

Psalms 56,57,59

Psalms 56:3,4 Whenever I am afraid, I will trust in You. In God (I will praise His word), In God I have put my trust; I will not fear. What can flesh do to me?

These three psalms were written when David's life was threatened during the time when he was fleeing from Saul. They represent distinct circumstances and yet the issue of faith vs fear is shared by the three.

Psalms 56: It is not a light thing if someone is seeking to take your life. You may not have faced such a circumstance. You have almost certainly been in a situation in which someone was seeking to harm you. Though the threat to harm is not as great as a threat against your life, the question of how to respond must be answered according to the same principle.

Notice that David's enemies were constantly after him. The pressure of the pursuers was intense for David. This persistent enmity required a response from David. The danger was too acute to ignore. A part of this attack was in the form of verbal assaults. Most of the time, people have a need to rationalize their actions. "All

day they twist my words; all their thoughts are against me for evil..." This is a weakness of the attacker, the moral advantage can be a hedge of protection.

For David, and for all who find themselves under attack, it is a question of relative power. If my mind is caught up in the fear of my enemy then I give to my enemy the power to shake my world. But if I can see that God's power is greater than that of my enemy and if I can have confidence in God's goodwill then faith can overcome fear. David gives a beautiful testimony of faith, "In God I have put my trust; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?" This trust is built upon the experience of God's care and provision and a mutual relationship of promises made and kept.

Psalms 57: In a similar circumstance David again expresses his prayers for deliverance and his confidence that God will rescue him from the danger he is facing. David does not underestimate his enemy but still sees them as less than God. He is helped by the certainty that he can take refuge under the shadow of God's wings "until these calamities have passed." David is kept in a steadfast and confident spirit by means of worship and praise.

Psalms 59: Here David presents his crisis to the Lord and calls upon God to "awake to help me..." But David takes an interesting turn in his thinking, from a description of the enemy and their intentions, David moves to a visualization of their complete and utter defeat.

"At evening thy return, they growl like a dog, and go all around the city. Indeed, they belch with their mouth; swords are in their lips; for they say, "who hears?" But You O Lord shall laugh at them; You shall have all the nations in derision. I will wait for You, O You His strength; for God is my defense. My God of mercy shall come to meet me; God shall let me see my desire on my enemies."

This visualization continues through the end of the psalm and David "sees" the complete destruction of his enemies and even further, he sees himself celebrating the great victory through the praise and worship that he will offer to God.

This is not out of the scope of our experience. Think of the football player who practices his touchdown dance... Look to the conclusion of your spiritual crisis and do the same.