

**IN WHO OR WHAT SHALL I TRUST?****PSALM 62**

The wilderness areas of northern Canada are about as remote a place as you can find on the planet. Once, a man got lost backpacking alone in an area of dense woods. For hours he wandered around trying to find the logging road that would lead him back to his camp. Finally, he came upon a narrow path overgrown with brush. He followed this trail until it came to a fork. There, at the fork, he saw a hand-written sign staked out beside one of the two trails he could take. On the sign was a message written in bold letters: "This is the only way out." Underneath those words the name of the man who made the sign was written. He was well known in the area as an expert animal trapper. The lost hiker wasn't sure he could trust the sign or its message. He felt tempted to take the opposite path instead. But then he noticed the sun was setting. There was just no better option. He followed the trapper's only way out and eventually found – much to his relief – the logging road that led him back to his camp just before darkness closed in around him.

Most of us get a little suspicious when we're told there's only one way to go somewhere or do something. And even if we try another way and end up being wrong, no great harm is done. But there's one time when questioning the direction we should move in can prove to be fatal not only for this life but eternity as well. I'm talking about what God says about life itself and how to live it. His message about life and how to live it is like that trapper's sign: direct, absolute, very much to the point. At different stages along life's journey, we all stand before those inevitable forks in the road. We must choose either to go God's way or to go in another direction. By the way, that's one way to think of Communion which we'll celebrate together at the end of today's service. Every time we partake of the bread and the cup of Jesus, we affirm our choice, our decision, and our resolve to walk God's trail in life and to live God's way.

In July and August, we're going to reflect together on several psalms that answer big questions we have about life and how best to live it. David wrote most of the psalms and he wrote the one we want to meditate on today – Psalm 62. Let's read it just now. There's something very direct, certain, absolute, and final about Psalm 62. One of the key words in it is a small one in both the original Hebrew and English. In Hebrew it's "ak," which in English means "only" or "alone." For example, David said this about God, "For God alone has become my Savior. He alone is my safe place.... Only God is my Savior, and he will not fail me.... Trust only in God every moment!" (Ps. 62:1-2, 5, 8 TPT) Here's a big question: in who or what do you trust? Where, in what, or in whom do you put your ultimate security? Lloyd Ogilvie, a pastor and author, put it like this, "Those who trust in God only have Him and everything else. Those who trust in God and anything else, end up without Him and nothing else." That sums up the message of Psalm 62 nicely. There are choices to be made about life and how to live it every day. David's psalm reduces it down to two fundamental choices. The first one is...

**THE "GOD PLUS SOMETHING ELSE" WAYS OF LIFE.**

One of the great struggles in life – even for followers of Jesus – is to believe God is truly enough to meet all of life's demands and needs. Our brain tells us God is sufficient. We have no trouble affirming He's the only One we can't afford to be or do without. But sometimes the way we actually live our lives tells a different story. We find ourselves developing a "God plus something else" way of life – God plus this, God plus that. We don't reject God by any means. But we don't put our full and final trust in Him and Him alone either. We want to add other people or things to strengthen our feelings of security and safety.

Sometimes, we can buy into a "God plus significant human beings" way of life. We place our trust and security in other human beings – parents, a spouse, adult children, or close friends. When we expect other human beings to provide us fulfillment, or meaning, or joy, or to meet our deepest needs, we're headed for disappointment. Why? We're asking human beings to provide something only God can provide. Yes, we do need other human beings and God brings some wonderful people into our lives who bless us with their love and friendship. But there's a place of ultimate trust only God can and should fill in your life.

David was aware of the temptation to put other people into a place only God should fill, because he alludes to two reasons not to do it. One, human beings are unreliable. At best, they can let us down. At worst, they can become our enemies. David said here, "But look at these who want me dead, shouting their vicious threats at me! The moment they discover my weakness they all begin plotting to take me down." (Ps. 62:3 TPT) Even when we try our best, we make mistakes, hurt feelings, and disappoint those who depend on us and love us. We're unreliable. Only God is always reliable and never fails. Of course, it's appropriate and healthy to trust other people up to a point, but God alone is trustworthy. God alone never fails.

Two, human beings don't live forever. David observed, "Before God all the people of the earth, high or low, are like smoke that disappears, like a vapor that quickly vanishes away. Compared to God they're nothing but vanity, nothing at all!" (Ps. 62:9 TPT) Our short lives are like a breath of air against the backdrop of eternity. Any and every human relationship – as wonderful, as loving, as fulfilling, as rewarding as it may be – will come to an end in this life. But our relationship with God will never come to an end. God alone is eternal; therefore, there's a depth of trust you should reserve only for Him.

