Psalm 25

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Preacher: Simeon Nichols

[0:00] And turn to Psalm 25. I'm going to read it for us and then I'm going to hand over to Sim who is going to explain it for us, preach from it.

So let's read Psalm 25 of David. In you, Lord my God, I put my trust. I trust in you. Do not let me be put to shame, nor let my enemies triumph over me.
No one who hopes in you will ever be put to shame, but shame will come on those who are treacherous without cause. Show me your ways, Lord. Teach me your paths. Guide me in your truth and teach me for you are God my Savior and my hope is in you all day long.
Remember, Lord, your great mercy and love, for they are from of old. Do not remember the sins of my youth and my rebellious ways. According to your love, remember me.
For you, Lord, are good. Good and upright is the Lord. Therefore, he instructs sinners in his ways. He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way.
[1:18] All the ways of the Lord are loving and faithful toward those who keep the demands of his covenant. For the sake of your name, Lord, forgive my iniquity, though it is great.

Who then are those who fear the Lord? He will instruct them in the ways they should choose. They will spend their days in prosperity and their descendants will inherit the land.
The Lord confides in those who fear him. He makes his covenant known to them. My eyes are ever on the Lord, for only he will release my feet from the snare.
Turn to me and be gracious to me, for I am lonely and afflicted. Relieve the troubles of my heart and free me from my anguish. Look on my affliction and my distress and take away all my sins.
See how numerous are my enemies and how fiercely they hate me. Guard my life and rescue me. Do not let me be put to shame, for I take refuge in you.
[2:21] May integrity and uprightness protect me, because my hope, Lord, is in you. Deliver Israel, O God, from all their troubles.

Simeon, over to you. Wonderful. Good evening. Should we pray as we look at God's word together? Gracious Father, we just thank you so much for your word.
We thank you that we can trust it. Lord, that it is a light to our path. And we pray that you would speak to us from it now, that you would humble us, give us hearts that are willing to listen and change.
Lord, would I lead us in it well? And point to you for your glory. Amen. Well, waiting isn't always easy, is it?
Waiting for that light to turn green when you're in a hurry. Or when you're hungry, so hungry. And waiting for that McDonald's order number to appear on the screen.
[3:28] Or needing the toilet when there's no place to go. Waiting, it's not easy. And David, the writer of our psalm, he's waiting. And maybe you caught the repeated word hope in the passage.

Like in verse 21, my hope, Lord, is in you. And that's the waiting. And ESV literally puts it, I wait for you. And it's not a fingers crossed hope.
It's an eager expectation and waiting. It's like the groom waiting at the front of the church, waiting for his bride to arrive. Eager expectation. I think Hannah made me wait about 20 minutes.
So, not too bad. Could have been shorter, to be fair. But that's eager expectation. It's what Christians are doing today, isn't it? Waiting.
We've been forgiven. We've been made right with God. We're headed for eternal glory. But we're not there yet. And so we're praying, come Lord Jesus, bring us home.
[4:32] But that waiting's not easy, is it? Because our lives, they look so far from glory. We suffer, we doubt, we sin. Maybe you're related to David as you heard the psalm.

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He wants deliverance from his suffering, from loneliness, affliction, a troubled heart, enemies. What is it that you want deliverance from right now?
Struggles at work, illnesses, strained relationships. We probably all have something. We suffer and we doubt. Maybe David's words in verse 2 struck home for you.
Don't let me be put to shame. Well, shame here is not about being embarrassed. It's being exposed as someone whose trust has been utterly misplaced.
It's like the groom left at the altar. It's like a drowning swimmer who the lifeguard hasn't answered the call of. They've been let down by what they trusted in.
[5:39] They've been exposed as in the wrong. And I wonder, do we ever worry that our trust has been misplaced? I know that I do. What if I deceive myself?

What if I've got God wrong? Is Jesus really worth trusting? And ultimately, we want to know that we won't be put to shame on judgment day, right?
We want to be not just delivered from suffering, but saved from hell. Saved from hell, given eternal life instead. Will we be put to shame?
But the stakes are really high, aren't they? And so that's why we really need Psalm 25 today. It's a psalm for those that are waiting. It's full of prayers and promises made to be meditated.
And meditated on, memorized, recited. It shows us what we need while we wait. And what do we need? Well, we can sum it up in one verse, thankfully, because anything else would be a bit too complicated for me.
[6:42] So, verse 1. In you, Lord, my God, I put my trust. I need to trust my God.

