

If you have a copy of the Scripture, we're going to look at the first eleven verses of Psalm 25 tonight. Our summer series in the Psalms, I was drawn to this one with The Supper in view, and I hope that becomes clear why, maybe, as we go. Let me read from Psalm 25, the first eleven verses. I think maybe it's going to be projected. Yep, there it is.

God's word for us. A Psalm of David

To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul.

Oh my God, in you I trust;

let me not be put to shame;

let not my enemies exult over me.

Indeed, none who wait for you shall be put to shame;

shall be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous.

Make me to know your ways, O LORD;

teach me your paths.

Lead me in your truth and teach me,

for you are the God of my salvation;

for you I wait all the day long.

Remember your mercy, O LORD, and your steadfast love,

for they have been from of old.

Remember not the sins of my youth or my transgressions;

according to your steadfast love remember me,

for the sake of your goodness, O LORD!

Good and upright is the LORD;

therefore he instructs sinners in the way.

He leads the humble in what is right,

and teaches the humble his way.

All the paths of the LORD are steadfast love and faithfulness,

for those who keep his covenant and his testimonies.

For your name's sake O LORD,

pardon my guilt, for it is great.

God's word for us.

Perhaps you're familiar with the TV show, *Hee Haw*. This is the crowd for that, right? I found this out: It ran from 1969 to 1992. I lost track about the early 80's. But there was a song that *Hee Haw* featured frequently written by Buck Owens and Roy Clark. "Gloom, despair, agony on me, [groan]. Deep, dark depression, excessive misery. If it weren't for bad luck, I'd have no luck at all. Gloom, despair, and agony on me [groan]." Maybe you're familiar with that, maybe not. But if you're not, I guarantee you're going to go Google it tonight, but if you're Googling it now, you're in trouble. Stop. Sometimes it feels like that, doesn't it? Sometimes life feels like "Gloom, despair, agony on me, deep, dark depression, excessive misery. It feels like that. Psalms give our hearts voice.

This is a Psalm of lament. There are several in the 150 Psalms that are inspired and inscriptured for us, and this is one of them. David, crying out to the Lord honestly, openly, raw, real. Lord, I lift up my soul to you. I bare myself to you. O God, in you I trust. This is one of those---and in fact, they're all this way---it's real. This is what we are supposed to be. You have pain, misery, and confusion, doubt, discouragement? Lift it to the Lord, right? Open up and let him hear. You have joy, exaltation, praise? Lift it to the Lord. This is what we are called to.

This is a Psalm of lament. Sometimes it feels as if the psalmist knew the *Hee Haw* chorus 4000 years before it was penned. In reality, that's simply our initial reaction to adversity. Man, life is tough. This is hard. And David gives our hearts an opportunity for an outlet here. I hope we'll see that we have that same outlet.

David is dealing with some real adversaries. He's in real need of real rescue. Real need and real rescue. Tonight I want to ask us the question---me included with you---How about us? Tonight as we encounter God's word, what are the great adversaries that you're facing? Notice I said 'What?' not "Who?" If you insert someone's name in there, I guess we can deal with that, too. But what are those adversaries? What are those enemies? What is coming against you? What causes you to cry out for rescue? Put that in your head. Put that in mind. Let that be right here as you think.

And now let's look at this Psalm. I want to point out five things. David sees the need for rescue. He sees the source of rescue. He sees the way of rescue. He sees the real rescue for what it is. And he sees the results of the rescue.

So David sees his need, he's crying out. These are real enemies and they're confronting him. They're aggressive. We see in verse two and verse three, they are treacherous. They want David's demise. They want him down. They want him out of the way. They're real, and they're not going to stop until they have their way and David is destroyed. He sees his need. And he sees that his need can only be addressed outside himself. So he sees the need for rescue.

And then he sees the source of the rescue. David sees the source of the rescue when he cries out to the LORD. See that again. There it is: capital L O R D. He cries out to the covenant-making, covenant-keeping God, the faithful one. He cries out to the God who already knows David's situation. He cries out to the LORD. He cries out to my God. You see that? It's a personal relationship. David knows the source of his rescue was with this personal, relating God. In verse two and three David cries out to the Lord over shame. He's crying out for the one who is over shame. This is important to us, because we're sinners. Our first parents, when they were naked in the Garden before sin entered in, they were unashamed. There was no shame. Sin had not tainted anything about their relationship with God or with one another. But as soon as they disobeyed, the Scriptures record that shame came in. Shame clothed them. Shame took over their thoughts. They went and hid. They covered themselves. Shame is what we deal with. David cries out to the Lord who is the God over shame. *Read some of verse two and verse three* is what my notes say. I guess I should do that. David says, "O my God, in you I trust; let me not be put to shame; let not my enemies exult over me. Indeed, none who wait for you shall be put to shame; they shall be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous." Now that's because God is the one that covers shame and removes shame. And God is the one who ultimately judges and causes that ultimate destruction as his wrath is experienced without the forgiving, shed blood covering sin. So David cries out to the one over shame.

