

# Repose in God

*Psalm 62:1-12*

Halifax: 13 June 2004

## **Introduction:**

For several years now it has been my practice to preach to you from a Psalm on the first Sunday of Month.

- The Psalm I select is usually one that corresponds to our regular Sunday morning sermon series.
  - This Psalm then becomes our Psalm of the Month which we sing for the remaining Sunday's of that month.

This has proven to be a good way to help us become more familiar with the psalms and to get them into our hearts.

- Consequently, I want to continue having a Psalm that corresponds with our series...
- But there is one thing I want to change about our former practice.
- Rather than introducing a Psalm on the first Sunday of the month, I want to introduce it whenever we come to a suitable place in our regular series.
  - I guess that means that rather than being the Psalm of the Month, it will be the Psalm of Focus or something like that.

Whatever the case, today I want to preach from Psalm 62.

- Before I went out of town, we completed the section in Jesus' Sermon on the Mount on doing our religious deeds to please God rather than man.
  - Next week we will begin the section in Matthew 6 that calls us to trust in God to bless us rather than looking to the world to bless us.
  - That is what Psalm 62 has to do with, so that is why I have chosen it for our Psalm of Focus.

Everyone has certain things they rely on.

- When you invest your money in an RRSP, you are relying on that RRSP to be there for you when you retire...
  - You may have different degrees of confidence about that, but to some extent you are relying on it.
- Likewise, when you marry, you rely on your spouse to be your companion for life.
  - Usually, at the beginning at least, you have a great deal of confidence, however, that confidence may ebb and flow over time.

- On a certain level, it is right and proper for us to rely on such things,
  - however, your ultimate reliance—your reliance for true and ultimate blessing and happiness must be in God.
  - And not only are you to rely on Him, you are to rely on Him with confidence and assurance!
    - It is one thing to rely on something—quite another to rely on it with confidence and assurance.
    - If you are falling off a cliff and you are able to grab hold of a scrawny little tree, you are relying on that tree—
      - but you are not relying on it with confidence and assurance!
      - You are uneasy and desperate, hoping it will not give way!
  - But when the rescue people come and throw you a rope with a nice loop in it to put your foot,
    - you are able to rely on the rope with a whole lot more assurance and confidence!

Psalm 62 (like Matthew 6:19-34) teaches you not only to rely on the Lord instead of other things, but to do so with confidence and assurance!

- We live in a world that is filled with insecurity and uneasiness!
  - And no wonder!
    - Just look at the things people are relying on for life!
      - Riches, personal success, friendships, doctors, our national defence!
      - No wonder there is so much anxiety and insecurity!
- But Christian, it should not be so with you!
  - Psalm 62 has three stanzas and each of them teaches you to rest securely in God.
    - 1) The first stanza runs from verse 1 to verse 4.
      - When you sing this stanza, you confess that as one of God's Covenant People, you **are** silently waiting for the Lord.
    - 2) The second stanza runs from verse 5 to verse 8.
      - When you sing this stanza, you are calling upon yourself and your Christian brothers and sisters to wait silently for the Lord.
    - 3) The third stanza runs from verse 9 to verse 12.
      - When you sing this stanza, you are considering the rock solid basis you have for silently waiting upon God.

Brothers and sisters,

- Let us consider each of these stanzas so that you might learn to silently wait for God.
- In the first stanza, verse 1-4, see that...

