

### Lesson 3

## A Prayer of Trust

### Psalm 62

**Purpose:** To learn to rest more fully in God's love.

**Trust:** (n.) firm belief in the reality, truth, ability, or strength of someone or something; acceptance of the truth of a statement without evidence or investigation; (v.) believe in the reliability, truth, ability or the strength of.

Synonyms: confidence, belief, faith, freedom from suspicion/doubt, sureness, certainty, assurance, reliance, and conviction.

Trust is the characteristic Old Testament word for the New Testament "faith," "believe." It occurs 152 times in the Old Testament and is the rendering of the Hebrew words signifying *to take refuge* (e.g., **Ruth 2:12**); *to lean on* (e.g., **Ps. 56:3**); *to roll on* (e.g., **Ps. 22:8**); *to stay upon* (e.g., **Job 35:14**).

Humans come into the world as vulnerable creatures, completely dependent on their parents for their survival. For people to develop a healthy capacity to trust, they need to experience an emotional attachment to a nurturing parent. If children are not greeted with nurturing, empathic responses to their physical, emotional and social needs, or if the relationship with the parent is disrupted, the attachment will be threatened and the capacity to trust will be damaged. Later in life it may be more difficult for them to trust God.

The good news is that God can heal our wounds. He can rebuild our capacity to trust.

**Group Discussion.** We all have insecurities in our relationship with God, but we rarely talk about these feelings. Not now, but at some point, take some time to write something about your fears and insecurities in relationship to God's trustworthiness.

**Personal Reflection.** What makes a person trustworthy?

**Note from the ESV Study Bible: Psalm 62.** God's people sing this psalm to foster confidence in His care, especially as they are faced with people who use power and wealth to oppress them. The strong temptation in such a case is either to despair or else to seek security in power and wealth rather than in God.

The simplest way to follow the flow of thought in this psalm is to observe how the addressees shift: from a description of "my soul" and God (**vv. 1-2**), to speaking directly to and about the attackers (**vv. 3-4**), then back to "my soul and God (**vv. 5-7**), on to exhorting the whole of the worshipping congregation (**vv. 8-10**), and finally back to a description of God's trustworthiness (**vv. 11-12**).

This psalm invites us to risk trusting. It calls us to commit ourselves to God's care. Read **Psalm 62**.

**Discussion:**

1. God is described as a rock, a refuge, a fortress, a place of rest and safety that is reliable, permanent, constant. God is also described as strong and loving. Humanity, by contrast, is described as opportunistic (they fully intend to topple this tottering wall, **v. 3**), deceitful (blessing with the mouth while cursing with the heart, **v. 4**) and “only a breath” (**v. 9**).
2. When the psalmist talks about resting in God it gives a picture of being free of worry and anxiety, being confident that God has things under control and will do what He says He'll do. Any other thoughts?
  - a. Resting and trust both have to do with relaxing, letting go of anxiety, leaning into, feeling held and feeling secure enough to let down our guard and be vulnerable.
3. In **verse 8** the psalmist draws a parallel between trusting in God and pouring out one's heart to God. Pouring out our heart involves intimate disclosure of our deepest needs and feelings. It is a vulnerable act that is possible only when we have some sense that the other person will not judge us or reject us, or mock us. It is based in trust that the other person will listen, care, understand, empathize and respond to us.
  - a. The psalmist tells his readers to “trust in Him at all times.” We can depend on God and share everything with Him.
  - b. Be careful with whom you pour out your heart!
4. **Verse 10** gives a warning against trusting in material wealth. With the increase of material wealth many are tempted to put their trust in those things and, to a certain extent, take their faith and focus away from God.
  - a. God is our source. He gives us the power to obtain wealth (**Deut. 8:18**). Material things can be stolen, wear out, be lost or destroyed. But God is from everlasting to everlasting.
  - b. Sometimes people can focus so much on material things that they forget about their souls. See **Luke 12:13-21**.
5. Where else might you be tempted to place your trust, other than in God?
6. The last two verses depict God as strong and as loving. When the images of mighty rock, refuge and fortress are understood to be set in the open desert, where the sun was scorching, these images take on new depth. In the desert, the wind could be merciless and one could be an easy prey to enemies. In these images, God is seen as *reliable, kind, protective, concerned*. He is always there for us to run to, to hold us, protect us, comfort us and care for us. He is strong. He is loving. More specifically, he is strong and loving on our behalf.
7. The images mentioned in the psalms were common material realities of the time in which they were written. We do not see fortresses on our way to work. Images are powerful when they are connected to our everyday experiences.

- a. What are some images that might be used today to describe God as being strong?
  - b. What are some images we can use to describe God as being loving?
8. How does seeing God as strong help you to trust Him?
  9. How does seeing God as loving help you to trust Him?
  10. Four times in **Psalm 62 (vv. 1, 2, 6, and 7)** we see the word “salvation.” The psalmist says that “God is my salvation” and “from him cometh my salvation.”

The Hebrew and the Greek words for salvation imply the ideas of *deliverance, safety, preservation, healing, and soundness*. Salvation is the great inclusive word of the Gospel, gathering into itself all of the redemptive acts and processes: *as justification, redemption, grace, propitiation* (the act of gaining or regaining goodwill of someone or something), *imputation (to put on one’s account), forgiveness, sanctification, and glorification*.

Salvation is in three tenses: (1) the believer *has been* saved from the guilt and penalty of sin and is safe. (2) the believer *is being* saved from the habit and dominion of sin. The believer is *to be* saved in the sense of entire conformity to Christ. Salvation is by grace through faith, is a free gift, and wholly without works.

11. **Verses 2 and 6** seem like a chorus in this writing. They are almost identical. In verse 2 we see the words, “I shall not be greatly moved.” But in **verse 6** the word “greatly” is not there, as if to say he shall not be moved at all. It gives the sense that the psalmist is speaking with more confidence or trust in God being his defense or high place.

As David’s faith in God advances to an unshaken “stayness,” so his joy in God improves itself into a holy triumph (**v. 7**): In God is my salvation and my glory.

**Prayer:** Spend some time thanking God for His strength and love and trust.

#### **Now or Later**

Write a psalm (or personal prayer) expressing your current feelings about trusting God. Include any fears, hesitations, longings, hope or gratitude you may have.

**Homework:** A Prayer of Distress. Read **Psalm 57**