

God's Presence Comforts and Assures

(Updated 10/2020; Dr. Baines, Jr.)

Read: Psalms 63:1-11

Summary Highlights: In vss. 1-5, the writer (i.e., many believe that it is David who is writing about being on the run from his son, Absalom, see II Sam. 15-18) declares that God is his God. The writer longs for a closer connection with God, as he used to have in the sanctuary. The loving kindness of God inspires the writer to praise God with lips and lifted hands.

In vss. 6-8, the writer talks about meditating on God at night, as he lies in his bed. God's historic help inspires continued rejoicing. The writer's soul longs to be in closer fellowship with God (i.e., follow hard after thee).

In vss. 9-11, the writer talks about his enemies. His enemies are to go to the lower parts of the Earth, fall to the sword, and be eaten by foxes. The king (i.e., David) shall rejoice in God, but lying mouths will be stopped.

Introduction: A key idea in today's lesson is that David trusted and praised God, in spite of his troubled circumstances. Prayerfully, we will be challenged to trust and praise God, in spite of our troubled circumstances as well.

Applications:

1. Faith for distant times. Notice in vs. 1 that sin and circumstances can strain one's fellowship with God. The sin of Absalom's revolt and the circumstances that it presented for his father, David, nurtured the distance that David feels in the text. We ought not to think it strange when troubles make us feel distant from God. *Let's work on developing a faith in God that can sustain us, even when we don't feel God's presence.* Our faith should be stronger than what we feel or see. This kind of faith is nurtured by prayerfully studying and obeying God's word with the support of others. The more we learn about and obey God, the more we will trust Him to take care of His own.

2. God's presence in the sanctuary. Notice in vs. 2 that David experienced God in the sanctuary. When a believer comes to the worship experience at church, he/she should experience the presence of God. That is, one should be keenly aware that God is present, God is speaking, and God is worthy to be obeyed. Too many come to church and experience the people and their problems more than they experience the presence of God. *Let's work on experiencing the presence of God, especially in corporate worship.* Some people may have to move their seats from distracting people. Make a conscious effort to focus your mind on God and what He is saying to you through songs, prayers, and preaching. Express your agreement with God's presence, so that others can be encouraged, as you are encouraged by others.

3. Praise inspired by God's loving kindness. Notice in vs. 3 that David praised God because of his confidence in God's loving kindness. The more we know about God, the more we learn to trust Him, in spite of what we see. God has been so loving and kind to us in the past that we can trust Him to continue being loving and kind to us. An expression of our trust is our praise. Our praise should be vocal, not silent, especially in corporate worship. Our praise should include some kind of movement – raise your hand, wave your hand, rock, or do something that shows that you are in agreement with the truth and are trusting in the God's loving kindness. *Let's work on praising God like we believe that we can count on His loving kindness.*

4. Meditating and praying. Notice in vss. 6-8 that David meditated on how helpful God had been in the past. There are many people who have problems sleeping. Learning how to meditate and pray can help us not only fall asleep, but they can help us praise God, instead of worry about our troubles. To meditate simply means to concentrate. Deliberately focus your attention on how good God has been. Talk with God about your thankfulness for what He has done and your confidence in what He is doing and will do. *Let's work on meditating on and praying to God.* Prayerful study can help us with even more to meditate upon, because what God has done for others (e.g., Hebrew boys, Daniel, Paul and Silas, and John) He can do for us.

5. Trusting God with enemies. Notice in vss. 9-11 that God can and will stop the enemies of His people. Even though some of our enemies come because of our sins, there are enemies that pop up in our lives because of our relationship with God and God's will. God is able and willing to handle those who try to stop us from doing what God is calling us to do. *Let's remind ourselves that we should trust God, instead of lowering ourselves to the level of our enemies or being afraid of them.* A host is an army. The Lord of host is the pictured as the ruler of the army. God can handle our enemies.

6. Praising God all of the time. Notice in vs. 11 that David keeps on praising and trusting God. There are some who only praise God when things are well or when they feel like it. *Let's learn to praise God all of the time.* God wants our praise, because it demonstrates a level of trust. Praising God helps us to stop worrying about our problems. Praising God helps and encourages those around us.