**Psalm 57**

I. The context of the psalm

A. David is going through a time of distress and danger

B. He is on the run from violent men (v. 4-6)

C. He is crying out to God for help (v. 1)

II. God as a refuge and mother bird

A. God as Refuge (v. 1)

1. David hid in caves as protection from Saul, and a cave became a perfect metaphor for God as a refuge in times of trouble

2. We’ve all experienced coming out of a store into a place of warmth, safety, and protection

B. God as a mother bird (v. 1)

 1. This image of God is common in the Psalms (see 17:8, 63:7, 91:4)

2. Mothers are often our first experience of this loving, protective presence

III. Qualities that make God a great refuge

A. Warmth and strength

1. To be a refuge, there must be warmth, tenderness, and comfort (see Zephaniah 3:17)

2. To be a refuge, there must be strength to defend and protect from enemies (see Psalm 18:2)

B. Love and faithfulness (v. 3, 10)

1. Faithfulness (Hebrew: “emet”) = reliable, trustworthy, dependable

2. Love (Hebrew: “hesed”) = loyal love, steadfast love, a love that never lets go

-Analogies:

-Our wedding vows (for better or worse) are vows of hesed

-A mother’s love for her children is one of the purest forms of hesed in human relationships

3. Two key moments in OT

a. Exodus 34:5-6: God reveals his glory to Moses and describes himself as a God who is “abounding in love and faithfulness” (even after Israel’s sin with the golden calf)

b. Genesis 15:7-18: God’s covenantal ceremony with Abraham. He commits himself to Abraham no matter what.

IV. David is actually going through the process of finding refuge in God through the writing of this psalm

 A. He begins in a place of fear

 B. He brings his fears and concerns to God

 C. He reminds himself and God of God’s core qualities and commitments

D. He prays for bigger things than simply his own concerns: prays for God to be exalted (v. 5, 11)

E. He ends in a place of confidence and trust (v. 7-10)

F. Philippians 4:6-7 is another great example of this process.

V. Conclusion

A. Where do you go for refuge?

1. When life is tough we go to something as a refuge (substance, sex, distraction/entertainment, shopping, exercise, human help, etc.)

2. What would it look like to go to God for your refuge?

 a. Sometimes our enemies are external

 b. Sometimes our enemies are internal

1) When our own sin is weighing us down, our reaction is often to run from God as a judge rather than run to him as a shelter

2) But Jesus took on God’s wrath (he wasn’t sheltered from God’s wrath) so that he could be a shelter for us

3) He longs to gather us up and shelter and protect us (see Matthew 23:37)

B. On this mother’s day

1. Mothers, you have a great opportunity to play this wonderful God-like role of being a shelter for your children: a place they can always come to and receive love, care, and protection. This fundamental role is even more important than many of the decisions that tend to stress us out as parents (e.g. vaccinations, disciplinary styles, school choice, etc.)

2. Women, if mother’s day is a hard day for whatever reason, that is a great opportunity to find refuge in God.

**Discussion Questions**

1. Two qualities were mentioned on Sunday that make for a good refuge: warmth and strength. As you consider your own relationship God, which of those two qualities do you tend to focus on or gravitate towards most, and why?

2. Two qualities of God that David mentions twice in Psalm 57 are love and faithfulness (v. 3 and v. 10). How did Sunday’s message impact your understanding or appreciation for God’s love and faithfulness?

3. When life is challenging, we all have things we tend to go to for refuge and relief (e.g. exercise, vices, shopping, distraction, entertainment, more work, a human being, etc.). Where do you tend to go when you’re discouraged, tired or lonely?

4. How do you practically find refuge in God? Can you share any practices you have to help you do that?

5. Can you share any specific experiences where God has been a great refuge for you? How specifically did he play the role of a refuge for you?