

St Andrew's Presbyterian Church Penrith

9 Doonmore Street, Penrith NSW 2750

www.penrithpresbyterian.com



ENCOURAGEMENT LETTER 22/10/2024

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

How are you today? I am thankful for a good holiday and time spent thinking through the book of Numbers.

Today's encouragement begins a series of encouragements from Psalm 62 with "Our Rest In God Alone" before moving on to church matters.

ENCOURAGEMENT: Our Rest In God Alone

How are you dealing with life? Life is not always easy, nor should we expect it to be. Trials and difficulties will come our way. They can hit us for a six. They slowly wear us down. They increase our stress levels. They can rob us of joy and hope. They can make us frustrated and angry. Some of us are feeling increased pressures related to the cost of living or the housing crisis. For others we face health challenges or the loss of loved ones. Maybe it is circumstances at work, at school or at home. Psalm 62 is a Psalm written for people struggling with life that we might find our rest and security with God. Today we look at v1-2.

My soul finds rest in God alone;

my salvation comes from him.

He alone is my rock and my salvation;

he is my fortress, I will never be shaken.

Psalm 62

The Psalm is David's reflection on who God is to him in difficult times. First, God is the place he finds rest. It is hard in difficult times to feel rested and relaxed. We can have sleepless nights. The thoughts in our head ceaseless in a litany of stresses and worries that you have to deal with. But David finds rest in God. He can give his struggles into God's hands and remind himself that God is bigger than life's trials. He can lay his life in God's care, and know that whatever happens, God will work for his good. He finds rest knowing God is bigger than the strife he faces and that God cares for him.

Second, God is the source of his salvation. The trials of life will not win out over us, even if the worst happens. Those who belong to God enjoy his salvation. We have been rescued from the punishment of our sin. He is with us to bring us through the trials of life. He will bring us home to be with him and ultimately save us from the struggle of this life. This is repeated in v2, when he says God is his salvation.

Third, he is our rock. He is a firm, safe place to put our feet. He will never shift and move. The flood of trials cannot wash us away from God. God remains consistently reliable and a safe place to run to in times of difficulty.

Fourth, he is our fortress. He is a refuge against the trials of life – against the storm and the barrage of hostile people. He is like the stone walls that stand between us and the threats that move against us. He protects and shields his own people.

Because God is all these things the Psalmist can say “I will not be shaken.” He will not cave into fear or stress for God is with him and will hold fast to him by his right hand.

We can say, “God is my resting place, my salvation, my rock and my fortress”, because of what he has done for us in Jesus. Yes, we will face trials. No, we will not be spared their difficulty. But here is the thing: We find all that we need in Jesus, our Saviour. He has rescued us from our worst fate – condemnation for our sin – so too he will walk with us in our sufferings. We can trust that though life hits us like a raging storm, though trials mount up like a massive tsunami, he will bring us through as more than conquerors because he loves us. So when you face trials hold onto Christ in faith – your resting place, your salvation, your rock and fortress – and you will not be shaken.

ENGAGING WITH GOD #7: The Big Picture

Our next engaging with God seminar is on Wednesday 20th November at 7.00pm in the church building. We will be bringing it all together as we think how all we have looked at helps us live a life that engages with God.

JERICHO ROAD: ONLINE CHAPLAINCY PRATER EVENT

Tomorrow (Saturday 26th) Jericho Rd are hosting an Online Prayer Event for their Chaplains. It begins at 9am online to pray for and support Jericho Rd chaplains in hospitals, prisons and emergency services at <https://jerichoroad.org.au/events>

COMMUNITY PANTRY: CHRISTMAS

As we approach Christmas, we would love some donations of Christmas gifts for all ages so we can offer our guests an opportunity for affordable Christmas shopping.

“PRAISE THE LORD” – AN AFTERNOON OF HYMNS AND CAROLS

On Saturday 23rd November at 2.00pm we are having an afternoon of hymn singing and Christmas carols followed by afternoon tea.

FINAL COMMENTS

*God is our refuge and strength,
an ever-present help in trouble.*

Psalm 46:1

As always, love and prayers,
Steve