

I will see the goodness of the Lord!

Back in November I preached a message about coming through the wilderness, about how being in the wilderness isn't all that bad. It is a place where the power of God is displayed, where we learn and grow in intimacy with God.

Today I want to talk about seeing the goodness of the Lord in our lives. Which is a word of encouragement for all of us as we go through this life, that God wants good things for us. His good things.

My primary verse this morning is:

Ps 27:13 I am still confident of this¹: I will see the goodness² of the LORD in the land of the living.

Now the context of this verse is interesting because before this verse King David who wrote this psalm is crying out to the Lord because of his troubles. If you will please turn with me to Ps 27 I want to read this together.

Ps 27

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?

² When evil men advance against me to devour my flesh, when my enemies and my foes attack me, they will stumble and fall.

³ Though an army besiege me, my heart will not fear; though war break out against me, even then will I be confident³.

So we have enemies, armies, war breaking out against him...but David is confident.

⁴ One thing I ask of the LORD, this is what I seek:

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 seek him in his temple.

David shows his perspective – not on the issues before him, but the eternal things of God.

⁵ For in the day of trouble he will keep me safe in his dwelling;
he will hide me in the shelter of his tabernacle
and set me high upon a rock.

⁶ Then my head will be exalted
above the enemies who surround me;
at his tabernacle will I sacrifice with shouts of joy;
I will sing and make music to the LORD .

¹ [OT:539](#) /m^a* 'aman (aw-man'); a primitive root; properly, to build up or support; to foster as a parent or nurse; figuratively to render (or be) firm or faithful, to trust or believe, to be permanent or quiet; morally to be true or certain; once ([Isa 30:21](#); interchangeable with [OT:541](#)) to go to the right hand:

KJV - hence, assurance, believe, bring up, establish, + fail, be faithful (of long continuance, steadfast, sure, surely, trusty, verified), nurse, (-ing father), (put), trust, turn to the right.

² [OT:2898](#) bWf **tuwb** (toob); from [OT:2895](#); good (as a noun), in the widest sense, especially goodness (superlative concretely, the best), beauty, gladness, welfare:

³ [OT:982](#) jf^B* **batach** (baw-takh'); a primitive root; properly, to hide for refuge [but not so precipitately as [OT:2620](#)]; figuratively, to trust, be confident or sure:

KJV - be bold (confident, secure, sure), careless (one, woman), put confidence, (make to) hope, (put, make to) trust.

⁷ Hear my voice when I call, O LORD ;
be merciful to me and answer me.

⁸ My heart says of you, "Seek his face!"
Your face, LORD , I will seek.

The NIV says "My heart says", others translate it "you have said". It possibly is saying that David's heart was recalling the Lord's instruction to "Seek his face." David is remembering that God desires us to seek him, and to be found by us. This is really important for us to remember. God is not playing hide and seek with us.

Isa 45:19 I have not spoken in secret, from somewhere in a land of darkness;
I have not said to Jacob's descendants, 'Seek me in vain.' I, the LORD , speak the truth; I declare what is right.

Isn't that cool? When God implores us to seek him, it is because he wants us to find his face.

Isa 55:6 Seek the LORD while he may be found; call on him while he is near.

⁷ Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts.

Let him turn to the LORD , and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will freely pardon.

When we seek the Lord we receive his mercy and his pardon. And if you are looking for help with a situation in life, don't go to the "system" first.

Prov 29:26

Many seek an audience with a ruler,
but it is from the LORD that man gets justice.

Continuing in Ps 27:

⁹ Do not hide your face from me,
do not turn your servant away in anger;
you have been my helper.
Do not reject me or forsake me,
O God my Savior.

¹⁰ Though my father and mother forsake me, the LORD will receive me.

So many today struggle with feeling rejected. You may be or have been in a family situation that was not healthy. You may not fit in with our society and culture. But you are not on your own. You do not need to turn to despair. The LORD will receive you.

