

## Getting the Nod

### Pre-Sermon Video: **Fragile**

**I was an athlete... once upon a time.** In a previous time, I played on baseball teams, basketball teams, soccer teams, softball teams, and golfed with my friends. I can never claim to have owned equal skills with the professionals... **but I was once a big shot in the eyes of my 8-year-old son!** He would watch my base hits with wide eyes and wait for my high-five in the dugout. We would shoot hoops and he would marvel as my “Round the World” shots went in. I would take Jacob to the golf course and my slicing drives would make him smile. **And in my son's world... I had skills.**

**But as Jacob grew older and my hair grew thinner and more silver, I watched my skills grow less impressive in his eyes. And I can take you to the place and the moment when my son beat me for the first time.** It was a moment in Mansfield when I knew the father had been schooled by the son. **We were playing driveway basketball** and even though he couldn't match up with my adult body under the basket... **I couldn't stop his three-point shot.** I never missed a shot... but he never missed with his long ball... and I lost that day... but the lesson I learned was more alarming... my athletic skills were now vulnerable.

Friends, we have all learned about life being fragile and our vulnerabilities during this quarantine. All of us! Three months ago, most of us were riding along getting ready to show off our Easter outfits and planning for warmer weather. Ball games were being scheduled; proms were being planned; boats and bikes were being pulled out of storage; swimming pools were being opened; and our normal lives were running on all eight cylinders. Life was good... until it wasn't.

Fear replaced our fun; struggle replaced our schedules; and we were all impacted by the reality that everything was vulnerable! And that reality has been a dark cloud over us... our feelings of confidence and control has been put into question.

**Yes, all of us have learned some hard lessons in COVID Country. And we are about to set free from our quarantine and we will be embarking on a new journey.**

**Transition: But I think I speak for you and I when I ask, “How will we find stability in a time of vulnerability?” David was doing the same thing when wrote the 62<sup>nd</sup> Psalm.**

## God's Take

### The Back Story:

- Psalm 62 is often referred to as the “ONLY” Psalm. Of course, it's not really the “only” psalm; we call it that because the word “only” occurs so often in it.
- Only my soul finds rest in God; He only is my rock and my salvation; He only in my fortress; I find rest in God only.
- Scholars believe that Psalm 62 was written in the context of one of the greatest heartbreaks of David's life, **the rebellion of his son, Absalom.** He was trying to overthrow his father to be king.

- 2 Samuel 15 gives us an idea of how awful this experience was on David: NLT | 2 Sa 15:30 David walked up the road to the Mount of Olives, weeping as he went. His head was covered, and his feet were bare as a sign of mourning. And the people who were with him covered their heads and wept as they climbed the hill.
- **Most of us cannot relate to what David went through;** David found out that not only had his son rebelled against him, but his own flesh and blood had plotted to steal the throne from his own father!
- **David also made the unhappy discovery that many of the people he trusted—his friends and court officials—conspired against him along with Absalom.** When he needed them the most, his friends and family turned their backs on him. He could trust no one.
- **So, Maybe that is something you can relate to.** Here was a man who had dedicated his life to God. He had asked for and been granted forgiveness, he was loved by God and sought to do God's work to the very best of his ability.
- **And yet, in spite of David's enviable relationship with God** and amidst the great success God had blessed him with, **David's world collapsed around him. Many of us can agree with an AMEN to this.**
- **And it is in this context that we read David's written words on how he would find STABILITY IN THE TIME OF HIS VULNERABILITY.**

NKJV | Ps 62:1-12 (To the Chief Musician. To Jeduthun. A Psalm of David.) 1 Truly my soul silently waits for God; From Him comes my salvation. 2 He only is my rock and my salvation; He is my defense; I shall not be greatly moved. 3 How long will you attack a man? You shall be slain, all of you, Like a leaning wall and a tottering fence. 4 They only consult to cast him down from his high position; They delight in lies; They bless with their mouth, but they curse inwardly. Selah 5 My soul wait silently for God alone, for my expectation is from Him. 6 He only is my rock and my salvation; He is my defense; I shall not be moved. 7 In God is my salvation and my glory; The rock of my strength, and my refuge, is in God. 8 Trust in Him at all times, you people; Pour out your heart before Him; God is a refuge for us. Selah 9 Surely men of low degree are a vapor, Men of high degree are a lie; If they are weighed on the scales, they are altogether lighter than vapor. 10 Do not trust in oppression, nor vainly hope in robbery; If riches increase, do not set your heart on them. 11 God has spoken once, Twice I have heard this: That power belongs to God. 12 Also to You, O Lord, belongs mercy; For You render to each one according to his work.

David gives us a short list of what he found to be vulnerable in this Psalm...

