

## SESSION 2

# THE SHELTER OF GOD'S SALVATION

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### *The Point*

Salvation through Christ allows us to overcome any fear.

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### *The Bible Meets Life*

Electricity, running water, a car that gets us from point A to B—we depend on these things to get us through the day comfortably, but when one of them fails, we notice just how dependent we are. In Psalm 27, the Holy Spirit reminds us that the One we ultimately depend on is God Himself. We can rest in the shelter of His salvation, because in it, we receive the strength, guidance, confidence, and joy that we really need.

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### *The Passage*

Psalm 27:1-6

# WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

## **Psalm 27:1-6**

<sup>1</sup>The LORD is my light and my salvation—whom should I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life—of whom should I be afraid?

<sup>2</sup>When evildoers came against me to devour my flesh, my foes and my enemies stumbled and fell.

<sup>3</sup>Though an army deploys against me, my heart is not afraid; though a war breaks out against me, still I am confident.

<sup>4</sup>I have asked one thing from the LORD; it is what I desire: to dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, gazing on the beauty of the LORD and seeking Him in His temple.

<sup>5</sup>For He will conceal me in His shelter in the day of adversity; He will hide me under the cover of His tent; He will set me high on a rock.

<sup>6</sup>Then my head will be high above my enemies around me; I will offer sacrifices in His tent with shouts of joy. I will sing and make music to the LORD.



## *THE SETTING*

Some Bible scholars believe Psalm 27 comes from the time of Absalom's rebellion when David had to flee Jerusalem. In any case, this portion of the psalm reflects David's great confidence in God and the high priority he placed on worshiping God in His house. Whether fleeing from Absalom or another threat, or securely entrenched in Jerusalem, David's one great desire was to worship the Lord and gaze on His beauty "in His temple."

# ENGAGE

(15 MINUTES)



## ITEM 3

**Leader Pack:** Direct your students' attention to the *Who Will I Fear?* poster. Ask them about their fears. Reiterate the psalmist's message that because of our salvation in God, we have nothing to fear.

## GET INTO THE STUDY

**ENGAGE:** Begin the session with one or more of the **Engage Options** on the next page. (This is optional. If you'd rather skip the **Engage Options**, just begin with the first discussion question.)

**SAY:** We depend on a lot of things to get us through this life comfortably, but what we should realize is that above everything else, we must depend on God and the salvation He provides for us. In Him, we find all we really need.

**DISCUSS:** Lead students to discuss the question, "Why do people like to be in charge?"

**GUIDE:** Call attention to **The Point**. Explain that this is the key idea to keep in mind throughout the session.

## THE POINT

*Salvation through Christ allows us to overcome any fear.*

**READ:** Read and summarize **The Bible Meets Life** for your group.

Every person wishes for independence. It begins when we are toddlers stomping our feet because we think it will convince our parents to give us what we want. As we grow into elementary age, we think we can get our way by begging, pleading, and a bit of whining. Then the teenage years come along and our will kicks in even stronger. More and more we try to assert our own authority and make our own decisions. We desperately want to assert our independence. But as much as we want to go it alone, we never reach a point where we don't need others. When I entered college, I suddenly realized how much I needed others I can rely on. Getting married, having children, and taking out a mortgage also helped me see how much I need others to help me. Could we be completely wrong in our desire for independence? What if what we really need is someone who will help us—someone who will do for us what we cannot do for ourselves? What we need is a hero. When Jesus came into our world God gave us the Hero we need. For all of our efforts to gain independence in the world, there is one thing that holds us captive: our own sinful nature. While we are busy trying to gain our own place in the world, God has given His Son so that we can come back to the place He intended for us to be all along.

**PRAY:** Transition into the session by praying that your students would understand their dependence on God and place their trust in His salvation.



