



Don't Lose Your Confidence

The cave of Adullam was a far cry from his father's sheep fields, but it was there that David sought refuge from his enemies. Soon news arrived of the deaths of the priests of Nob—men who weeks earlier had given him and war-wearied men shelter from the hot pursuit of King Saul.

The hunt for David was intensifying and God's future king knew it. His life was on the line and his confidence was slipping. Saul was consumed with one thing—killing the man whom he knew would one day take his place. David was Saul's personal target.

Maybe you have felt like David—pursued by an adversary of doubt, fear, hopelessness, or rejection. No amount of words or explanation spoken can soften the blows of those who want to hurt you. They are up for the chase and fit for their mission, which is to tempt you into quitting—tossing in the towel of life and running to a cave of mere existence.

Can This Be Happening To Me?

There is little wonder as to why David hesitated when God commanded him to go to Keilah and fight the Philistines (1 Samuel 23:1). He had been running for so long, hiding in places that he was sure that no one would think to search, and making plans for escape to regions beyond the grasp of a jealousy-driven king that he had forgotten what it was like to sense the call of God. More importantly, his faith was being tested – but his confidence would be regained.

David's men were suspicious, too. Their shoulders were stiff from nights spent on a cold cave floor, their hearts fearful of yet another siege and another battle where they would escape with barely their lives. "Here in Judah we are afraid. How much more, then, if we go to Keilah against the Philistine forces" (1 Samuel 23:3)!

Their confidence was on the verge of being broken; the light of their hope was all but blown out. At a time when we would expect God to have mercy on these men by giving them a commission that was soft and appealing, He sent them straight into a battle and commissioned them to a task that required great physical and emotional strength.

Instead of allowing them to roll over and pull the covers of their bed rolls over their heads, they were called to suit up and go to war for a country that had all but forgotten them. One day David would reign as king over Judah. And one day, Keilah would be a part of his kingdom, but that day was in the future.

You may understand David's hesitation. Perhaps you know what it is like to be "hotly pursued" by the enemy. You have been betrayed, forgotten, and ridiculed. You know David's fear, frustration, and sorrow.

You feel as though the stresses of this life are threatening to stretch you past the breaking point, but God is commanding you to get up and get back to work – to do what He has given you to do. David was God's champion, but he also was the man – one who, like you and me, could be tempted to lose his confidence.

Make a Commitment: Trust God for your Future

When feelings of brokenness come, we need to turn to God. When we are tempted to react to someone else's anger, we need to seek the Lord's wisdom. When we are misunderstood and feelings of self-justification rise within us, we need to lay aside every thought of self-defense and run to God.

David had a wonderful habit of going to God in prayer. He sought the Lord's direction and by faith knew he would receive an answer. In Psalm 27, he writes, "The Lord is my light and my salvation – whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life – of whom shall I be afraid?"

"When evil men advance against me to devour my flesh, when my enemies and my foes attack me, they will stumble and fall, though an army besiege me, my heart will not fear; though war break out against me, even then will I be confident" (vv.1-3).

Having a sense of brokenness taught David that God controls our very breath. He is sovereign over our down times, our good times, our bad times, our sorrowful times, our joyful times, our cave times, and the times we feel as though we are standing in His palace before His throne of love and grace.

David learned a lesson that changed His life and it will change yours as well. It is this: there is never a moment when you are outside of God's care. He is sovereign and the enemy cannot touch you apart from the will of God. Sorrow and disappointment cannot prevent you from living your life for the Lord. God is working on your behalf as he was with David.

Gloom disappears in the light of God's sunshine. Fear departs when faith emerges. Peace comes as we learn to trust God. "My times are in your hands," writes David. "Deliver me from my enemies and from those who pursue me. Let your face shine on your servant; save me in your unfailing love" (Psalm 31:15-16).

The Refining of Your Faith

Why did God allow David to face such opposition? He was the anointed king – God's choice and a man after His own heart. (Acts 13:22) Many times, God places us in the furnace of affliction so that we will learn to trust Him in an even greater way. He refines our faith by allowing us to face opposition and failure.

David was focused on God, and he refused to be deterred by his detractors. He wanted to make sure that God was telling him to go to Keilah. Therefore, he inquired of the Lord a second time, and once again God said for Him to go.

There will be times when you want to give up – when the pressures of life will grow to a point where you just want to lie down in defeat, but God does not want you to sink into despair.

We may not understand all the aspects of a challenge or problem. We may try to imagine how God's provision will come, especially when we are facing a desperate situation such as a layoff at work or the death of a loved one, but we can learn to trust God and leave the outcome to Him.

The key to David's success was not having an iron-willed determination in times of crisis. Instead, it was having a simple, abiding faith in an unshakeable, unchangeable God. That is what made the difference.

Simply put: when life became difficult, David did not lose his confidence. He turned to God, seeking His perspective for the situation: "For in the day of trouble he will keep [you] safe in his dwelling; he will hide [you] in the shelter of his tabernacle and set [you] high upon the rock. Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord" (Psalm 27:5, 14).