

New Year's Resolutions – One Passion (David)

Text: Psalm 27:1-6

Introduction:

1. New Year's resolutions are made by many over the Christmas/New Year season. Top resolutions usually have to do with things like weight loss, exercise and better money management. Gym memberships tend to spike during the early days of the New Year. However, according to one news article, approximately 80% of resolutions fail by the second week of February.¹
2. As a New Year opens before us as believer's, what sort of godly resolutions should we be making before the Lord? Instead of attempting to make many resolutions, lets resolve to do **"one thing"**.
3. There are several examples in the Word of God of godly individuals who aimed at "one thing" and were blessed as a result. May God help us to resolve the same "one thing(s)" in our own lives this year for His glory.
 - I. One Passion – Closeness to God (David) (Psalm 27:1-5)
 - II. One Priority – Communion with God (Mary) (Luke 10:38-42)
 - III. One Pursuit – Conformity to God (Paul) (Philippians 3:10-14)
4. Firstly, let's resolve like David to have One Passion – Closeness to God.

Look at...

I. DAVID'S CONFIDENCE (VS. 1-3)

A. Faith in the Person of God (Vs. 1)

Notice David's use of the possessive adjective "my" with each of these stanzas revealing his personal relationship with God. "The writers hope was fastened with a threefold cord which could not be broken."
(Spurgeon)

1. God was his light (Vs. 1a) – He pierces through the darkness of evil and distress. Light dispels darkness!
 - a. "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all." (1 Jn. 1:5)
 - b. Jesus said, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." (John 8:12)
2. God was his salvation (Vs. 1b) – He rescues and protects.
 - a. As a believer, I have not cause for doubt or fear concerning my salvation when I remember Who my Saviour is!
 - b. Notice how light and salvation are linked together. The truth of the Gospel brings light to our darkened souls and when received by faith we experience salvation.

¹ <https://www.businessinsider.com/new-years-resolutions-courses-2016-12/?op=1&r=AU&IR=T/#exercise-more-often-1>

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3. God was his strength (Vs. 1c) – He empowers and enables in the battle. The word 'strength' means a fortified place, stronghold.
4. Note: David's questions ("whom shall I fear?"; "of whom shall I be afraid?") are questions of triumph and victory and resemble the triumphant tone of Paul's questions in Romans 8:31-39. The questions have their own answer. E.g. Vs. 31 "*What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?*" In light of the fact JEHOVAH was David's light, salvation and strength, he had no cause for fear.

B. Faith from Past Victories (Vs. 2)

1. The viciousness of the enemy (Vs. 2a) The phrase "came upon me to eat up my flesh" is a graphic picture of hostile enemies seeking his destruction. Like wild beasts that would tear apart their prey, David's enemies had pursued him to destroy him.
2. The victory over the enemy (Vs. 2b) God foiled the enemy's attempts against His servant by causing the enemy to stumble and fall.
 - a. Illustration: Gideon and the defeat of the Midianites. Judges 7:21-22 "And they stood **every man in his place** round about the camp: and all the host ran, and cried, and fled. And the three hundred blew the trumpets, and **the LORD set every man's sword against his fellow**, even throughout all the host: and the host fled to Bethshittah in Zererath, *and* to the border of Abelmeholah, unto Tabbath."
 - b. Illustration: Jehoshaphat and the Ammonite and Moabite coalition. God spoke through Jahaziel the son of Zechariah, "Thus saith the LORD unto you, **Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not yours, but God's**...Ye shall not need to fight in this battle: set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the LORD with you, O Judah and Jerusalem: fear not, nor be dismayed; to morrow go out against them: for the LORD will be with you." (2 Chr. 20:15, 17)
 - c. A frequent theme in Psalms is that God is our defence (word appears at least 8 times)! For example:
 - i. Psalm 7:10 "My **defence** is of God..."
 - ii. Psalm 59:9 "...God is my **defence**."
 - iii. Psalm 59:16 "for thou hast been my **defence** and **refuge** in the day of my trouble."
 - iv. Psalm 59:17 "God is my **defence**, and the God of my mercy."
 - v. Psalm 62:2, 6 "He only is my rock and my salvation; he is my **defence**; I shall not be greatly moved."
 - vi. Psalm 89:18 "For the LORD is our **defence**; and the Holy One of Israel is our king."
 - vii. Psalm 94:22 "But the LORD is my **defence**; and my God is the rock of my refuge."