# Engage Options

## ► Lead with Action

Have one silly item on hand (like a toilet seat or rubber chicken). Announce to the group that whoever has the item in his or her hand is in charge for the next five minutes, and the whole group has to do what that person says. Select a student and give them the silly item. Before the session starts, secretly tell one student to try to steal the item while the other student is in charge. Also, make sure there is one student who does not obey the commands of the one in charge. After 5 minutes is up say, **"People like to be in charge. They like to think they have control. However, sometimes people don't listen. Sometimes life circumstances take over to remind you that you have no control over what happens. Fears can creep in at those moments. Salvation through Christ gives us hope. While we cannot control those things that frighten us, He is in control of all."**

**OPTION:** As students are walking into the room play the song "Our God" by Chris Tomlin.

## ► Lead with Atmosphere

Around the room, place items that are common phobias (like a spider in a jar, a clown mask, a balloon). Say, **"We all have things that strike fear in us. Maybe your fear is a balloon popping (pick up balloon as you say it and pop if you want), a clown mask (put clown mask on), or certain creatures (hold up the spider jar). There are also life circumstances that bring a fear deep in our soul, like a death of a loved one. Fears can consume us. Our God is bigger than our biggest fear. When we enter a relationship with Him, He takes our biggest fears and shows us true hope."**

## ► Lead with Media

Search the Internet for a video titled, "The Funny Phobias Workshop." Say, **"Some of us really are afraid of some crazy things. There are some fears we try to push out of our minds because the very thought of them makes us feel sick. God knows your deepest fears, and He loves you more than you love yourself. He offers us true hope, so that in all circumstances we can live without fear."**

**OPTION:** As with any media, be sure to view the clip in its entirety. Website content changes quickly, so make sure the video is appropriate before sharing it with your students.

## STUDY THE BIBLE

*The Point: Salvation through Christ allows us to overcome any fear.*

<sup>1</sup> *The LORD is my light and my salvation—whom should I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life—of whom should I be afraid?*

—PSALM 27:1

### PSALM 27:1

**GUIDE:** Lead the students through the three ways David identified God.

As David began this psalm, he identified God in three ways:

- ▶ **his light,**
- ▶ **his salvation, and**
- ▶ **the stronghold of his life.**

God's presence in David's life in those ways meant something else was removed: fear. As God rescued David, removing all of David's fear, He will remove our fear as well.

**DISCUSS:** Lead students to discuss the question, **"In what situations in your life do you often feel afraid?"**

**SAY:** We all experience fear. It can come on our hearts like a sudden attack or build up slowly to harass us. Fear can come in the form of relationship problems, hardships, or spiritual separation. But then along comes the Savior. Psalm 27:1 gives us insight into how God Himself has provided salvation in such a way that it removes any fear that we might have.

**DO:** Direct students to complete the **Action Point**, "Hiding His Word."

#### **Hiding His Word**

Write out Psalm 27:1 and make a commitment to have it memorized by next week.



# Commentary

## PSALM 27:1

We know that David was the author of this psalm, but we don't know the specific circumstances in which he wrote. Allusions in the psalm suggest David was facing a storm regarding relationships with others. Some believe this was the time David had to face the rebellion of Absalom, his son (2 Sam. 15–18), or the time David fled from King Saul—but we don't know for sure. The opening words “The LORD is my light” highlight the Lord's deliverance in David's life. God often guides His children through the spiritual light His Word provides (Ps. 119:105). Just as a flashlight illumines a path on a dark night, God's Word lights our way as we face the storms of life, whatever they are.

David also called the Lord his salvation. He knew God would save him from all his troubles. The word often described physical rescue from difficult circumstances; God could put the afflicted in a place of safety (see Ps. 12:5 “safe place”). The term could also denote deliverance through difficult circumstances, such as those the prophet Habakkuk faced when he foretold Babylon would eventually conquer Judah (Hab. 3:18). The word could also denote spiritual salvation. David probably had this in mind when he asked God to restore the joy of David's salvation after David sinned with Bathsheba (Ps. 51:12). Interestingly, the Hebrew word for salvation is related to the name Jesus (Matt. 1:21). The whole reason Jesus came to earth was to bring us eternal salvation.

