

## Retreat Guide

### Psalm 27

The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

When evil doers assail me to devour my flesh – my adversaries and foes – they shall stumble and fall. Though an army encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war rise up against me, yet I will be confident.

One thing I asked of the LORD, that will I seek after: to live in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in his temple.

For he will hide me in his shelter in the day of trouble; he will conceal me under the cover of his tent; he will set me high on a rock. Now my head is lifted up above my enemies all around me, and I will offer in his tent sacrifices with shouts of joy, I will sing and make melody to the LORD.

Hear, O LORD, when I cry aloud, be gracious to me and answer me! “Come,” my heart says, “seek his face!” Your face, LORD, do I seek. Do not hide your face from me.

Do not turn your servant away in anger, you who have been my help. Do not cast me off, do not forsake me, O God of my salvation! If my father and mother forsake me, the LORD will take me up.

Teach me your way, O LORD, and lead me on a level path because of my enemies. Do not give me up to the will of my adversaries, for false witnesses have risen against me, and they are breathing out violence.

I believe I shall see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living. Wait for the LORD; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the LORD!

[New International Version](#)

### First Encounter

In your first section of the retreat approach the passage via *lectio divina*. (You could also do a slow process and use the four movements of *lectio* for the entire retreat time.) Begin by settling yourself and then presenting your whole self before to Jesus. This may take a while. Sit quietly and as things come to mind hand them to Jesus without comment.

As your soul becomes still, take up the passage and read it, listening for the word or phrase that stands out to you. This isn't time for inductive study. It *is* time for being attentive to the Holy Spirit. In the first reading, just notice the word or phrase and hold it.

When you are ready, read the passage again. This is the *meditation* section. Let your mind engage the word or phrase. What does it evoke in you? What other passages of Scripture come to mind that help inform the word or phrase. Are there other angles of your life or experience from which you can view the word or phrase? Take as much time as you like to absorb the word or phrase.

Now read the passage a third time. In this section we *pray*. Take the fruit of your meditation and have a conversation with Jesus about it. Remember to give a good bit of space to listening to what the LORD wants to say to you from this reflection. Don't be spare in your speaking with God. Pour your thoughts, feelings, desires, and needs out to the One who loves you.

Once you've finished the conversation, read the passage a final time. As you finish stay quietly in God's presence. Let worship and *communion* be the attitudes of your heart.

## **Second Encounter**

In what ways has the LORD been light and safety for you recently?

When, in the last several months, have you felt overwhelmed, surrounded, or threatened? What were the causes or sources of these feelings? How did you respond to these circumstances?

In this psalm David expresses a singleness of focus and purpose. How would you describe your focus and purpose at this point in your life?

What comes to mind for you when you consider the faithfulness of God? Have there been any situations for you in the last months that have eroded your confidence in God's faithfulness? Take the time now to talk with the LORD about these circumstances and your response.

What is your fundamental posture toward this life? How does it compare with David's, "I believe that I shall see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living"?

For what are you waiting on the LORD? What is your disposition in your waiting? There may be some hopes or desires for which you haven't thought about from a waiting on the LORD perspective. Take some time to search your heart and mind in this regard.

## **Third Encounter**

In this encounter come to the Psalm using an Ignatian approach. Place yourself in the text. Use all of your senses to be with David as he writes these words and pours out his heart to God. Make the Psalm your own.

When you are ready, go to the art supplies and either illustrate a section of the psalm through which the Holy Spirit has spoken to you or in some way express a prayer that has awakened in you from your time in the text.

1.