### **What's Vulnerable in Tough Times:**

#### **1. Relationships are vulnerable. (3-4)**

- David found out that people could wound him. This seems very personal to David. They acted nice on the outside—blessing him with their mouths—but they had a hidden agenda to take him down.
- And during these months of vulnerability... **SOME people's relationships** have become strained.
- Christians have squared off with other Christians; marriages have grown to become thin ice; opinions about this virus have become battle lines on social media and among friends. Vulnerable times produce abrasive relationships.
- **I think you all would agree that we've seen this!!**

- **Application: Remember Christians... WE CHOOSE LOVE!!!** NLT | Eph 5:2 **Live a life filled with love, following the example of Christ. He loved us and offered himself as a sacrifice for us, a pleasing aroma to God.**

## 2. Life is vulnerable. (9-10)

- (9) Surely men of low degree are a vapor, Men of high degree are a lie; If they are weighed on the scales, they are altogether lighter than vapor.
- This verse is referring to a life that has no control and the fragile trust in those over us!
- There are so many questions being raised about conspiracy theories and political manipulations. **We are feeling like we are all just puppets in the hands of underlying agendas.** Whether that's true or not... we are being made to feel like pawns on someone else's chess board.
- **Don't we all feel like life has been placed on the chopping block of humility?**

## 3. Money is vulnerable. (10)

- **If riches increase, do not set your heart on them.** (10)
- **Oh, how quickly has our robust economy as fallen. Employment has weakened. Many families that were financially stable just 3 months ago have been caught up in a whirlwind of instability.**
- Now, riches aren't bad. Some of you are doing amazing good deeds with your wealth. But whether you have a little money or a lot of money, it's all vulnerable.
- **David is saying "Don't make it your salvation."**

Knowing these things have proven to be vulnerable, now let's take a look at David's plans to keep stability in the midst of vulnerability...

**Lessons on Stability:** Ah, I said there is so much good news woven into this psalm. Why?

## 1. God is my salvation. (1-2)

- Notice that word **"ONLY"**—because David uses it four times. When it comes to finding the foundation for your life in vulnerable times **there is only one winner**—the Living God.
- **1 Truly my soul silently waits for God; From Him comes my salvation. 2 He only is my rock and my salvation; He is my defense; I shall not be greatly moved.**
- **We're all looking for a rock to stand on. We're all looking for a fortress to run into for shelter.** Well, ultimately there's only one.
- **And David says I've gotten silent about this.** There isn't any question about this inside my head. And notice what he says—"I shall not be greatly moved (or shaken)."
- **Application:** Stability is only realized by anchoring to a solid foundation!

## 2. Talk to yourself about God's stability (5)

- **5 My soul, wait silently for God alone, for my expectation is from Him.**
- **What's he doing? He's preaching to himself.** He's telling his soul, "Hey, soul, just want to remind you, life is fragile, but remember—God alone is your salvation."
- **Why does he do that? Because, like us, he forgets.** Aren't we all like that? You hear the bad news of world events. You wonder what is happening in this country. You

worry about your neighbors, or loved ones, or the poor. You worry about your job or your marriage or your finances. You see your own flaws and sins and failures.

### 3. Be a source of elevation for the vulnerable others. (8)

- In verse 8 he's not just preaching to himself; he's preaching to all of us. And what does he say? **Trust in Him at all times, you people; Pour out your heart before Him; God is a refuge for us.**
- **Application:** Now here's something interesting. For nearly 2,000 years the church has taught that **David is not the only one speaking in this psalm.** Yes, David is speaking, sharing his life story. But there is someone else speaking here. Who is it? It is the Lord Jesus himself. He is the one calling us to make him our salvation, our rock, our refuge.
- **If that is true, then this psalm is truly amazing. Because think about Jesus.** Think about his life. Who is he? In the words of an ancient Christian creed, he is "God from God, light from light, True God from true God." But what did he do for us? What do we remember every Christmas? That he became flesh. He became a human being.
- **In other words, in Jesus, God became vulnerable.** He became one of those "low estate" people in Psalm 62. Poor. A refugee. Woundable. And as a matter of fact, he was wounded.
- **He was crucified as a common criminal, a victim of injustice.** As the Bible says, **"Jesus was pierced for our sins. He was wounded for us and for our salvation."** How amazing is that? You can trust a God like that! **So, if you want to find stability in these times of vulnerability... REMEMBER THIS...**

### 4. Jesus became vulnerable so we could become stable. (6-7)

- **6 He only is my rock and my salvation; He is my defense; I shall not be moved. 7 In God is my salvation and my glory; The rock of my strength, and my refuge, is in God.**

**Transition: So, the challenges for us all who are looking for stability...**

## Our Response

### The Challenge:

- Make Him your ONLY! (Only Rock; Only Fortress; Your Only Shelter to run to)
- Learn the art of self-preaching. (Tell your soul often that God is your salvation)
- Elevate the Vulnerable others (To trust the Lord because you have)
- Morph your story into His story!!!

## Conclusion

**Final Illustration of a Farmer Named Howard Ballou:** He lived in Barnum, Minnesota, a little town of 460 people in northern Minnesota, he was an 82-year-old dairy farmer. A short, stocky man with huge hands and massive knuckles. His back and shoulders were strong but bent from a lifetime of hard farm work. **Like King David, Howard knew how fragile life was. Life had wounded him.** He knew **the yearly vulnerability of raising crops.** He knew **the pain of losing a son, Buddy** who died at the tender age of 10. **He lost his wife Chloe after over 50 years of good marriage.**

His pastor visited him and found him on his rocking chair, with a big, fat Bible open on his lap. He told me, **"Yea, I'm reading it again. I know the story, but I just want to see how the good Lord does it all over again. How he made us and saved us."**

Howard had no cattle. No work. No wife. No son, Buddy. **But he was not alone. He had a foundation.** Psalm 62 could've been his story.

**Prayer:**

- Be Our ONLY! (Only Rock; Only Fortress; Your Only Shelter to run to)
- Place Your Story on Our Hearts. (Tell your soul often that God is your salvation)
- Help us to Elevate the Vulnerable others.
- Morph your story into Our story!!!