

God is Our Refuge

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[0 : 0 0] Good morning, if you'll please open your Bibles to Psalm 46.

You may remember we've been looking at a series on a Christian worldview. From the book of Psalms, and I'm always timid to say this, but we may be coming to the end this week.

I think this is a good summary, conclusion place for us to end. And then, as I get through the course of the week and I find more Psalms, there's always more I want to preach from the book of Psalms. But this really does come to a good conclusion for some of what we've seen already from the book of Psalms.

So let's look together at chapter 46, verses 1 through verse 11. The whole chapter. Psalm 46. God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

Therefore, we will not fear, though the earth gives way, though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble at its swelling.

[1 : 3 1] There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy habitation of the Most High. God is in the midst of her.

She shall not be moved. God will help her when morning dawns. The nations rage. The kingdoms totter. He utters His voice.

The earth melts. The Lord of hosts is with us. The God of Jacob is our fortress. Come behold the works of the Lord, how He has brought desolations on the earth.

He makes war cease to the end of the earth. He breaks the bow and shatters the spear. He burns the chariots with fire. Be still and know that I am God.

I will be exalted among the nations. I will be exalted in the earth. The Lord of hosts is with us. The God of Jacob is our fortress.

[2 : 3 0] Let's pray. Dear Heavenly Father, we thank You for Your Word. Lord, we pray that You would help us even now to find You to be our refuge.

That we would rightly understand Your Word by Your Spirit's help. That, Lord, not just understanding, but that it would be life-changing. Lord, we pray that You would be exalted not only throughout the earth, but specifically here in our midst today.

In the preaching of the Word. In our response to that preaching. That You would be exalted. We pray this in Christ's name. Amen. Amen. So I've mentioned already we've been looking at this series from the book of Psalms on a Christian worldview.

And we have done so because we've acknowledged that we're living in difficult times for Christians. We're seeing, I think, increased persecution of the church. At least a more pushback against the church and its positions, its commitments, even to truth, but primarily to God.

And we've asked the question, how do we live in such a world? How do we respond? What does God's Word tell us about how we respond? And so just quickly I want to recap so far what we've seen and what we're building on.

[3 : 47] And then you can kind of see as we come to Psalm 46 somewhat of a conclusion there. So we began by looking at Psalm 2. And we saw in Psalm 2, we spent two sermons on Psalm 2.

But we saw there that unbelievers are opposing God's rule and trying to throw it off. And we saw even from Psalm 2 that this is nothing new, that this is what unbelievers will do.

They are in opposition to God's rule. They don't want to bow the knee to God. They don't want to have to obey His law. And we even talked about how opposition to absolute truth is a form of opposition to God.

We don't want God or anyone to tell us what's right and wrong. What's right for me is right for me. And what's right for you is right for you. And so unbelievers are opposing God's rule in this world and trying to throw off His rule.

But in our second message we saw God's not threatened by that. Right? We may respond in fear to that. That may be our natural response to that.

[4 : 46] But God's not up in heaven trembling. God's not afraid. He's not threatened. Remember how He responds. He says God laughs. God holds Him in derision.

And we saw the greatest response He has to this is what? He has seated Christ on the throne. And so His answer to the raging of the nations is to set above them the King of kings and the Lord of lords.

Which He has now done. And then we saw in Psalm 1. That the righteous are to be planted in the Word of God. And that the wicked one day will face God's judgment and they'll be blown away because there's no foundation.

And so we were encouraged to go to the Word of God. To focus on and spend our time on the Word of God and let that be our source of truth. Not everything else the world gives us is what they believe to be true.

But to be planted in the Word of God. And then Psalm 14. I hope Paul preached this. I hope I'm summarizing it well.

[5 : 44] That we must live in light of God's existence. This is Psalm 14. It's the one that begins, The fool says in his heart, There is no God. And there's a reason he's called a fool. Because he believes there's no God.

But there are ways in which we as Christians can live in a practical atheism. Where we live as though God doesn't exist. And so we were encouraged to live in view of God's existence.

To understand that God exists and He's still sovereign and ruling over this world. And then Psalm 42 and 43 showed us the need to preach the gospel and biblical truth to ourselves.

