



Cornton Baptist Church

Demonstrating God's love in action
in the community of Cornton

Through the Bible

Exodus
Nehemiah
2Chronicles Luke
Malachi
Philemon
Job
1Kings
Ruth
Amos
2John
Hosea
3John
Jude
Obadiah
Haggai
Genesis
Colossians
Micah
Jeremiah
Romans
1Chronicles
2Thessalonians
1Thessalonians
Jonah
Acts
2Timothy
2Peter
Zephaniah
Ecclesiastes
1Timothy
Joshua
Psalms
James
Isaiah
Titus
Galatians
Daniel
Hebrews
Zechariah
1Samuel
2Corinthians
Deuteronomy
Ephesians
Numbers
Mark
1Corinthians
Judges
Leviticus
Ezra
Ezekiel
1Peter
John
2Samuel
Lamentations
SongsofSongs
Revelation
Philippians
Habakkuk
Matthew
1John
2Kings
Joel
Nahum
Micah

May 2012

But I trust in your unfailing love. (v.5)

William Cowper, a 19th-century English poet and hymn writer, struggled with recurring bouts of depression throughout his life. Perhaps that's why his hymns still touch us deeply during times when our life seems to be spinning out of control and we desperately want to trust God. One of Cowper's best-known hymns, "God Moves in a Mysterious Way," contains these encouraging words:

*Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take; the clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break in blessings on your head.*

We often imagine that the triumphal songs of faith were penned by people who had already overcome their struggles. Psalm 13 reminds us that you can take confidence in God even in the midst of anguish and struggles. David begins this Psalm asking where God is – has He forgotten him, is He hiding His face from him? It's almost like David is accusing him of not being there for him. In his prayer, David described his feelings of abandonment through poetic repetition, hyperbole, strong word choices, and evocative imagery. He felt forgotten. He couldn't sense God's presence. He wrestled internally with loneliness, doubt, and sorrow, and externally his enemies seemed to be triumphing.

And yet David's faith is strong. He might be feeling alone but he recognises in verse 3 that the Lord is his God '*O Lord my God*'. And then he is able to finish the Psalm by reminding himself that the Lord has been good to him in days past and will be again. According to verse 5 he can trust in the unfailing love of God.

In every struggle - mental, physical, emotional, or spiritual - our challenge is to move from the fear of being overwhelmed to the confidence that God has overcome. Cowper didn't find it easy, but he always found that God was greater than he had ever imagined.

Pray: thanking God for his unfailing love.

Reflect: are you facing dark clouds? Then take courage, God is with you.

There is no one who does good, not even one. (v.3)

I read a story about a woman who was dying. She had lived a good and moral life and had never felt she needed a Saviour. But when a minister offered to come and talk with her, she allowed him to visit. The pastor explained the way of salvation by grace through faith in Christ. Emphasising that Jesus died for the sins of everyone in the world, including her, he urged her to trust the Saviour.

The woman responded, “Do you mean to tell me that if I’m going to be saved, I have to come to God on exactly the same terms as anyone else - even the most wicked person in the world?” “That’s right,” the pastor answered, “there’s only one way.” The woman thought for a moment and then declared, “Well, if that’s the case, I want no part of it!” Because of her pride and her unwillingness to come to Christ as a sinner, she had to face the judgment of God. She failed to recognise that even “good” people do not qualify to stand before a holy God.

How do we know that all need salvation? Well we are repeatedly informed about this through the Scriptures. Here in Psalm 14, David declares that no one does good. He reminds us that all have turned aside and sought their own ways. They have in effect said no to God. And by the way that’s what the phrase in verse 1 literally means in the original Hebrew ‘No God’. We might not declare that there is no God but we certainly act like there is no God. We do our thing, go our own way, and seek to get what we can out of life for ourselves. In this regard we are all in the same boat...we have all sinned against God. Therefore we all need saved.

The Psalmist concludes this Psalm by praying for salvation for Israel. The Lord has provided salvation for his people. He sent His own Son to this earth. Jesus died on the cross of Calvary paying the price for our sin. Put your trust in Him now and make sure you tell this message to others – for all need a Saviour.

Pray: thanking God for the gift of salvation.

Reflect: do I say ‘No God’ in the way I think, act and speak?

Lord, who may dwell in your sanctuary? (v.1)

Imagine what would happen if I travelled down to London and went to Buckingham Palace and called over one of the guards – those people dressed in their finest uniforms with their big hairy hats – and said to them “I want to live with the royal family, please.” He would probably very quickly say “Go away before I have you arrested.” In order to stay with the royal family you have to be a member of it – you have to be one of them.

Here the Psalmist is asking who may dwell with the Lord. Only through Jesus can we live on his holy hill. Jesus died to forgive us our sin and restore our relationship with God. Through faith in Jesus we become members of God’s family and one day will go to be with him forever.

To dwell in God’s presence was David’s purpose and joy. The question of verse 1 defines the theme and is addressed to the Lord, and the answer that follows is a sort of descriptive prayer. The answer not only describes the person who dwells in God’s presence, it is also a prayer to be or become such a person.