The question “whom should I fear?” is clearly rhetorical—not expecting an answer—because the answer was obvious. David seemed to have reason to fear, but he would fear no one because the Lord was his light and salvation. No one could step between David and his Lord. David's words remind us of Romans 8, where Paul asked a series of rhetorical questions concerning who can stand against believers or separate us from God's love in Christ (Rom. 8:31-35).

The expression “stronghold (or strength) of my life” also stressed David's confidence in God. A stronghold denotes a place of refuge, providing a sense of shelter, protection, and security for whoever enters. The Lord was not merely David's stronghold periodically or on various occasions; rather, He provided security throughout David's life, at every turn. God also provides such security today for all those who place their faith in Him.

The question of “whom should I be afraid?” is the second rhetorical question of the verse, and the answer is the same. Because of God's guiding light, physical and spiritual salvation, and provision of shelter and security, David did not need to fear anyone or any circumstance.

**TIP:** Take the opportunity to ask each student in your group if he or she has a personal relationship with Jesus.

## STUDY THE BIBLE

*The Point: Salvation through Christ allows us to overcome any fear.*

<sup>2</sup> When evildoers came against me to devour my flesh, my foes and my enemies stumbled and fell.  
<sup>3</sup> Though an army deploys against me, my heart is not afraid; though a war breaks out against me, still I am confident.

—PSALM 27:2-3

### PSALM 27:2-3

**DISCUSS:** Lead students to discuss the question, “**What are some positive and negative ways to face our enemies?**”

**SAY:** God’s salvation does not just deal with the negative—the removal of our fear. It also does something positive: God’s salvation gives us confidence.

**READ:** Call on a volunteer to read the following:

David highlighted the evildoers, foes, enemies, and an entire army who were deployed against him. Yet David’s heart was not afraid; he was still confident. This great hoard of enemies confronting David began to stumble and fall. The only way such a thing was possible was because a greater Hero was on David’s side. David had decided to take delight in the Lord. He trusted in God because he knew the Lord’s power to be so much greater.

We deal with adversaries as well. They’re pretty similar to the ones David faced. Family stress, cultural craziness, and even wars around the world plague us. But just like David, we can gain confidence from our salvation, knowing that the enemies in our lives cannot overcome the victory God brings to us.

We have to choose where we will place our confidence. We can have confidence because of who our Hero is. Jesus’ victory enables us to have confidence. And such confidence will endure when it is based on what Christ has done rather than what we have achieved.



# Commentary

## PSALM 27:2-3

“Evildoers” or “the wicked” describe people who seek to do injury or to bring evil on someone. The words “came against me” literally can mean “drew near around me” and suggest a large number came against David with hostile intent. The expression “devour my flesh” clearly describes the evildoers’ intent to tear David apart, perhaps likening them to wild animals going after their prey. In the Book of Daniel, the similar expression “maliciously accuse” literally means “eat the pieces of.” It describes those who accused Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego (Dan. 3:8) and those who accused Daniel himself (6:24). In both contexts, the image of animals devouring prey fits well.

“Foes,” or “enemies,” translates a strong Hebrew word. It describes those who show a clear hostility toward others, vexing or harassing them (2 Sam. 24:13). However, God’s protective provision meant David’s enemies stumbled and fell. The term *stumbled* often comes in the context of judgment that comes to someone, while *fell* clarifies that the judgment was final. Indeed, the latter term occurs to describe a nation’s final defeat (Isa. 21:9). David’s enemies fell defeated in the face of God’s protection. The apostle Paul later used this imagery to describe the Jewish nation’s refusal to embrace Jesus as their Messiah. They had stumbled, to be sure, but Paul insisted they had not “stumbled in order to fall” (Rom. 11:11). One day, they too would believe (vv. 25-26).

David’s confidence grew as he began verse 3. He would not fear an entire army (literally a “camp”) of enemies. The picture here is of an entire army encamped around him, which may imply a situation in which David’s enemies had surrounded him. Indeed, David was in real trouble—except for the fact that God was with him!

