

## **National Youth Sunday 2020**

### **Through my fear, I trust in God (Psalm 56:1-4)**

#### **Sermon notes by Nolan McBride**

Psalm 56 is a prayer that expresses trust in God and God's word while crying out for help in the face of persecution. While we almost certainly don't face the danger the psalmist or some of our siblings in Christ around the world experience, everyone has times in their lives where we have to face very real fears. It is not a competition to see whose fears are "more valid" than others. What may seem relatively minor to one person can be life or death to another. How we respond to these fears shows who we are. Do we run from them, or turn to face them, trusting God to walk alongside us and lead our steps?

The Psalm is labeled as a "miktam of David, when the Philistines seized him in Gath." This refers to 1 Samuel 21:10-15. David is on the run from King Saul, who is jealous of David's popularity and fears he will supplant him and his descendants as king. (Given the prophet Samuel has already anointed David the next king of Israel, this is not exactly an irrational fear - though Saul does not know this.) Saul's children, David's wife Michal and best friend Jonathan, helped David escape and he flees to Gath, a Philistine city (and hometown of David's famous foe Goliath) where he seeks refuge with its king, Achish. The king's servants recognize him, and afraid of what the king might do, David pretends to be insane. He finally flees into the wilderness.

While most likely you are not currently on the run from someone actively trying to kill you, at some point everyone must face something that terrifies them. If you haven't yet, just wait; it will happen eventually. Maybe it is standing up to that one classmate who is making your life miserable or standing up to acquaintance. Or even harder is standing up to a friend. Maybe you face rejection if you are honest about yourself or/and your faith with your friends or family. Maybe you face the unknown of the next stage of your life, or any other number of difficult and stressful situations at home, school, or work.

Above my computer I've taped a picture of Christ with the words "Jesus, I Trust in You" along the bottom edge. When I am overwhelmed, I look at it and take a few deep breaths. I remind myself that I'm here and that no matter what may seem to be looming large right now, I will get through it. In the final verse of Matthew, Jesus promises us "I am with you always, to the end of the age." When praying Psalm 56 we affirm "in God I trust; I am not afraid; what can flesh do to me?" Nothing can separate us from the love of God. No matter what we are going through, God is with us. Through our fear, we can trust in God.