So, what kind of people can enjoy God’s presence? What qualities does God love? The list is daunting. They must be blameless, upright, righteous, and truth-loving. They must love those who love God and keep their promises no matter what the cost. They need to control their tongues, avoiding lies, slander, and gossip. They should be generous, just, and compassionate, certainly not selfish people who flout God’s commands or trample on the poor. They should hate sin as God does (v. 4).

David desired above all else to enjoy God’s presence: “One thing I ask of the Lord, this is what I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to seek Him in His temple” (Psalm 27:4). Do you desire to live in the Lord’s presence? Then pray like David here in Psalm 15 that you would live a worthy life.

Pray: asking God to help you live a blameless and righteous life.

Reflect: do I long to be in God’s presence?

You are my Lord; apart from you I have no good thing. (v.2)

In one of my favourite films ‘The Sound of Music’, based on the true story of the von Trapp Family Singers, a new governess Maria arrives to care for a widowed captain’s seven children. Although the captain professes to love his children, he often leaves for long periods, trying to cope with his own pain. Even when he is present physically, he substitutes governesses and gifts for emotional involvement with his children. His physical and emotional distance places an immense strain on the entire family.

Even the finest gifts in the world can’t satisfy what the human heart really wants - not things, but relationship. King David, who had unbelievable success and wealth, clearly understood this. At the beginning of today’s psalm, David exclaimed that if God were not a part of his life, he would have nothing good (v.2). This didn’t mean that David wasn’t thankful for his family, kingship, and other blessings. It simply meant that God Himself is incomparably greater than any of His gifts - that He was the all-sufficient, all-satisfying joy, truth, and purpose of David’s life.

We all have an empty space in our lives and we try and fill that gap with many things – we seek good jobs, good relationships, good possessions – but in the end they do not satisfy. The only thing that satisfies is what David found – relationship with God. David says he is able to rejoice (v.9) because God has not abandoned him but saved him.

We have experienced the truth of that in our lives. We were lost in our sin and distant from God, yet God did not abandon us. He reached out in love and compassion. He sent Jesus, His own Son to earth to pay the price for our sin and to restore our relationship with him. We live contented lives now in his presence. We are able to say like David ‘*You are my Lord; apart from you I have no good thing.*’

Pray: thanking God for his presence in your life.

Reflect: am I able to say of the Lord ‘*apart from you I have no good thing*’?

Hear, O LORD, my righteous plea; listen to my cry. (v.1)

Prayer is such a wonderful privilege and such a necessity for life. In prayer we draw close to God and talk with him. Although all the Psalms contain elements of prayer within them, only five are titled as prayers, this being the first of them. Within this Psalm we see some elements of effective prayer.

First, we need God's ear. David prays that God would hear him in verse 1. David was praying for a just cause and he was concerned about the Lord's will. He probably prayed this prayer as he was being chased by Saul. To get God's ear, we must pray honestly, fervently and submissively. We must prepare our hearts for prayer.

Which leads us to the second element – God's eye. In verse 2 David prays that God's eyes will see what is right and in verse 3 that God would examine him. God knows our heart and he probes our hearts as we pray. One of the first things for us to do when we come to pray is confess our sin and get ourselves right with God. We ask God to reveal any sin in our lives so that we can deal with it.

Then we come to God's hand. In verse 7 and then 13 David calls for God to save him and rescue him. He asks for God to hide him in the shadow of his wings. King David asks the King of kings for help, and He responds to David's faith. His enemies think they have David, but God's power goes to work for him.

And finally we see God's face. In verse 15 David declares that he will see God's face and be satisfied with seeing his likeness. God's goal is that we be conformed to the image of His Son (Romans 8:29). But we don't have to wait for the resurrection; we can be changed daily through God's Word and through prayer. Keep praying and pray for God's ear to hear, eyes to examine, hand to save and face to satisfy.

Pray: thanking God for the privilege of prayer.

Reflect: am I being changed daily through God's Word and prayer?

The LORD is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer. (v.2)

This is David's song of praise which was recorded in 2 Samuel 22 after God had delivered him from the hands of his enemies. When God delivers we are drawn to praise. And David uses some very descriptive words in verse 2 to describe God and all that He has done for David. In this single verse, there is a seven-fold ascription of praise to the Lord for His great salvation. His testimony about God is powerful. He says that the Lord is:

- '*my rock*' - The word used here does not mean a stone or even a boulder, but a mighty monolith, immovable and impregnable. He is speaking of strength and stability here.
- '*my fortress*' – This refers to a great stronghold, like the city of Jerusalem on Mount Zion.
- '*my deliverer*' – God is able to deliver from the fiery furnace, from a den of lions and from the armies of Saul.
- '*my rock or strength*' - This word often translated “rock” also means “strength”. This time it refers to a rugged, craggy rock, most appropriate for a symbol of great strength.
- '*my shield*' - The small movable shield used to “quench all the fiery darts of the wicked” (Ephesians 6:16). A picture of God as protector.
- '*the horn of my salvation*' - This striking Old Testament symbol is even repeated in the New Testament (Luke 1:69), and applied to the coming Saviour, referring either to the “horns of the altar,” where fleeing sinners could cling for refuge, or to the fighting horns of a strong beast.
- '*my stronghold*' - This is sometimes translated as “high tower”. Here the word is not for a man-made tower, but for a natural, high, topographic eminence suitable both for watching and for defence.