**I. If you are one of God's covenant people, it is your confession that you are silently waiting for the Lord.**

A. This is what every one of God's people professes to do!

1. Like all Psalms, this Psalm is given to you to sing as one of God's people!
  - a. The Psalms are no longer mere individual compositions of David or Moses.
    - God has given them to His people to sing.
    - They are covenant songs—that is, songs for the people who are in covenant with God.
  - b. In the Old Testament, people entered into this covenant by circumcision, but now we enter into it by baptism.
    - By baptism, we are marked out from the rest of the world as those who are God's people.
    - This does not mean that we all believe, for there are many people in the covenant who do not keep the covenant...
      - They are joined to Jesus Christ by their baptism, but they are like dead branches on a tree that receive no life from Him.
      - They will be cut off in God's time.
2. But if you are true to the covenant, verse 1 is your sincere confession!
  - a. v. 1: "Truly my soul silently waits for God; from Him comes my salvation!"
    - It is the confession that you are looking to God alone to save you.
  - b. It is fair to ask the question, "to save you from what?"
    - I could honestly say, "from everything," but let me explain!
      - 1) The great problem of the human race is that our first parents turned away from God...
        - They rejected His counsel and chose to go their own way.
        - And because Adam was our federal head, he spoke for himself as well as for all his children.

- 2) The result is that Adam and the whole human race with him were caught up in his rebellion.
    - Having become corrupt and sinful, he could only bring forth corrupt and sinful children.
    - And so we became the objects of God's anger, justly deserving nothing but His wrath and displeasure.
  - 3) But God, being rich in mercy, did not leave us all to perish in our sin and misery, but entered into a covenant of grace to save those He had chosen!
    - He saves us from our sin and from His judgement!
    - In this covenant He promised that He would take away our sins and give us His Spirit to change our corrupt hearts!
    - And now He has sent His only Son to bear the curse for us so that we might be forgiven!
      - Jesus has come and He has paid the penalty for our sins,
      - And He is the One who gives us the Holy Spirit that we might be restored to God's image from our corruption!
      - With Him, everything wrong is restored!
        - This is our salvation!
3. And God's promise is that everyone who believes will be saved!
- That is why God's people profess verse 1!
    - "Truly my soul silently waits for God; from Him comes my salvation!"
  - To silently wait is to trust confidently in Him for salvation!
    - It is to look to Him to bring about the deliverance that He has promised!
    - Through all the storms of this sinful world,
      - we quietly await the resurrection when we will be raised to a perfect life, completely free from sin and the curse, to live with Christ forever!
    - This is the confession of all God's people.
- B. This silent waiting is a calm repose that looks to nothing else but God for this salvation.
1. Once you have come to find rest and security in Christ,
    - you can't dream of finding salvation from any other quarter!
    - You are settled upon Him because you see clearly now that He alone answers your need.

- Once you have found Him,
    - you understand how undone you really are so that you dare not trust in yourself or your own works...
    - and you also understand how suitable and perfect a Saviour He is...
  - The result is that you are not restless to go somewhere else!
    - Like Peter, when He asks, “will you go away also?”
      - you reply, “Lord, to whom shall we go? you have the words of eternal life!”
2. And that is just what is confessed in verse 2!
- a. “He only is my rock and my salvation, my defence.”
    - I have no other refuge, no other place to go.
    - The word “defence” refers to a fortress or refuge for safety.
    - God is our hiding place where we can be safe in the presence of His glory even though we are sinners...
      - Like Moses who hid in the rock when God’s glory passed before Him lest he should be consumed.
      - Our Lord Jesus shields us from God’s wrath and curse for all eternity so that we may live before God in safety.
  - b. And because He is such a strong and able Saviour—a rock and a fortress—
    - We will not be greatly moved!
      - Thus the confession continues “I shall not be greatly moved!”
    - This means that though we may be shaken, we will never be moved from the safety and security of Christ.
      - We may stumble and falter at times, but we will never fall away—
        - We are in Christ for ever.
- C. And it means that even though our enemies assail us with desperate energy, fuelled by envy and bitter hatred, we will be safe in Jesus Christ.
1. These enemies are referred to in verse 3-4.
    - a. The Psalm turns to address them and say, “How long will you attack a man?”
      - Their malice is so great that they attack without relenting.
      - Even though their case is desperate and they cannot prevail, they continue to rage against God’s people.

