

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION
Psalms: Living By Faith In God
XXX. Handling The Threat Of Spiritual Darkness
(Psalm 30:1-12)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

Spiritual darkness is not only a big problem today, it is also becoming a watershed issue for the nation:

(1) The editorial, “Sign of a bigger problem” in the Waterbury, Connecticut Republican-American, June 27, 2022, p. 10A, claimed that “perhaps the central problem in American life” is “the decline of a communal sense of self, resulting in an increase in loneliness and despair . . . The American ideal of individualism is . . . profound and worth maintaining, but it must be tempered by a larger sense of belonging, purpose, and obligation. Contemporary society clearly is failing to maintain that balance, and self-reliance has given way to self-destructive self-indulgence.”

(2) However, the problem runs even deeper in religious realms: “Churches and other civic institutions . . . once were bulwarks against the listlessness that characterizes modern American society,” and they “told Americans . . . that they had places where they were welcome, where they belonged, and where they could make a difference.” (Ibid.) However, many of “(t)hose institutions are dying, and many of them are unlikely to be revived.” (Ibid.)

For example, the editorial noted that “the paltry Catholic Church attendance in Waterbury has led to a tentative plan from the Archdiocese of Hartford to close some churches in the city and merge congregations,” Ibid. The problem doesn’t end with Waterbury Catholics, either, for “the number of self-identified Christians in the United States has declined.” (Ibid.) Reflecting the editorial board’s worry over this issue, the Republican-American editorial concluded: “As they watch their churches close, Waterbury residents and Americans” at “large must ask themselves two important questions: How will we replace these institutions, and what will happen if we don’t?” (Ibid.)

(3) Mainline Protestant churches are awash with spiritual darkness: one of our members who grew up in such a church has informed me that until she attended our Church, she had never heard that “the Bible is ‘the Word of God; true, authoritative, and without any error.’” She added, “I was in awe at that realization . . . and I yearned to learn more of what the Lord had revealed to us through His Word . . .”

(4) Since the Supreme Court’s June 24th overturning of the 1973 Roe v. Wade decision that removed the federal sanction for abortion, a significant effort by Pro-Choice advocates to persuade Bible-believing Christians that their Bible sanctions abortion is underway! (a) Some claim that since Adam became a live soul when God breathed into him the breath of life in Genesis 2:7, human life begins when a baby breathes, so one may abort a late-term baby if it has not yet breathed! (b) Others claim that the Numbers 5:27-28 test of a woman’s sexual faithfulness to her husband sanctions abortion, for her failure to pass the test allegedly produces an abortion. (c) Since Numbers 3:39-40 speaks of numbering the males who are one month old and older, some claim that younger males were not considered people, condoning late term abortions! (d) Some say that since Ecclesiastes 6:3-5 claims it is better to die as a stillborn than live an unhappy life, God sanctions abortion. (e) Others claim that passages like 2 Kings 8:12 that predict God’s judgment having Israel’s pregnant women ripped up show God sanctions abortion. (f) Some state that Exodus 21:22-23 teaches that if a man strikes a woman so that she aborts her infant, and the woman is not otherwise harmed, the man must merely pay a fine, thus sanctioning abortion!

Need: *So, we ask, “In God’s view, what is the cause and what is the cure to the spiritual darkness that we face?!”*

- I. In Psalm 30:1-4, David praised the Lord for delivering him from a near-death defeat by his enemies, and he called on fellow believers to join him in that praise. (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, ftn. to Psalm 30)**
- II. David then clarified that this trial arose as God’s discipline for his spiritual darkness, Psalm 30:5-10:**
 - A. Hinting that God’s discipline was behind this trial, David testified that God’s anger lasts for a moment where His favor is for a lifetime, that weeping might be for a night, but rejoicing comes in the morning, Psalm 30:5.
 - B. The cause of God’s discipline had been David’s stating in a time of prosperity that he was so secure he would hardly be shaken, so God had temporarily withdrawn His blessing to where David’s enemies had afflicted him in divine discipline in accord with God’s Davidic Covenant warning of 2 Samuel 7:14. (Psalm 30:6-7)
- III. Accordingly, David had then realized his folly and pleaded with the Lord to deliver him, claiming that his death at the hands of his enemies would not allow him to praise the Lord in this life, Psalm 30:8-10.**
- IV. The Lord had heard David because he had ceased being complacently self-reliant by returning to rely on the Lord, and David added that God had changed his sorrow into joy that he might make music that testified of God’s glory and not becoming silent in death by the hands of his enemies, Psalm 30:11-12a.**

V. David then asserted that he had learned the lesson never again to become foolishly self-reliant, but that he would forever give recognition to the Lord for the blessings he enjoyed, Psalm 30:12b.