¹¹ Teach me your way, O LORD ; lead me in a straight path
because of my oppressors.

Again, David puts his focus on the Lord, and walking in His way. This is so key. When we go our own way, we are on our own. When we walk in God's way, we can have confidence.

¹² Do not turn me over to the desire of my foes, for false witnesses rise up against me, breathing out violence.

¹³ I am still confident of this:

**I will see the goodness of the LORD
in the land of the living.**

¹⁴Wait for the LORD ;
be strong and take heart
and wait for the LORD .

This last part we hate right? Wait for the Lord. We hate to wait right?

So Why was David so confident?

David was confident because in the midst of everything he looked up. Because he sought the Lord. And what was David confident about? In God's deliverance and in his goodness.

Now the two words translated "confident" in the NIV in Ps 27 are two different Hebrew words. The first occurrence in verse 3 expresses the idea of boldly trusting. When we got up this morning we knew the sun was coming up. We were confident the building would still be here. That the doors would be open, and that there were going to be a worship team here to lead us. This is the bold confidence based on experience. It is really important to learn take our troubles to the Lord on a daily basis. Because when they rise up again we can look up with confidence because we've been through it before and God got us through it.

The second occurrence of the word confidence is in verse 13 and it is that of long-term quiet assurance. It is used when the Lord promised Abraham that he would have descendants like the number of stars in the heavens, and Abraham believed. And this belief was credited to him as righteousness. That was a confidence that persisted for a long time despite a lack of evidence. In this way you are trusting in your past experience, but upon the understanding of the character of God.

So what about us

In our lives, upon what do we base our confidence? Are you confident because of your intelligence? Your abilities? Your learning? Paul talked about not putting confidence in our natural attributes and abilities:

Phil 3:3-4

For it is we who are the circumcision, we who worship by the Spirit of God, who glory in Christ Jesus, and who put no confidence in the flesh— ⁴ though I myself have reasons for such confidence.

Some here may have reasons for self confidence. Paul did say not many who are called are wise, or influential, or of noble birth, so some may be. But we do not want to be self-confident. We **SHOULD** be confident in God and in his promises. There is so much to be confident about in Christ.

- **Our confidence rests in the blood of Christ, not ourselves**

Heb 10:19 Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, ²⁰ by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, ²¹ and since we have a great priest over the house of God, ²² let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.

- **By faith in his blood we can approach God with freedom and confidence**

Eph 3:12 In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence.

- **We can approach God in our time of need**

Heb 4:16 Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

- **If we ask anything according to his will, he hears us**

1 John 5:14 This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. 15 And if we know that he hears us-whatever we ask-we know that we have what we asked of him.

- **If we continue in Him we can be unashamed at his coming**

1 John 2:28 And now, dear children, continue in him, so that when he appears we may be confident and unashamed before him at his coming.

- **We can be confident that God will finish his work in us (Phil 1:3-6)**

Phil 1:3 I thank my God every time I remember you. 4 In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy 5 because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, 6 being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

- **Finally, If we are in Christ we will have confidence on the day of judgment**

1 John 4:17 In this way, love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment, because in this world we are like him.

So we can be confident in God and what he has promised.

David was confident in God's Goodness

Honestly this is a huge problem for many people. They don't see or believe in the goodness of God, at least toward themselves. This is fundamental because you will move toward that which you perceive is good. So often we have the wrong ideas though.

The goodness spoken of here is associated with gladness, beauty, welfare. Good stuff.

Ps 31:19

How great is your goodness, which you have stored up for those who fear you, which you bestow in the sight of men on those who take refuge in you.

You might be thinking – if God has it stored up, why doesn't he send some my way? Does your life reflect that you fear the Lord? Are you taking refuge in him?

Jer 31:12-14

They will come and shout for joy on the heights of Zion;

they will rejoice in the bounty of the LORD – the grain, the new wine and the oil, the young of the flocks and herds.

They will be like a well-watered garden, and they will sorrow no more.

¹³ Then maidens will dance and be glad, young men and old as well.