- Verse 3 declares that they will be slain—
  - Every one of them even though they are many and even though they unite together.
  - They are described as a leaning wall and a tottering fence that will soon collapse under its own weight.
  
- b. But who are they and what is this all about?
  - They are the enemies of God—Satan and all people who are still outside of Jesus Christ.
  
  - 1) Their one objective is to cast Christ down from his high position as Lord and Saviour.
    - Look at verse 4:
      - “They only consult to cast Him down from His high position.”
  
  - 2) They will use any means to try to bring this about.
    - Verse 3 shows that they will use murder—
      - Verse 4 shows that they will use lies and even hypocrisy—
        - blessing with their mouth but cursing in their heart.
        - pretending to be friends when they are really enemies.
  
    - Satan and all who are in league with Him have always used these two methods (murder and lies) to oppose Christ and His people—
      - Do we not see both of these today?
      - We see laws passed in our own country against those who hold to God’s truth...
        - And we see persecution throughout the world as people are imprisoned, tortured, and murdered because of their faith.
  
    - And how readily lies and deception are employed!
      - There are those who outright deny that we are sinners who need to be saved,
        - deny even that there is a living God who created the world and will come to judge...
  
      - And there are those who come into the church pretending to be teachers of God’s word who bring in all sorts of false teaching to lead God’s people astray.

2. Brothers and sisters, you know about this opposition to Christ if you are following Him!
  - You know about the opposition you face from unbelieving parents and friends for following Christ!
  - You know how the world tries to chisel away at your faith and your practice, just one chip at a time.
  - They are united together against God and against His anointed.
3. Yet, in the face of all this opposition, you are able to say:
  - “Truly my soul silently waits for God; From Him comes my salvation. He only is my rock and my salvation; He is my defense; I shall not be greatly moved.”
  - This is the common confession of God’s people.
    - This is what is fundamentally true of each one of us.

TRAN> But you all know that silently waiting for God’s salvation is not an easy thing!

- This is what we do at the foundational level,
  - but to our shame we often struggle with insecurity and doubts in daily practice.
  - Therefore, in the second stanza of this Psalm (v. 5-8)

## **II. You are led to admonish yourself and others to wait silently for the Lord.**

A. Do you see the difference in verse 1 and verse 5?

1. In verse 1 you sing, “Truly my soul silently waits for God...”
  - and in verse 5 you sing, “My soul, wait silently for God alone...”
  - In verse 1 you are declaring what is true of you and all believers,
    - but in verse 5 you are seeking to stir yourself up to wait silently for God.
2. If you have true Christian experience, you will know how much this self-admonition is needed!
  - a. You know how easily the slightest provocation will cause restlessness and anxiety to rise up in your heart and unsettle you.
    - You know what happens when a parent begins to question what God’s word teaches about training up your children...
    - Or when the government passes a law against the biblical use of the rod.
    - You know how it is when the people at work begin to question you—
      - “You don’t believe that God created the world in six days, do you?”
      - Or “You don’t believe that I am going to Hell, do you?”

b. These are times when you need to command yourself with the words of verse 5-7.

1) Psalm 62:5-7: My soul, wait silently for God alone, For my expectation *is* from Him. He only *is* my rock and my salvation; *He is* my defense; I shall not be moved. In God *is* my salvation and my glory; The rock of my strength, *And* my refuge, *is* in God.

- You see how you are taught here to remember what you believe about God so that you will not be shaken.

2) Notice that there are two significant variations from verse 1-2—

a) In verse 5, you say, “my expectation (instead of my salvation) comes from Him.”

- By referring to salvation as an expectation or a hope, it stresses the fact that God’s final blessing is yet future.

- In Romans 8:24, Paul says:

- but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for *it* with perseverance.

- It helps you to press on in the face of opposition when you have hope—

- when you keep remembering that God **will** make things right.