David’s heart would not waver in fear and unbelief. God stood with him; therefore, David would prevail through Him. Fear disappears when we remember the One who is with us is greater than our enemies—greater even than Satan, our greatest enemy (1 John 4:4).

The first part of verse 3 describes David’s enemies encircling him. The second part of the verse describes war that breaks out against David. The battle has begun! Nonetheless, David remained confident because of God’s past faithfulness to him. We trust Him because we know He will walk with us through all our trials. He is powerful enough to walk with us and to deliver us.

**TIP:** Make sure students understand that all confidence should be rooted in Jesus. The gospel should lead every Christian to have confidence in Christ over any other thing.



# STUDY THE BIBLE

*The Point: Salvation through Christ allows us to overcome any fear.*

<sup>4</sup> *I have asked one thing from the LORD; it is what I desire: to dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, gazing on the beauty of the LORD and seeking Him in His temple.*  
<sup>5</sup> *For He will conceal me in His shelter in the day of adversity; He will hide me under the cover of His tent; He will set me high on a rock.* <sup>6</sup> *Then my head will be high above my enemies around me; I will offer sacrifices in His tent with shouts of joy. I will sing and make music to the LORD.*

—PSALM 27:4-6

## PSALM 27:4-6

**SAY:** What is “one thing” you want in life? We all want something. Many of us have one thing we want a great deal more than anything else. Many of us look at this “one thing” as the answer to all of our problems and the hope for all of our joy. But consider someone who has achieved something similar to what you are hoping for. The question you have to ask is whether or not that person’s accomplishments have brought real security.

**READ:** Have a volunteer read the following:

David recognized that he could only find security through the presence of God. No human achievement, level of self-righteousness and morality, or power-grab can deliver security to us. So David decided to ask for the one thing from God that would give him security: David wanted to dwell in God’s presence. He wanted to be in a relationship with God so that he could gaze upon God’s beauty.

When we ask for that same thing, we are submitting to the opportunity to live under God’s grace. His beauty is the representation of His character, which is full of mercy and forgiveness. We all need shelter, which is exactly what God provides to those who will trust in Him.

To give us this “one thing” we truly need—to dwell in God’s presence—is why Jesus came to earth. Jesus has done everything for our salvation and has given us everything we need to experience freedom from fear, confidence in victory over our enemies, and security through His presence.

That calls for one response from us: grateful and joyful worship.

**DISCUSS:** Ask students to answer the question, “How is depending on Christ in all aspects of our lives an act of worship?”

# Commentary


## PSALM 27:4-6

During David's day, Jerusalem had no temple; the ark of the covenant sat in a tent in the city of David (2 Sam. 6:16-17). Clearly then, a house did not imply a permanent structure; it described the place David could go to worship God. The term *dwell* implies a regular, customary habit of worship. "All the days of my life" further stresses David's desire for a lasting relationship with the King of kings.

David again affirmed God's protection from stormy relationships as he proclaimed that the Lord would hide or conceal him in His shelter. The word *conceal* is related to the Hebrew word for treasure and may suggest God's personal interest in protecting David as someone valuable to Him. The word is used of Moses' mother concealing him after he was born (Ex. 2:2) and to designate the gathering of knowledge (Prov. 10:14). "The day of adversity," or "trouble," denotes a general time when bad things might happen to David. The Hebrew word translated *adversity* is related to the word "evildoers" in verse 2. The day of adversity might bring trouble or evil, but God would shield David from such things.

David alluded to his intimate fellowship with God. David affirmed God would protect him by inviting him into His tent. The image of setting David high on a rock stands in stark contrast to the tent image. In the first part of the verse, the Lord offered His servant protection by concealing him; in the latter part, He established David high on a rock. Such a position—high on a rock cliff—allowed David to see enemies approaching long before they got close.