Another "God plus something else" way to live we might call a "God plus human institutions" way of life. This week we celebrate our nation's birthday once again. Of course, be patriotic and have lots of fun thanking God for our country. But as wonderful as our country might be in some ways, America is not the Kingdom of God and it never will be. One day, the United States of America will cease to exist. It's not eternal. Sure, love your country, but don't ever put your ultimate trust or security in our government, or any political party, or our way of life. By the same token, our military, our educational system, our business establishment, our free market economy, our scientific and technological power all have their rightful place and purpose, but all of them will come to an end. Only God lasts. Only God is eternal.

David mentioned another possible “God plus something else” way of life. Call it the “God plus stuff” way of life. Most of us know in our heads money and the things money can buy won’t make us happy or provide real security, but so often our hearts believe the lie anyway. We admit none of us will be able to take even one penny with us into eternity, and yet how much time, how much effort, and how much energy is expended in trying to increase our money and possessions. Don’t miss David’s warning. “The wealth of the world is nothing to God. So if your wealth increases, don’t be boastful or put your trust in your money.” (Ps. 62:10 TPT) David wasn’t on public assistance when he wrote those words! As the king of Israel, he was undoubtedly the wealthiest man in the country. But along the way, David had learned that wealth – stuff – provides very little real or lasting security in in this life. And it’s irrelevant when it comes to eternity. Don’t put your trust in stuff.

Speaking of money, let me say something about financial giving to the Lord’s work right here. If you give back to the Lord less than the tithe – 10% of your income – you have a “God plus stuff” way of life. The fact is you don’t truly believe God will meet your needs and allow you to live on 90% of your income. Instead, you believe money provides a level of security that simple obedience to God doesn’t. There’s an interesting fact about money David alluded to in that verse. You might think the more money you make, the easier it will be to tithe. Wrong. David said it’s really the opposite. The more money you make, the greater will be the temptation to trust in it and the harder it will be to give what you should to the Lord and His work.

Today, July 1, begins our new fiscal year here at KRBC. It’s likely we finished the last fiscal year yesterday – June 30 - running a deficit. We spent more than we took in. Fortunately, we have reserve funds we can use to cover the difference. But here’s what I know. If all of us were tithing – even if more of us were tithing – this church wouldn’t have a financial deficit. I don’t know what you or anyone else gives, but I do know the more money you make – “so if your wealth increases” – the more difficult it is to keep on tithing because the amount you give away to the Lord becomes more and more significant. There’s one simple, effective way to prevent putting ultimate trust in money or stuff. Tithe. What do most people trust in? A well-paying job? You could lose it tomorrow. A comfortable home? It could burn down tomorrow. Investments? They could be lost tomorrow. There’s nothing wrong or sinful about any of that stuff. They’re good and worthwhile, in fact. Just don’t allow stuff to sit on the throne of your life and become what you put your ultimate security in. Only God deserves that kind of trust.

“God plus something else” ways of life. They’re deceptive because none of them reject God outright. They’re dangerous because they try subtly to raise something else to the level of God in our lives. But, “Those who trust in God and anything else, end up without Him and nothing else.” One of the most dangerous things you and I can ever do in this life is to put our ultimate trust and security in anything or anyone else but God alone, but God only. However, ““Those who trust in God only have Him and everything else.” In other words, there’s...

**THE “GOD ONLY” WAY OF LIFE.**

It's been my experience most of us – myself included – kind of get forced into a “God only” way of life by dealing with unpleasant circumstances in life. Adversity and crisis just have a way of revealing what or who we trust in. Where we run for help is a pretty good indicator of where we place our trust ultimately. So, let me ask you a question I ask myself. When all the other props we depend on in this life – our family and friends, our own intelligence and abilities, our own resources financial or otherwise – fail to support us, will God still be there? Absolutely. When we run to God for refuge, protection, and help, we can expect His help and blessing.

That's what David discovered. “Only God is my Savior, and he will not fail me. For he alone is my safe place. His wrap-around presence always protects me as my champion defender. There's no risk of failure with God! So why would I let worry paralyze me, even when troubles multiply around me?... Trust only in God every moment! Tell him all your troubles and pour out your heart-longings to him. Believe me when I tell you—he will help you!” (Ps. 62:5-6, 8 TPT) Even though David became a king, he was well acquainted with the great ups and downs of life. As much as I dislike troubles and tests in my life, I have to admit they have a way of stripping away from me anything else but God alone, God only. More often than not, that's when you and I move into a “God only” way of life.

Years ago now, I had the opportunity to travel through England. I went a little castle crazy. I was fascinated by them and had to see as many as possible. Most of them were hundreds of years old, but still very solid and formidable structures. I'd try to imagine the battles in and around those castles and realized how hard it must have been to get to much less defeat someone holed up in a castle. David compared God to a castle - a fortress. When God alone is our castle, our fortress, defeat is impossible. In a life that's always uncertain and unchanging, God alone remains strong, stable, and absolutely reliable like a castle set up on a hill. “He alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress where I will never be shaken.” (Ps. 62:2 NLT)

There's another little word in this psalm that's just as important as the word “alone” or “only.” It's the word “my.” God wasn't an abstract idea for David. God was a Person who interacted with David and did things for him. Can you say about God what David said about Him? “Only God is my Savior, and he will not fail me. For he alone is my safe place. His wrap-around presence always protects me as my champion defender.” (Ps. 62:5-6 TPT) When you put your trust in God's stability and reliability – when you rest in Him and His sufficiency – your life inevitably takes on stability and calmness.

