

Summer in the Psalms – Week 3

Preacher: Pastor Chris Ogden

Focus Passage: Psalm 27

Belong

Think about a song that's been around for ages – maybe one your grandparents loved or a really old hymn. What's one thing that makes those "ancient" songs still resonate or feel meaningful even today?

***Leader Transition (Read Aloud):** This week, Pastor Chris helped us explore Psalm 27 through the lens of David's life – a man described as being "after God's own heart. Just like those old songs can still speak to the human experience, these ancient Psalms are "unfiltered expressions of the longing, disappointment, beauty, and heartache inherent in the human experience." We'll see how David's example of confidence in God, single-mindedness, and worship can help us find a deeper sense of belonging in our relationship with God. We will examine how these "3 Features of the God-Directed Heart" teach us to belong to God.*

Believe

- 1. Confidence in God: Read Psalm 27:3. How does David express his confidence in God despite facing a "mighty army" and being "attacked"? How can we apply this confidence to our own struggles – such as "marital or relational conflict," "financial fallout," "unanswered prayers," or a "devastating diagnosis"?**

Leader Note: David's confidence wasn't just poetic; it was rooted in real-life conflicts. He faced predators, Goliath, Saul, and wars. This confidence is a key feature of a God-directed heart. Like refining silver, God is with us "in the middle of the fires that you are facing." Psalm 27, like Psalm 23, reminds us that God is present "in the middle of the trouble." Faith is "the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen."

- 2. Single-Mindedness: Read Psalm 27:4. What is the "one thing" David asks of the Lord? Why is this his priority? What "one thing" tends to grip your attention, root itself in your heart, or lure you away from God?**

Leader Note: David's "singular desire" is God Himself, not just His blessings. This single-mindedness is another characteristic of those after God's heart. The goal is the "Practice of God's Presence," to "love the Lord our God with all of our heart, soul, mind and strength." "Purity of heart is to will one thing," and for the people of God, that "one thing is God himself." We should examine what has gripped our attention and ask God to bring us back to Him.

- 3. Worship: How did David express his worship throughout his life? Read Psalm 27:8. What does this intimate exchange between David and God reveal about worship?**

Leader Note: David was a worshiper in all seasons, expressing worship through writing

Psalms, dancing, and planning the temple. His heart was to worship God and lead others in worship. This passage reveals the intimacy of worship, like "listening in on lovers." True worship is more than a ritual; it's a genuine connection with God. A person who is "confident in God and single-minded in their pursuit of him can worship God in the middle of chaos or quiet."

Become

1. **Reflecting on the idea of being a "man/woman after God's own heart," what practical step can you take this week to pursue God with greater confidence, single-mindedness, or worship?**

Leader Note: Encourage specific actions. For example, if it's confidence, identify and counter a fear with a verse from Psalm 27. If it's single-mindedness, schedule a time for focused prayer. If it's worship, try expressing worship in a new way (e.g., journaling, music, or being in nature).

2. **How does the reality of Emmy's passing strengthen or reshape your understanding of David's confidence in Psalm 27, particularly verses 13-14 about seeing the goodness of the Lord "in the land of the living"?**

Leader Note: This question aims to create space for wrestling with complex emotions. Acknowledging grief and unanswered questions while still clinging to hope is okay.