

Vacation from Life but not Jesus: Reconnect

Psalm 31:1–5; June 21, 2026

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I think my worst vacation was when I was fifteen years old. My parents owned a Ford Country Squire Station Wagon. It was green with the wood grain panels. Thinking back that was my dad's favorite car. They owned a pop up camper and loved taking the Ford to go camping. That particular summer we were taking my dad's mom to Florida to stay for the fall and winter. My dad's brother lived in St Augustine. We were towing the camper so when we got to my uncle's house we could camp on the beach. It was a vacation filled with expectation and excitement. Time on the beach, Busch Gardens, time on the beach, some other boring place and time on the beach.

While driving through Georgia on the interstate on a warm afternoon, while everyone was napping except my mom, who was driving the right rear tire blew out. There was the loud pop and the car started swerving, my mom was trying to keep control, my dad was yelling instructions, grandma was screaming, the car and the camper were spinning in circles. Finally, everything stopped suddenly in the grass median. My mom was just okay, my dad was paying close attention to grandma, who was close to breaking down. She was shaken and that made me feel shaken. After my dad and mom got grandma calmed down, my mom started to cry.

My dad got out of the car and there were already several other people who stopped to offer help. The Georgia State Trooper showed up, the tow truck arrived, and they hauled away the completely demolished camper. My mom was praying for grandma and holding onto her. She was also reciting Psalm Twenty-three. This was one of my first true crises. It was also one of those moments I got to see panic and fear turn into faith. This event helped me learn to was okay to cry out to Jesus. As a result the book of Psalms became incredibly powerful for me.

Psalm 31:1 (NLT) O Lord, I have come to you for protection; don't let me be disgraced. Save me, for you do what is right.

Have you ever had a vacation where you needed God's protection? ---Protection from your enemies, protection from the disasters, protection from yourself is all within the grace and love of God. I hope no one ever has a vacation like the one described.

Vacations are not meant to be a time for stress, but to release the stress. Vacations are not for car crashes or other catastrophes but as a time of rest. Vacations aren't meant as moments to be disconnected, but to reconnect with Jesus. Vacations aren't meant to drain us, but a time for renewal.

Our enemy on that vacation was the fear of what would happen next. My mom didn't want to drive and frequently blamed herself. The entire trip felt disjointed. I'm certain neither of my parents or my grandmother had the sense of being renewed.

It's easy now to identify the enemy from that vacation. But all of us have an enemy that wants to distract us while we are trying to reconnect with family and with Jesus. The tire blowout and car crash could have become an even bigger disaster. The car being totaled and a few frayed nerves was a small disaster. One or all of us could have easily died.

I've shared before how I can create bad vacations by over planning. I become my own worst enemy. As a result I make life miserable for all those who are around me. I need the protection of God all the time: at home, on vacation, and all the moments in between. A few weeks ago I stated that we need to claim God's hand of protection over our lives. When we are trusting God to protect us we won't have any regrets.

Our God is the one who defined what is right. God always has done what was right. God will always do what is right. I think back to the vacation when our camper and car crashed. God's hand was protecting my family. God was not surprised by a tire blowout. God was able to use that moment to help us all connect with Him. His name was proclaimed more than once. I don't mean as a swear word.

My mom praying and reciting Psalm Twenty-three with grandma was a moment of reconnecting. My dad offering support and encouragement to his mother and his wife was a moment of reconnecting. We reconnected with my aunt and uncle and cousin. We still went to the beach. I still got sunburned. We still went to Busch Gardens. I still was bored. My family reconnected with one another in a unique way that year. We also reconnected with God, who is always good.

Psalm 31:2 (NLT) Turn your ear to listen to me; rescue me quickly. Be my rock of protection, a fortress where I will be safe.

No vacation should need divine intervention. Whoever said that wanted to get away from God. Honestly, that person's attitude is selfish and self-sufficiency. Who needs God when you're having fun and getting away from work? Not a good way to live life.

The writer of this psalm was obviously facing a crisis. Some disaster was at the door. The enemy was too close for comfort. Like most of us the cry of the psalm writer is filled with urgency. When we want God to act we want it to happen now. We need help when we need it. We can never understand the word wait or later. There is a crisis and something needs to happen.

We can cry out to the Lord and He will intervene. God will speak a word of hope into our souls. The word may be from the Bible or from a person. God will nudge us, prompt us, get us moving. He will take us to a place of protection.

I love the psalmist feeling of intimacy with God. This phrase turn your ear announces that God can and will come close. The request is made to God to draw near with the experience that God has been near in the past. This paints a picture of caring and tenderness and familiarity. We all need this relationship. The psalmist cries out that God will provide protection. Like a castle with thick walls, God's protection keeps us safe from the enemy.

Not only do vacations need the touch of God, but our everyday lives need God's touch. We need protection from the dogs that run across the street barking and showing their teeth. We need protection when we're hiking in the forest. We need protection when we're at the beach. We need God's protection as we drive in the car and fly in the plane. God's protection can be with us in every situation.

There is no place in life that God is not near. There is no situation that we can face that God is not with us. Yet, we live with the motto I don't need anybody but me. I'm self-sufficient, I am more than able. All I need is to get away, to take a break, to go on vacation. Then while we're on the way or when we're gone we don't ask for Jesus' power and protection.

