

## Leader Notes – Lesson 8 – Waiting is the Hardest Part Psalm 27

PLEASE DON'T READ THESE NOTES UNTIL YOU HAVE COMPLETED YOUR LESSON.  
YOU WILL ROB YOURSELF OF THE JOY OF DISCOVERY!

These are suggested responses – your group may have even better answers!  
Don't try to include everything and you may not need to use any of the below!  
I make these comments to clarify and give some additional thoughts and suggestions.

In case you don't have time to discuss all the questions,  
be sure to ask your group which questions  
they want to make sure they get to.

### DISCUSSION STARTER

- What do you want more than anything else this year?

### PREPARATION

1. Before you read **Psalm 27**, ask the **Holy Spirit to teach you and guide you into all truth** (John 16:13). We have been using the prayer, *Holy Spirit, think through me until your ideas become my ideas*, or King David's prayer, *Open my eyes to see the wonderful truths in your law*.
2. Read **Psalm 27** slowly and thoughtfully in at least *two translations*. As you read and reread, mark any words or phrases that are meaningful to you and put a question mark by anything that you don't understand.
3. If God had written this Psalm *just for you*, what words and phrases would he have underlined? Why?

### Encourage several to share

4. What main attitude permeates this Psalm?

### Confidence or Trust

### QUESTIONS

All the key statements of **Psalm 27** fit into one of three groups: 1) *statements of trust* where David declares with confidence who God **is** or what he will **do**; 2) *statements of intent* where David declares what he will do in response to God's actions; and 3) *statements of request* where David shows his dependency on God by asking God for what his heart needs.

5. Fill in the blanks in the chart below using the *NIV* translation.

\*\*The questions found in **27:1** are *rhetorical questions*. These questions don't require an answer because the answer is obvious. By asking the question, the speaker makes his point. These questions can be turned into positive statements. *Whom shall I fear?* is the same as *I will not fear*.

CONFIDENT TRUST	INTENT (I WILL ...)	REQUESTS
v. 1 This Lord is my <b>Light</b>	v. 1 I will not <b>fear</b>	v. 4 I ask and seek to <b> dwell </b> in the <b>house of the Lord</b> all the days of my life
v. 1 The Lord is my <b>Salvation</b>	v. 1 I will not be <b>afraid</b>	v. 4 I seek to <b>gaze</b> on the <b>beauty</b> of the Lord
v. 1 The Lord is the <b>stronghold</b> of my life	v. 3 My <b>heart</b> will not fear	v. 4 I ask to <b>seek</b> him in his <b>temple</b>
v. 2 My enemies will <b>stumble</b> and <b>fall</b>	v. 3 I will be <b>confident</b> even though a war break out	v. 7 <b>Hear</b> my voice when I <b>call</b> , O LORD
v. 5 In the day of <b>trouble</b> God will keep me <b>safe</b> in his <b>dwelling</b>	v. 6 At his tabernacle I will <b>sacrifice</b> with <b>shouts of joy</b>	v. 7 Be <b>merciful</b> to me and <b>answer</b> me
v. 5 He will <b>hide</b> me in the shelter of his tabernacle	v. 6 I will <b>sing</b> and make <b>music</b> to the Lord	v. 9 Do not <b>hide</b> your <b>face</b> from me
v. 5 He will set me <b>high</b> on a <b>rock</b>	v. 8 Your <b>face</b> , Lord, I will <b>seek</b>	v. 9 Do not <b>turn</b> your servant <b>away</b> in anger
v. 6 My head will be exalted above my <b>enemies</b>	v. 14 (I will) <b>wait</b> for the Lord (2x)	v. 9 Do not <b>reject</b> or <b>forsake</b> me
v. 9 You are my <b>helper</b>	v. 14 (I will) be <b>strong</b> and	v. 11 <b>Teach</b> me your <b>way</b> O Lord
v. 10 The Lord will <b>receive</b> me even if my parents forsake me	take <b>courage</b>	v. 11 <b>Lead</b> me in a <b>straight</b> path
v. 13 I will see the <b>goodness</b> of the Lord in the <b>land</b> of the <b>living</b>		v. 12 Do not <b>turn me over</b> to the <b>desire</b> of my <b>foes</b>

