

“I Trust in Your Lovingkindness”
(Psalm 13)

I. Introduction.

A. Orientation.

1. God is trustworthy.

- a. The quote on the back of the bulletin can serve to introduce us to this psalm.
- b. It tells us that no matter the circumstances, we can still trust that God is working out His good purposes towards us.
- c. “God is to be trusted when His providences seem to run contrary to His promises. God promised David to give him the crown, to make him king; but providence turns contrary to His promise; David was pursued by Saul, was in danger of his life; but all this while it was David’s duty to trust God. The Lord does oftentimes, by cross providence, bring to pass His promise. God promised Paul the lives of all that were with him in the ship, but now the providence of God seems to run quite contrary to His promise; the winds blow, the ship splits and breaks in pieces; and thus God fulfilled His promise; upon the broken pieces of the ship, they all come safe to shore. Trust God when providences seem to run quite contrary to promises” (*Treasury*, Thomas Watson).
- c. God is trustworthy, even when it appears as though He isn’t.

2. Why can we trust Him?

- a. First, because He never changes: when He promises, He doesn’t turn back.
- b. However, that doesn’t explain why He promises in the first place.
 - (i) Why does He?
 - (ii) It’s because of His love: what David calls His lovingkindness.
 - (iii) Because of this love, He has made precious promises to us.
 - (iv) Because that love will never change, His purpose towards us in life won’t change.
 - (v) We need to believe and trust Him!

B. Preview.

1. All of us will face difficulties in life.

- a. They’re very much a part of life.
- b. Life is not ideal; God never promised it would be; we shouldn’t expect heaven here.
- c. He did promise we would have trials; to test our faith, to test our patience.
- d. The question is, will we trust Him – with our ultimate safety, with our ultimate happiness – even when it appears as though His Word or His Providence is leading us away from these things?

2. This is what David needed to do and what he did.

- a. He was surrounded by his enemies.

- b. God had hidden His face of blessing.
 - c. It appeared as though he would going to die.
 - d. But yet, because he knew of the Lord's lovingkindness, he took courage, his faith was renewed, he knew he would see God's goodness again.
3. What I want us to consider this morning is the lovingkindness of the Lord:
- a. What it is.
 - b. Why it never fails.
 - c. And how it can be the greatest source of strength and encouragement we have in this life no matter what we must face.

II. Sermon.

A. First, what is this lovingkindness?

1. It is God's special love towards His covenant people.
 - a. The love He reserves for His people.
 - b. His steadfast love, His mercy, His tenderness.
 - c. It is not for those in the church merely through profession or baptism.
 - d. It is for those who genuinely believe, who trust in Him.
 - e. It is God's electing love, or His love for His elect in Christ Jesus.
 - f. It is that love that moved Him to chose certain from among all the sinners.
 - g. That love that moved Him to send His Son.
 - h. That love that He will never withdraw, no matter what happens in life.
 - i. Paul writes, "For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8:38-39)
2. How did this love come about?
 - a. In some ways, it is a mystery.
 - (i) God is holy; He loves holiness.
 - (ii) And yet He chose to set His love on sinners.
 - (iii) Obviously, we are not worthy of that love.
 - (iv) The reason is not found in us.
 - (v) It is found in God alone: He is gracious.
 - (vi) Why He would ever love us in this way would be a mystery, if we only considered ourselves.
 - b. But when we consider His overall plan, it isn't a mystery.
 - (i) His plan was to glorify Himself: to show us what He is like.
 - (ii) One attribute He revealed was His love, His grace.
 - (iii) This He did in Christ, to glorify His Son, to make us trophies of grace.
 - (iv) In Christ, He can love us.
 - (v) When, by His grace, He brings us to repentance and faith, He places us in Christ.
 - (vi) Once in Christ, our sins are removed, His righteousness is given.
 - (vii) God loves us now, because He sees us in His Son.

(viii) He loves us as He loves His Son.