So everything we saw in Psalm 1 about being planted in the Word of God, We need to remind ourselves of these things when we feel discouraged. We need to preach to ourselves and say, Here's what God's Word says. We have co-workers that are saying this and that.

We have the news saying this. We have social media where we're reading this and that. But we go and say, But God's Word says. And that's what instructs us. And so today I'd like for us to look at Psalm 46.

[6 : 49] And what I want to argue from this is that God is our refuge. That's really the title of my sermon. God is our refuge. But that He is a refuge and a fortress for us in difficult times. Now I'd love to say I tied this all in together so nicely.

But this is a psalm from which Martin Luther based his hymn, A Mighty Fortress is Our God, Which is what we're going to close in today, Right around the time of Reformation celebration. But it's not really intentional.

But Martin Luther, the Reformation, We have here this idea that God is our refuge. He's our fortress in difficult times. So, just a summary, Before we even jump into it to say, This psalm is going to encourage us.

Where do we go in difficult times? We've seen already, Well, we trust in a sovereign God. We trust in the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. We go to His Word. We preach the Word to ourselves.

But overall, we see that God is our refuge. There's nowhere else we can go. Even more important, As I've said in previous sermons, More important than changing our circumstances. More important than things getting better in America Is that we go to God when things are not good.

[7 : 58] And so I want to look at that today. God is our refuge and fortress. So that's really my first point. Is that God is a refuge and fortress. And I've done this, I've tried to pull from different parts of the psalm.

We won't go straight through this time. I have three points that I want to look at. And as I do so, I'm going to pull from different parts of the psalm. So let's look at a few parts of that now To see God is our refuge and fortress.

Beginning in verse 1, God is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble. And then, Maybe you remember from Psalm 42 and 43, There was that refrain, Or the chorus that's repeated three times.

We see here also there's a refrain. I really, There seems to be three stanzas, But two of them have the same refrain. Verses 7 and verse 11, The Lord of hosts is with us.

The God of Jacob is our fortress. And that's repeated again in verse 11. So we see, Again, This theme that's begun in verse 1, And then repeated in 7 and 11, That God is a refuge and a fortress for us.

[9 : 04] So let's look at verse 1 first. He is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble. The fact that it says, In trouble.

God is our help in trouble. Maybe, I don't want to raise hands right now, But it'd be great to get a poll. How many of you think that this is a safe description Of the time in which we're living in?

Probably, I think, Most of us would agree that We're living in a time of trouble. Maybe, Again, I don't want to take out a context And imagine as though our time is worse than others.

Probably all throughout church history. People can look at the time they're living in And see parts of it that would say, It's a time of trouble. I just mentioned the Reformation. There were obviously blessed times in history. The Reformation, The age of the Puritans.

But again, That's in isolated areas And for brief periods of time. Throughout history, We've seen The opposition, Of those who Are unbelievers to God And His people.

[10 : 06] If they hated me, They will hate you. Christians have lived in times of trouble And we could Acknowledge today That we're living in A time of trouble. And admittedly, Things may yet get worse.

We prayed earlier for revival. I would say, Unless God sovereignly does something To change the course of things As we see it, It looks as though things Are getting worse, Not better.

So, We're living in a time of trouble And trouble may yet increase. Where do we go? Either way, Whether it gets worse Or whether it gets better, We find this psalm To be A Solace for us.

A place of comfort for us In times of trouble. I've spoken Somewhat corporately About all of us Or Christians in America. Let me say individually as well, There are probably many of you Who are facing times of trouble Right now In various forms.

I've noted That there seems to be Periods in the life of the church Where there's death In the life of the church. And I forget now Where we're at But somewhere around seven I think funerals we've had Either in the church Or a direct family member Of somebody in our church I think in the last three months It seems It could be four months But if that's true That means there's many of you Who have had a death In your family All of us have had a death Or deaths In the church And so there are ways In which individually We may be hurting From the loss of those That we love There may be situations At work That make it difficult Or even cause anxiety That could be judged As trouble There may be difficulties In your marriage right now That make life To seem like There's great trouble Right now What I want you to see That if that's true for you Then this song's for you Right It's for those Who are living in times of trouble Again individually