6. Consider all the *statements trust*. Which one do you desire to say today with great confidence? Why?  
**Encourage several to share**
7. Consider all the *statements of intent*. Which one do you need to hear yourself declare today? Why?  
**Encourage several to share**
8. Consider the *requests* that David makes of God. Which one would you put at the top of your list today? Why? **Encourage several to share**
9. What three personal descriptions does David have for God in 27:1?  
**The Lord is my light and my salvation;**  
**The Lord is my stronghold (protects me from danger)**
10. David uses the word picture of God as *light*. What do you think David meant when he said, "The Lord is my light"? Think about the characteristics of light and why light is so important and useful.  
**Light guides us; lets us see what we cannot see in darkness; light exposes; light drives away darkness; light warms, heals, helps life grow; is necessary for life; Light reveals and transforms; God as light means he is the source of all these benefits.**

11. What do you learn about *God as light* in each of the following verses?

Psalm 43:3 - – God's light guides us and leads us to Him

Psalm 119:130 - – God's light guides us and leads us to Him

John 8:12 and 12:46 - Jesus is the Light of the World. He came to deliver us from darkness. Whoever accepts and follows Jesus will never be in darkness but instead will have the Light that is true Life.

John 3:19,20 - Jesus is God's Light and he came into our dark world and exposes our sinfulness. Anyone who doesn't want to change and come to God hates the Light because it exposes what is really in their heart.

1 John 1:5 - God IS Light. There is no darkness in God at all. He is completely pure, holy, good. He is not a mixture of good and evil. There is nothing bad in God.

♥ In what area of your life do you need God to be light right now?

We need God as light when we need guidance, understanding, and conviction of sin. God's light surrounds us and keeps us safe from the darkness. God's light lets us see and understand the truth.

♥ Is God as light always welcome in your life? When might he not be?

♥ Light is often seen as a symbol of God's presence and influence and darkness is seen as a symbol of God's absence. Why is this a good metaphor?

Darkness and light cannot coexist. Light always drive out darkness, and darkness never overcomes the dark.

♥ Which is stronger, darkness or light?

Picture two rooms right next to each other with a door that connects them. One room is full of light and the other is completely dark. When the door is opened, what happens? Light floods the dark room. The darkness in the dark room never diminishes the light in the light room

12. . Read 27:1 in the *Amplified* version. What is the purpose of a *refuge* and *stronghold*?

To protect and keep safe

What images come to mind when you think of a *refuge* and a *stronghold*.

Have several share; perhaps a castle, a fortress, a cleft in a huge rock will come to mind.

13. Read 27:5 in all four of the Bible versions. What three things does God do for us to demonstrate that he is our *stronghold*?

In the day of trouble, God our stronghold and refuge keeps us safe and hides and conceals us so that we are not harmed; He hides us and keeps us safe in his tent, tabernacle or sanctuary. He protects us by tucking us into himself; He sets us high on a rock, above and out of reach from our enemies and out of harm's way.

How does God do these things? What would this look like in everyday life?

We have inner peace and calm even when our circumstances are difficult; the hard times we go through do not damage and scar us; we might experience deep joy even the middle of sorrowful circumstances; we have inner assurance that we are going to be okay; we feel surrounded by God and we feel protected.

♥ What situation has driven you to God to find shelter and refuge? What words describe your sense of his presence at these times?

♥ Why do you think David could say his statements in 27:1-33 with such confidence? What would it take for you to say the same things with confidence?

14. What did David want more than anything else? 27:4

To be close to God, to gaze on God's beauty and delight in him, and to seek him or to meditate on Him in his temple

♥ Why do you think this "one thing" was so important to David?

Once you have experienced God's presence and closeness, nothing else satisfies. David knew from experience that being close to God is the best thing life has to offer. Intimacy with God satisfies us so deeply because we were created for it. It is the only thing that really fulfills our heart longings.

♥ If you could ask "one thing" of the Lord and have it granted, what would it be?

15. What is the connection between 27:4 and 27:8?

In both verses, David's goal is to seek God in order to be close to him. We see how important this is to David when he says it's the ONE thing he wanted and that his heart calls him to seek God.

16. Read 27:4,8 in the *Amplified* version. In your own words, write a definition of what it means to seek God's face.

To seek God's face means to pursue God and to ask for his presence. It means we do whatever is necessary to find and experience him. It means we know we absolutely need him and we won't give up until we see and experience his presence.

17. What do you learn about seeking God in each of the following verses?

Psalm 14:2 -

God is always watching to see if anyone is seeking him. The implication is that he wants us to search him out and he's waiting for us to turn to him.

Proverbs 8:17 -

God loves those who love him and seek his presence. If we seek God, he promises we will find him. When we find God, we find Light and Life.

Jeremiah 29:13 -

When we seek God with all our heart, he promises to be found. If we pray and talk to God, he promises to listen.