David, the king of Israel, he's saying, I lift up my soul to you. He's trusting his whole self to the Lord. He's staking all of his life on his promises.
And he's claiming God to be his. Did you see it? You are my God. Like a child saying, you are my mum. It's a deeply trusting relationship. And we too can claim God as ours, right?
We're in his people. If we're trusting Jesus, we're under the perfect king. That king that David was a small picture of. If we're under Jesus, we can pray this too.
In you, Lord, my God, I put my trust. He is everything I am. My life, my dreams, my possessions, my friendships, my troubles too.
[7:50] And my eternity. I will trust you with all of it. No backup safety options. This is the way not to be put to shame.

Verse 3 tells us that. No one who hopes in you will ever be put to shame. So that's it, really. That's all we need. That's what we can have in our hearts this week.
When waiting is hard. I need to trust my God. So we've got the answer. But we haven't really seen what that looks like, have we?
And Psalm 25 really is that trust in action. So as we dive a little deeper into these prayers and promises, I hope that we'll learn not just that we need what we need to trust God for, but also how trustworthy and good he is.
Shall we see what that trust looks like? It's a trust that prays three things. Three things that we rely on God for as we wait. And we'll be taking the psalm as a whole for these.
[8:56] So hopefully you can keep with me as we dot around a little bit. So three prayers. First, we need to trust God for guidance. So take a look.

Verse four and five. Show me your ways, Lord. Teach me your paths. Guide me in your truth. And teach me. For you are God, my savior. And my hope is in you all the day long.
So David trusts that God's way is best and that he needs to follow it. But he's dependent on God to lead him in what is right. He's like a child walking with his father and reaching out his hand to be led. He knows that he can't do it without him. And wonderfully, God promises to follow through. Verses eight to ten. Good and upright is the Lord.
Good. Therefore, he instructs sinners in his ways. He guides the humble in what is right. He teaches them his way. All the ways of the Lord are loving and faithful toward those who keep the covenant, the demands of his covenant.
[10:06] So because God is good, he'll instruct, guide, teach those who are sinful and suffering in his way. And Jesus shows us what these upright ways look like.

In fact, he is the way for sinners, isn't he? He's the perfect life. And his perfect life is the model that God is teaching.

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So this is actually deeper than God promising to guide in big decision making about career and marriage.
And for me, struggles to decide which takeaway to order. He actually said he doesn't promise obvious answers to these. But it's a promise to guide us to be like Jesus.
Perfectly trusting God. Becoming loving, self-sacrificial, forgiving. God works all things for those that love him so that we'd be conformed to the image of his son.
[11:13] That's Romans 8. But how does this doing what is right, being like Jesus, how does that help us when it's hard? When we're suffering or doubting?

Well, so many ways. Can I show you a few reasons why becoming like Jesus helps us when waiting is hard? So verse 12, it signals that we're his.
Who then are those who fear the Lord? He will instruct them in the ways they should choose. So like the pulse shows that the heart is beating, wanting what God wants gives us assurance as we wait.
Being led Jesus' way is actually a sign that we've already started living with him. Verse 13, it also gives us assurance of future blessing.
They will spend their days in prosperity and their descendants will inherit the land. This is the good life. Think of the richest person on earth. I don't actually know who that is.
[12:18] But this life doesn't compare to this good life. The life that they have doesn't compare to this good life. And it's not just the land of Canaan promised for ancient Israel, but Jesus showed us that the true fulfillment of this promise is far greater than the riches and land of this world.

It's an eternal life with him. And so we can wait with confidence knowing all of our promises, all of God's promises are ours in Jesus.
Look at verse 14 then. Our next reason, it gives us friendship with the Lord. So the Lord confides in those who fear him.
He makes his covenant known to them. He befriends us and he walks with us. Try to get your head around that. Friends with the maker of the universe.
Walking with you every step by his spirit, making known his ways to you in his word. And making known to you all that you have in Jesus.
[13:29] Can you trust God enough to call him your best friend? I hope so. Because surely this is the goal of life, to walk with God in eternal friendship.

