**Rhythms of Grace**

**Preaching to Yourself**

Psalm 62

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We started the year with a series called the Rhythms of Grace, looking at the rhythms of discipleship, those habits God uses to produce spiritual growth, becoming conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. We have looked at priorities, Scripture, prayer, community, hospitality, generosity, and last week fasting. Today I want to look at a rhythm you may or may not have ever considered, preaching to yourself. Most of us come most Sunday mornings because we value preaching. You may even listen to sermons throughout the week because you want to learn and grow. But one of the most powerful forms of preaching may be one of the most neglected, preaching to yourself. Preaching to yourself is calling yourself to apply biblical truth to experience transforming power of the gospel for repentance, ongoing faith, and obedience. Spiritual growth requires more than just reading the word or listening to preaching, we must apply the truth to our hearts and seek to obey it. Turn to Psalm 62 and let’s consider todays message, Preaching to Yourself. The psalm describes David’s experience, his faith is being tested, his faith feels weak. He affirms trust in God alone and then preaches first to himself and then to the congregation to seek refuge in God alone. My big idea is preaching to yourself is a consistent means to fight sin and unbelief.

1. **Waiting for God Alone (1-4)**

The psalmist, king David, is desperate because his faith is being tested and is faltering (3-4). Desperation was a friend to David. His adult life was lived under the threat of death. He was a fugitive, fleeing from King Saul for years. He led armies against warring nations. And he saw both trusted friends (Ps 55:13-14) and his son (2 Sam 15:10) turn into enemies and conspire to kill him. Like many times before, he feels weak and fragile. He feels like an ancient stone wall about to crumble or a rickety old fence ready to fall over from the battering ram of verbal assaults. He is describing how it feels when adversity comes, and faith is being tested to trust in God alone. Sometimes those moments feel like threats to our faith. We feel weak and fragile, our faith ready to cave to the pressure.

Listen to David’s response (1-2). In God alone I wait in silence. Amid the assaults, God is his rock, his protection; God is his salvation, his deliverer; and God is his fortress, an impenetrable haven. He is like Jesus asleep in the boat during the storm while his disciples are freaking out (Mark 4:35-41). We are not promised immunity from suffering in this life, but we are promised that God will sustain us through it. It is in adversity that enduring/persevering faith is forged, shaped and strengthened. This situation, like many others in David’s life, forced him to trust in God alone. But this did not come automatically. He battled unbelief (5-7).

1. **Battling Unbelief (5-7)**

David describes how he got to the place of trust in God alone. He is reminding himself of the source of his hope, God, specifically the promises of God (5-7). He is preaching to himself, battling his doubts, his faltering faith, his false beliefs that raised themselves up against the knowledge of God (Ps 73:1-3; 42:11; 2 Cor 10:5). When life caused him to doubt, he preached to himself, trust in God alone. God did not save us to be cowards, running from the fight of faith, but courageous warriors, who run to fight the good fight of faith (1 Tim 6:12). And God did not leave us without weapons for warfare. David’s weapon was the sword of the Spirit, word of God and the promises of God which he used to fight those thoughts and feelings that raised themselves against the knowledge of God. But you won’t be able to preach to yourself unless you know the word and meditate on it so that it seeps into your mind and heart. David understood that life is war and victory was only possible by wielding God’s promises (1 John 2:14). God’s promises are the fortress David fled to when he was afraid. David took refuge in God’s word. That’s why he wrote that every word of God’s word has power to revive the soul, rejoice the heart, enlighten the eyes, and reward those who keep them (Ps 19:7-11). When life pushes against our faith, we must push back with God’s word and promises. Instead of just listening to and accepting those thoughts, preach God’s promises to yourself. We preach to ourselves because the world is broken, the devil is scheming, and our hearts are corrupt and deceiving. We preach to ourselves because we need the gospel not to just save us but to sustain us. There are hundreds of promises in Scripture to sustain your faith when something or someone is threatening your hope and confidence in God alone.

Preaching to yourself:

* Read and meditate on God’s word
* Apply it to your heart and your life
* Don’t listen to and believe every thought that comes into your mind
* Reject those thoughts that contradict Scripture and the character of God
* Preach God’s word, God’s promises, and the gospel to yourself
1. **Preach to Each Other**

Then David preaches to the congregation to trust God alone because he is a refuge. He is all powerful and his steadfast love means that is more than able and he will do good toward those who trust him alone.

*Life Group Questions:*

Ice Breaker:

1. Tell us your name and what is a lie or untruth you have believed in your life?
2. Tell us your name and what promise of God has encouraged you in your life?

Head

1. What do we learn about ourselves from this Psalm?
2. What does it mean to have our faith tested?
3. What do you think would change in your life if you never doubted God?
4. What are some of God’s promises that has encouraged you in your life?
5. What does it mean to wait for God? What is the importance of alone? Why is it so hard to wait?

Heart:

1. Have you ever felt like David, where your faith felt weak and fragile? Explain.
2. Have you ever been in a situation where you felt all hope was gone? How did you get through it?
3. Where are you placing your hope other than in Jesus?
4. Can you recognize God’s hand sustaining you in your past?
5. Do you struggle that God loves you in particular? If so, how do you battle this feeling?
6. What is the balance between trusting God and making plans and methods or other help for deliverance?
7. Why do we tend to trust in other things? What do you tent to trust?

Hand:

1. One way we trust God is pouring out our hearts in prayer. What do you need prayer for?
2. Verses 11-12 speak of the power, love, and justice of God. How are each of these evidenced in the cross of Jesus?
3. How is God asking you to apply this passage to your life?