B. Second, why will this love never fail?

1. Because God never changes.
 - a. He is the same now as He was at the beginning of the world, as He was before He made the world.
 - b. Nothing that's He's done has changed Him.
 - c. Nothing we've done can change Him; He knew about it from all eternity.
 - d. Nothing can change Him, because He can't learn anything new.
 - e. He knows it all.

2. And one thing He knew was whom He would love: He has loved us from eternity and will for all eternity.
 - a. His love for us never began, it has always been.
 - b. And it will never end; it always will be.
 - c. This is why His promises towards us will never fail.
 - (i) He never changes, and so His love for us will never change.
 - (ii) This is why David could say, "But I have trusted in Your lovingkindness" (v. 5).

C. Now lastly, how can this truth be our strength and encouragement in life?

1. We know that we will face trials; but we can also know God will work it for good.
 - a. Consider David.
 - (i) He was faced with some trial.
 - (a) It appeared as though God had forgotten him for some time: "How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever?" (v. 1).
 - (b) It appeared as though God was hiding His face of blessing (v. 1).
 - (c) He was searching his memory for the cause (v. 2).
 - (d) His heart was grieved by the apparent absence of God (v. 2).
 - (e) His enemy had the upper hand (v. 2).
 - (f) He asked God for help, to show Him what to do to restore that presence, to act on his behalf or else he would die (v. 3).
 - (g) If He didn't, David's adversaries would have him (v. 4).
 - (ii) But look at the change in verses 5 and 6:
 - (a) "My heart shall rejoice in Your salvation" (v. 5).
 - (b) "I will sing to the Lord, because He has dealt bountifully with me" (v. 6).
 - (c) Suddenly his anxiety and fear are gone; hope is revived.
 - (iii) What happened?
 - (a) Nothing in his circumstances; but something in his perspective.
 - (b) His hope in God was revived: "But I have trusted in Your lovingkindness" (v. 5).

- (c) He remembered that God loved him, He would always love him, and therefore he would again rejoice in the Lord.
- (d) Though it appeared as though things were against them, they really weren't.

b. Consider again what Thomas Watson said:

- (i) "God is to be trusted when His providences seem to run contrary to His promises. God promised David to give him the crown, to make him king; but providence turns contrary to His promise; David was pursued by Saul, was in danger of his life; but all this while it was David's duty to trust God. The Lord does oftentimes, by cross providence, bring to pass His promise. God promised Paul the lives of all that were with him in the ship, but now the providence of God seems to run quite contrary to His promise; the winds blow, the ship splits and breaks in pieces; and thus God fulfilled His promise; upon the broken pieces of the ship, they all come safe to shore. Trust God when providences seem to run quite contrary to promises" (*Treasury*, Thomas Watson).
- (ii) Even though the situation appears to go against what God promises, the promise is still there, backed by His love.
- (iii) When you can see that, believe it, hang onto it, it can revive joy.
- (iv) God will fulfill His promises to us, because He loves us.
- (v) He will do so because He never changes and cannot change.

2. We can extend this further.

- a. Sometimes we balk at God's commands, but should we?
- b. Hasn't God given them from the same loving heart?
- c. Shouldn't we believe then that they are for our good?
- d. Yes, because He loves us.
- e. We can do anything, endure anything, make any sacrifice, as long as we know God loves us.
- f. If we have that love, we have everything we need for eternity.
- g. But if we don't have it, we have nothing, no matter what we might think we have.

3. Application:

- a. If you don't know the Lord, come to Him now; love Him, trust in Him, turn from your sins; then you may know that He loves you and you can have this confidence.
- b. If you know Him and are going through difficult times, take comfort in the fact that He loves you – He will work it out for your good (Rom. 8:28).
- c. If you are struggling with obedience to one or more of His commandments, if you trust Him, you know He loves you – He wouldn't ask you to do anything that wasn't the greatest good for you.
- d. Trust in the Lord's lovingkindness towards you – not your senses, not your emotions – and experience the peace and joy that comes from that love.
Amen.