We get friendship with the Lord. And we can't trust anything else. Look at verse 15 with me. My eyes are ever on the Lord, for only he will release my feet from the snare.
So we can't trust riches or relationships or entertainment. They can't free us from our troubles. We know it's true, but we so often turn to them, don't we?
But walking God's way, it guards us from looking to those things for freedom. And it keeps us from despair when those things let us down. So becoming like Jesus helps us wait.
Mostly because it reinforces our trust in him. And lastly, I just want to show you verse 20 and 21, how it shows that our trust won't put us to shame.
[14:40] So a life of integrity, that is that his life would match what he believes.

That life of integrity would show that his hope really is in the Lord and not himself. It would show that he really won't be put to shame.
And that's what he's dependent on God to bring about. So walking in our Savior's ways, it shows that our trust won't put us to shame. And doesn't following Jesus' example of obedience do that?
As we try to live cross-centered lives, cross-shaped lives, as we live for the life to come, sacrifice for others, as we're willing to face ridicule for him, are we not being preserved from shame?
Because really, if you think about it, our life exposes our trust, doesn't it? Even when waiting is hard. If I serve my spouse when I've got back pain, it's a sign that I'm trusting Jesus' ways are more important than my comfort.
[16:14] If I get angry when I'm tired and I don't get my way, it's a sign that maybe I don't fear the Lord as I should. And wow, we need God's help in this, don't we?

That God would guide us to live out our trust. I wonder, are you praying that God would make you look more like Jesus?
Because we're reliant on him for it. And this is the good, the blessed way to live. As we trust in God's instruction and guidance and truth in his word, as we rely on his Holy Spirit to change and guide us by them, we show that we trust God.

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And so we need to trust God for guidance to be like Jesus. That's our first prayer. But hopefully you've noticed that there's a missing foundation.
Maybe little alarm bells have been ringing in your head as I've been talking, because look at my life. I am so far from holiness and wholeheartedness for God.
[17:28] I think instinctively we know that if holiness and uprightness and integrity is what we need, then we're all in trouble. And actually all the guidance in the world wouldn't help.

We need something else while we wait. We need our second prayer. We need to trust God for forgiveness. We can never move away from this.
It's the central background to the psalm. It's literally structured all around it. It's the middle, middle, verse 11, like the middle piece of bacon in a double bacon cheeseburger, but maybe a little bit more significant than that.
It's a central prayer. Forgive my iniquity, though it is great. So without this, everything else falls apart.
Without it, ultimate deliverance is not possible. It's like trying to make a bacon cheeseburger without the bacon, I guess. Even if he's delivered from all of his troubles in this life, he'd be guilty before God.
[18:35] That really is his fundamental problem. It's ours too. We all sin. Everyone in this room, everyone in the world, we've chosen to make up the way ourselves rather than walking with God in his.

And so like a groom that's cut off all his ties with the bride and hasn't even shown up for the wedding, how can he expect to marry her?
How can we expect to be with God forever if we've never known or pleased him? Our guilt, it should cut us off from God forever, cut us off from God's goodness forever.
And yet, we can trust God for forgiveness because of who he is and in spite of who we are. As David prays in verse six, remember Lord, your great mercy and love for they are from of old.
So did you see he appeals to God to remember who he is, who he's always been, a God of mercy, tender compassion, a God whose love is unchanging for all eternity.
[19:58] The God we rely on has chosen and loved his people since before the creation. We can trust that he's forgiving because of who he is and even in spite of who we are.

Verse seven, do not remember the sins of my youth and my rebellious ways. According to your love, remember me for you, Lord, are good. Don't treat me as my sins deserve.
He begs God not to remember. Not that God will literally forget. Oh, I don't remember when you did that. But that he won't add these things to the charge sheet.
And us too, we can join with David and pray this prayer. But we can pray it with a confidence that David didn't even have because we can see how that forgiveness is won.
We know that Jesus has taken our shame on the cross. He's won the battle over sin and punishment. Colossians 2 tells us he forgave us all our sins and cancelled the charge which condemned us.
[21:10] He's taken it away, nailing it to the cross. And in the end, actually his enemies were the ones put to shame. That passage continues, having disarmed the powers and authorities he made a public spectacle of them triumphing over them by the cross.