David then transitioned into a declaration of the results of God's favor on his life. David's declaration that his head would be high above his enemies calls to mind three images. First, God lifted up David's head, thereby showing him favor (Ps. 3:3). Second, God put David on high ground, giving him advantage over his enemies. Third, God's favor demonstrated to David's enemies that they were no match for God. As the verse proceeds, David indicates his desire to offer sacrifices to God. Such sacrifices could never repay God for all He had done; rather, they served to demonstrate David's gratitude and his desire to please God in every way. David declared that shouts of joy would emerge from his mouth as he offered his sacrifices, and that he would sing and make music to the Lord.



**TIP:** Point out to students that we all have things we want to see happen in our lives. The challenge is making sure that all those things focus on Christ.



# IMPACT

(10 MINUTES)

**TIP:** *Everyone has fears, but some students have real anxiety and may need further counseling. If any of your students seem to be overwhelmed by fear and anxiety, encourage them to seek help from church leadership and/or a professional Christian counselor.*

## APPLY IT

**SAY:** What will you do with the truth in Psalm 27?

**READ:** Ask for a volunteer to read aloud a few ways students can take what they have learned and **Apply It**.

- ▶ **Accept the Savior.** Trust Jesus Christ and let His salvation give you the freedom, confidence, and security that no one else can.
- ▶ **Surrender your fears.** If worry is a constant for you, memorize Psalm 27:1. Every time you are tempted to worry, recall this verse. Let worry be a “warning light” calling you to pray.
- ▶ **Share your faith.** You have friends who have the same desire for freedom from fear and a desire for security. Share with them the confidence and security you have found in Christ.

**GUIDE:** Lead students to consider which of the three suggested responses to the Bible study most closely applies to them and their current circumstances.

**ASK:** Which of these responses do you personally need to focus on most as you live this session out? Allow time for responses.

## WRAP UP

**PRAY:** Close in prayer, asking God to help students depend on Him to overcome fear.

**ASK:** Ask students about last week’s **Live It Out** options. Discuss any responses and encourage students as they choose to apply the Bible to their lives.

**GUIDE:** Encourage students to complete one or both of the **Live It Out** activities for the week. Let them know you will discuss them next time you meet.



For **free online training** on how to lead a group visit  
**MinistryGrid.com/web/BibleStudiesForLife**

# LEADER LIVE IT OUT

*Before the session, challenge yourself to grow with your students through this Live It Out.*

## Salvation Has Come | Romans 5:8

Record yourself sharing the story of how Jesus has changed your life through salvation. Write out your testimony first so you know what you are going to say. Include these elements as you share:

- ▶ **what your life was like before being saved,**
- ▶ **your salvation experience,**
- ▶ **and your life since Jesus became your Savior.**

For Facebook and Twitter, record a 2-minute video and upload it. For Instagram, record a 15-second version of it to use.

Notes:

# ONE CONVERSATION™

*Use these discussion starters to help foster a spiritual conversation with your family.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 27:1-6

**THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE:** Electricity, running water, a car that gets us from point A to B—we depend on these things to get us through the day comfortably, but when one of them fails, we notice just how dependent we are. In Psalm 27, the Holy Spirit reminds us that the One we ultimately depend on is God Himself. We can rest in the shelter of His salvation, because in it, we receive the strength, guidance, confidence, and joy that we really need.

## STUDENTS

**THE POINT:** Salvation through Christ allows us to overcome any fear.

- Discuss with your student some of your fears.
- How does your relationship with Christ overcome your fears?

Discuss the following quote: "A perfect faith would lift us absolutely above fear."<sup>1</sup> —George MacDonald

1. "Fear Quotes," OChristian.com, [cited 2 May 2014]. Available from the Internet: <http://christian-quotes.ochristian.com>.

**LIVE IT OUT:** Your student has been encouraged to do one or both Live It Out activities in the Personal Study Guide. Here are some suggested ways to help your student:

*If your student chooses to do **Fear Not:***

- Ask your student what he/she fears.
- Consider sharing some of your own fears with your student. Pray together that God would help you to overcome your fears.

*If your student chooses to do **Salvation Has Come:***

- Offer to help your student record his/her testimony.
- Encourage your student to boldly share with his/her friends.