

Wheelersburg Baptist Church 4/11/93 PM  
Psalm 54 "Where To Turn When You Need Help"

**Intro:** Illust: Story about 2 ants in sandtrap, "...we'd better get on the ball."

Tonight, before our baptismal service, we want to focus on a question.

Q: Where do you turn when you need help?

My girls love to play a game called "Who am I?"

Who am I? I'm not the kind of person you'd expect to find in such a jam. I am the youngest of 8 sons. Granted I have had my share of sibling rivalry, but that isn't the cause of this jam. In fact, lots of people say I am a very likable person. I am good-looking. I love the outdoors. I have a big heart. But in spite of all that, I am between a rock and a hard place. Literally. In fact, I spent many months actually hiding in a cave, fearful for my life. I was a fugitive being hunted like a wild animal.

What was my crime? This might surprise you, but I had in-law problems. Namely with my father-in-law. You see, my father-in-law was the king of our country. And though he was a very gifted man, he forsook God, and forfeited his right to rule. God announced that the penalty for his disobedience was that his kingdom would be stripped from him. And given to another. Guess who God said the new king would be? Me. God chose me to rule over his people Israel.

Well, you can imagine how that affected my father-in-law's attitude towards me. He tried to kill me. He fired his javelin at me, but missed, barely. I fled for my life. I ran like a scared rabbit being trailed by a pack of dogs.

By now, you've probably guessed. Who am I? I am David.

Q: Where do you turn when you need help? David can show us.

**Proposition: Tonight, we're going to examine a psalm written by David, Psalm 54. In it, David shares 3 lessons he learned firsthand about where to turn when you need help.**

- I. Lesson #1: Life is full of Danger (1-3).
- II. Lesson #2: God is the only Deliverer (4-5).
- III. Lesson #3: We are faced with a Decision (6-7).
  - A. Option one: Trust Self.
  - B. Option two: Trust God.

I would encourage you to write down, and think about these lessons.

**I. Lesson #1: Life is full of Danger (1-3).**

Notice the heading above the Psalm.

"To the chief Musician, on Neginoth, Maschil"

The Psalms were personal expressions that grew out of real life situations. Also, the Psalms were designed to be sung.

Q: Who wrote Ps 54? "A Psalm of David"

Q: When did David write this Psalm?

A: "when the Ziphites came and said to Saul, Doth not David hide with us?"

Don't miss that. The meaning of the whole psalm rests on that piece of background info. Who were the Ziphites? When did they come to Saul? What did they do to David? We'll find out by turning to I Sam 23.

In I Sam 18, Saul, the king of Israel and David's father-in-law, tried to slay David. In ch 19, he put a bounty price on his head. David fled for his life.

In ch 23, David found refuge in the town of Keilah. But while there he caught wind of a plot by Saul. So he left, and headed for the hills (13), to a desert-like place in the wilderness of Ziph (see v 15).

Q: How long did David stay there?

A: Until the local residents ratted on him to Saul. Who were they?

V 19 "Then came up the Ziphites to Saul...Doth not David hide himself...?"

Wow! Hollywood couldn't devise a better story! Do you know what happened? The Ziphites conspired with Saul to set up a trap for David.

V 26 "And Saul went on this side of the mountain...and his men compassed David."

Finally, Saul had his man! David was trapped! There was no hope. He had no where to turn. The world was against him. Then guess what happened? God intervened!

Vv 27-28 "But there came a messenger unto Saul...wherefore Saul returned..."

God diverted David's enemy. God rescued his servant.

Key: David wrote Ps 54 with that experience fresh in his mind.

Q: Where do you turn when you need help?

You may never face as grave a danger as David did. I hope you don't. But one thing's for sure. Life is full of danger. That's the first lesson David learned.

Listen to what he said about the danger he faced.

Vv 1-3 "Save me, O God, by thy name...For strangers are risen up against me..."

David's danger came from the Ziphites. Who were they?

Ziph was a desert town located in the eastern district of Judah. Did you catch that? The Ziphites were men of Judah. Which of the 12 tribes was David from? Judah. Listen. David was betrayed by men of his own tribe!