I will turn their mourning into gladness; I will give them comfort and joy instead of sorrow.

¹⁴ I will satisfy the priests with abundance, and my people will be filled with my bounty," declares the LORD .

See this is God's heart towards us – to give us joy instead of sorrow. Now certainly we know that scripture shows us in the book of Revelation chapter 21 that the ultimate fulfillment of this is in the new heaven and new earth after Jesus returns. At that time Jesus says there will be no more sorrow and no more pain but a new order of things.

In the land of the living

But there is also the goodness of the Lord that we can experience now.

See the last part of Ps 27:13 David says he will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. This isn't to say David didn't believe in a life beyond the earth, but the expression was a clear reference to being on this side of eternity, on this side of the death divide.

Now I'm not here to preach a prosperity doctrine – but what does Ps 1 say about the one who walks in Godly counsel and delights in the law of the Lord? "Whatever he does shall"... Anyone... anyone... something PER...PROSPER.

What about those who live in a poor land, or where they are persecuted for their faith. I know – this doesn't look the same for everyone. But yet the principle is still true. Prosperity as God defined it follows righteousness.

I feel like sometimes we just get gloomy as believers and we almost just waiting to die so we can get on with life. And there is a very real place called the new heavens and new earth that all believers will get to experience one day. But God has also promised us abundant life here on the old earth.

Just look at Proverbs chapter 3 for an example. If we trust in the Lord (put our confidence in Him) and learn His wisdom it will help us with

- Health
- Healthy finances
- Long life
- And pleasant ways

I know we don't all get the same expression of these things. God also promises blessings to the children of those who fully commit their ways to the Lord. Now, that doesn't mean just because you are saved and you live your life for Jesus that your kids will by necessity follow. In fact that would mean there is no such thing as free will – it's just a formulaic thing.

But there is a strong blessing that follows the righteous. Look at how many generations there often are following a great man.

Prov 20:7

The righteous *man* walks in his integrity; His children *are* blessed after him.

You might be discouraged by choices your children are making, but don't lose heart. Even as they make their own way the paths that you started will help point them in the way they should go.

Remember the end of this Psalm

Ps 27:14 Wait for the LORD; be strong and take heart and wait for the LORD.

So we must wait for the Lord. Wait to see what he will do. **We need to take heart, and not lose heart.** How much better is our outlook when we are confident? Not worried and despairing, not burdened down with doubt. We wait for the Lord, but we wait with confidence that in the end it will be good and we will have joy in the Lord. It causes us to not take desperate measures, or to wrest control out of God's hands because we know he is working on it.

A tribute to Billy Graham

Billy Graham passed away this week. He was a man of great passion and integrity. He preached a simple message of repentance from sin and faith towards God. He told of a time early in his life when he struggled with doubt about the word of God, but he chose by faith to believe it to be the inspired word of God. He traveled extensively and sacrificed much to follow his calling. He had a son go wayward for a time because of the strain this put on their family. That son, Franklin Graham eventually returned to the Lord and has become a significant figure for the cause of Christ.

Billy Graham gave his all for the gospel. He suffered in many ways because of it. But yet he also got to see many good things in his life. Now he is in the presence of his Lord. And he is probably being greeted by many saints who are there because of his ministry.

Today if you are here, and you have not experienced God's forgiveness for your sins. I want you to know that all that is required is repentance. You turn away from your sin and you ask Jesus to forgive you and come into you heart and be the Lord of your life. If you want to pray and become a Christian today, I'm going to ask you to come down front here, and we will pray with you.

Also if you are here, and you doubt God's goodness toward you, I want you turn your heart toward God and seek him. I want you to be confident that God will show you his goodness in your lifetime. In the land of the living. If you are struggling with seeing God as good, at least toward your life, you come down here too. Let us pray together that God will begin to birth in you a confidence in God's goodness that will get you through any trial that comes our way. A confidence that continually looks forward to the good that God will bring into your life as you trust him and follow him.