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*Devotion for the Week of July 20, 2020 --- One Thing*

*"In my distress I called to the Lord;*

*I called out to my God.*

*From his temple he heard my voice;*

*my cry came to his ears..." --- 2 Samuel 22:7*

*At the end of David's life he reflects on what was most important to him as most of us would. This is the same time that David wrote this song in 2 Samuel. And what is one thing that sums up David's life? In all of his trouble, he prayed and God heard him. What would be the one thing that sums up your life?*

*As with every life, David's had its ups and downs. Many of those Psalms of praise? That was David. All of those Psalms of 'O Lord, help me!?' That was David.*

*Unfortunately, many of David's problems were the results of his own actions. His affair with Bathsheba, the arranged murder of her husband, and attempt to cover up his sins cost him grief, dishonor, the life of a child, and almost constant distress within his household.*

*His lack of faith made him take a census to determine the size of his army, instead of trusting God, and it cost the lives of more than 70,000 Israelites. His lack of discipline in his own house contributed to his son Absalom rebelling against him and another son, Adonijah, seeking to inherit the throne instead of Solomon.*

*The life of King David ends soon after proclaiming his son Solomon the next ruler of Israel. He dies at the somewhat early age of seventy after ruling God's people for forty years. (over please)*

*But through it all, he experienced God hearing his cries. Of course, things did not change automatically for David, and they don't often change automatically in ours when we pray. But God heard and responded in God's own time, never David's time.*

*It is David who first uttered the words, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" in Psalm 22:1. At the very end of Jesus' life, after suffering for nearly 24 hours for the violence of humanity, Jesus cries from the cross, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"*

*We are in good company when we feel that God is far away from us. And it may not really help when a friend tells us, "Oh no, God is right here." Let the feeling be the feeling. But I take comfort in the fact that David's last testimony through it all was that God heard him. God has always heard him. Living the consequences of his actions? God heard him. Repenting when he made a wreck of his life? God heard him. Running for his life? God heard him.*

*Jesus knew the resurrection was coming, but it didn't stop him from quoting David and feeling alone in the world. He has been through hell, literally. But the horrible experiences did not stop the resurrection. David's grief did not stop the fact that God heard him.*

*You may be going through a lot right now. Know you are being prayed for. Know that God hears your prayers, too. Even if it doesn't feel like it.*

*For this week, what is the one thing that sums up your life? What would be your last testimony if you were writing a song about God?*

*I think of the people I have ministered with over the years. Some may have survived the Flu Pandemic of 1918. Some went through WW1, others WW2. Many grew up during the Great Depression. There was Korea, Vietnam. But you know what? I can't remember one of them who wouldn't share David's words: "In my distress I called to the Lord;*

*I called out to my God.*

*From his temple he heard my voice;*

*my cry came to his ears..."*

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*Prayer: Lord, hear my prayers, be with – caregivers, healthcare providers, grocery store workers, day care providers, teachers and students, lawmakers, church leaders and musicians. Lord, hear my prayers, be with – the worried, the anxious, the fearful. Amen.*