TRANS> At the end of verse 6, there is another variation...

b) Instead of saying “I shall not be **greatly** moved,” as in verse 2,

- you say, “I shall not be moved!”

- The difference is that in verse 6,

- you are stating what will be the case if you obey the admonition of verse 5 to wait silently for God.

- If you will find your repose in Him alone, you will not be shaken at all!

- Verse 2 suggests that there are times when a believer will be shaken from his calm repose...

- but verse 6 teaches us that those times will not be the times when we remember to wait silently for God.

3. In verse 7, we are reminded that we have everything in God (and so ought to silently wait for Him)...
  - a. Don't anxiously long for some other source of blessing or safety when pressure and temptation come!
    - Will you find anything good by caving in to temptations?
    - What salvation, or what glorious thing, will you find if you please man rather than God?
  - b. In God is your salvation and your glory...
    - All your hopes are wrapped up in Him!
    - As soon as you start glorying in other things, your whole life becomes distorted!
      - God is no longer in His place and you are trying to serve two masters—
        - you are double-minded and unstable in all your ways!
      - You are promoting something desperately inferior!
        - You are like a foolish nation who sends an athlete to the Olympics who is grossly inferior to another...
          - That nation will be disappointed!
      - Why would you choose what is inferior and inadequate when you have what is best and most excellent?

TRANS> Temptations will come to draw you away from God and trials will come to drive you away...

- That is when you must admonish yourself afresh to wait silently for God...
- Do not let yourself be unsettled and disturbed, but keep your heart stayed on Him.

B. But it is not enough only to admonish yourself...

1. When we sing psalms, we are also to admonish one another,
  - a. and so in this psalm, after admonishing yourself to wait silently for God, you must turn to your brothers and sisters in the Lord.
    - v. 8: Trust in Him at all times, you people; Pour out your heart before Him; God *is* a refuge for us.
  - b. If you need to remind yourself, surely your brothers and sisters need to be reminded too...
    - Do you think they do not suffer the same trials and temptations as you?

- “You people” refers to those who are God’s people, your brothers and sisters in the church.
2. In this verse, you are taught to remind them about two things—
- a. First, to trust in the Lord at all times...
    - 1) No matter what happens, no matter how hard the trial, you must point them to trust the Lord...
      - The worst thing you can do is hear their problem and act like there is nothing that can be done about it!
      - Encourage them trust in the Lord no matter what...
    - 2) The word **trust** that is used here is one that not only speaks of looking to Him instead of somewhere else for help—
      - but a word that also means having confidence in Him...
      - Remember the illustration with the tree on the cliff—
        - Don’t be satisfied if your brother is holding on to the Lord with the insecurity of one who is terrified that he will fall...
        - Encourage him to rely on God with peace and confidence as one who will surely meet his need.

TRANS> Trusting Him—that is the first thing to encourage your brother to do when he is tempted and tried.

- b. The second thing is to urge him to pour his heart out to the Lord.
  - 1) There is a tendency for us to run around all over the place looking for help, but what we need to do is to cast all our care upon the Lord...
    - And we do that by prayer—
      - by pouring our heart out to Him in prayer.
      - You can see many examples of this in the Psalms.
        - Just go back to Psalm 61 and look at verse 1-2:
        - “Hear my cry O God; Attend to my prayer. From the end of the earth I will cry to you, when my heart is overwhelmed; lead me to the rock that is higher than I.”
  - 2) And be sure that this praying is not the kind of praying that just goes on and on about the problem—
    - It is to be a prayer of faith that rolls the problem over on God to deal with.

- Prayer is not a time to simply go over and over your problems in your mind and churn up your emotions,
  - It is a time to turn them over to Lord and leave them there!
  - To put the matter in His hands and then go forth and fulfil your responsibility for Him with renewed hope and without anxiety.
  - How we need each other's help to do this!

TRANS> How we need to admonish both ourselves and others to continue in hope without wavering!