[12:14] Or corporately In such times What do we find What does the psalm tell us That God Is a very present help In such times He is a very present help This weekend We looked at Hebrews 11 And it talked about Faith in what was unseen And here we have God Who is invisible And we're told That he's very present In these kind of times In these He's a very present help In times of trouble The psalmist doesn't just mean That God's omnipresent Right God's omnipresent Of course he's very present If he's everywhere Right What is the psalmist saying When he says He's a very present help In trouble In trouble We can always go to him He's immediate He's there for us He's We have access to him And remember This is the psalmist

Writing from an Old Testament perspective This isn't even Accounting for the fact That we have The indwelling of the Holy Spirit With us now As Christians And when we're in times Of trouble I think One of the struggles We sometimes have Is There's no one to talk to About this Where can I go Where can I find comfort I feel alone In my trouble Well we're encouraged God is very present For us He is a help In these times of trouble He is near to us I think it's even implied That if God is a very present Help in trouble It's not just The immediacy Of his presence Is it He's willing to help us Which implies God cares for us He's not just nearby We can talk to him But he doesn't really care I'm sure Every one of us Have been in the conversation Where we talk to someone And we're sharing with them We're kind of We feel like we're Pouring our heart out Right And you get to a point

And they ask you a question They go Didn't you hear what I said Like obviously You're not nearly as interested In this conversation As I thought you were Because that's the very thing I said I was speaking to my mom last night I did the same thing There were other people In the room talking to me And I go back And ask a question I was like Who was saying this And she said Didn't you hear That's where I started No no I guess I missed that point It's not just saying God will listen to you Or That God's there And you can speak to him It's saying God actually cares And will provide for you The help that Maybe even someone Well intentioned Could never provide for you They may try to be helpful Probably all of you Have had someone say something That they thought Was really helpful At the time Only for it to come off Not very helpful at all Probably the In our life We had a miscarriage

And we had a lot of Christians That tried to say things That were really helpful They thought was helpful That really hurt Probably more than it helped God's not like that And I'm not I'm not trying to In any way This was not here At this church So I'm not trying to In any way Demean those who have Tried to help I think that's good We want to be helped to people And we should speak to those Who are hurting But God actually helps He gets it right He's not just trying He's there He's present He's a help to us And I think we see What that help looks like In this psalm How is God a help to us Well he is a refuge And a strength for us Just let me give you A English definition here Refuge Is a condition of being safe Or sheltered from pursuit Danger or trouble So a refuge is a place You go to be safe It will protect you From whatever it is That's threatening you

I thought maybe we could imagine Something like a A storm cellar Not something we deal with A lot here Maybe in Hazleton But Kansas There's a tornado coming through You get down in the shelter Where the tornado Is not going to Affect you It's a safe place It's a refuge When trouble is all around And maybe that's What it feels like For us sometimes That trouble is swirling around Like a tornado You know it's coming for you Where do you go You don't just stand out there And watch it come You go to God Who's your refuge And there we find Protection from that Which threatens us That which is Trouble to us And then it also Talks about him Being a strength And I think this even Speaks to the fact That he provides The strength That we need In times of trouble To uphold us To enable us To endure And persevere When times are hard God's our strength He's what supports us And even as we think about that

[17:18] That begs the question Where do we go When things seem hard What do we think Is going to get us Through it Maybe we don't want To admit it Or acknowledge it Where does the world go When times are troubled Or times are difficult And they want to endure And persevere Maybe there's a lot of places They would go I think some go to alcohol Some go to drugs To help them get through Difficult times Maybe some just figure They'll veg out For three or four hours In front of the television Every evening To help them Get off their mind The difficulties of work That day Maybe there are other things That we might pursue That we find To be of comfort to us Maybe I need to speak Closer to home And say Some of us go to food And find food to be a comfort When things When we're nervous When we're worried About things We want to eat more Do we find God To be a very present Help in trouble Are we depending On the same things The world does When we're worried