Instead of reconnecting with our Savior and Lord, we disconnect. We trust in the blue sky to relieve our stress. We believe the walk in the forest will give us rest. We think the sound of the waves at the beach will help us reconnect.

The reality is that we can't connect with Jesus, unless we are talking with Jesus. That sounds obvious, right? Drive your car to your favorite vacation destination and talk with Jesus. Head out to work and talk with Jesus. Work in the yard and talk with Jesus. Sit on your porch and talk with Jesus. Turn off your TV, computer, tablet, phone and talk with Jesus. Speak to Jesus about the crisis in your life and ask for protection. Reconnect with Jesus by calling out to Him.

Psalm 31:3-4 (NLT) Since you are my rock and my fortress, for the sake of your name lead and guide me. Free me from the trap that is set for me, for you are my refuge.

I would like all of my life to be within God's refuge and fortress. Daily we need to believe and claim the Lord as your rock and fortress. God is a rock and a fortress. God is unchanging. God is strong. No circumstance of human will or nature will alter God's character. God is the only place where we can find real safety, security, and shelter. There are no weapons made by people that can break down God's stronghold. There are no weapons in the spiritual world that overcome God's power.

This is our God. He is eternal. He is present every moment. He is nearby in every location at home, on the road, at work, and on vacation.

The psalm writer claims for His own life the rock and fortress of God. It is one thing for God to be a rock and a fortress. The writer knows these things as facts, as the truth. But, over his own life, in the midst of each situation the psalmist claims this truth as his own.

He says, you are my rock and my fortress. He is placing himself on the rock of God's steadfastness. He is putting himself inside the walls God's fortification. He can see the rock on which he stands. He can see the fortress where he lives. He is personally connected to the Lord. His very soul, spirit, mind, and body are joined by the Spirit of God with the Living Lord. God will not leave him.

The psalmist makes this claim, connects himself with the Lord for the glory of God. When he says these words, he knows that whatever happens God will do what is right and what is good. He is trusting the Lord to be true to His promises, to keep His Word, and to bring about His perfect plans.

The sake of God's name is glory and honor of the One who has made plans for our lives. God is working out His plans. God is fulfilling His purposes. The psalm writer knows that this will always be better than of his own desires.

Know that you have been freed from the snares set up against you each day. When you call out to the Lord, God will answer. As you connect your life to God, the Lord's plans will be fulfilled. The battles may rage on all about you, but Jesus is with you. The crisis may carry on, but the Holy Spirit will be leading. The challenges may come one right after another, but God's love, compassion, mercy, grace, authority and power are with you. Take this personally that when you sit in your living room pondering all the bad things that can happen. Fill your mind and heart with this truth while you are mowing the lawn or doing the dishes. While you rest on the porch looking over the mountains or lie on the beach with sand between your toes breathe in and out with the hope and peace of being with the Lord.

One of the great joys of life is that God has saved you, Redeemed you, and delivered you. In this truth keep your connection with your God.

Psalm 31:5(NLT) I entrust my spirit into your hand. Rescue me, Lord, for you are a faithful God.

Whether it's vacation or work entrust your spirit to God's hand. Your spirit is where you communicate, abide, and cooperate with God. In your spirit you connect and reconnect with God. I'm talking about the most important connection in your life. This is the connection which brings protection over your life. Your connection with Jesus brings hope, peace, joy and gratitude. Being connected with your Creator, the Lord of your life provides power and protection. Your connection with Jesus is your salvation.

Life is filled with stress. Life wears us out. Life disconnects us from one another and tries to keep us away from God. Life drains us until we are nearly empty.

Jesus felt this way when He was hanging on the cross. His body had been beaten by the Roman soldiers on the crucifixion detail. He had been betrayed and denied by His own disciples. The people who cheered Him as their king also called for His death. He was belittled, mocked, bullied and harassed by those He came to save.

The weight of His own body was suffocating Him being nailed to the cross. The sin of every person ever born, ever conceived, ever imagined was upon Him. The power of sin to deceive, destroy and bring death weighed on His spirit and His body. This weight of sin created a barrier between Him and the Father in heaven. He felt as though He had been forsaken and forgotten. He felt the burden of abandonment. But in the end He cried out to the Father, into your hands I commit my spirit. The ultimate test of faith. The extreme example of trust. Breathing His last breath He laid His very life in the Father's hands.

This was the worst moment on the face of the earth. Nothing compares to this moment. God's Son, Jesus Christ, died on the cross. The enemies of God appear to have prevailed. The hope of salvation is seemingly gone. What appeared to be salvation, redemption, and deliverance died.

Then the greatest victory happened. Jesus rose from the dead. Being in the tomb Friday, Saturday, and Sunday morning Jesus walked out. He is alive today. He wants to connect with every person.

Unless you entrust your Spirit into God's hand you cannot be saved, redeemed and delivered. More than a vacation for release from stress. More than finding a moment to rest. Jesus is providing everyone of us with an opportunity to connect or reconnect. No matter what is happening in your life, whether you are a sinner or you are saved, you need to be connected with Jesus. Working around your house, you need to be connected with Jesus. Laboring for your wages, you need to be connected with Jesus. Relaxing by the pool or walking through the forest, you need to be connected with Jesus. Every moment of everyday you need to be connected with Jesus.

In the silence of the next few moments cry out to Jesus. Open your spirit, confess your need be connected to Jesus. Invite Jesus to fill your life.