The Lord is all of these things for the believer and more. David knew this to be true in his life and we can all testify to times in our life when God has rescued us and protected us.

Pray: thanking God for being all you need Him to be.

Reflect: reflect on your own testimony – what words could you use to describe God?

The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. (v.1)

April 2012 presents a great month for watching the five visible planets. In fact, four of them – Jupiter, Venus, Mars and Saturn – will be visible at nightfall for most of the month from both the Northern and Southern Hemispheres. The missing planet – Mercury – will be extremely difficult to view from the Northern Hemisphere, as it sits in the glare of morning twilight. In March many in the UK spotted a meteor in the sky as well. At times like this is really is like *‘the skies proclaim the work of his hands.’* We can praise the Lord for many things, but today’s psalm leads us to worship Him for two in particular: His creation and His law.

As we read about the stars and the sun (v.1–6), we can almost envision David looking from the royal palace at the brilliant night sky or watching a huge yellow ball beginning to rise over Jerusalem. The noted Christian author C. S. Lewis thought that this was one of the greatest poems ever written, and it’s easy to agree. What wonderful images we find here! Skies speaking, star voices echoing forth, and the sun like a joyous bridegroom or a champion runner. Unlike the pagan religions around Israel, however, David doesn’t worship the sun or stars, but rather the One who created them.

David then moves to God’s law (v.7–11). Sometimes we think of the law as something sombre and difficult, somehow the opposite of God’s grace. But the law isn’t about “dos” and “don’ts” - the law also reveals who God is. It tells us about the beautiful order that God has created and about His perfect righteousness and mercy. Once again, we can almost see David looking up from a rolled scroll and bursting forth in song for sheer joy.

As we see look at the night sky, let’s be drawn to think on God’s creation and remember His law; and then let us praise and worship Him.

Pray: thanking God for his creation.

Reflect: do I proclaim the work of God in my life?

Tuesday 8 May 2012

Psalm 20:1-9

Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the LORD our God. (v.7)

I still have in my possession a one cent coin an American missionary gave to me when he spent time in Crieff doing a mission. He had given a children's talk reminding us that it is only 'in God we trust' and those words were inscribed on every coin and monetary note in the States. Those words were to be a reminder to the people of America that ultimately it is God they need to trust in.

David and the Israelites knew this too and we see that coming through in the Psalm 20. The people prayed for a series of requests in verses 1-5. They asked God to answer the prayers of His anointed king, just as He promised to do. They asked Him to protect, send help, and grant support in the battle to come. They asked Him to remember and accept the sacrifices and worship offered to Him by His people - an acknowledgment of their covenant relationship. And they prayed that He would give David the desire of his heart and make his plans succeed. This "desire" was not merely for a battle to be won, but for the name of the Lord to be glorified and exalted among the nations.

As David answers them in verses 6-8 he reminds them that they are not trusting in chariots and horse – in their own military might; but rather they are trusting in God. He is the one who protects and leads and guides; he is the one who gives victory over their enemies. David's trust is in God alone.

We would do well to remember that too. When we are in trouble, what we do to solve our problems and turn our trouble into triumph is evidence of what or whom we're trusting. Let's not be turning to our bank balances, our intellect, our positions or our friends...let's trust in God alone.

Pray: asking God for help to trust him more.

Reflect: can I truly say 'in God I trust'?

*Be exalted, O LORD, in your strength; we will sing and praise your might.
(v.13)*

I am always encouraged on a Wednesday night at the end of kids club as the kids go out and one parent in particular always says to her daughter 'what do you say to Hamish?' and the girl turns and says thank you as she runs away. She is grateful for the time she has had at kids club, grateful to those who take time every week to help her have an enjoyable hour as well as learning about Jesus. It is good to give thanks.

Psalm 21 is the response to the answered prayer of Psalm 20. The victory is won and the people of Israel sing praise to God for hearing and answering prayer. I wonder how often we recognise God's answers to our prayers and how often we go back to say thank you. David teaches us here that it is good to look back and give thanks. The people and their king address the Lord and thank Him for what He did for them in answer to their prayers. He has protected the king's life and given the people victory over their enemies.

Not only do the people look back but they look ahead as well. The king trusted in the Lord and so did the people and they affirmed their faith as they addressed these words to the king. The emphasis is now on the future victories God will give David and Israel because they have faith in the living God. We can look ahead too knowing that God has the final victory. Jesus conquered death and hell and evil and one day he is coming back to take us to be with him forever. The devil will finally be vanquished and God's children will be with him.

And then they looked up and as the Psalm concludes we see the people addressing the Lord and expressing praise for His greatness. God is good all the time. Let's lift our eyes from the troubles of earth and see Him in all His glory.

Pray: thanking God for the ways he has answered your prayers this week.