Or when we're troubled Or have we gone to God And found Him To be our refuge And our strength And in the refrain It kind of adds to that Verses 7 and verse 11 The God of Jacob Is our fortress Now in some ways This may be a repetition Of refuge It may expand The definition A little bit further Again I'll give you A definition From the dictionary Fortress is a military Stronghold Especially a stronghold Fortified A strongly fortified town Fit for a large garrison I was always taught You weren't supposed To define the word With the same word But here we go The fortress is A fortified city A place you can go Where there's room For an army To be there And garrison And help to protect you And so God Is a fortress for us I think it implies here That He is fighting To keep us safe He is on our side We're going to see

More of that In just a moment But at the very least It says that the Christian When they go to God As a refuge God protects them They are secure They're kept safe By God They're guarded And protected And so Let that just sink in For a second As we think of The troubles we face In life Whether they be Cultural Or American troubles Whether they be Individual troubles In our life Do we know Do we understand That we are protected And safe In God And again That doesn't mean Let's clarify What does safety mean here I've talked about Some Hebrews 11 The examples of faith And at the end It talks about These great men of faith Who were Tortured Stoned Sawn in two So let's just be clear What we're not arguing Is that When we say

You're safe in God As your refuge Doesn't mean You will not face Hardships in this life Including possibly Being put to death That's not what we're saying What we are saying is That ultimately Is not where safety Is to be found Our greatest safety Is not In keeping our life Our greatest safety Is what I would argue It's in eternity Paul counts His union with Christ As greater than Everything else in this life He said I count it all rubbish Compared to knowing Christ Jesus And being found in Him Why?

Because He has something That the world Can never take away He knows that when He dies He will be with the Father forever He will be with Christ forever And that's greater But I don't want to demean As well the fact that When it says He's the very present help There's The very present aspect That is not just future Is it?

[21 : 18] He does help us Through these times He does shelter And protect us But I think we have to understand That doesn't mean Universally so He may give us The strength to endure Standing for Christ If it means dying for Christ Proverbs 18.10 Says the name of the Lord Is a strong tower The righteous man Runs into it And is safe It's a strong tower He's a fortress for us To run to When we feel trouble Around us Notice verse 7 and 11 Also describe God They give a title to Him They call God The Lord of hosts Now you've heard me say this Probably multiple times by now I really want to Ingraine this in us And let's understand it I'm really I still long for A new version Of the English Bible That would translate Host into armies The Lord of armies Which is what host means

It means a Fortified people It's an army And so The Lord of armies Is how he's described The God who leads His military Is with you On your side The Lord of hosts Is with us I think The implication is He's fighting for us God with his armies He leads his armies Is with us He's on our side And to be clear I'm not universally Saying that On our side On our side of Those who love him Those who are his people God is fighting For his people And I've said this before In Our messages here On Psalms But If God is on our side I put it before If we got Lionel Messi On our team Right We get the best Of the best It's like a cheat code

The world's In opposition to you And you're going to Stand up against them How are you going to God's on my side And God brings with them Angel armies Matthew Henry says This sovereign Lord Is with us Sides with us Acts with us And has promised He will never leave us Hosts may be against us But we need not fear them If the Lord of hosts Be with us And this foundation That he builds on Leads him there In verse 2 So look Look with me Just the flow of Verse 1 and 2 God is our refuge And strength A very present Help in trouble Therefore We will not fear Now The we will not fear Part is really My third point So I'm not going there yet But I do want you to see These realities Form a foundation Of truth That hold the believer Steady in times of trouble

What's going to keep us From fear In times of trouble The Lord of hosts Is with us God is our refuge He's our strength And again we'll come back To that But I want you to see That there's There's this Foundational basis It's what we saw In Psalm 1 God's word is the Foundation for us That holds us steady This is the very thing I have wanted us to do In these sermons From the book of Psalms To give you Or point you Let's say To a foundation That will hold you steady And keep you from fear When times are difficult Or when there's trouble And we see More of these foundations Of truth in the psalm And so before I dive Into the response Of not fearing Let's build the foundation Even more Let's see what else This psalm says That ought to keep us From fear So my second point is A foundation of truth Let's expand that Foundation of truth Verse 4 Let me actually read it