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viii. See Psalm 18:1-19

3. Note: Past victories provide footholds for faith that God will be faithful in the future. Example: David had assurance he could defeat Goliath as he had proved God with the lion and the bear (1. Samuel 17:34-37)

C. Faith for Prospective Victories (Vs. 3)

1. "Though an host should encamp against me" = a 'host' refers to a "mass of persons" (Strong's); an army or multitude of enemies. In Psalm 3:6 David expressed a similar sentiment, "I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people, that have **set themselves against me round about.**" When you see the smoke of enemy camps nearby, you can easily fear, especially if you are surrounded on multiple sides. But so long as we have the Lord with us in our camp, we have no cause to fear. We stand on victory ground.
2. "my heart shall not fear" = why? Because David had proved God's faithfulness. David had no need to fear the 'host' of enemies because he served "**the LORD of hosts**" (This title of God appears 245 times in the Bible!) Psalm 46:7 "*The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.*"
3. Illustration: The Syrian host and Elisha (2. Kings 6:14-17)
4. Illustration: When Judah was invaded by Sennacherib, king of Assyria, king Hezekiah said, "...Be strong and courageous, be not afraid nor dismayed for the king of Assyria, nor for all the multitude that is with him: **for there be more with us than with him:** With him is an arm of flesh; but with us is the LORD our God to help us, and to fight our battles..." (2 Chr. 32:7-8)
5. The way to know the Lord is on your side is to get on His side! 2 Chr. 15:2 "...*The LORD is with you, **while ye be with him...***" Exodus 32:26 "*Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, **Who is on the LORD's side? Let him come unto me...***"

Look at...

II. DAVID'S CONCENTRATION (VS. 4)

A. The Pursuit of His Presence – "one thing have I desired" (Vs. 4a)

This quest was:

1. A Single-minded quest – "one thing". David's heart was not divided. The presence, power and purposes of God were the consuming passion of his life. "Let all our affection be bound up in one affection, and that affection set upon heavenly things."
2. A Sought-after quest – "that will I seek after"
 - a. 'desired' = means David requested or asked this of God. The desire of his heart drove him to God for its fulfillment.
 - b. "seek after" = means David put his desire into practice! David put legs to his desires. "Desires are seeds which must be sown in the good soil of activity for they will yield no harvest. We shall

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find our desires to be like clouds without rain, unless followed up by practical endeavours.”

- c. Psalm 64:8 “My soul followeth hard after thee: thy right hand upholdeth me.” Tozer: “We pursue God because, and only because, He has first put an urge within us that spurs us to the pursuit...The impulse to pursue God originates with God, but the outworking of that impulse is our following hard after Him. All the time we are pursuing Him we are already in His hand: “Thy right hand upholdeth me.”
- d. Song 1:4 “Draw me, we will run after thee...”
- e. Psalm 119:32 “I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart.”

B. The Place of His Presence – “the house of the LORD” (Vs. 4b)

God’s presence was manifested in the tabernacle, the Jewish place of worship. David’s longing is to be near the dwelling place of God – ‘house’ (Vs. 4); ‘temple’ (Vs. 4); ‘pavilion’ (Vs. 5); ‘tabernacle’ (Vs. 5).

David had a passion to be in the place where God’s presence was! Do you?

- 1. In the N.T. age of grace, we have direct access to the temple in heaven, the holiest of all by the blood of Jesus. Hebrews 10:19 “*Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus.*”
- 2. The N.T. church, while distinct from Israel and the Old Testament temple system, is also called “the house of God”. 1 Tim. 3:15 “But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself **in the house of God**, which is **the church of the living God**, the pillar and ground of the truth.” Where is the glorified Christ pictured in the church age in Revelation 1-3? Standing and walking amidst his candlesticks. Christ is present in the lives of all his born again, blood washed children through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit but His presence and blessing are manifest in a special way in the assembly life of God’s people in the local church. When you skip church, above all else, you missed an audience with the King of kings and Lord of lords.
- 3. Challenge: If I told you that 100%, without a doubt, Christ will be here next service, would you come? I guarantee you He will be!
 - a. Matt. 18:20 “*For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.*” Context is the local church (Vs. 15-17)
 - b. Hebrews 10:24-25 “And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: **Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together**, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.”

