, I have always clung to you God. Thou and thou alone art my God and will always be. What was it that caused David’s faith to soar? What was it that sustained him in such hard times? What caused him to endure to persevere? Because he knew that everything was in God’s providence and therefore in God’s hand. Thus, in GREAT faith he would gloriously declare, *“my times are in thy hand.”* There it is, nothing deep or mysterious, nay, something simple as trusting God! *“The sovereign arbiter of destiny holds in his own power all the issues of our life,”* Spurgeon. David’s comfort was in the understanding of the Sovereignty of His God. No matter how bad it got he knew God was in control. David say, “My Times – my times – yes MY TIMES are in THY HAND, upheld by thy Sovereign Omnipotent HAND! Ps.73:23 -28; 71:1-3; 5, 9. Remember our studies on Jairus Daughter, Christ in Luke 8:50 said to him, “...FEAR NOT – BELIEVE ONLY...”

Then he says, *“Make thy face to shine upon thy servant: save me for thy mercies’ sake.”* David is asking God’s face to shine on him as he goes through this hard time because it feels as though it is not shining. He wanted God to be favorable and gracious unto him. He also asks God not to let him be ashamed. As a matter of fact he says bring shame on the wicked that are always impenitent in their hearts. Let them be silent even in the grave. Shut their mouths as they speak evil against the righteous. (David’s Confidence – D’s Consideration – D’s Concern – D’s Consistency)

V. David’s Confession in verses 19-22. The fifth thing we see is David’s confession. As David shares his heart with us in setting forth the awful trail he is going through, he also sets forth his great faith of trusting God because his times were in God’s hand. He now comes to the place of giving praise to God. David confesses the goodness of God. He says, *“Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!”* David turns from prayer to praise and what he does in verses 19 – 22 is that he eulogizes the goodness and mercy of God, who has wrought gloriously for His people. Notice how he uses the word “then” 4 times in these verses 19 & 20. He also divides goodness in two parts; that which is stored and which is given. Joseph stored corn for the famine, but our great God stores goodness for us when we go through trials and then he opens up the storehouse, the windows of heaven are opened and we are so

blessed that we cannot contain it. Remember David says, OH HOW GREAT IS THY GOODNESS WHICH IS LAID **FOR THEM** THAT FEAR THEE! And he does this openly before the sons of men. He also says, *“Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence from the pride of man: thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues.”* God will hide us and he will keep. What a two-fold blessing to help us on the way. David blesses God, *“Blessed be the LORD: for he hath shewed me his marvellous kindness in a strong city.”* David in faith blesses his God, God has showed such love and mercy and kindness by giving him strength, assurance and glorious help for his trials which gives him absolute security. He then confesses the goodness of God in hearing his petition in time of need, *“For I said in my haste, I am cut off from before thine eyes: nevertheless thou heardest the voice of my supplications when I cried unto thee.”* **(David’s Confidence – D’s Consideration – D’s Concern – D’s Consistency – D’s Confession)**

VI. David’s Command in verses 23 & 24. David concludes with a glorious command, *“O **LOVE**, the Lord all ye his saints...”* As though he bursts in such an exuberance to instruct us LOVE THE LORD! This is an important instruction. We must love our God supremely and always in times of blessings as well as in times of trials. We are commanded to love our God with all our heart, our soul, our strength and mind. We are warned in 1 Cor.16:22, *“If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha.”* What an admonishment to love our God. When was the last time you said to God, I LOVE YOU! We’ll if it’s been awhile David commands you, LOVE THE LORD, ALL YE HIS SAINTS! NOT ONE SAINT IS EXCLUDED. David says, *“O love the LORD, all ye his saints: for the LORD preserveth the faithful, and plentifully rewardeth the proud doer.”* Amazing even after a hard trial and time David says LOVE THE LORD! Yes, truly he was a man after God’s own heart.

David ends with an exhortation that we might continue to be encouraged and hope in the LORD. *“Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the LORD.”* Spurgeon says, *“Be of good courage. Keep up your spirit, let no craven thoughts blanch your cheek. Fear weakens, courage strengthens. Victory waits upon the banners of the brave. And he shall strengthen your heart. Power from on high shall be given in the most effectual manner by administering force to the fountain of vitality. So far from leaving us, the Lord will draw very near to us in our adversity, and put his own power into us. All ye that hope in the Lord. Every one of you, lift up your heads and sing for joy of heart. God is faithful, and does not fail even his little children who do but hope, wherefore then should we be afraid?”*

Oh, dear brethren, let us set our eyes on God in the midst of all our difficulties. We must trust and rely on our great God; everything else is but empty vanity. As we set our eyes upon God let us cast away all fear. May God grace us to meet all our trials as bold as a lion! The more we hope the more courage we have. We must remember that strength comes from heaven above which makes the heart strong. Therefore we can say, *“I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.”* Phil. 4:13. As the Lord told Jairus he tells us, **“FEAR NOT – BELIEVE ONLY!”** **Faith is Confidence: Confidence**

is Believing: Believing is Trusting: Trusting is Hope: Hope is Expectation: Expectation anticipates Mercy! I would like to conclude with a poem on Psalm 31

Our Times are in His Hand Psalm 31

In God's hand is our safety and refuge
As we go through a trial's awful deluge
Our times are in His omnipotent hand
For it was initiated in His providential plan

The Sweet Psalmist of Israel recognizes this
For his faith is seen in such a radiant bliss
He said, in thee O Lord do I put my trust
Faith in a trial is a necessary must

He prayed and knew he was in His Father's Hand
For in God's bowed ear would his petition land
His faith shall be tried much more precious than gold
Tried in the fire faith grounded in hope will unfold

He trusted in the Lord God His Rock
Even though his enemies sought to mock
Let me never be ashamed he would pray
Knowing His God would send help on the way

For thy name's sake please lead and guide me
This would be his petition and holy plea
Pull me out of the net he would stress
For thou art my strength he did confess

He cried into thy hand I commit my spirit
Knowing His loving God would plainly hear it
For He bows His ear as His saints do pray
By faith they do seek Him night and day

Deliver me from the hand of the enemy
For they are the ones that persecute me
Make thy face to shine upon your people
For we are cast down, frail and so feeble

Lord we believe, but help our unbelief

Oh, Lord God we all do fade as a leaf
Lift us up so that we can lay hold of you
Help us to believe for this we must do

We want to be as we were before
Where our faith exceedingly did soar
Our faith and hope in you does remain
Because your promises to us are so plain

We need your great and mighty power
Oh how we want it this very hour
That our souls no longer be dismayed
Please cause our trials to speedily fade

This will help to strengthen our heart
And cause us to hope and never depart
As we set our eyes solely on you
We seek to trust and this we will do

Oh how great is your goodness and love
Which is given to us from heaven above
Thou hast claimed us as your very own
Which means that we are never alone

O love the Lord is what David proclaims
This is a message for all His saints
For the LORD preserveth the faithful
By His omnipotent power He is able

Be of good courage in your soul
It will help us to always be bold
In His hand is that blessed cord
For all those that hope in the LORD

Pastor Jose F. Maldonado

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