In the sections Verses 4 through 6 And then we'll come later To verses 8 through 9 So 4 through 6 There is a river Whose streams Make glad the city of God The holy habitation Of the most high God is in the midst of her She shall not be moved God will help her When morning dawns The nations rage The kingdoms totter He utters his voice The earth melts So beginning in verse 4 God cares for the dwelling Of his people We see just to start with He provides water to them To make them glad He nourishes it We see as well From verse 5 That God dwells in the city He's with his people And because of his protection The city is untouchable He helps the city So he provides water That gladdens them I just think What a great mercy From God I spoke of in terms Of nourishment I think that's a large part Of it If we picture this city

[26 : 23] As a fortified city Like Jerusalem The river that runs Through it Provides the water To the city But it makes them glad Maybe that they have water I think there may even be Aesthetic reasons It's beautiful God cares for his people And he gives them things That gladden their heart In the midst of trouble The picture of the psalm We almost imagine There's war going on And there's this fortified city And here God is He's concerned Not just for their protection But that they would have Glad hearts When there's trouble Going on all around them And that he would dwell With them And help them Now what is this city?

Maybe a little bit difficult For us to answer What is this city That's spoken of? The obvious context Is Jerusalem And Jerusalem did have A river flowing through To provide water to the city Which made it a strong And good fortified city And as we think about Jerusalem Then we would understand That the temple Would dwell in Jerusalem Where God's presence Would rest And so God is there In the midst of his city I think obviously In light of the New Testament We cannot stop there It's not just speaking of Jerusalem It's speaking of greater truths Than that So then What would we speak of?

Maybe if we Extract that further And say That This city Is the people of God Gathered together Then we could say In a larger context That The city is The church Universal Throughout the world Today And we understand From that That if that's the case Then what's being Communicated to us Is that God dwells With his city Excuse me God dwells with his people He's present with them He protects them He does things That gladden their heart We know this Especially As we've said earlier From Then dwelling in the spirit With us God's present With his people We know this Corporately As we gather together For worship That God meets us And is very present With us As we worship I think of Passages like Matthew 16 18 Where Jesus said I will build my church And the gates of hell Shall not prevail against it It's very much

A picture of what we see In Psalm 46 He's going to build his church And the gates of hell Will not prevail against it He's protected his church Romans 8 38-39 For I'm sure That neither death Nor life Nor angels Nor rulers Nor things present Nor things to come Nor powers Nor height Nor depth Nor anything else In all creation Will be able to separate us From the love of God In Christ Jesus our Lord Perhaps the greatest protection That we need There's nothing That can separate us From the love of God Whatever enemy May come against us There's nothing else In all of creation Which I've said Is everything except for God There's nothing In all of that That could In any way Take away our salvation And so Again There's There's a stronghold for us There's A foundation To encourage us Maybe another argument For Thinking of it In terms of the church

Is the fact that There will come a day When this world Will be destroyed God himself Will consume the world With fire And what will survive The destruction of the world The church Right We know unbelievers Will be cast out Into the lake of fire We know that The church will Survive it More Be glorified And then be placed Into the new earth And the new heavens So if all the things That we will experience In this world What will remain In the new heavens And the new earth It's only the church Everything else Gets recreated It's not your pets Sorry It's not even Our favorite national parts Or the most beautiful things In this world Even those things Are corrupted by the fall And God's going to create Something more beautiful Than all those things It's the church That survives Even that destruction They have a lasting inheritance Which really points me to Maybe a third way

[30 : 43] Of understanding this As we think of the city In which God dwells With his people And protects them What city is it That we long for In which God Will dwell with his people It's the new earth And the new heavens And so I think There's probably some Illusion to that as well But God is with his people Again I don't want to Carry it too far In the fact that He's there with them In times of trouble And we know In the new heavens And earth There will be no trouble But we see that Even as an answer To the troubles That we face now But God is there With his people In verse 6 We see that the nations Rage And kingdoms totter I don't have to Spend long on that Because that's the same Truth we saw In Psalm 2 Why do the nations Rage and the people Plot in vain They take counsel Together against the Lord And against his anointed Saying let us Burst his bonds apart And cast his Rule off from us I may have gotten Rule wrong But you understand The context there The nations rage They are in opposition To God And his authority

But we see in verse 6 That he's more powerful The nations rage The kingdoms totter He utters his voice The earth melts So God's on our side He has armies with him Does he even need the armies?

