



SERIES TITLE: PSALM 27 | SERMON TITLE: THE LORD IS MY LIGHT & MY SALVATION

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All right. Let's turn to Psalm 27 this morning. Psalm 27. I've entitled my message, "The Lord is my Light and my Salvation," the opening line from Psalm 27. Brethren, this is a beautiful, powerful psalm. This has lifted me many times in my life, in times of struggle and trials and pains and discouragement. And, you know, every Lord's Day, we come to gather together to hear the word of God and to make deep application, and so we always want to come ready to hear in listen. But in a very special way, I do want to encourage you this morning to have open hearts and open ears, especially if you feel discouraged or dismayed about life or troubled by the times we live in. We could all be so discouraged by shootings, discouraged by politicians and the fears and concerns we could have about the Communist party taking over and all these kinds of things. But we fix our eyes and our thoughts on the Lord Jesus, and we are lifted up as we study this psalm together out of really the miry clay and the temporal concerns of life. And brethren, when we embrace the truths of Scripture, we are further ready to engage and be ready for the battle that we all live in.

Certainly, David lived a life of battle. We can't deny that. And the truth is, we don't really know the context of this psalm. There are many psalms that we can put our finger on the time of life that David was in, that we're actually told the situation. We're just not told that exactly in Psalm 27. We know it's a psalm of David. But frankly, David's whole life was a battle. Certainly, every year of his life and era of his life after his being anointed king by Samuel the prophet was a time of struggle. We begin with the giant Goliath, and we move into his conflict with King Saul, and then he faced Abimelech, and then constant battles with the Philistines, and then because of his own sin, he faced numerous and many deep family dramas. Toward the end of his life, he faced maybe the hardest struggle of all, and that would be the rebellion of his own son, who brought an army of 20,000 soldiers and drove David out of his own city and into the Judean desert. His whole life was a battle. His whole life was a conflict. But in this, we have these beautiful psalms. And again, we don't know exactly when this was written. I do speculate, and that's really all it is, that he might've been an older brother at the time of this writing. There's just so much maturity here. It's under the radar a little bit, but let's read this together and we'll walk through this psalm together. So again, this is Psalm 27:

A Psalm of David.

*The LORD is my light and my salvation;
Whom shall I fear?*

*The LORD is the strength of my life;
Of whom shall I be afraid?*

² *When the wicked came against me*

To eat up my flesh,

My enemies and foes,

They stumbled and fell.

³ *Though an army may encamp against me,*

My heart shall not fear;

Though war may rise against me,

In this I will be confident.

⁴ *One thing I have desired of the LORD,*

That will I seek:

That I may dwell in the house of the LORD

All the days of my life,

To behold the beauty of the LORD,

And to inquire in His temple.

⁵ *For in the time of trouble*

He shall hide me in His pavilion;

In the secret place of His tabernacle

He shall hide me;

He shall set me high upon a rock.

⁶ *And now my head shall be lifted up above my enemies all around me;*

Therefore I will offer sacrifices of joy in His tabernacle;

I will sing, yes, I will sing praises to the LORD.

⁷ *Hear, O LORD, when I cry with my voice!*

Have mercy also upon me, and answer me.

⁸ *When You said, "Seek My face,"*

My heart said to You, "Your face, LORD, I will seek."

⁹ *Do not hide Your face from me;
Do not turn Your servant away in anger;
You have been my help;
Do not leave me nor forsake me,
O God of my salvation.*

¹⁰ *When my father and my mother forsake me,
Then the LORD will take care of me.*

¹¹ *Teach me Your way, O LORD,
And lead me in a smooth path, because of my enemies.*

¹² *Do not deliver me to the will of my adversaries;
For false witnesses have risen against me,
And such as breathe out violence.*

¹³ *I would have lost heart, unless I had believed
That I would see the goodness of the LORD
In the land of the living.*

¹⁴ *Wait on the LORD;
Be of good courage,
And He shall strengthen your heart;
Wait, I say, on the LORD!*

Father, we do pray that you would give us special ears and attention this morning to the Word of God. Help us, we always pray, to receive it as it really is, not as the thoughts and opinions of mortal men, but as the Word of God. That we ask in Christ's name, amen.