Lesson: When David in spiritual darkness became self-reliant in a false sense of security, God let him face the threat of death at the hands of his enemies until David realized his folly and returned consistently to trust the Lord.

Application: (1) May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God's gift of eternal life, John 3:16; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11. (2) May we realize that any security and blessing we enjoy is EXCLUSIVELY due to the ONGOING blessing of a gracious God, that we NEVER become foolishly self-reliant in spiritual darkness, but ALWAYS rely on the Lord for blessing.

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

To avoid becoming falsely self-sufficient in spiritual darkness by ceasing to trust the Lord for blessing, and to avoid the lack of divine blessing noted in the issues mentioned in our introduction, we heed Scripture (as follows):

(1) To avoid the self-reliant self-destructiveness of self-indulgence that afflicts our culture and has led to the weakening and the closing of many churches locally and nationally, your pastor heeds Matthew 9:36 and Mark 6:34. We explain: (a) In Matthew 9:36, when Jesus saw the crowds of His day, He felt compassion for them because they “fainted” (KJV) and were “scattered abroad” (KJV). “Fainted” translates the New Testament Greek perfect passive participle *eskulmenoi*, that means, “having been distressed” (Wm. D. Mounce, The Analyt Lex. to the Grk. N. T., 1993, p. 218; Abbott-Smith, A Man. Grk. Lex. of the N. T., 1968, p. 411), and “scattered abroad” translates the perfect passive participle *errimmenoi*, that means, “having been cast down; prostrated” (Ibid., Mounce, p. 216; Ibid., Abbott-Smith, p. 398). These perfect passive participles describe many people in our culture today as depicted in our introduction notes, and the passive voice in particular indicates that much of the guilt rests with leaders who have failed spiritually to shepherd the people! Christ’s response to this crisis in Matthew 9:36b was to urge His disciples to pray that the Lord of the harvest might send forth laborers into His harvest field! (b) Mark 6:34 describes the specific action these laborers must take, for in an action similar to the situation presented in Matthew 9:36, Jesus in Mark 6:34 began to teach the people many things! (c) Thus, our nation’s spiritual darkness is the result of the failure of pastors to teach Bible truth to the people! (d) Your pastor thus teaches Scripture to those in need, 2 Timothy 4:1-2.

(2) To apply this effort to upholding the truth about what the Bible teaches on abortion in a post-Roe v. Wade world, we state the following: (a) In Psalm 51:5, David admitted that his mother conceived him in sin. In the context, David did not discuss his mother’s sin, but his own adultery with Bathsheba. (See introductory notes to Psalm 51) If David was guilty of sin at conception, he was a person then, so abortion following conception kills a human being. (b) We now answer the Pro-Choice interpretations of Bible verses that were presented in our introduction as follows: (i) On Genesis 2:7, Adam was formed before he was given life in contrast to how fetuses in the womb have life while they are being formed. Adam’s case does not apply to the abortion issue. (ii) In Numbers 5:27-28 ESV, the woman tested was not considered to be pregnant, but was suspected of being unfaithful to her husband. If she failed the test, she would not be able to conceive where if she passed, she would conceive children. This passage has no application to abortion. (iii) In Numbers 3:39-40, the numbering was **not** a **general census** to determine the number of **live souls**, but a numbering of the males of the tribe of Levi to determine the number of the **redemption** of the **firstborn** in that tribe who would qualify to represent **by proxy** the number of the **firstborn** sons of the other tribes. God required all males in this unique case to be 1 month or older, what has no application to the issue of when human life begins and hence to abortion. (iv) Ecclesiastes 6:3-5 merely states that dying as a stillborn is a better experience than living an unhappy life while making no statement that is applicable to abortion. (v) 2 Kings 8:12 among many other similar verses simply predicts the atrocity of Israel’s pregnant women being ripped up much as it predicts the atrocities of mass killings of born people without sanctioning these evils at all! Murder is still murder, and God always punishes it, no matter who commits the crime! (vi) Exodus 21:22-23 does **NOT** mention the word “abort” which is *shakal* (B. D. B., A Heb. and Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 1013), but states that the woman’s “children” (*yeladeyha*, Kittel, Bib. Heb., p. 111; Ibid., B. D. B., p. 409) “come out” (*weyas’u*, Ibid., Kittel; Ibid., B. D. B., p. 422-425), that she gives birth to children prematurely! If any harm comes to the woman or to her children (or child by application), the offender must pay life for life, meaning that a fetus at any trimester is a person! The Pro-Choice promoters greatly err in assuming that the passage speaks of and sanctions an abortion when it strongly opposes abortion!

May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God’s gift of eternal life. May we realize that any security and blessing we enjoy is exclusively the blessing of a gracious God that we never become self-reliant in spiritual darkness, but always rely on the Lord for blessing.