- Notice that after admonishing yourself in verse 7 you are taught to say, "My refuge is in God..."
- And after admonishing others in verse 8 you are taught to say, "God is a refuge for us."
  - He is the place we go to find rest for our souls!
  - You go there first and find refuge,
    - then encourage your brothers and sisters to come with you.
  - There is no other refuge but God.

And so in the third stanza,

**III. You are to consider the solid reasons you have for waiting upon God with calm assurance and repose...**

- There is a negative reason and a positive reason that you can have peace when you are looking to God.
  - A. The negative reason is that all other confidence is utterly groundless!
    - To rely on anything apart from God is like relying on air.
      - Two things that we commonly rely on are given as examples.
        1. Verse 9 shows us that there is no basis for relying on man.
          - a. Oh how impressive and strong man can look to us!
            - 1) It is so easy to talk of how futile it is to rely on man in theory,
              - but let one of these futile men come and make promises to you and suddenly you are filled with hope!
              - How common it is to see women flattered by deceitful men who accomplish nothing but to lead them away from God!

- Douglas Wilson pointed out that in all his years of ministry he could not think of a time when a woman had rejected the faith that a man was not involved.
  - How congregations are deceived by ministers who come along with some great plan, some new device for raising money or for making the church grow.
  - How citizens are led along by relying on politicians who promise to do all sorts of wonderful things without it costing a cent!
- 2) Not only are we deceived to trust in men, but also to fear them!
- Let the government issue a threat against the church and all the Christians are fretting in desperation...
  - Let a young man in the ministry be confronted by an ungodly Presbytery and how quickly he surrenders his convictions to please men.
  - Let a teenager be mocked by another teenager for following Christ in some way and see how soon that way is abandoned!
- b. This passage sets the record straight about men!
1. Take them all and put them in the scales and they are lighter than vapour!
    - a) The word *vapour* that is used twice in verse 9 and once in verse 10 is the word translated *vanity* in Ecclesiastes.
      - It is literally “a breath!”
      - It could be translated “a puff of wind!”
        - It is that which has no affect on anything.
        - After it is gone, everything is still the same as it was.
    - b) Verse 9 says that if you take all men together and weigh them, they are lighter than this vapour.
      - They can do nothing
  2. And idiom is used in Hebrew to compare men of low degree with those of high degree...
    - a) Some would trust in men of low decree because of their number—a king may take confidence in the multitude of his troops...
      - Or you may be dazzled by something that *everybody* believes or *everybody* does.
      - But what does it matter if God has spoken?

- b) Others would trust in men of high degree because they have power and influence and make many promises and many threats...
        - but the scripture says that they are a lie...
        - They promise much but can deliver nothing apart from God.
    - c. You will remember how clear our Lord Jesus was about this when He stood before Pilate.
      - 1) Pilate marvelled that Jesus did not answer him and finally asked...
        - “Don’t you realise who I am? I have power to release you and power to condemn you...”
        - And Jesus said, “You could have no power over me except it were given you from above.”
      - 2) Amen! That is the teaching of the scripture throughout!
        - How did Pharaoh get his power?
          - God says, “For this cause I have you up, that I might make my power known!”
          - The same is true of Satan.
        - What did Nebuchadnezzar learn when he boasted that he had built Babylon by his own power and wisdom?
          - He was made to confess that:
            - “the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, Gives it to whomever He will, And sets over it the lowest of men.”
      - 3) Oh that we could learn this so that we would be concerned about nothing but what God thinks!
        - What does it matter if you do something that displeases a puff of wind when it pleases God?
        - Who can harm you or oppose you if you do His will?
        - There is no basis for relying on man.
2. Verse 10 gives us the second example of things that offer no help—namely riches:
  - v. 10: “Do not trust in oppression, nor vainly hope in robbery; if riches increase, do not set your heart on them.”
  - a. Those who trust in riches to obtain blessing are often careless about the way they treat other people.
    - They will pay unfair wages to those who work for them.