Brethren, as you can see and hear as we walk through this, this is a very personal psalm. Really, we can kind of walk through it and see the following. We see, first of all, David's personal experience. He gives testimony to it in the first six verses. Then we simply see the heart of prayer in verses 7 through 12, and then he makes deep and personal application in verses 13 and 14. Again, this prayer of David is a bit different than his typical pattern. Oftentimes, David would begin with a word of lament and end with a strong affirmation of God's sovereignty and goodness toward him. Turn back with me to Psalm 17, and I'll just show you how that typically plays out with David's psalms. Psalm 17, just looking at an example, if you'll look at Psalm 17 and verse 1, "Hear a just cause, O LORD; attend to my cry; Give ear to my prayer which is not



from deceitful lips; let my vindication come from Your presence; let Your eyes look on the things that are upright.” And if you’ll go now to the last verse, verse 15 of Psalm 17. “As for me, I will see Your face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake in Your likeness.” It’s a very common way that David makes his psalms. He oftentimes begins with a lament, and at the very end this great affirmation.

But what you see in Psalm 27 is he’s beginning with this great affirmation. “The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?” Brethren, this is not carnal boasting or carnal bragging on David's part. This is not swag, this is not bravado, this is not self-importance. This is his absolute confidence in God. One of the reasons I believe he might’ve been an older brother when he wrote this is David would’ve had so much life to draw upon by this age, right? He’s lived a long life, and he can now say with absolute confidence, “The LORD is my light and my salvation; who am I afraid of,” right? I’ve faced Goliath, I’ve faced Saul, I’ve faced Abimelech, I’ve faced armies of Philistines, I’ve faced my own son in rebellion, and I’ve seen God’s deliverance over and over again. It is in the present tense. The LORD is presently, right now, in a very personal and powerful way, the LORD is my light and my salvation; who shall I fear? It’s a rhetorical question, and the answer is a redounding “No one!” I fear no man. I fear no army. I’ve seen it all. I’ve walked through it all. I’ve stood before a nine-foot giant, for Pete’s sake. Who am I afraid of? No one!

The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? This again is a gospel line. It is an affirmation of who God is. It has been David's experience over and over again in life that God is the God of salvation. He’s experienced God’s grace. He’s experienced God’s mercy in his life. And of course, this is true for every true believer that God always shows his covenant faithfulness to His people. When you look at David's life, he’s seen this over and over again, God’s goodness and God’s favor to him. And brethren, this is a good word for us. One of the things that younger people need is older brothers and sisters in Christ to look up to and to learn from. I can look to my own father and my grandfather and really all my family, and I can see how they have a lifetime to draw upon. I saw when I was a child my grandfather, who took care of my grandmother when she had Alzheimer’s. And my grandfather was so patient and so kind and I wondered, how did he get that way? Well, a lifetime of walking with the Lord, who was his light and his salvation. Who will he fear? Not Alzheimer’s. And now I see the same thing with my dad, sadly, with my mother, who also has Alzheimer's, and I see his lovingkindness, his patience. There’s just a steadfastness there. He’s like a rock, you know, things that I think for a younger

man, a newer believer, a less mature person would just cast them down and wipe them out. He's had years and years of walking with the Lord Jesus to draw upon that gives him strength. I can see that in his life.

We see that also, of course, I believe, with David. He knows that God is the deliverer of his life. Look at verse 2. "When the wicked come against me and eat up my flesh," this is of course is not speaking of cannibals, but it is speaking of bloodthirsty men, bloodlust, okay? Again, this would be the actions of those like the Philistines, people who hated the LORD, hated the LORD's people. These are wicked men. And no, this is not an imprecatory psalm, okay? There are imprecatory psalms, and they are justified, where David is praying against those who hate God and hate God's people. But that's not what David is doing here. He's just acknowledging them, and he's moving right past it. "When the wicked come against me to eat up my flesh, my enemies and foes, they stumbled and fell." Brethren, this is a good word for us, I think, especially in election seasons, that our life is not in the hands of corrupt people. Our life is in the hands of our sovereign God. We will not fear. It's a good word for us, because we could so easily be swayed and have our hearts and minds drift away into all kinds of anxieties and troubles. But rather, we root ourselves in the sovereignty of God, the goodness and power of God, that God will defeat His enemies, either now or later. Again, David saw this with Goliath, he saw it with Saul, he saw it with Abimelech, he saw it with the Philistines, he saw it with Absalom. He knows that his Lord will provide for him and take care of him.