The nations are raging How does he answer them? He speaks And what happens? They melt You know I always picture this Like you would think Of a nuclear bomb That vaporizes Whatever it hits Right It just vaporizes things They melt Before This is the whole world All the nations In opposition to God All it takes Is the voice of God To melt all opposition He speaks And his enemies Melt Before him These are the same enemies That cause our heart To falter That cause us To fear And God speaks And they melt And then look at Verses 8 and 9 Come behold The works of the Lord How he has brought Desolations on the earth

He makes wars To cease to the ends Of the earth He breaks the bow And shatters the spear He burns the chariots With fire Verse 8 We're called to Come and behold The works of the Lord How he's brought Desolations on the earth There's an invitation Come and see Come look Behold You're in trouble You're in trouble Right now You have worries And fear Come look at something And we're told To behold his power In wiping out people And bringing desolations On the earth Now I didn't Go overly deep And try to figure out Now what exactly Is he speaking of I think there are Probably ways in which There's an immediate Context of Israel's enemies Are destroyed before Them sometimes Miraculously God wipes out Those armies That might oppose them And so we have Historical and biblical Testimonies to this I think There are other ways In which we could Behold the desolations Of God in the earth

Couldn't we We know That this rule Is not governed By mother nature This world is governed By a sovereign God And so as difficult As it is for us To understand But things like Tsunamis And hurricanes Are the work Of our God And he can wipe out And he can bring Desolation on the earth Biblically Sodom and Gomorrah I saw just the title Of an article The other day That You know They're always looking For proof of different things But that It could have been A meteorite Or a meteor That crashed into The earth An asteroid Forgive me if I get The terminology wrong That destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah And I think Whether it is Or whether it isn't Does it prove anything wrong It says God rained in fire And brimstone From heaven That's what it sounds Like to me But who's the Sovereign lord Over asteroids

[35 : 01] And meteors God He brings Desolation Come and behold it Make note of it And understand That if God Can do this That he can stand Against our enemies It says Verse 9 Also that he brings Wars to end To an end He is more powerful Than all our enemies Cumulatively And so together These passages Demonstrate God's power Over nature In verses 1-3 His power over his city To protect it In verses 4-7 And his power Over the whole world To bring desolations On the earth In verses 8-11 And so over and over again We see God's power God's power God's power Why do we need to see that?

My argument in point 2 Is that because that's the foundation Of truth we need Which then leads us To our response I said verse 2 Begins with a therefore Let's go back to that God is our refuge and strength The very present Help in trouble Therefore we will not fear Though the earth gives way Though the mountains be moved Into the heart of the sea Though its waters roar and foam Though the mountains tremble At its swirling What is the Christian's response To all the troubles of the world?

We will not fear Why? Well we've seen that In our first and second point God cares for his people He protects them He's their refuge He's their strength He's their fortress And he's more powerful Than all our enemies He brings desolation On the earth He speaks and they melt He's got your back He's on your side What do we have to fear?

Well he gives some examples I really think Psalm 2 Is the major Excuse me Verse 2 Is the major conclusion Of the psalm Because of these things Therefore We will not fear And then it builds The argument even further If verse 1 is true In the rest of the psalm That truth foundation That we've seen How could we possibly fear?

What is there to fear? And so the psalmist I picture a little sense Of humor here What is there to fear? Why would you be afraid?

[37 : 32] Therefore we will not fear Though the earth gives way What if things get worse? What he envisions here Maybe we could argue Is what happened In the flood But in terms of Our human experience Nothing like this Has happened So what if things get worse?

And isn't that Always the question? Those of us Who sometimes struggle With worry Don't we imagine Worst case scenario And then we try To one up it? What if it got worse?

What's the worst Possible thing That could happen In this situation? Oh you know But it could be worse That this happened And we imagine How bad it could get And we begin worrying About things That have not yet happened We're more worried About the unreal things The things that might Possibly potentially happen Well let's take Worst case scenario What if the earth Consumed?

What if the whole earth Is destroyed? What if the earth Gives way? If the mountains Can you imagine Something more Permanent and fixed Than the mountains?