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- c. Illustration: Thomas missed church on a Sunday evening and missed out on an encounter with the risen Christ! (John 20:19-24)
- d. **Question:** When you are forced to miss church (e.g. due to sickness), do you feel excited or disappointed?

C. The Preciousness of His Presence – “to behold the beauty of the LORD” (Vs. 4c)

1. ‘behold’ = to gaze upon, contemplate with pleasure. A clinging, lingering gaze. David was preoccupied with God and His will. His purpose in coming to God’s house was to behold His God. Let’s remember to make our glorious God the object and the focus of our worship.
2. ‘beauty’ = splendour, agreeableness, grace, pleasantness. Contemplate the beauty of God’s Attributes and the beauty of His Activities. “Word is used in Psalm 90:17 in connection with the works of one’s hands being established. So, David’s desire would be to see the delightful things that God does for his people, primarily in answer to prayer” (Ross)
3. Challenge: Never underestimate the power of concentration. What captivates your heart and mind will have a profound influence upon your life. It will shape and mould you! Is it God and His Word or the things of this life? (E.g. T.V., Hollywood, Unwholesome literature)
4. 2 Cor. 3:18 “But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.”

D. The Praying in His Presence – “to enquire in his temple” (Vs. 4d)

1. ‘enquire’ = to seek the Lord’s will and mind for guidance and direction. David came to God’s house not only to learn of God but to petition God.
2. This was the habit of David’s life – E.g. “Therefore, David enquired of the LORD...” (1. Sam. 23:2); “Then David enquired of the LORD yet again...” (1 Sam. 23:4); “And David enquired at the LORD...” (1 Sam. 30:8). Also 2. Samuel 2:1; 5:19, 23; 21:1)
3. The presence of God is both the place of contemplation and petition. We worship God, meditating on Who He is and we present to Him our requests. We seek His leading and direction in our lives.

III. DAVID’S COMFORT (VS. 5-6)

David had confidence in, and drew comfort from:

A. The Protection of God (Vs. 5)

The preposition ‘for’ introduces reason behind David’s seeking after the presence of God. David knew that there was safety, security and stability in God.

1. The Season of His Protection – “in the time of trouble”. God does not abandon you in your hour of distress! He is a very present help in times of trouble! Psalm 46:1-3 “God is our **refuge and strength**,

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a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; *Though* the waters thereof roar *and* be troubled, *though* the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah”

2. The Security of His Protection – “hide me in his pavilion”. God would be His refuge. God would hide him in a secret and safe place.
 - a. The word ‘pavilion’ is a booth or hut, “the allusion being, as some think, to the shepherd's tent or booth, into which he sometimes takes a poor sheep, and protects it from the scorching heat of the sun at noon.” (Gill)
 - b. Apparently in those days in times of battle, “the royal pavilion was erected in the centre of the army, and around it all the mighty men kept guard at all hours.” (Spurgeon) David was probably alluding to this figure.
 - c. God “shall give me the best of shelter in the worst of danger” (Spurgeon)
 - d. Psalm 91:1-2 “He that dwelleth in **the secret place** of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust.”
3. The Stability of His Protection – “set my feet upon a rock”. This could be reference to a rock fortress (common in Judea) out of reach of the swords, spears and arrows of the enemy. Psalm 40:1-3 “I waited patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and **set my feet upon a rock**, *and* established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, *even* praise unto our God: many shall see *it*, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD.”

B. The Power of God (Vs. 6a)

1. Reliance upon the power of God (faith) – “now shall mine head be lifted up”. This is the language of conquest & victory. David has assurance the Lord is going to fight for him!
2. Rejoicing in the power of God – “therefore will I offer...sacrifices of joy”.
 - a. David’s response to the goodness of God was to offer the sacrifice of praise. Hebrews 13:15 “By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.”
 - b. “I will sing praises” = singing an important part of our praise and the hearts response to God’s gracious protection and care.

Conclusion: What is your quest for this year? Money? Possessions? Or is it to draw nearer to Christ? What should we resolve for 2023? Resolve to have just **one passion**, a passion for God (Phil. 1:21)!