And that's why he can say, "Though an army," verse 3, "an army may encamp against me, my heart shall not fear. Though war may rise against me, in this I will be confident." You know, David really always was a bold man. I think by nature he was a confident person. But again, this confidence is not in himself. And really, he was always like this. When he was anointed to be king and he stood before Goliath, he asked the people, "Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the army of the living God?" That's a bold man. But his confidence was not grounded in his stature. We know that when he made those statements, he was a young man, couldn't even fit in King Saul's armor. He was not big. He was not boasting in his own power. He was boasting in the sovereign power of the living God. He knew, as Paul said, "If God is for us, who can be against us?" Again, David said, "The LORD has delivered me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear. He will deliver me from the hands of this Philistine." Forget that he's nine foot tall. The LORD has delivered me from the paw of the lion, the paw of the bear, and He'll deliver me from this Philistine. His confidence, again, is not carnal. His confidence is

based on the living God, who is for him and not against him, and so he is not afraid. “My heart shall not fear. Though war may rise against me, in this I will be confident.” His confidence is in the living God.

And we see as we unfold through this the great desire of King David. Look at verse 4. In many ways, verse 4 is the key to this whole psalm. “One thing I have desired of the LORD, that will I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD and to inquire of His temple.” This was the great desire of King David. His desire was single-minded devotion for God-ordained worship. David loved gathering with God’s people in worshiping and filling his mind with the truth of God’s word. This is really all throughout the psalter, faith family. When you read through the psalms, you see this over and over again, and in fact, in Brother Brian’s opening passage this morning, there was a word about loving to gather with the saints. We see this, for example in Psalm 63. This is another psalm of David. This is the context where he’s on the run from Absalom, his own son. He was in rebellion against his father and brought a massive army of 20,000 soldiers and drove David out into the Judean wilderness, desert. And in that context, David writes, “O God, You are my God; Earnestly I seek You; my soul longs for You; my flesh thirsts for You in a dry and weary land where there is no water. So I have looked for you in the sanctuary, beholding Your power and Your glory.” This was the longing of David. It was not vengeance on his enemies so much as I want to be in the presence of God, I want to be with the people of God, I want to hear the truth of God. And I want to encourage you, faith family, this is our passion too. I hope that you have a longing in your hearts to gather with God’s people.

You know, life so often is about making deposits and then making withdrawals. When you gather with God’s people on the Lord’s Day, you’re making deposits. You’re hearing truths, you’re, I hope, enjoying godly fellowship, you’re being built up in your faith. You’re singing amazing hymns like we sang this morning. I mean, when you sing “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God,” are you not encouraged? I always -- I just love that anthem, as millions of people for 500 years have been. You’re making deposits into your spiritual life. There’s going to come times when something happens that you’re making withdrawals. In the context of probably Psalm 27, certainly Psalm 63, there is a withdrawal that’s happening. You’re not able in those moments to gather with God’s people. You’re going through what David called a wilderness experience. My soul longs for You, my flesh thirsts for You in a dry and weary land. That’s not hyperbole. He



really is in a desert. What sustains him in those moments is years and years and years of gathering with God's people and hearing the Word of God.

I want to encourage you, make all the deposits you can. Never take gathering with blood-bought saints for granted. This is a blood-bought privilege God's people have. Make these deposits. There will come a time, maybe when you're older, maybe sooner than we would like to think, that you're going to be making withdrawals. Young people, make deposits. In those times of your life where things feel calm, that's not the time to take the foot off the gas. That's the time to lean in more, to read the Scriptures, to read biographies, to gather with God's people and be making deposits, spiritual deposits of truth in your life that will sustain you in times of leanness.

And there's many other examples of this longing to gather with God's people. Another one is Psalm 84. This is not a psalm of David. This is a psalm of the sons of Korah, but it's a beautiful psalm. And I love all the psalms, but this is certainly a top ten. Psalm 84. "How lovely is your dwelling place, O LORD of hosts! My soul longs and even faints for the courts of the LORD; my heart and flesh cry out to the living God." Verse 10, "For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of God than dwell in the tents of wickedness." Again, it's just a taste of the desire of the psalmists, that they would gather with God's people.

What we're doing here, family, is very ordinary looking. You're hearing very ordinary preaching, that's for sure. And we gather in a humble building with humble saints. Brethren, years of gathering with humble preaching in humble buildings with humble saints does extraordinary things in your life, like see you through when your spouse has Alzheimer's, or see you through when you get that terrible phone call that, younger in your life, maybe you could've never handled. But as a person who's walked with the Lord through many, many valleys, many, many struggles, the Lord has given you the strength to come through that as well. Make deposits for times that you'll have to make withdrawals.