Solid rock What if they're moved Into the heart of the sea? Just imagine The kind of natural disaster We're talking about Where mountains Are thrown into the sea Though its waters That's the waters of the sea Roar and foam Though the mountains Tremble at swelling So again I think a picture Almost of a universal Flood A disaster What if the whole world Were to come crashing in on us And everything be lost?

[39 : 10] Therefore we will not fear Though the earth gives way Even if that's the case We will not fear And however bad things Will get in America Even I still pray That we would send missionaries Out to some of the hardest Places in the world And maybe that's one of you Who's listening to this sermon One day No matter how hard Things will get Wherever you may go If you're in the 1040 window If there's Muslims That are putting Christians to death Left and right Some of the missionaries We support No matter how bad things get We will not fear For God is our refuge And our strength He is our fortress And so then I think we move on from that And we're told What should we do then?

How are we going to get there? Because we do fear So how are we going to become Those who do not fear? Well it's the foundation Of truth we've seen already But look also At what the psalmist says In verse 10 Be still And know that I am God Be still And know that I am God Being still I think Speaks also to Still in your hearts Calm it down for a little bit Take it down a notch Stop focusing on the worries Just for a second Be still Relax for a second And just meditate on Give your thought to the fact That God Is God And can we say by implication And the world is not Even say and I am not God is God He is sovereign He is still in control This is one reason

I said I think This is a good place For us to end this series Because this really Is the culmination Of everything we've seen Through our study Through the psalms What do we need to do? We need to behold God We need to Still our hearts And meditate on the fact That God is God He is sovereign He is in control Of all these things We're to meditate On those truths And live in light of them Do we live Like God is God Or do we live Like I don't know who it is In our culture That's God Who we think Sometimes maybe It's Mark Zuckerberg I'll probably just Butch his name Whatever Whatever we read On Facebook Whatever the news Station's telling us The latest push From the culture We may not agree But don't we act Like they're God Sometimes we fear them As though they had The power God is God He speaks They melt That's what it means To be God

He is all powerful So we live In light of God being God And not in light of Whatever's happening Around us Which may even include The earth giving way And the mountains Being thrown into The depths of the sea The water's roaring The flood's coming The whole world's Going to be wiped out Eh Not a big deal God's God And so Tim goes on And says Be still And know that I am God I will be exalted Among the nations I will be exalted In the earth What does that mean Why Why include that Why say that Even note That we have this Transition in the psalm That's Maybe somewhat awkward For psalms We have the psalmist Speaking the sons of Korah

Apparently Maybe writing this Speaking this And it stops in verse 10 And we have a quote From God Why does God say I will be exalted On the earth Why does that matter I think he's addressing The nature of fear This world exists To exalt God And you exist To exalt God And to enjoy him forever That's why we're here And so Maybe it seems like Something in this world Whether it be people Or events Are going to somehow Interfere with that That's not the case Maybe I can say it this way From our limited perspective We look at things And think That the exaltation Of God Is going to come to an end Maybe we think God's not in control anymore Things don't seem To be going very well Right now God's still sovereign

[44 : 05] God's still in control Not only that The things that we see And that we so fear Are working together To exalt God He's receiving praise In the midst of what we fear And are so worried about So I think it's meant To calm us even more And say Guys I know things May not look good And it doesn't mean We should not Oppose Things that oppose God It doesn't mean We shouldn't pray Against these things But don't for a second Think that God's Somehow not in control And that he will not Use even this For his glory I think of even What's going on With COVID In our nation I said Recently It seems like In many ways That COVID Purged the church I think there were A lot of people Who were Hanging around the church And when things Got difficult Or they got

An excuse For why they don't Have to come to church Anymore They stopped coming And I think The church In America Maybe elsewhere In the world Has lost Some people Who will probably Never be back In the church Does that worry us?