So now it's true what Romans 10 verse 11 says, everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame.
So is your sin great? Well, join the club. But what's your plan with it on judgment day? will you trust God?
Because when we don't ask God for forgiveness, we're essentially trusting in something else to deal with our guilt, aren't we? Our goodness, human opinion, maybe even a man-made idol.
It doesn't matter what it is, all of those things will put us to shame on judgment day because only Jesus can free us from shame. So if you haven't asked him for forgiveness, there really is no hope without it.
[22:26] I must beg you to do that today. But if you have, you can have confidence he has and will forgive us. He won't remember your sins.

He won't keep bringing them up to make you feel bad. Actually, that's what the devil does. So let's depend on him by continuing to turn to him for forgiveness each day and reminding ourselves who he is.

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We need to trust God for forgiveness. So is that it then? Is that what this trust looks like while we wait? To keep us from shame, we need to rely on God for forgiveness and Christ-likeness.
But, maybe you've been wondering, what about the troubles themselves? What about the actual things that make waiting hard?
Well, we still need one last thing to pray. We need to trust God for deliverance. Do you see his prayer starting at verse 16?
[23:34] Take a look with me. Turn to me and be gracious to me for I am lonely and afflicted. Relieve the troubles of my heart and free me from my anguish.

Look on my affliction and my distress and take away all my sins. See how numerous are my enemies and how fiercely they hate me.
So here's our model of utter dependence on him to relieve us of trouble. suffering. He's acknowledging that it's not what we deserve but asking him to be gracious.
So suffering exposes trust. What will you think of God? What will you ask of him? It's good for us to cry out for things to get better because it exposes that we think God cares and we think God can rescue.
It shows that we know that opposition and suffering don't discredit these promises. I don't know what you're going through today.
[24:50] Illness, conflict, persecution, struggles with sin. Whatever comes, we know that one day God will dwell with us in a perfect world where revelation tells us he will wipe every tear from their eyes.

There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain. And it's good for us to ask for that to come now. So that's our final prayer.
Keep crying out for deliverance. And I wonder as we finish will you make these prayers your prayers? Will you make these promises your meditation when you're not sure what's right?
Guide me. Show me your ways. Make me like Jesus. you are good. When you failed again, forgive me, take away my sin, guard my soul.
Your mercy is everlasting. When it's just hard, deliver me, make the suffering stop. Come Lord Jesus, you are trustworthy.
[26:07] We can endure when waiting is hard. by knowing our God and what he's done. And by trusting him for Christ likeness, forgiveness and deliverance.

But having said all that, it's a little bit of an unsatisfying ending, isn't it? In fact, there's no real resolution in the psalm. David is still living in that tension, promises of prosperity, eternity, and yet he's still presently suffering.
We're right with God, we're headed to an eternity with him, but waiting is hard in this world of sin, with doubting hearts and troubles that seem too big to bear.
Well, it's an unsatisfying and yet comforting end to the psalm too, because David's final prayer shows us that all of God's people are totally reliant on the Lord for every deliverance.
You see verse 21, no, 22, sorry, deliver Israel, so deliver your people, O God, from all their troubles. And you could say that this is Jesus' prayer.
[27:28] Jesus will bring all of his people home. So waiting isn't easy. We suffer, we doubt, we sin. And so in the unresolved, we pray, in you, Lord, my God, I put my trust.

I trust you for guidance, forgiveness, and deliverance. And our trust is well placed. Verse 3, no one who hopes in him will be put to shame.
shall we pray together? In you, Lord, our God, we put our trust.
Might that be our prayer? Deliver us from our troubles in this life, Lord. We are suffering and sinful. And as we endure those troubles, guard our lives from shame.
Guide us to be like Jesus by your word and spirit because we do trust in you for forgiveness and for ultimate deliverance.
[28:43] Come, Lord Jesus. Amen. Amen. Amen.

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