Again in verse 4, back in Psalm 27, "One thing." It's like David's saying the only thing I really want out of life is an undivided heart, a great desire to know the living God, the beauty of the LORD. What is the beauty that David is longing for? Brethren, the beauty was not the tabernacle. This was not beautiful, okay? His son Solomon is going to build a beautiful, opulent temple, not David. He asked the LORD and the LORD said no, too much blood on your hands, David, but your son can. The tabernacle that David and the saints gathered in was very, very

humble. And the sacrifices made in this tabernacle were not beautiful. They were meant to show the heinousness of sin and to show the need for redemption. They were not in and of themselves beautiful looking and aesthetically pleasing. Brethren, the beauty was in the truth. As the saints of God gather in the tabernacle, they hear the truth of the Scriptures, being built up in the truth. The truth is what is beautiful. The truth is what builds up God's people. The Church is the pillar of truth. We are a people of the truth. Our Savior Jesus is truth incarnate. The way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Him. He is being built up as he gathered with the saints to hear the truth.

Now, I do want to give somewhat of a warning here. There could be certain people who hear that, and they hear this beautiful psalm and they think, okay, I understand, worship lifts us out of the struggles and pains and trials of life. And it could be that some people would at least accuse us of saying, you're trying to escape reality and avoid conflict. I simply want to point out that's not how David lived. David's whole life was conflict. He played the man. He was strong. He faced real enemies. And when people tell you that heavenly-minded people are no earthly good, you remind them that, historically, the most heavenly-minded people did the most earthly good. We have our thoughts and our hearts bent around the truths of God, and so we don't avoid conflict, and we don't avoid the fight because we're followers of the Lord Jesus. Rather, we're engaged for the fight. We just talked about putting on the full armor of God and being girded with the truth. We are equipped with the truth, so we have a biblical worldview that has an answer for the wicked and demonic influences in our culture.

So we talk about it all the time. We're not shy about these things. We hate abortion because we love the truth. We hate the distortion of marriage in our day and age because we love the truth. When you love the truth, you don't disengage and become passive and weak. You become active and you stand against the lie. So we refute that. That's not true. Being engaged with God actively in worship is to be engaged with the truth, and when you're engaged with the truth, you're ready to engage the world with the truth. That is how David lived his life. He was not hands off. He was hands on. We want to be the exact same way. We want to follow that pattern. But we are reminded that in a sin-sick world, there is a refuge. In a sin-sick world, there is a sanctuary, and that is what David is longing for. One thing I have desired of the LORD, that I will seek: That I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life and behold the beauty of the LORD and inquire of His temple. This was the longing of David, so this is our life.

We face the battle. We're in the world but not of it. We're engaging the world, we're not following it. And then we long to gather with God's people and be refueled with the truth.

In verse 5, we see, "For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion; In the secret place of His tabernacle He shall hide me; He shall set me high upon a rock." This pavilion would be referring to the king's tent in a time of battle. They would put the only tent that was usually very colorful and beautiful in the midst of these rather drab-looking tents, and he'd be surrounded by the ranks and files of the army. In the very center of this army encampment would be the king's pavilion. David is likening God to that, that he knows where the refuge is. He knows where it's safe. He's safe in the hands of the God he loves. That's where he's safe. And being in that position is like the victor's position. He shall set me upon a rock. This is the safe place. By the way, this is where David would set his tabernacle in Jerusalem, upon the highest place, and sadly, it's now where the Dome of the Rock is in Jerusalem. It was a safe place, the victor's position. He knew where to run. He knew where to hide.

Now he said in verse 6, "And now my head shall be lifted up above my enemies all around me; Therefore I will offer sacrifices of joy in His tabernacle; I will sing, yes, I will sing praises to the LORD," again affirming his delight to gather with God's people.

Now we transition into the actual prayer of David in verse 7. We'll briefly outline this prayer. First of all, he's asking the LORD to hear him in verse 7. "Hear, O LORD, when I cry out with my voice! Have mercy also upon me, and answer me." And then he asks in the next verses, 8 through 10, the LORD to help him. "When You said, 'Seek My face,' my heart said to You, 'Your face, LORD, I will seek.' Do not hide Your face from me; Do not turn Your servant away in anger; You have been my help; Do not leave me nor forsake me, O God of my salvation. When my father and mother forsake me, the LORD will take care of me." Now, what David is probably referring to here is actually his parents passing away, the death of his parents. There is no indication in Scripture that his father and mother ever literally forsook him, as in disowned him. In fact, what we do see in Scripture is David making provision for his father and mother when he was on the run from King Saul. We see that he in 1 Samuel 22, he pleaded with the king of Moab, "Please let my father and mother come here with you until I know what God will do with me." David actually made provision for his father and mother and thus honored the Word of God by honoring his father and mother. This forsaking, again, is probably the passing of his

parents, the leaving physically of his parents from his life. What he's affirming is, "God will never leave me. God will never forsake me." Of course, the words of our Lord Jesus echo that.

