

**Small Group Discussion**  
**Week of January 1, 2017**

**Note:** Visiting Pastor Corey Johnson spoke this Sunday on the topic, “Living Confidently in Christ.” His message was anchored in Psalm 27:1-3 and Colossians 3:2-4.

**Warm-up question** (for everyone to answer): How are you feeling about the New Year? You can share something you are glad about, or looking forward to, or something that you are glad to see end with the old year, or something you are sad to see go, etc.

1. Corey began his message by talking about how children will often ask, during a car trip, “Are we there yet!?” because they don’t have a concept of the length of time required for a journey. **Discuss:** Do you ever feel this way about life? Do you get impatient with the journey? Do you feel this way about any specific area of your life? What’s that like?
2. **Read** Psalm 27:1-3.
3. **Discuss:**
  - a. For some psalms, we know when David (or others) wrote them, and the circumstances they were experiencing at the time. But scholars are not sure when David wrote Psalm 27. Based on the phrases in these three verses, what would you guess that David was experiencing at this time? (Hint: he probably was not sitting on his comfy throne in peace-time. We know that David spent significant periods of time running from a crazed tyrant who was out to kill him, or fending off pesky armies, or running from the insurrection led by his son Absalom).
  - b. David claims here that he will be confident, not because of the absence of conflict, but in the midst of conflict—even conflict that brings the threat of death. What conflicts or threats face you as you enter the New Year? How are you feeling about them? Can you say what David did? (Be honest!)
  - c. Pastor Corey pointed out based on vv. 1, that we can have confidence in the face of threats for two reasons: 1) the character of God, and 2) the competence of God.
    - i. The fact that David uses God’s personal name, “The LORD” (Hebrew Yahweh), implies that he is calling God’s character to mind. Based on what you know of God’s character—and in particular, what we have seen throughout the “Big Story” of Scripture—why does God’s character give us reason for confidence?
    - ii. What aspects of God’s competence do we see in v. 1, which would inspire confidence in us?
  - d. Verse 1 ends with a rhetorical question: “Whom shall I fear?” The implied answer is, “Nobody.” If you apply this question to your own circumstances—and specifically the answers to 3b (above), can you come to the same conclusion?
  - e. Pastor Corey pointed out that we often fall apart when some circumstance causes an unwanted change in our lives, because we have anchored our lives to things that are changeable. What aspects of your current circumstances, if they were suddenly changed, could threaten to throw you off your moorings? How can you become “anchored to the unchangeable,” as Corey said?
4. **Read** Psalm 27:4.
  - a. What is David’s one request, in the midst of danger? (Leaders, note that during David’s lifetime, the “house” of God was a tabernacle, or portable tent—so he is not speaking of a fortified, physical structure, but rather the place where God’s presence dwells.)
  - b. How does this thought/desire affect David’s outlook? See vv. 13-14.
5. We have greater reason even than David did to have confidence in all situations, because we live on the other side of Jesus’s death and resurrection.
  - a. **Read** Colossians 3:1-4.
  - b. Based on Paul’s words here, what reasons does Jesus give us for confidence?
  - c. Practically, how can we “set our minds and hearts on things above?”
  - d. How do we come to the place where we can say authentically, that Jesus is our life? (V. 4).
6. Spend some time **praying** specifically for the challenges and/or opportunities that each member of your group is facing in the coming year. Pray for the confidence that comes in Christ.