- They will withhold their riches from the poor that God gave to them in order that they might help the poor.
  - James says that such persons are only fattening themselves for slaughter on the day of judgement with their riches...
    - If you have riches like this that you are relying on to bring you blessing,
      - you can be sure that they will instead bring cursing.
- b. The Psalm warns you about setting your heart on riches when they increase.
- 1) Setting your heart on riches is so easy to fall into when riches increase.
    - The word increase speaks of *fruit-bearing*
    - Riches have a way of multiplying—the more you have, the more you obtain and the easier it is to obtain.
  - 2) That is what can be so intoxicating!
    - All of the sudden bearing fruit for God takes a back seat,
      - and glorying in God is replaced with glorying in riches.
    - Soon riches become your portion and happiness
      - you start valuing yourself and others based on what you have...
      - and you make the acquisition of wealth your chief and highest end...
  - 3) This does not mean that everyone who is rich does this...
    - but it does mean that everyone whose wealth increases must beware!
    - It can happen to a poor man who gets two mules when he has only possessed one,
      - just as easily as to a rich man who gets a second corporation when he only had one.
    - Do not suppose that you are exempt from this danger, but guard you heart continually.
      - If you find yourself overly concerned about what you have and don't have, turn your heart back to God.

TRANS> Now let us turn to consider the positive reason for trusting in God alone...

B. You should trust in God alone because God has spoken!

1. He, whose word cannot be broken, has told us that power belongs to Him!

- a. There is no power in men or in wealth to bless us beyond the power that God gives to these things to be a blessing.
  - b. The ultimate power to bless or to curse belongs to God alone...
    - Just because there is blessing for a time from wealth or from men does not mean that the blessing will last...
    - It may be fattening for the slaughter, or
      - God may be raising a person up to make His power known...
      - That is why it is vain to trust in anything but God...
        - Power belongs to Him and Him alone—He has said so.
2. But in conjunction with power, there is mercy
- v. 12 says, “Also to you belongs mercy.”
  - a. This is that word that is used so often in the Psalms—**Hesed**
    - It refers to God’s covenant love.
      - That is, the love that He has promised to His people in Christ.
      - When you put mercy together with His sovereign power,
        - you have divine power exercised to bless His people!
  - b. If you are going to be strong and true in this world,
    - It is essential for you to remember that both power and mercy belong to God!
    - What fool would look some other place for blessing with a God like that?
      - Who could be uneasy and anxious about anything while under such care?
      - Realise, dear child of God, that you are not holding to little twig that may break off but the living God who has committed His power to bless you!
3. He who has the power of life death, the power of blessing and cursing, does not sit idly in heaven as the world supposes!
- a. You can rest with absolute confidence in Him because He has promised that all who in Christ Jesus will be blessed.
    - There is no cause for any anxiety, any anxious looking about for other helpers!
    - He has told you that power and mercy belong to Him...
  - b. And how clearly He has spoken now that Jesus has come!

- He is the God who gave up His Son to be cursed for His people!
  - This is not passive and this is not impotent!
  - This is the power of God revealed from Heaven for salvation!
  - This is divine love displayed!
- c. This is the God who will render to each one according to his work...
  - Thus the Psalm concludes!
  - 1) If you oppose His will and resist the Son that He has sent to save the world,
    - you will surely feel His power that dashes to pieces against you for ever and ever...
    - All who oppose Christ and His kingdom will be destroyed with Satan.
  - 2) But if you, yearning for forgiveness and salvation, turn to Jesus Christ and joyfully submit to Him as Lord and Saviour,
    - You will know all the fullness of divine power exerted to bless you for all eternity.
    - All the threads of your life and the threads of world history will join together in the end to bring to you the richest blessing and reward.
    - Mercy is the work that God delights to do.
      - What good reason there is for you to silently wait on God!
      - He is your refuge!
      - You will not be moved!