

Psalms 11, 12, 13

Psalms 13:5,6 But I have trusted in Your mercy; my heart shall rejoice in Your salvation. I will sing to the Lord, because He has dealt bountifully with me.

These consecutive Psalms each share a common circumstance of reaction to ill considered word and thought. One of the challenges we all face is that of discouraging words and thought. David faced the same issue and found the path of triumph through faith.

Psalms 11: The Psalm begins with the conclusion, “In the Lord I put my trust.” If our trust is in the Lord, what does this look like?

The circumstance of the Psalm may have been the period when David served under Saul and Saul was growing jealous and turning against him. The counsel of David’s friends was, “Flee as a bird to your mountain...” They were looking at the real threat that David faced and they came to, what was for them, an inevitable conclusion, that is, that it was time to go. They were saying, “If the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do?” Effectively they were saying that things were out of control and that it really did no good to speak of what was right, that in these chaotic times you need to save your life while you can. These sentiments disconnected God from the times. They assumed that God had

nothing to say and that He would not act on behalf of the faithful. He could not when the forces of evil were clearly so powerful.

But David answered, “The Lord is in His Holy Temple, the Lord’s throne is in heaven. His eyes behold...” In other words David was saying that God is still on His throne and He has not gone anywhere. He is as He has always been. He is the arbiter in the battle between right and wrong and He will always remain on the side of the righteous. “For the Lord is righteous, He loves righteousness...”

Psalms 12: Where in the previous Psalm it was the counsel of friends that failed to take into account the faithfulness of God, here it seems to the Psalmist that everyone has fallen into godlessness. David feels isolated by his spiritual insight. He is crying out as he asks if there is not anyone left who sees what he sees. Instead, everyone all around is full of idle talk, flattering one another with a double heart. In all of this the Lord is forgotten. Life is conducted as if God has nothing to say to us. This leads to a breakdown in the culture. The poor are oppressed and people simply do as they please. David observes, “The wicked prowl on every side, when villainy is exalted among the sons of men.” In contrast, he knows that “the words of the Lord are pure words, like silver tried in the furnace of the earth, purified seven times, You shall keep them, O Lord, You shall preserve them from this generation forever.”

Psalms 13: David has rejected the bad advice of friends and he has recognized the godlessness of the culture and so now in Psalms 13, he faces his own faithless thinking.

The Psalm begins with accusation. David feels that God has forgotten him, abandoned him and refused to answer him. David is down and his enemies are up and where is God?

But even accusation is communication. If you are communicating with God then there is opportunity for the conversation to become healthy. David’s accusation becomes a prayer for help and insight. “Consider and hear me O Lord my God; enlighten my eyes...” David places the circumstance before the Lord and asks that he be enabled to prevail against those who are against him.

Praying for help reminds David of the times when God has helped him in the past. David had always trusted in God during those times, why would he not do so again? In fact, there was quite a history of God coming through for him and so David is able to come back to faith and hope. “But I have trusted in Your mercy; my heart shall rejoice in Your salvation. I will sing to the Lord, because He has dealt bountifully with me.”