

Chat with the Children

- Computer games
 - some oldies from my childhood... Name them? (Space Invaders, Asteroids, Planetoid/Defender, Pacman)
 - often games start easy, but get harder
 - initial appearances can be deceptive
 - there is a sting in the tail...
- Sometimes life, and faith, can seem like that:
 - easy peasy lemon squeezy to start with....
 - and then things get harder...
 - something goes wrong...
 - we make a mistake...
 - or someone does something that makes life difficult for us...
- How do we cope?
 - Psalmist...

Introduction

- Recap on intro from chat with the children
 - sometimes life and faith isn't as easy/straightforward as we'd like
 - what light does the Psalmist cast here...

Confident Faith! (vs.1-12)

- **God is great**
 - everything is fine
 - he is in charge...
 - his people will all be fine
- **Easy to praise him...**
- Is that our experience?
 - or perhaps it was our experience at some point in the past - do we ever hark back to the time when....
 - eg when I was at University...
 - or perhaps that is our perception of how other people's faith is - "its alright for them..."

Confident Faith? (vs.13-16)

- That isn't the whole picture!
- Come to v.13 and begin to get a more nuanced picture!
 - at death's door
 - opposed...
 - its all gone wrong?
 - or was it ever right?
- First, his faith is not dependent on his circumstance:
 - he doesn't trust God because God makes everything easy
 - **he trusts God because God is good, powerful, trustworthy, faithful - and looks for that in the midst of whatever circumstance comes his way**
 - neither does he doubt God when his circumstances turn sour
 - **he trusts God because God is good, powerful, trustworthy, faithful - and looks for that in the midst of whatever circumstance comes his way**

Real Confidence (vs.17-20)

- Real faith is confidence in God to do right, to do good, to bring justice, to provide refuge for the oppressed....
 - even when we don't see much evidence of that yet
 - even when we don't see how that could come to pass
- **Objects in the mirror are closer than they appear...**
 - **the God of faith is closer/stronger than he appears**
 - **he is real - and worthy of praise - even when at those times when he seems more distant**