Reflect: do I always go back and say thank you for answered prayer?

My God, My God, why have you forsaken me? (v.1)

A weatherman boasted, “I’m 90 percent right - 10 percent of the time.” That’s a ridiculous statement, but some people resort to that type of doubletalk to cover up a poor record. The Bible’s prophetic record, though, truly is accurate. Here in Psalm 22 we see a prophecy recorded by David about the death of Jesus hundreds of years before it happened. And the details mentioned here came to pass. Indeed various parts of this Psalm are quoted in all four gospels, as well as in Hebrews 2:10-12.

In this Psalm David wrote about the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In the first part (v.1-21) he focuses on prayer and suffering and takes us to the cross, while the second part (v.22-31) announces the resurrection and expresses praise to the glory of God. In the first section we remember that Jesus was abandoned by God (v.1-5). He let out that famous cry ‘*My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?*’ He was on the cross carrying the punishment for our sin and as we know God cannot bear sin. In that incredible transaction he became forsaken so we did not get forsaken. Then we remember that he was despised by the people (v.6-11). The people turned on Jesus and mocked him; they hurled their insults at him even as he hung on the cross. And then he was condemned by the law (v.12-21). We even see the prophecy there of his hands and feet being pierced (v.16).

The second part of the Psalm moves from suffering to glory and from prayer to praise. Jesus endured the cross but now He enters into the joy that was set before Him. All the ends of the earth will turn to the Lord and every knee will one day bow. How much better it is though for us to bend the knee now willingly as we proclaim Him as Lord and Saviour.

Let’s use this Psalm to remember that Christ was forsaken so that we could be forgiven.

Pray: thanking God for your salvation.

Reflect: on the price that had to be paid so that I could be forgiven.

The LORD is my shepherd. (v.1)

Psalm 23 is probably the best known Psalm. Psalm 23 paints a beautiful word picture of a caring shepherd, secure sheep, and a tranquil scene of quiet meadows and still waters. But it is the Lord, our shepherd, who gives rest, not the green grass or the flowing stream. *‘He restores my soul; He leads me in paths of righteousness for His name’s sake.’ (v.3)*

Sheep need three things before they can be at rest. First, they need to be within sight of the shepherd. If they can’t see the shepherd, sheep will stand up looking until they collapse from exhaustion. Second, sheep need the safety of the flock. Even a sheep that is tired and hungry will not stop wandering if it is alone. Third, sheep need freedom from predators. As long as a wolf or a lion is near them, sheep will not lie down or eat. And so the shepherd provides all of this, he guides the sheep into those safe places where he protects them and looks after them.

What a picture of Jesus as the shepherd of the sheep. He is the good shepherd. This Psalm begins by reminding us that *‘The LORD is my shepherd.’* And because he is the shepherd we lack nothing. That means the Lord provides for us. Everything we need he gives to us. He doesn’t supply our wants but he does meet our needs. In verse 2 and 3 we discover that the Lord guides us as a shepherd guides the sheep. His *‘word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path’* (Psalm 119:105). He shows us how to live life the way it was intended to be lived. As we go on we discover in verse 4 that the Lord protects us. We need not fear anything in life because he is at our side with his rod and staff to comfort and to keep us safe. He will protect us from the evil one. And of course we know the Lord blesses us as well. In verse 5 and 6 we discover that he sets a table out before us and he anoints our head with oil. More importantly he blesses us with his presence for ever and a place with him in heaven.

We can rest secure in Him for *‘The LORD is my shepherd.’*

Pray: thanking Jesus for being Jehovah Rohi *‘The LORD is my shepherd.’*

Reflect: do I follow the shepherd or am I prone to wander off?

The earth is the LORD's and everything in it, the world and all who live in it. (v.1)

“You’re not the boss of me!” Have you ever heard a child make this statement to someone in authority? It’s the child’s attempt to assert his or her independence. It’s not just children, though. No matter what our age, we don’t like having someone tell us what to do. After all, that person might ask us to do something we don’t want to do, or put us in a situation we don’t want to be in. We like to control our own lives and affairs.

Therein lies the fear of trusting God. Afraid of putting control of our life into His hands, we prefer to dig in and say, “You’re not the boss of me.” There’s a serious problem with that line of thinking: It’s not accurate. In reality, we cannot tell God that He’s not in charge. In Psalm 24, David said, ‘*The earth is the LORD's and everything in it, the world and all who live in it.*’ God is the boss of “those who dwell” in the world. That means all of us. With that in mind we ought to trust Him and follow His leading.

The next part of the Psalm has the Psalmist asking who may ascend the hill of the Lord and stand in his holy place. The answer is those with clean hands and a pure heart. Trouble for us is none of us can attain that on our own. We are sinners, none of us is righteous, not even one. Thankfully God has taken care of that in Christ Jesus. Jesus died to redeem us. So not only are we the Lord’s because he made us but also because he redeemed us.

In that case we really have no reason to say “You’re not the boss of me.” God made us and knows us and loves us. He sent Jesus to save us and redeem us. He wants the very best for us. All we have to do is trust in Jesus, turn from our sin and seek to follow him always. All we have to do is welcome the King of glory in (v.9).