And then he's asking the LORD to teach him in verse 11, "Teach me Your way, O LORD, and lead me in a smooth path, because of my enemies." So David here is making a plea that the LORD would give him guidance. How does the Lord give us guidance as we study the Word of God and fill our minds with the truths of Scripture? The Lord makes deep application and He teaches us through His Word. And He leads us through His Word, "Lead me in the smooth path, because of my enemies." You might recall that in ancient times when a king would come in, oftentimes they would level out the path so there would not be heavy rocks and stones in the way of a king. David is simply asking the LORD, make my path straight here, clean out the way, help me to know the way I should go in life. And he's asking, in verse 12, the LORD's protection. "Do not deliver me to the will of my adversaries; For false witnesses have risen against me, and such as breathe out violence." And so he's asking the LORD for spiritual and physical protection. Again, not to bring everything into the here and now, but this is a way that we should pray as well. We do recognize that we live in a time and an age when there are enemies of God and enemies of the gospel. This is one of the ways that we want to be praying, out of verse 12, asking the Lord to smooth out our path and protect us from God's enemies.

And then David ends really with a personal application, and I want us to pay special attention to this for just a moment. "I would have lost heart, unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living." So again, this personal application. He is again drawing us into worship, pointing us to the covenant faithfulness of Yahweh, the LORD. This is the personal name of God. His name is Yahweh. He's a personal God. He's a covenant-keeping God. David is not being shifted on the changing times and changing circumstances. The bedrock of his faith is the LORD, that I'll see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.

So what do we do as we walk through life? We walk through life worshiping, and we walk through life waiting. His advice, his counsel in verse 14, "Wait on the LORD; Be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart. Wait, I say, on the LORD!" So as we walk through the hills and valleys of life, this is what God's people do. God's people always worship, but we don't change. We set our hearts and our affections on the living God. We are like David: Who is this uncircumcised Philistine? We're not scared of him. We're not scared of the changing, shifting sands of time. We're not scared of socialist democrats. We're not scared of the threats



coming out in our culture from media. We're not afraid of these things. Our hope was never set on them anyway. Our hope has always been on the living God. He loved us before time. He sent his Son Jesus, truly God and truly man, the One who lived a perfect life, the One who went to a cross and died for the sins of all those who believe. He's the One that was a wrath-bearing sacrifice for all who believe. God did not spare His own Son. He died to take our place. He rose again. He's seated at the right hand of the Father, and history is moving according to God's appointed plan. So we don't fear. We don't sit on our hands. We don't wring our hands. Rather, we are people who prioritize worship, learn the truth, engage with the truth, share the truth, live the truth, and wait on the Lord. That's what we're doing.

And so Father, we pray that you would help us to do that. Lord, help us to learn from Martin Luther. I will not fear, for God hath willed His truth to triumph through us. Lord, we remember the admonitions all throughout your Word: Do not be afraid. Lord, help us as blood-bought people, under the good care of the Good Shepherd, to not fear, but rather to build our life on the truth. Lord, I pray that you would put upon all our hearts the priority of worship and the bold confidence, not in self, but in your Word and your truth and in the living God that we see in David. Help us, Lord, we ask, to follow his pattern and to follow his faith. We pray, Lord, that in this season where many people are beginning to be worried and panicked and filling up their mind with all kinds of anxieties that this would be one way that we could show that we're different. Help us, Lord, not to be afraid, but to build our life in steadfast confidence in the living God. And in so doing, Lord, we pray, help us. Help us, we pray, to be wise, realizing, as Paul says, that the days are evil, and to be filled with the Holy Spirit. Help us, we pray, to put on the full armor of God. Help us, Lord, to walk with the belt of truth. Help us, Lord, to share the truth. We ask, Lord, for your special grace and help with these things.

Lord, thank you for this time that we've had together. Thank you for the Word of God. Thank you for the fellowship of the saints. We pray that as we gather around tables this morning and share a meal, bless our time of fellowship. We pray it will be edifying and encouraging and we build each other up. Bless this time, we ask in our Savior Jesus's name, amen.