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"Nowhere Else To Turn"

By: Josh Dowdy

*In you, O Lord, do I take refuge;
let me never be put to shame;*

in your righteousness deliver me! Psalm 31:1

Have you ever prayed for God to deliver you *in his righteousness*? I don't think I have. My prayers are always more, 'Deliver me, *in your mercy*' (especially when I'm driving to the dentist). When the poet says, *in you I take refuge—in your righteousness deliver me*, it sounds like a contract. The poet has placed his trust in the Lord, and he wants the Lord to honor the contract—to make good on his righteousness—by delivering him. But, here's another way to think about it. In his prayer, the poet confesses two things: there is no one besides the Lord who will deliver him, and there is no one else who is righteous. Whatever the Lord does, he does in his righteousness. So, the poet appeals to the Lord's righteousness not because the Lord owes him something in response to his trust, but because the poet knows that no one else deserves his trust. We see this idea later in the same psalm.

Into your hand I commit my spirit ... (v. 5)

The poet trusts so exclusively in the Lord, that Jesus would use the same declaration on the cross (Luke 23:46). And now, because of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, God not only delivers us *in his righteousness*; he delivers us to become his righteousness (2 Cor 5:21)!

So we have every reason to trust the Lord with the same exclusivity that the poet cried for deliverance. He concludes Psalm 31 by encouraging others also to trust the Lord.

Be strong, and let your heart take courage,
all you who wait for the Lord! (v. 24)

Here's a question for you and me:

Does our trust in the Lord illustrate for others that we have no plan B, that we have nowhere else to turn?

Josh Dowdy is a husband, dad, Sunday school teacher and soccer coach.

Men of Shades Devotional

How about writing one devotion to share with the Men of Shades. Share your thoughts on a favorite Bible verse, a story from your life with an application from Scripture, or share a devotion written by a favorite writer that was particularly meaningful to you. Follow the parameters below and then send it to Steve Grissett at s_grissett@yahoo.com.

- Choose a favorite verse or verses (2 or 3).
- Write a short devotion of 200 to 300 words max.
 - Add a title.
- Add one thought-provoking or reflective question at the end.
- Include a one or two sentence introduction of yourself.

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Man Church

Our next Man Church is Sunday, October 24th, and our speaker will be our Minister to Young Adults and Equipping, Bradley Patton. Bradley started attending Shades in 2010 and joined staff in 2013 after graduating from Samford. He served in a variety of roles while completing his M.Div. from Beeson Divinity School and is currently the Minister to Young Adults & Equipping. He gives pastoral oversight to Young Professionals, Nearly/Newlyweds, and Young Married couples without kids. He also oversees Adult Discipleship Groups and the Shades Equipping Center – which includes Foundations classes and the Training Institute.

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