Pray: asking for God’s forgiveness for the times we try to run our own lives and tell him he is not boss.

Reflect: do I crown Jesus as King of my life or am I still trying to run things myself?

Remember, O LORD, your great mercy and love, for they are from of old.
(v.6)

The late author Alex Haley loved to tell of the time when, as a boy, he and his grandmother faced eviction from their Tennessee home. Hard times had caused the family to get behind in the mortgage payment. But Grandma Cynthia received a special gift that Christmas, an envelope which contained a receipt showing that the mortgage had been paid and a roll of money totalling twenty-seven dollars. Grandma Cynthia got down on her knees and offered a prayer of thanksgiving, tears flowing uncontrollably down her cheeks.

Alex Haley said that even with all his successes, nothing touched him as deeply as that moment. We can understand why. Such real-life illustrations of God's faithfulness are unforgettable. And just as Haley never tired of telling how God met Grandma Cynthia's need, we must never tire of rehearsing God's faithfulness to us, or praising Him for His love.

Here in Psalm 25 David praises God for '*no one whose hope is in you will ever be put to shame.*' (v.3) That does not mean we will never face struggles because we will but David recognised that God will not let our enemies triumph over us. David has faced much in his life with even Saul chasing after him...but God never abandoned him, and he brought him safe through in the end.

When we realise God's saving presence with us then we come to pray as David did '*show me your ways, O LORD, teach me your paths*' (v.4). We seek to follow God for we come to know there is no other way. David also asked God to remember him, not according to his sins, but according to God's goodness and love (v.7). The latter word, love, is another occurrence of that wonderful Hebrew word describing God's unfailing or loyal love. In fact, this same root, "hesed," also appears two other times (v. 6, 10).

Pray: thanking God for his great mercy and love.

Reflect: do I recall the Lord's many blessings and praise Him for them?

Test me, O LORD, and try me, examine my heart and my mind. (v.2)

Give a choice I would not go to the dentist. I had a bad experience growing up with an ex-army dentist and when I left school I stayed clear of the dentist. That was until I married Morag, who was a trained dental nurse, and she dragged me along to her dentist to get checked out. I now go regularly especially seeing as Morag currently works as a dental receptionist. And given a choice, many of us are a little afraid of spiritual checkups as well. After all, if we check our spirit too closely, we might have to change a habit or two.

David wasn't afraid to let God test and examine him here in Psalm 26. He is asking God to vindicate him before his enemies and to redeem him. As he does this he says '*vindicate me, O LORD, for I have led a blameless life.*' Now this is not an expression of self-righteousness but rather an honest testimony of a real man of God. The words translated "examine" and "try" refer to the testing of metals to determine their true value and also to remove the dross. "Heart and mind" is "kidneys and heart" in the original, kidneys being the seat of the emotions and the heart the place of moral decision.

David's life was controlled and motivated by God's love and truth. The Lord was faithful to his covenant and David was faithful to the Lord. Though David occasionally fell and sinned, as we all do, the habitual bent of his life was toward the Lord and His Word. Indeed in other Psalms we see him praying for forgiveness. He refused to have fellowship with the deceitful men and the hypocrites. Instead he said that he proclaimed aloud the praise of God and told of all His wonderful deeds.

I wonder what the Lord would find if he examined our hearts and minds – are our hearts filled with love for God and do our minds dwell on His Word.

Pray: asking God to examine your heart and life and reveal any unconfessed sin.

Reflect: do I seek to love God with all my heart and follow His Word?

The LORD is my light and my salvation – whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life – of whom shall I be afraid? (v.1)

During the First World War, a soldier in the trenches saw his friend out in no man's land stumble and fall in a hail of bullets. He said to his officer "May I go, sir, and bring him in?" But the officer refused. "No one can live out there," he said, "I should only lose you as well." Disobeying the order, the man went to try and save his friend, for they had been like David and Jonathan throughout the whole war. Somehow he got his friend on his shoulder and staggered back to the trenches, but he himself was mortally wounded and his friend was dead.

The officer was angry. "I told you not to go," he said. "Now I have lost both of you. It was not worth it." With his dying breath the man said, "But it was worth it." "Worth it!" said the officer. "How could it be? Your friend is dead and you are mortally wounded." The boy looked up into his officers face and said "It was worth it, sir, because when I got to him, he said, 'Jim, I knew you'd come.'"

In Psalm 27 David shows his faith in God. He trusts that God will see him through. He recognises God as his light and salvation and stronghold. God will protect him from the enemy who suddenly comes upon him and the enemy who camps around him. He goes on to say that he dwells to be in house of the LORD where God will keep him safe and hide him from his enemies. He was confident that God would come and rescue him. And that's why he finishes by saying in verse 14 '*Wait for the LORD; be strong and take heart and wait for the LORD.*'

We face many struggles and difficulties in life. At times it can be hard to know what to do and how to respond. David's suggestion is to wait on the LORD for He will come through and save you.

Pray: asking God to hear your voice and help you in your hour of need.

