

I Am Confident of This
Psalm 27
February 28, 2010

I've been watching the Winter Olympics all this week and I have found them to be fascinating. Like you, I have lost a lot of sleep, but watching the winter games has really been enjoyable and suspenseful.

The competitions have been suspenseful for many reasons. We pull for the American athletes. We hope they win. We live and die with every turn, twist, spin and jump; and when the competition is over and they have done well, we exhale a sigh of relief. If they win a medal, I am even more pleased.

Most of the time, I try to put myself in their place. I watch them warming up. I focus on them as they prepare to start. I wonder what they must be feeling in the midst of their event. I wonder if there is any wavering. How confident are they?

As I watch the Olympics I wonder. Is Apolo Ohno confident he can skate from third position to first or second? While fixated on the skaters doing double and triple loops and sow cows and triple axles, I hold my breath hoping they will make it and not fall. I shake my head at times when I watch the skiers do flips, twists and upside down gyrations. How do they know they won't kill themselves?

Watching the downhill skiers, makes me wonder if I would have the nerve to do that. I have already decided what my exit strategy would be. I would ski down the hill and veer off to the right before the end of the ramp and tell the coach and the team that I just didn't have the nerve.

Confidence is essential to be an Olympic competitor and daredevil. The competitors can't stop halfway through the jumps. They have to believe that what they did successfully in practice they will be able to do in competition. In the most difficult of events they have to believe that they will be able to tell their bodies what to do and that their arms, legs, heads and torsos will do as directed.

Their confidence and skills are mind boggling to us. I am in awe of their confidence.

I am also in awe of David's confidence. In Psalm 27 he writes that the Lord is his light and his salvation. God is his stronghold. Even though a foreign army seeks to threaten Israel and his kingship, he does not fear. When war breaks out against him and the nation of Israel, he is confident.

David believes that he will be kept safe. How does he know this? He knows it from experience. The King of Israel spends time daily in the presence of the Lord. He is

reminded of the Lord's faithfulness. It is believed that every time David faced a challenge from another country, he would enter the temple. Even when he wasn't able to enter the temple, he entered the presence of the Lord.

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David was confident that in the end, he would experience the goodness of the Lord. So he admonishes Israel and every modern day reader to wait for the Lord. To be strong, because the Lord is your light, your safety and your stronghold. Take heart and again wait for the Lord.

One pastor has stated that when he prays, he prays out loud. When he is finished praying out loud, he waits in silence. He believes he focuses better when he prays out loud. However it is insufficient to simply end his prayer after audibly praying. An essential aspect of prayer and hearing God's voice is to wait and listen. Notice that even here, confidence is essential.

To wait patiently and to practice waiting requires confidence in the Lord. The Lord will reveal the message you need to hear. The All Knowing One is certain of what is best. In the process of waiting, revelation of the person and presence of God is revealed. Often by not receiving the answer you desire or by not obtaining an immediate response from God, our Creator and Savior works deeply within our souls.

The answer we thought we wanted wasn't even the answer to the right question. God is bigger than our questions. God desires to do a greater work within us than merely answering the questions we pose. By sitting in his presence, we come to know and love God. Again though, we must enter his presence with the confidence that we can trust the Lord and that down the road of our spiritual journeys we will see the goodness of God.

My guess is that many of you have questions for God that you feel the All Knowing One has not answered. Possibly some of you have given up on prayer and given up on God.

I want to encourage you not to give up. Granted some questions we have will not be answered until we see the Lord face to face, but prayer is more than a question and answer period.

Prayer is two way communication with God. It requires patience, practice, repetition, and God's revelation. When we are able to pray and listen, our fondness and love for God and our Savior grows. You must believe that God will reveal himself to you. As you travel on the journey of prayer and as you wait, reflect and listen, God will reward you and you will develop confidence in God. Then there will be no second thoughts about seeking to enter his presence and grace.

Psalm 27 speaks to us today and beckons us to have confidence in the Lord. During this season of Lent, Wait for the Lord, be strong and take heart. Wait for the Lord and place your confidence and trust in him. Amen.