

Last month we looked at Psalm 34 and how we handle tough times in our Christian walk. Let's continue down the same trail this month as we look at how we cope with trying times. **PSALM 62** talks about hanging in there when everything seems to be screaming at you to give up and walk away.

David wrote this psalm most probably during his son Absalom's rebellion or during his reign over Judah in Hebron when Saul was doing all he could to kill David. Either way David felt he was between a rock and a hard place as far as what the future looked like. However, despite the circumstances David gives us some very good advice as to hanging in when the going gets tough.

Firstly David reminds himself in v1-4 that God alone saves both in terms of a personal relationship with God, and of being delivered from a difficult situation in life. David was determined to trust in God alone. Again it highlights the importance of keeping our focus on God and not on our circumstances, as difficult as that may be.

David's faith was exemplified in the fact that he waited on God in silence. Have you ever stood in a long bank queue and listened to the conversation around you; I guarantee there would be a few impatient grumblers. David's silence implies his submission to the working of God in his life and in his circumstances. The testimony that our faith in God and Him alone is shown in the lack of complaining. I have said this often that the time of greatest testimony for us to the non-Christian is in times of trial. How we handle difficult times can be an unbelievable witness to non-Christians. Notice also that David did not try to manipulate the situation or the circumstances to alleviate the problem.

In v2 David prayed to God and relates how this affected him. As he prayed God brought stability as he declared God to be his rock. God gave His deliverance and His protection. The word used for defence (KJV) is the word picture of a strong tower that is impregnable despite the level of opposition. This then was coupled with a warm expression of confidence in God's keeping power. The word moved (KJV) has the idea of not been shaken or demoralized by our circumstances.

PRAISE the Lord for:

- Great trip to Queensland with over 40 churches visited
- Our great production team and wonderful writers who contribute each month to the paper
- Wonderful opportunities to speak in churches to share about the ministry of Challenge

David then prayed patiently to God in v3 which is a key part of waiting on God for His deliverance. David had confidence that when God was ready He would deal with his difficulties and his enemies. These enemies lacked integrity and were marked by hypocrisy.

Secondly David discovered that God alone encourages us, v5-8. As David waited silently on God, yielded and surrendered to Him, David found himself being encouraged by his Heavenly Father. Again he reminds himself of who God is and what He does. A number of things are delineated for our blessing :

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OVER**

- (i) Look expectantly for God's deliverance
- (ii) God is the only one who can wonderfully deliver us even when things seem hopeless, or no ready solution seems to be available
- (iii) God is our refuge. God is the one who brings us words of comfort and who encouragingly answers our prayers for help

Thirdly David discovered in v9-12 that God alone rewards us as we wait patiently on Him. As David prayed genuinely and authentically he gained *a new perspective on his situation*. He discovered his situation was not as bad as he first thought. As he analysed his predicament he realized his enemies lacked substance. The men who threatened him were seen as a vapour meaning they lacked those things that gave meaning to life.

David also realized that there was nothing to be gained from oppression and dishonesty. These folks were making the same mistakes that many people do today in that they were trusting in their position in life and their wealth, in the hope it will bring peace and satisfaction into their lives. Unfortunately disappointment is all they gain and so they throw themselves even more determinedly in the hope that they will gain that elusive goal.

David then reminds himself that all power belongs to the God whom he worships. He is really saying God reigns supreme no matter what the situation may look like on the surface.

When Isaiah went into the temple (Isaiah 6) he entered thinking it was going to be like any other day. He was concerned about the Assyrian enemy gathering on Israel's borders and the spiritual decline of his nation. However, this was a day that was to change Isaiah's life as he saw the Lord high and lifted up. Immediately Isaiah saw himself as he was, and declares that he had been undone and that he was a man of unclean lips in the company of men of unclean lips.

Isaiah learnt another important lesson as he saw the Lord high and lifted up. Uzziah the King had just died after a prosperous 52 year reign and Isaiah realized that although earthly kings come and go, the King of Kings reigns supremely forever.

David closes Psalm 62 with the reality that every person is judged according to his work. For the non-Christian this means that he or she will be judged for their rejection of the Saviour Jesus. For the Christian we will be judged on the basis of how we have served God as it is spelled out for us in 1 Corinthians 3:5-15.

{ CARL CARMODY
EDITOR CHALLENGE }

PRAYER needed for:

- Recommencement of Kenyan edition. Waiting for approval from various quarters to have edition up and running again
- Continued growth and development of our new project in Philippines. Third edition will be printed December
- Upcoming trip to South Africa and Malawi for Carl (8 Nov - 13 Dec)
- Promotion from our office for Christmas edition. Pray churches will take the opportunity to use Challenge for outreach

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