

WHAT IS THE TESTIMONY OF YOUR LIFE?

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Text: Psalms 37:25

The right perspective can be a very powerful quality for a person to possess. Perspective is exactly what David had as he begins to write what we would later know as Psalm 37.

In my imagination I can see David secluded in his private chambers within the palace walls. As a father advises his child about the pitfalls of life, David sits down at his writing table to share with us the lessons of a lifetime lived with God.

Perhaps, reminiscing, his mind goes back to the early years of his life when he was a young shepherd boy tending his flocks. He remembers how the Lord enabled him to fight off the bears and the lions that threatened his sheep. At night under that huge expanse of sky and stars, with his sheep as his only earthly companions, he could feel the presence of the Lord as it seemed that God was walking through the hills and valleys. There was nothing to fear—he was never alone.

He took that same confidence in God with him when his father sent him to inquire about the welfare of his brothers who were in Israel's army. He went to inquire about the progress of the battle between Israel and the Philistines, only to find the army of Israel cowering to the threats of Goliath the Philistine. He remembers his brash boldness as he declares that he will fight the giant of a man, and the dismay of King Saul, as he refuses the king's armor and weaponry. In his mind, it is as fresh as though it happened yesterday. He can still see the giant fall before him and feel the exhilaration of victory. Nothing ever felt as powerful as when the Spirit of the Lord came upon him to do battle. And it was only the beginning of the great conquest for the Lord that he would witness.

His mind wanders as he sits stroking his beard, alone with his thoughts, when out of the corner of his eye; he catches a glimpse of himself in the mirror on the wall. As he turns to look at his image, he sees that his hair and beard are almost white and he realizes that he is no longer the young shepherd boy or for that matter the young king of yesterday. And despite his position in life, he is also aware that he has never become the man he had hoped to be, nor has he become the man that many think he is. Now a lifetime of joys and heartaches, troubles and triumphs, failures and victories now show in every line on his face. He finds it ironic that when he was young, all he could think about was what he was going to do for God. And now in the twilight of his life, all he can think about is what God has done for him.

Perspective is very powerful. It makes everything crystal clear. And for David, he clearly sees the goodness of God and feels true gratitude.

With a deep sense of satisfaction, he turns back to his writings, picks up his pen, and begins to write these words on the paper: *"I have been young and now I am old... yet I've never seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread."* If you look closely you can see that these words contain the lessons he has learned as well as, what I like to think, was the testimony of his life! ***Never forsaken! Never begging!***

He wants us to know and understand the *lessons* he has learned.

I. THE RIGHTEOUS ARE NEVER FORSAKEN (v. 25a).

A. Because God never forsakes His people.

The beauty of David's words are lost on people who think they merit the goodness of God. *"I've never seen the righteous forsaken"* was an important part of David's testimony. He knew that despite his great deeds for God he was only one of the "righteous," or one of God's people, and that only because of God's mercy.

Many of us have no problem believing that the Lord would not forsake the "holiest" of His people or those who appear to be closest to Him; but we doubt that He would cling to those of us who have so many problems being perfect. What we must know is that God never forsakes us because of fault, failure, trial or sin. It is against His nature and His person to forsake anyone. ***David knows this and can testify of many instances when God was there for him.***

He said previously in verses 23 & 24, "If the LORD delights in a man's way, he makes his steps firm; though he stumble, he will not fall, for the LORD upholds him with his hand." (NIV)

B. David knows that he was never forsaken in the times of opposition.

David is known as a skilled man of war. His victories and military prowess is legendary among the Jewish people. But in being a king and a conqueror one tends to make a few enemies and he knows that even he had too many enemies to overcome without the Lord.

In Psalms 55:17-18 he writes, “Evening, morning and noon I cry out in distress, and he hears my voice. He ransoms me unharmed from the battle waged against me, even though many oppose me.”

C. David knows that he was never forsaken in times of sorrow and heartache.

Many forget that David tragically lost two sons in his lifetime. First in 2 Samuel 12 his new born son died and in 2 Samuel 18 his rebellious son Absalom was killed.

2 Samuel 18:33 tells of David’s response to the news of his rebellious sons death. It reads, “The king was shaken. He went up to the room over the gateway and wept. As he went, he said: “O my son Absalom! My son, my son Absalom! If only I had died instead of you—O Absalom, my son, my son!”

This was not the musing of a poet. It was the voice of a broken hearted father. He knew sorrow but he also knew God. Maybe that’s what he had on his mind when he wrote in Psalm 23:4 **“Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.”**

D. He was never forsaken—even in times of failure.

David is possibly known as much for his sins as for his military victories. We all remember Goliath; but we also remember Bathsheba. But David remembers God’s forgiveness.

Psalms 32:1-5 David writes, “Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man whose sin the LORD does not count against him and in whose spirit is no deceit. When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer. Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD"—and you forgave the guilt of my sin.”

II. THE RIGHTEOUS HAVE NO REASON TO BEG (v. 25b).

A. Begging is the result of fear in a person’s heart.

There is the fear that they will not receive—that no one will have compassion. There is the fear that their need will not be met—that they will do without. There is the fear of what the future holds—that all will be lost
David knew that God could and would bless him in spite of his enemies.

Maybe that’s why David said in Psalms 23:5 “You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.” (NIV)

B. Begging is the act of a desperate person.

To beg is to be unsure of the nature of the one who has something to give. Begging is the act of a person who has nowhere else to turn and yet still has no assurance that they have found help.
Begging is the act of humbling oneself with no assurance of being lifted up.

C. ASKING is God's plan for provision.

The scripture doesn't teach that God's people will never suffer need. However, it does teach that the Lord will meet every need.

Jesus said in Matthew 7:7-8, "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened."

David realized that we have no reason to live in fear or desperation because our Father in heaven knows that we have needs.

David's testimony in Psalms 23:1 was, "The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not be in want." (NIV)

CONCLUSION

Is the testimony of your life one of dissatisfaction and inconsistency and always looking for something that never fulfills, if so, then perhaps you can identify with the following newspaper article written by a fourteen-year-old boy named Jason Leman. It's entitled: *Present Tense*.

Present Tense

It was spring.

But it was summer I wanted—the warm days and great outdoors.

It was summer.

But it was fall I wanted—the colorful leaves and the cool dry air.

And it was fall.

But it was winter I wanted—the beautiful snow and the joy of the holiday season.

It was winter.

But it was spring I wanted—the warmth and the blossoming of nature.

I was a child.

But it was adulthood I wanted—the freedom and respect.

I was twenty.

But it was thirty I wanted—to be mature and sophisticated.

I was middle-aged.
But it was twenty I wanted—the youth and the free spirit.

I was retired.
But it was middle-aged I wanted—the presence of mind without limitation.

My life was over.
But I never got what I wanted.

-Jason Leman

David was not a man who was always wishing for something else. He had sought the Lord all his life and that's why he was able to look back over his life with great confidence—not because of all that he had done or because he was a great man—but because of all that the Lord had done for him.

His testimony could have been, *“I’ve lived a long time, I’ve made my mistakes and committed my share of sins; but I’ve never seen God forsake His people and I’ve never known God to let His people become beggars. All my life the Lord has been good to me, what more could I ask for in this world?”*

Ultimately, all of our worldly pursuits will leave us empty and wanting; *yet a relationship with the Lord will fully satisfy*. Let me ask you, If you were to look back over your life today, what would you find that truly satisfied? David found that he knew the faithfulness of God and that was all the satisfaction that he needed.

How about you?

- ▶ Do you know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior?
- ▶ Is He everything to you?
- ▶ Do you truly trust him?