But look at the source of rescue as it continues. In verses four and eight David cries out for the wise God, the one who's capable of teaching. David cries out in verse four to the gracious God—he's willing to guide his people. In verse five we see David crying out to the source of his rescue, the powerful God, the God of salvation. In verse five we also see David crying out to the source of rescue is the personal God, he's the God of my salvation. David cries out to the source of his rescue, the merciful God, in verse six. The loving God, in verse six. In verse eight we see David crying out to the good God and the upright God, the righteous one. You see, David recognizes that the source of his rescue is this kind of God. All these characteristics, that's who he cries out to. O LORD, to you I lift up my soul. Oh my God, in you I trust. So he recognizes his need for rescue, and he recognizes the source of that rescue.

And David recognizes the way of rescue. As David says, "I lift up my soul." I've already alluded to this, but this is a posture of openness. David is saying, I'm open and bare before you. To you, O LORD, is my soul exposed. You know my thoughts, you know my inner way, you know my motivation for things, you know my fears, you know what plagues me, you know my distress---probably better than I do. No 'probably' about it---you do. So David says, I'm open to you.

The way of rescue is through a humble submission, a receptive heart. In verses three and four David recognizes that the way of rescue is a teachable, submissive posture. He says, make me to know, teach me thy ways, lead me in your truth. Teach me. Now that's a heart that says, I don't know all things, right? That's someone who actually recognizes, wow, I've got a lot to learn. I've got a lot to learn about God's ways and God's will. David says, the way of rescue is to be humble. In verse nine you see this twice. "He leads the humble in what is right, he teaches the humble his way." You heard that this morning. My eyes are not lifted up, my heart is not haughty. That's the posture of all who come to God on God's terms.

That's our posture here tonight. We're sinners in need of a substitutionary sacrifice. We need to have our sins covered by someone else's blood. Christ has done that. That's the posture of humility. We recognize that, we confess that, we acknowledge it. We stand before the assembly, and we shout it again, I'm saved because of Christ alone. David recognizes that.

And the way of rescue is for the ones who keep the covenant. Now this sounds like a law-abiding citizen, but as we look back on the cross, what we recognize is this: That those who keep the covenant are those who exercise faith in Christ. They continue steadfast in the faith. They don't forsake the assembling together of the saints. They are humble and submissive and teachable and they're correctable, and that is the way of the covenant. David says the way of rescue is all those characteristics.

And then, before we get to this fourth point, *The Real Rescue*, I just want to point out I think something happens to David as he's crying out. I think something occurs to him as he's calling upon the Lord to deal with the treacherous. He realizes that a cry for justice is a reminder to plead for mercy. How often does this happen in my life? Does it happen for you? God, get them!

God, be merciful to me, a sinner. It happens like that if we're open to the Spirit's leadership, because that's what goes on in David. 'God, get them!' becomes, 'Oops---God, be merciful to me, a sinner.'

The intensity with which we cry out for help is directly proportional to the severity of the calamity that we are facing.

So these were treacherous, wantonly treacherous enemies, and David was crying out. But as he cries out, what he realizes is this: "Make me to know your ways, O LORD, teach me your paths. Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation, for you I wait all day long." And then, you see? "Remember your mercy, O LORD, and your steadfast love, for they have been of old." You're the covenant-making God. You've done these things. In fact, those Hebrew phrases in verse six, 'Remember your mercy' 'Remember your steadfast love' can actually be translated 'Remember your acts of mercy. Remember your acts of love.' Remember your acts of mercy and love as you demonstrated that to your people so faithfully, so often, for so many centuries. David's crying out to the covenant God. God have mercy, because I'm a sinner. In verse seven, "Remember not the sins of my youth or my transgressions; according to your steadfast love remember me." The intensity with which we cry out for help is directly proportional to the severity of the calamity we face, David realizes. As I'm crying out for justice, I don't want justice to be delivered to my heart. And so he's caught up immediately in a plea for mercy. And the persistence with which we cry out is related to our understanding of the character and the ability of the one upon whom we call to remedy our distress. You see how many times David persists in calling upon the mercy of God? Remember your mercy. Remember your steadfast love. Remember not the sins of my youth. According to your steadfast love remember me. For the sake of your goodness, LORD, O LORD---implied there is 'Remember.' That's persistence. And David knows the

biggest thing that he will face as a human being before a holy God is the judgment of that holy God in the final Day. David says that's the greatest calamity that any of us can face. So cry out with an intensity that's directly proportional to the severity.