Reflect: do wait on God or do I rush in and try and sort things myself?

Hear my cry for mercy as I call to you for help, as I lift up my hands toward your Most Holy Place. (v.2)

A minister was once asked what he said when he discovered two of his young people were dating. He said that the first thing he did was sing the little chorus *'Be careful little hands what you do, be careful little hands what you do, for the Father up above is looking down in love, so be careful little hands what you do.'* This was to be a careful reminder to them to behave when dating.

The words of the chorus remind us about hands and God watching us. It is interesting that David in the Psalm talks of hands: the psalmist lifted up his hands, the enemies were doing evil work with their hands, but God had His hand at work as well.

David found himself in difficulty and once again called out to God. He knew where to turn. He turned to the one who was *'my rock'* (v.1) and *'my strength and my shield'* (v.7). As he cried for mercy he lifted up his hands toward heaven. It seems that rather than praying with his hands clasped as we often do, David lifted his hands upwards. When an Old Testament Jew prayed, he didn't fold his hands. He lifted them up to God in praise and in expectancy that He was going to do something.

David prayed against the handiwork of those who did evil. He prayed that God would not drag him away with them but that God would *'repay them for what their hands had done'* (v.4). David knew he had done wrong too but the difference was he acknowledged it before God. He also acknowledged that God had done many mighty works in the world with His hands. Those who did evil showed no regard for God's work.

We can call on God too by lifting up our hands in prayer. He is our rock and salvation and he will hear and answer our prayer. Let's remember to finish like David did in the Psalm by thanking God for hearing our prayer.

Pray: asking God to help up us with whatever difficulty we face just now.

Reflect: do I acknowledge God's hand at work in my life?

*The voice of the LORD is powerful; the voice of the LORD is majestic.
(v.4)*

The long dry summer season in Lebanon and Israel usually ends in October with welcome rains that are often accompanied by strong winds, lightning, and thunder.

The writer of Psalm 29 may have had in mind an autumn storm as it moved from the Mediterranean Sea across Lebanon (v.5), down through the desert (v.8), and over the temple in Jerusalem (v.9). He spoke of the storm's elements as '*the voice of the Lord*' (v.3), and the joyful response of the worshipers in the temple as they shouted, '*Glory!*' (v.9). The psalm closes with the people of God enjoying the peace He alone can give (v.11).

In Romans 1:20, Paul told his readers that God's eternal power and Godhead are clearly seen in the created world. He makes Himself known through nature. Now I wouldn't recommend walking through the woods during a storm but it is amazing to walk and see God's handiwork in nature at other times. I like nothing more than a quiet walk for it is in those times I can hear the still voice of God through the voices of nature. As the wind blows the leaves rustle; as the birds sit on the tree tops they sing away; as the river gently meanders you hear its flowing waters. It is often as I walk that I am drawn back to the Father and as I think on His amazing creation I am drawn to praise Him. I can shout '*glory!*' as '*the LORD blesses his people with peace.*' (v.11)

God speaks to us through His marvellous creation. His power and majesty are inescapable if we would just pause to listen. The trouble is our lives are too busy and too noisy. Let's work at making time today for some peace and quiet. Let's make time to sit and watch the river flow by or the leaves blow gently in the wind. Listen for the still small voice of God and then take some time to praise the creator of the world.

Pray: praising God for His wonderful creation.

Reflect: do I take time to listen for God's still small voice?

*You turned my wailing into dancing...that my heart may sing to you.
(v.11-12)*

It was the worst of times. In the first half of the 17th century, Germany was in the midst of wars and famine and pestilence. In the city of Eilenburg lived a pastor by the name of Martin Rinkart.

During one especially oppressive period, Rinkart conducted up to 50 funerals a day as a plague swept through the town and as the Thirty Years' War wreaked its own terror on the people. Among those whom Rinkart buried were members of his own family. Yet during those years of darkness and despair, when death and destruction greeted each new day, Pastor Rinkart wrote 66 sacred songs and hymns. Among them was the song "Now Thank We All Our God." As sorrow crouched all around him, Rinkart wrote:

*Now thank we all our God with hearts and hands and voices,
Who wondrous things hath done, in whom His world rejoices;
Who, from our mothers' arms, hath blessed us on our way
With countless gifts of love, and still is ours today.*

Rinkart teaches us a valuable lesson that thankfulness does not need to wait for times of prosperity and peace. David shares something of this in Psalm 30. He wants to build a temple for God – to move from the Tabernacle to a fixed place of worship. God has declared that Solomon, David's son, will build the temple. David is distraught for that is all he wants to do. Yet he accepts this and even helps buy the land and prepare some materials. He goes on to write this song which the people will sing at the dedication of the temple.

David recognises that God turns our weeping into dancing and our sorrow into joy. We can sing praise to God even in hard and difficult times...in fact singing praise to God in those moments will lift our hearts and minds from our problems to things above. Then we will know the joy of the Lord.

Pray: thanking God for all He has done.

Reflect: do I sing praise to God even when I am feeling down?