If that wasn't bad enough, think about this. Do you know what David and his men did in I Sam 23:1? He had rescued one of the border towns of the Ziphites from the Philistine enemy. What a way to say thanks!

The Ziphites were opportunists. They didn't care about justice. They didn't care about David. And they certainly didn't care about God (3). All they cared about was self. They were willing to betray an innocent man like David in order to "butter up" Saul.

Q: Do you know people like that?

Illust:

Here's Lesson 1: Life is full of danger.

All of us have problems in life. Maybe not like David's. But we have problems just the same. Maybe your problem is a conflict with a father-in-law, or a spouse, or a child.. Maybe it's a financial crunch. Maybe it's a boss that takes advantage of you. Maybe it's a person you thought was your friend who let you down.

Listen. None of us are exempt from problems. But the critical question is this.

Q: Where do you look for help?

Tran: Which brings us to the second lesson David learned. One, Life is full of danger.

## **II. Lesson #2: God is the only Deliverer (4-5).**

Vv 4-5 "Behold, God is mine helper..."

God is the ONLY deliverer. And notice how personal this is. David said, "Behold, God is MINE helper."

Q: How does God help us?

A: Look again at David's request in v 1.

V 1 "Save me O God, by THY NAME...by THY STRENGTH."

This is great! The God of the Bible delights in delivering us. He wants to get personally involved in our lives. And when He's on our side, that makes a majority!

Look at an incredible, NT application of this principle

Rom 8:31 "What shall we say...If God be for us, who can be against us?"

How can we know that God is for us?

Rom 8:32 "He that spared not his own Son..."

Listen. David's danger in Ps 54 was the Ziphites. David's deliverer was God.

Objection: You may be thinking, "Why doesn't God help me? I'll be honest. I'm having problems in my life. And I call out to God, but He doesn't seem to hear. Why not?"

A: The answer is found in Is 59:1-2.

Is 59:1 "Behold the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save..."

What's the problem then?

Is 59:2 "But your iniquities have separated between you and your God..."

Listen. Do you know what our greatest problem is? It's sin.

Ps 66:18 "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me."

Do you know why God was real to David? Do you know why David could say that God was His deliverer? David had come to grips with his sin problem.

If God's not real in your life, I want to ask you to consider a question.

Q: Have you ever come to grips with the danger of your sin problem?

Have you ever admitted to God that you're a sinner, that your sins are an offense to a holy God, that Jesus Christ went to the cross to pay for your sins?

Have you ever done that? Have you ever been saved? Have you ever trusted Jesus Christ to deliver you from your greatest danger, your sin?

You can tonight. Rom 3:23 "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through..."

You say, "I've done that, but God's still not real."

Here's another question, "Are you harboring known sin in your life?"

Illust:

Tran: Lesson 1, Life is full of danger. God is the only deliverer.

### **III. Lesson #3: We are faced with a Decision (6-7).**

Vv 6-7 "I will freely sacrifice..."

All of us are faced with a decision. And in this decision, there are 2 options.

#### A. Option one: Trust Self.

That's what the Ziphites did.

V 3 "they have not set God before them."

In Ps 52 David describes something else about a person who chooses that option.

Ps 52:7 "Lo, this is the man who made not God his strength, but trusted in the abundance of his riches..."

We can trust in ourself. Or...

#### B. Option two: Trust God.

David trusted in God. Listen. In v 7, David could confidently say of God, "He has delivered me out of all trouble." Because of that, he vowed to sacrifice to Him. He vowed to praise Him.

There's the options. We can either trust self, or trust God.

We'll all faced with a decision.

Q: Where's the right place to turn when you need help?

Ps 121:1-2 "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills. From whence cometh my help? My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth."

### **Conclusion:**

Tonight we are going to witness the public testimony of 6 people who have said, "I have chosen to trust God in my life. I have received Jesus Christ as my Savior and Lord."

Illust: Paul Robbins--Two months ago he came up to me in the Awana Grand Prix, and said, "I've got to have what you guys have..."

Illust:

Q: Where do you turn when you need help? Turn to Christ.