I think also Of the early church And how Martyrdom Purified the church As well If you identify With Christ You're going to Be put to death Or at least You could be Put to death That limits How many people Are going to Say they're Christians I think One of the problems That we've had In our culture Is the world Looks at The church And says They don't like What they see Basically Well I think One reason for that Is there's so many People hanging around Claiming to be the church That probably Aren't really The church at all And so It's difficult As it may be Purification May be God's purpose To exalt His name In our country And I've also heard It's interesting At the Reformed Baptist Network General Assembly About half the churches In the association From my personal Polling and talking To pastors About half of them Experienced decline During COVID And another half of them

Are experiencing This strange expansion I mean some of them Have like 10% growth New members Coming in left and right It's amazing But we look at it And we only see Perhaps the bad And I'm saying God's working good in this But so is he in everything That he's working These things together For his good So even when we Cannot see it And we find it Hard to believe This world is working To exalt God Providence Is working To exalt God God Is still working To exalt God It's what Romans 8 28 tells us right And we know that For those who love God All things work together For good For those who are called According to his purpose It's even working together For our good Not just for that Exaltation Of God's name But for our good So Imagine for a second I've got something good I want to give you

And the whole time You fear it You're afraid of it It may not be pleasant But it's going to be good For you Do we trust God?

[47 : 32] Do we really believe God And take him at his word That whatever we face In this life Is working together For our good? If so What is there to fear?

Do we believe That everything That happens in this world Is working for his exaltation? What do we have to fear? So let me just close With a few points Of application First God is for his people We've seen that already In the psalm He's working to protect them He is a refuge for them He is a strength for them And a fortress for them I thought of Romans 8 31 What then shall we say To these things?

If God is for us Who can be against us? What's the answer? Everybody can be against us Right? A lot of people Can be against us But what it's saying is If God's for us Do those people Against us even count?

Does it even matter? You got God on your side He's got his armies He's got his voice That melts them Does it even matter? Here's what it says If God is for us Who can be against us? He who did not Spare his own son But gave him up for us all How will he not with them Also graciously give us All things?

If he's given us A greater thing with Christ Won't he give us Everything else? Who shall bring any charge Against God's elect? It is God who justifies Who is to condemn?

[48 : 54] Christ Jesus is the one Who died More than that Who was raised Who is at the right hand of God Who indeed is interceding for us Christ is in heaven Praying for you right now Who shall separate us From the love of Christ?

Shall tribulations Or distress Persecutions Or famine Or nakedness Or danger Or sword Knowing all these things We are more than conquerors Through him who loved us For I'm sure that Neither death Nor life Nor angels Nor rulers Nor things present Nor things to come Nor height Nor depth Nor anything else In all creation Will be able to separate us From the love of God In Christ Jesus our Lord What do we have to fear?

He who has given us His own son Is working to protect us He will give us all things And nothing can separate us From the love of Christ We have the greatest thing That can never be taken from us So again God is our refuge Our strength He's a very present help In hard times Matthew Henry says This may be applied By particular believers To themselves If God be in our hearts In the midst of us By his word Dwelling richly in us We shall be established We shall be helped Let us therefore trust And not be afraid All is well And will end well Secondly Where we were just talking about A second ago God will be exalted We must remember that We must It's one of the truths I just want to say Let's build this arsenal of truth That we're preaching to ourselves Psalm 42, 43 Here's the truth We have to preach to ourselves God will be exalted Thirdly

We need not fear But rather be still And know that he is God That really I think Is the solution That's given to us Here in this passage Instead of our response Being one of fear Let this be our response Be still Calm yourself And know That God is Lord God is God He's still sovereign And he will be exalted Let's pray together Dear Heavenly Father We thank you That you are still God That you are still sovereign That you are still working In this world Even when we look at things And think It seems as though Lord it Sometimes it seems as though You've abandoned us We think of some of the prayers Elsewhere in the psalm Where The psalmist cries out Feeling That your presence is nowhere near That you rejected them And Lord we look at the world around us And sometimes it seems that way Lord let us not give way to fear When we do fear

May we run to you And find you to be our strength Our very present help Our refuge And our fortress And Lord let us meditate Upon the truth of your word That you are still God That you are still sovereign That no weapon formed against you Or against us As your people Will prosper That we are more than conquerors Lord we thank you For that truth And we pray That you would fortify Our souls With such truth And that we would meditate Upon you And Lord we thank you That you have given us The greatest gift Your son Jesus Christ That we have salvation That no one can take away And that we know That even if someone Were to take our very life Even in death That we would be present With our savior And present with you Lord what could we fear We pray this in Christ's name Amen