But I trust in you, O LORD; I say “You are my God.” (v.14)

After the terrorist bombing in Bali in 2002, one man reacted by giving up travelling. Three years later, he finally took his family for a holiday in Bali, together with 50 tourists from Newcastle, Australia. The trip ended in tragedy when his family was caught in a suicide bombing at a café on Jimbaran Beach. Threats and warnings of terror attacks continue across the world. As we think on those and on other natural disasters like earthquakes and tsunamis, we tend to worry and put things off. We decide not to travel. If we worried about everything in life we wouldn't get out of bed in the morning.

David knew something of that fear. He writes in Psalm 31:13 about facing *‘terror on every side; they conspire against me and plot to take my life.’* He was in the grip of surrounding threats that would damage both his reputation more crucially his life. David was surrounded by subversive whispering campaigns and wicked conspiracies and everything seemed against him. He was worried. He could have stopped at that moment and hidden away. He could have lived in fear of his life. David'

Yet David shows us the way to go in life. He turns to God and declares his trust in God. Verse 14 *‘But I trust in you, O LORD; I say “You are my God.”’* He then remembers how God has helped him in times past. He recalls how his life is in God's hands. God will be His refuge and strength. There is the encouragement for us to have that same trust in God when difficulties come.

Are you in a situation in which you or your family feel directly or indirectly persecuted for your faith? Or perhaps are you experiencing other sorts of troubles and difficulties? God sees and cares about your circumstances and feelings. Like the psalmist, cry out to Him. Describe the situation, affirm your trust in Him, and call on Him to rescue, vindicate, and give you hope. As David said in verse 24 *‘Be strong and take heart, all you who hope in the LORD.’*

Pray: affirming your trust in God.

Reflect: have I handed my fears and concerns over to God?

*Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered.
(v.1)*

Bible teacher Chuck Swindoll warns us that our society's message of "instant gratification" holds a danger for believers, the way an undertow in the surf can sweep away an unsuspecting swimmer. The danger is that our "instant" society can lead us to believe there are shortcuts to getting where we want to go. The fact, Swindoll writes, is that "there are no shortcuts to anything meaningful."

This observation really rings true when it comes to the issue of confession, forgiveness, and restoration. We all want peace of heart and a clear conscience before God. These blessings are available on a daily basis to every believer - but there is no shortcut to achieving them.

David found that out the hard way. For about a year after his sin of adultery with Bathsheba and the murder of her husband (2 Samuel 11), David tried to find peace in his kingly activities and his family. But the poison leaked out of the sin he had worked so hard to cover, eating away at his body and spirit. The pain didn't stop until David fell on his face before God in confession and repentance.

He speaks of that here in this Psalm. He speaks of keeping quiet and hiding the sin away. His bones wasted away and his strength was sapped like it would have been in the summer heat. For some of us who have holidayed in hot countries you know the feeling where the heat is such that it seems to sap the energy right from you. David felt rotten. But then he confessed his sin before God and the Lord forgave him.

None of us like to confess our sin – we feel ashamed by it and guilty of letting God and others down. Yet hiding it away does us no good. The best thing to do is confess our sin before a righteous and compassionate God who will forgive us (1 John 1:9).

Pray: thanking God for covering your sins with the blood of Christ.

Reflect: am I hiding sin from God? Confess it now and seek His forgiveness.

By the word of the LORD were the heavens made, their starry host by the breath of his mouth. (v.6)

Annie Jump Cannon, a pioneering astronomer of the early twentieth century, invented the modern system of classifying stars according to their spectra. She grouped them into seven categories, each labelled by a single letter, so that today we speak, for example, of a “K-type star.” Since her day, three new categories have been added, but her system is still taught in basic astronomy classes.

Cannon catalogued more than 400,000 stars over a career of more than 40 years. She is also credited with discovering 300 variable stars. For her work, she was given the first honorary doctorate ever presented by Oxford University, and was the first woman elected as an officer of the American Astronomical Society.

The stars observed and classified by Annie Jump Cannon should prompt praise for the God who created and organised them. He alone is worthy! Psalm 33 urges us to praise God and to sing to him a new song. We have been singing a new song recently called 10,000 reasons. When we think on all that God has done we are drawn to praise him.

The Psalmist here offers some reasons for singing that new song. He speaks of God’s character: *‘the word of the LORD is right and true; he is faithful in all he does.’* (v.4) Then he speaks of God’s creation: *‘By the word of the LORD were the heavens made, their starry host by the breath of his mouth.’* (v.6) And he finishes by praying for God’s compassion: *‘May your unfailing love rest upon us, O LORD.’* (v.22).

Let’s sing a new song to God today as we consider his character, his creation and his compassion.

Pray: praising God for who He is and for all He has done for you.

Reflect: list some of the reasons you have personally for praising God.

Whoever of you loves life and desires to see many good days... (v.12)

How often has someone said to you, “Have a good day”? That’s a nice statement, but what does it mean? When you review the day’s activities before you go to bed, how do you know whether the day was good or bad? When Joseph’s brothers sold him into slavery, that was a bad day. But God turned it into good for him. When Potiphar’s wife lied about Joseph and had him put into prison, it was a bad day. But God turned that into good for him also. You see, we don’t always know what a good day is. However, we can make our days good if we follow the instructions given in today’s passage.