As we come to the Lord's Table in a few minutes, ask yourself this question, “How can I express my trust in God alone today?” The psalm offers two possibilities. First, just be silent and rest in God. “I wait quietly before God, for my victory comes from him.” (Ps 62:1 NLT) When you think about your life today, your heart might be racing and your stomach might be all tied up in knots. Trust involves a quiet expectation and restful confidence in God right in the very midst of life's anxieties and problems. Be silent in God's presence. Relax. Be still and know that He is God. Do you need an image for how silence, trust, and rest come together? How about this verse, “I am humbled and

quieted in your presence. Like a contented child who rests on its mother's lap, I'm your resting child and my soul is content in you." (Ps. 131:2 TPT) A baby in his or her mother's lap. Contentment. Restfulness. Peacefulness. That's what God offers you.

Some years ago, a speedboat driver talked about how he survived a racing accident. When he was at top speed, his boat veered slightly and hit a wave at a dangerous angle. The boat went spinning crazily into the air. He was thrown from his seat, out of the boat, and then propelled deep into the water – so deep, in fact, he had no idea which direction the surface was. Completely disoriented. He had to remain calm and wait for the buoyancy of his life vest to begin pulling him up. Once he discovered which way was up, he was able to swim for the surface. Sometimes we find ourselves surrounded by so many confusing options and overwhelming problems, it's hard to know "which way is up." Remain calm. Wait for God's gentle tug to pull you in the right direction. Your "life vest" may turn out to a specific Scripture verse, another follower of Jesus, a message, a book, or a strong impression from the Holy Spirit. The key is recognizing your dependency on God and putting your trust in Him alone.

The other way to express your trust in God is exactly the opposite. "Join me, everyone! Trust only in God every moment! Tell him all your troubles and pour out your heart-longings to him. Believe me when I tell you—he will help you!" (Ps 62:8 TPT) Instead of quietness, stillness, or silence, maybe you just need to pour out your heart to God as you come to His Table today. Tell Him about all your frustrations, what you're angry or sad about. Tell Him about the guilt or discouragement you're experiencing.

Are there massive problems in your home? Are you dreading returning to the place where you work tomorrow? Are there some hostile feelings between you and your spouse today? Or, between you and your kids, or you and your parents? Are you worried about a loved one for some reason? Are you carrying a burden of guilt you just can't escape? Did someone deeply offend you and you're struggling with feelings of resentment? Are you full of fear? Are you at some major crossroads in your life and you just don't know which direction to go? Then, as you come to the Table, spend those moments pouring out your heart to God. God already knows all about it, so pour out your heart before God and to God. When you do that, He never rejects or turns away from you. Through the Holy Spirit who lives within you, God will let you know He hears you, He loves you, and He understands what you're feeling. He will give you a new sense of peace. You'll find yourself praising God as you give Him your problems. I hope, like David, you'll be able to say, "God said to me once and for all, 'All the strength and power you need flows from me!' And again I heard it clearly said, 'All the love you need is found in me!'" (Ps. 62:11-12 TPT) Isn't that the message of the Lord's Table for you and me – what it represents and what it symbolizes?

Years ago, a woman had come to the end of her rope. Her husband was chronically ill and had lost his job. Financial reversals had caused them to lose their home. There were five children to feed and clothe. She tried to find employment to help make ends meet, but the situation continued to deteriorate. She got so desperate that, one day, having lost all hope, she took her 5 year old daughter into the bedroom. She carefully

put rags and newspapers into any spaces around the windows. Then she turned on the gas heater in the room without lighting it. She put her arm around her little daughter as they laid together on the bed. She heard the gas escaping, but she also heard something else. She'd forgotten to turn off the radio. Someone was singing an old hymn, "Oh, what peace we often forfeit; oh, what needless pain we bear. All because we do not carry, everything to God in prayer." The woman realized her tragic mistake. She got up, turned off the gas, and opened the windows. She said, "I began to pray.... I prayed a prayer of gratitude to God. I thanked Him for my life. I thanked Him for our five children. I made a promise I'd never forget my faith again. So far, I have kept that promise."

In a few minutes, I will invite you to come forward and partake of the Lord's Table. Allow it to be time when you invite the Holy Spirit to identify any and every "God plus something else" way of life in your life today. Repent of anything He reveals to you. Then, affirm again that because Jesus died and rose again for you, you are called to live a "God only" way of life. "Those who trust in God only have Him and everything else. Those who trust in God and anything else, end up without Him and nothing else."