

Session 6

January 10, 2021

WEATHERING THE BLUES

Psalm 31:1-8

Trouble comes to everyone.

Job, the Bible expert when it comes to suffering, said, “Man who is born of woman is of few days...and full of trouble” (Job 14:1). That certainly covers everybody! The disciples were arguably Jesus’ closest earthly friends. Yet their lives were filled with storms, even when Jesus was with them (see Mk 4:36ff). Even King David, a person Scripture characterized as “a man after God’s own heart” (see 1 Sam. 13:14), faced terrible situations and continual challenges. If these godly and committed folks suffered trials and tribulations in their lives, why should we expect anything different? Fortunately, in Psalm 31, David reminds us who to turn to when “the blues” are weighing us down.

Seek the Lord...He is our refuge (vv. 1-2). Verse 1 sets the tone for the entire passage. The Holman translation, “Let me never be *disgraced*” is better understood as “Let me never be *disappointed*.” The idea is that the Lord might never let the psalmist down when he claims His promises. Rather, might he be saved as a demonstration of the Lord’s consistent and righteous character and the faithful fulfillment of His promises. The Hebrew of verse 2 is literally asking the Lord *to bow down His ear closely*, and to *deliver him speedily*. This time, the English translation captures the idea perfectly: “Listen closely” and “rescue quickly.” This intimate and personal plea is then backed up with David’s confidence in who the Lord is: a *rock of refuge* and a *mountain fortress*. For reflection: *How do you think David’s personal, intimate pleas square with the vastness and sovereignty of Almighty God? In other words, where do we draw the line between the informal and formal expressions of our prayers?*

Call out to the Lord...He is our rescue (vv. 3-4). The imagery used in the next set of verses is rich in description and rapid-fire in expression. In verse 3, the Lord is both a source of security (*rock* and *fortress*) and a source of direction (*leads* and *guides*). This is established by *His name’s sake*. Not only has His name been designated as a rock and fortress, but God’s own reputation is at stake should He fail to fulfill His promises. In verse 4, the Lord is both a deliverer and a safe place, pointed out in the contrast between a dangerous and deceitful net set by the enemy and the safety that the Lord provides from such enemies. For reflection: *What kinds of traps do you think David faced? Who do you think your enemies are...and what kinds of “nets” do you need to avoid in your own walk with Christ?*

Trust in the Lord...He is our redeemer (vv. 5-8). The idea that faith is “a blind leap” is absurd. The trust David had in the Lord was complete in the present because it was based on God’s faithfulness in the past. And so is ours. Verse 5 is best known as the text quoted by the Lord Jesus from the cross. David’s usage was in the present and couched in the context of his trust in God’s deliverance. Jesus extended that trust from present circumstances to eternal destiny. (By the way: I like to point out that Jesus was not quoting David, but in reality, David was quoting Scripture that Jesus wrote! See 2 Tim. 3:16; also Ps. 22:1). In verse 6, he contrasts the foolishness of worshipping “useless” idols with the joy found in worshipping the one true

God. Unlike dumb idols, the one true God sees his affliction, empathizes with his turmoil, delivers him from his enemies, and sets his feet in a spacious (safe) place. For reflection: *Consider the idea of redemption mentioned in verse 5. How do you think the doctrine of redemption is affected by God's truth (v. 5)? Like David, can you identify the results of God's redemption in your own life?*