**Finding Refuge in the Shadow of Your Wings**

**The Word**

Read together Psalm 57

**The Big Idea**

Through the storms of life, our God is a refuge in whom we can find peace and protection. We can take every need to him and find peace in the midst of trouble.

**Questions for Discussion**

1. Consider together the image of God as a mother bird protecting and comforting her chicks. How do we fit this image of God together with other images we have of God, such as warrior or judge?

2. On Sunday we talked about going to God as a refuge through the storms of life but also acknowledged some of the other places we tend to go in trouble (anxiety, control, distraction, etc.). Consider a recent storm in your life: where have you found yourself going in the midst of that storm (positively or negatively)?

3. Consider the 3 ways David seeks refuge in God (Point IV below). Consider that list together and consider what you think needs to be added to that list in terms of how we can practically find refuge in God in our daily lives.

4. Read together Philippians 4:4-7. Spend some time praying for one another, particularly in the challenges you are currently facing.

**Digging Deeper: Sermon Outline**

I. Introduction

A. The psalms model to us living life with God through every human emotion and experience.

B. The psalms are God’s invitation to bring everything and anything we’re going through to him in raw and honest ways because he can handle it all and desires to walk with us through it all.

II. Two images of the challenges of life

 A. Lions (v. 4, 6)

 1. David was on the run from Psalm and he faced literal enemies

 2. Sometimes we too face literal enemies who are out to get us

3. Other times, our enemies are big more general and less personal, but the psalms give us helpful language to name some of those things (cancer, depression, etc.) as enemies

 B. Storms of disaster (v. 1)

1. Weather is a good metaphor for different seasons of our lives, and storms are a good metaphor for the challenges of life that pass through

2. Some of life’s challenges are like Orange County storms: they come gradually and you can usually see them coming

3. Some of life’s challenges are like Sierra Mountain storms: they seem to come unexpectedly as if out of nowhere

C. The storms/challenges of life are inevitable, so the question is not will they come or how can we get out of them but rather: where will we go when they come?

-Some of us go to fear and anxiety, others to control, others to denial or distraction

III. Two images of God as our refuge in the storms of life

A. A cave (see the inscription before v. 1)

God is like a cave: he can be a hiding place amidst enemies, he can be a refuge in the storm

B. A mother bird (v. 1)

 1. See also Psalm 17:8, 63:7, 91:4 for similar images of God as a bird

2. Jesus compares himself to mother hen longing to gather her chicks (Lk 13:34)

C. Both images convey a beautiful combination of both strength and warmth

D. Our mothers are often our first and greatest example of this kind of strength and warmth that allows us to seek refuge with in them when life is hard

IV. How David practically finds refuge in God

A. He goes to God in prayer with his specific need and desires (v. 1 and 2)

1. The psalms aren’t always these overly theologically sophisticated and reflective prayers. Sometimes they are just raw expressions of need: “Help! Mercy! Do something, God!”

2. As simple as it is to say we should take our needs to God in prayer, it’s remarkable how often we don’t do this as a first response to trouble

B. He reminds himself of who God is

1. He reminds himself of God’s love and faithfulness (v. 3, 10)

2. We can remind ourselves of who God is by regularly going to the Scriptures and soaking in his character, promises, and truth

3. We can remind ourselves of who God is by regularly looking back at our own story and examples of how God has been faithful through past challenges.

C. He prays beyond his own need to God’s larger purposes in the world

1. David starts with his own needs, but he also prays for bigger things (v. 5, 11)

2. When we’re in the midst of a storm, it’s easy to get very myopic and self-absorbed, and it can be so helpful to lift our eyes up from our current situation and be reminded of the larger picture.

V. There is a beautiful trajectory in this psalm

A. From fear to trust to praise (see especially v. 7-10)

B. Maybe David’s situation hasn’t changed, but his heart has found a refuge