Ask you group: How do we seek God with all our heart?

Isaiah 55:6-7 -

This verse tells us not to put off seeking God and coming close to him. We can't count on God always being available if we keep putting him off. To seek God means I turn from my own way and my sin. When I turn to God and admit my need for him, he forgives and pardons and lets me experience intimacy with him.

Hebrews 11:6 -

Just seeking or pursuing God is not enough. I have to believe that I will find him and that God will reward me with his presence if I seek him with faith. God is watching to see if I'm sincere.

♥ Why does God require that we seek him? Is he playing "hide and seek"? What is his purpose?

Seeking God shows our commitment and desire. To be intimate is to be vulnerable and to share your deepest self. God desires to share himself with us but he will only be intimate with the person who takes the relationship seriously.

18. How many things can you find in **27:4-13** that describe what happens when God is "**found**". (Look for things in David's statements of trust as well as his requests to God.)

- v. 4, 6 – we will experience intimacy with God through worship
- v. 5 – God will keep me safe in the day of trouble
- v. 7 – God will hear me and answer me
- v. 9 – God will turn towards me instead of away from me; he will help me
- v. 10 – God will never abandon me
- v. 11 – God will teach me and lead me on an even, well-lighted path
- v. 12 – God will protect me from my enemies
- v. 13 – I will see God's goodness in this life

- ♥ What will you do (or have you done) to seek God's face? What do you expect to happen?
- ♥ *Where* did David want to seek and meet God? **27:4** Where is the temple today? **1 Corinthians 6:19,20** Where, then, do we meet God today?

We are the temple or sanctuary because God lives in us. We meet God in our inner being, his Spirit touching our spirit.

19. When does David expect God to answer his prayers? **27:13**

In this life – while he is still living

What does David say he will do in the meantime? **27:14**

David waits for the Lord being brave and courageous

*Waiting on God* means that we ask God for what we need and desire, but we leave the *how* and the *when* up to him (**how** he will answer and **when** he will answer). Waiting is believing that God really *is* good all the time (even while we wait) and that his timing is perfect. While we wait, God transforms us, getting us ready to receive his answer. Waiting strengthens our character by teaching us patience and dependency.

20. Read **27:14** in the *Amplified* version. What are some things we can do while we wait for God?

We can hope while we wait. Hope, in scripture, is not wishful thinking, but rather confident expectation. We can be looking for and expecting the answer. We can be brave and courageous while we wait instead of doubting and in despair.

- ♥ What specific actions can you take to show your faith while you wait for God to answer your prayers?

We continue to pray, worship, study, meditate, etc. In other words, we keep on keeping on. We continue to do all the things God has called us to do while we wait. We are active, not passive.

- ♥ About what concern do you need to continue praying, confident that God will answer in his own time and in his own way?

#### **RESPONSE:**

Answer one of the following "Heart Questions" on the back of this page.

- ♥ What have you learned about God's character in this lesson? What difference will it make in your relationship to him?
- ♥ Jesus said that if we put seeking God and his kingdom first, he will take care of our other needs (Matthew 6:31-33). Is seeking God first for you? Second or third? What distracts you from putting "first things first"? How will you deal with the competition?
- ♥ In your love life with God, where does he stand: a) Closer than your closest human relationship? b) More like a distant relative you've only heard about? c) Somewhere in between? Why? What will it take for you to get better acquainted? More seeking? More waiting? Both? Explain.

ON THE NEXT PAGE IS ALL THE "EXTRA SCRIPTURE" FROM THIS LESSON IN CASE YOU WANT TO MAKE COPIES FOR YOUR GROUP SO THAT YOU CAN EASILY READ TOGETHER THE VERSES REFERRED TO IN THE QUESTIONS.

**Psalms 43:3**

Send forth your light and your truth, let them guide me; let them bring me to your holy mountain, to the place where you dwell.

**Psalms 119:130**

The unfolding of your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple.

**John 8:12**

When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

**John 12:46**

I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness.

**John 3:19**

This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil.

**20** Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed.

**1John 1:5**

This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.

**Psalms 14:2**

The LORD looks down from heaven on the sons of men to see if there are any who understand, any who seek God.

**Proverbs 8:17**

I love those who love me, and those who seek me find me.

**Jeremiah 29:13**

You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.

**Isaiah 55:6**

Seek the LORD while he may be found; call on him while he is near.

**7** Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the LORD, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will freely pardon.

**Hebrews 11:6**

And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

**Matthew 6:31**

So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'

**32** For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them.

**33** But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.