Tragically, we've heard the devastation of tornadoes too often in recent news. I want to use an illustration with a tornado, and I'm not trying to be flippant. But if a tornado was called for in this area at this time, and we knew that the basement here was a tornado-safe shelter area, I can imagine the intensity with which we would make our way to the basement would be fairly exaggerated, right? Intense movement that way. Organized, hopefully--we wouldn't trample, you know, over little old ladies. But we'd get there, because we recognize that the tornado is coming. However, if somebody just mentioned casually that there are some leftover cookies available to anybody who wants them---downstairs, same basement---from the Pesce's farewell reception, we might meander that way. The intensity with which cookies call our name may dictate some of that, but probably not a lot. You get the picture, I hope. That is, if God is simply there---I don't know---called upon every so often, enjoy the air-conditioned room of a loving fellowship---whatever the thing is that we've gotten in our heads which is not pure, basic wrath of God and redeeming, Christ-crucified, blood-justifying salvation, then we need to probably think more intensely about what it is that we're about to partake of. This really matters. And it's a reminder for my heart, as I respectfully offer it to your heart.

So we see David understood the real rescue. That's all this remembering stuff. He sees his sin before him, and he sees how God remembers. And he calls upon the covenant-keeping nature of God: Remember your acts of mercy. He calls upon the personal God: Remember not the sins of my youth according to your steadfast love. David doesn't put a record up there: "Remember all the good things I've done for Israel, Lord, because it's a lot of them. You know that." He says, man, I've done---I don't even want to remember. But God, please, you don't remember, please. Remember me, Lord, remember my sins, NOT according to what I've done, but according to your steadfast love, according to your loving kindness.

And then in verse eleven he really hits this. Remember me, Lord, according to your name, for your name's sake, for the honor of your name. God, when he put the covenant into action, when he instituted the covenant, he said: I am the Lord, I will do this, and he proclaimed that to the world. So his reputation is on the line and David knows that. He cries out to the Lord: "For your name's sake, O, LORD, pardon my guilt, for it is great."

I was in a fairly intense prayer meeting this past week with several brothers, and we were praying for a family that's in the midst of a fairly severe crisis. One of the brothers was so encouraging in his prayer. He kept praying for the reputation and the honor of Christ in this marriage that we had in view. He wanted Christ to be honored, because he knew that the husband and the wife were a picture to the world of Christ and the church. He kept crying out to God, Lord, for your name's sake. Lord, honor yourself. Bring them to repentance. Over and over he cried. And it was an encouragement to me, and I reminded him as we prayed, even, of this verse that I've been looking at for this talk tonight. I said that's just a psalmist's prayer right there: "For your name's sake, O LORD, pardon my guilt, for it is great."

The *Result to the Rescue* is the fifth point. Results are for us. This is why we're here. We're here to be fed spiritually and be nourished, to be nourished with the Gospel message. The good news. The results are found in verse eight: He instructs sinners in the way that they should walk. In verse nine: He leads the humble in what is right. In verse nine he teaches the humble his way. And it's a specific and narrow way, Jesus reminds us in Matthew 7. In verse ten he puts us---us---on the paths of steadfast love and faithfulness. Those are the paths that lead all the way home. All the way home, those paths lead, the paths of steadfast love and faithfulness. They'll lead us to what this meal tonight is simply a promissory note representing. They lead us to that banquet table. They lead us to that wedding feast. They lead us---those paths of steadfast love and

faithfulness---to that time when we get to see this covenant-keeping God face to face and rejoice eternally that he's taken sinners and he's saved them. He's taken us and saved us.

So when gloom and misery and despair and destruction threaten you, remember this---we're going to sing in just a second---remember the Man of Sorrows, who was acquainted with grief, who was stricken, smitten, and afflicted, not because of sins he had committed, but for every one of our sins---all the thoughts that are running right now in our heads, all the things that we've done this week and things we know not of that we're going to do this coming week. Jesus Christ paid it all.