David says in verse 12 *‘whoever of you loves life and desires to see many good days, keep your tongue from evil and you lips from speaking lies. Turn from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it.’* There are three actions there for us to follow. The first is for us to control our tongues. The tongue is a dangerous weapon – it can slice someone down in an instant with a wrong word spoken. It has the power for good but also for evil. So David says watch what you say.

He goes on to say *‘do good’*. He encourages us to turn from evil and do good instead. We do good when we help others, when we act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with our God (Micah 6:8). Go out of your way today to help someone and do a kind act.

And then David says seek peace. We are to be peacemakers rather than troublemakers. Don’t be bothered by every little slight or by everything that people say. If somebody cuts in front of you in a line, don’t let it bother you. Be a peacemaker, not a troublemaker.

“Have a good day!” may be a trite expression, but you can have a good day if you follow certain instructions from Scripture. Try following the guidelines of this psalm. Not only will you have a good day, but those with whom you come in contact will be blessed.

Pray: asking God to help you have a good day and share it with others.

Reflect: how can I “do good” today?

My tongue will speak of your righteousness and of your praises all day long. (v.28)

In times of war, soldiers and generals often become popular heroes. Their brave exploits frequently attain legendary status. During World War II, General Douglas MacArthur came to signify firm, unflinching resolve when he left the Philippines declaring, "I will return." When he did, in fact, return to liberate the Philippines from Japanese control, a famous photo of him wading ashore captured the American sense of commitment to be defenders of freedom against aggression.

Today's reading portrays God as a divine Warrior or Defender. David calls on the Lord to come to his aid, picturing him as a mighty, rescuing soldier wielding all-powerful weapons (v.1-3). The king, himself a famous military commander, knew that his successes and victories resulted not from human strength, but from God's supernatural power (2 Samuel 22).

This passage alternates between accusations against the wicked and prayers for God to save the psalmist. David's enemies had attacked him without cause, so he hoped their downfall would be sudden and complete. They repaid evil for good, betrayed friendship, made false accusations, and took malicious delight in all of it. Showing faith in God's righteousness, David prayed that his enemies would be routed: "God, come and fight for me! Vindicate me! Defend me! Strap on your armour and rush to my aid!" When that day comes, he said, '*My tongue will speak of your righteousness and of your praises all day long*' (v. 28).

David was in trouble; his enemies were accusing him and lying about him. What did he do? He prayed. And there is the lesson for us when trouble comes our way...take it the Lord in prayer. Allow God to deal with it on our behalf. Leave it with him.

Pray: asking God to help you in the midst of the trouble you are currently facing.

Reflect: do I turn everything over to God or do I try to resolve it on my own?

*Your love, O LORD, reaches to the heavens, your faithfulness to the skies.
(v.6)*

Here in Psalm 36 David ponders the reality of evil in God's world, he praised God's character and then he prayed that God would protect him from evil and eventually judge the wicked. He solved the perplexing problem of evil in the world by being a worshipper, not a philosopher, and by taking personal responsibility to obey God and serve Him.

When evil things happen in the world we can get all worried and worked up and try to work it all out. We never do work it out though. Evil will continue to exist in the world until Christ's return on the clouds but it need not have dominion over us. We should not let Satan control us and we should not let the evil around us get us down. Rather we ought to take a leaf out of David's book and turn from the reality of evil to look at God. And as we look at God we should take some time to ponder His character. As we ponder His character we will be drawn to praise Him for who He is and for all He has and continues to do.

David recognises that God's love reaches to the heavens and his faithfulness to the skies. God's love here is that great word 'hesed' which pictures the loving kindness, the steadfast love and mercy of God. And God's faithful love is limitless. That's what David means when he writes that they reach the heavens and skies. He also recognises God's righteousness and justice. As we ponder these four characteristics of God (love, faithfulness, righteousness and justice) we remember how the holy and righteous God had to punish sin but on account of his grace and love and mercy he forgave sinners by allowing His own Son to die in our place. That's enough to get us praising God too.

And then of course David prayed for protection from evil. Jesus taught his disciples that line in the Lord's Prayer as well. God as we know already from the Psalms is our refuge and strength, our shield and defender.

Pray: praising God for His love, faithfulness, righteousness and justice.

Reflect: list a few of God's characteristics and praise Him for them.

Delight yourself in the LORD and he will give you the desires of your heart. (v.4)

A certain airline pilot had a peculiar habit. Whenever he took off from his hometown of Minneapolis, he would ask the co-pilot to take the controls. Then he would stare intently out the window for a few moments. Finally the co-pilot's curiosity got the best of him, so he asked, "What do you always look at down there?"

"See that boy fishing on that riverbank?" the pilot asked. "I used to fish from that same spot when I was a kid. Whenever a plane flew over, I would watch it until it disappeared and wish that I could be the pilot." With a sigh he added, "Now I wish I could be back down there fishing."

It's natural to spend time thinking about where we'd like to be or what we'd like to have. But we must evaluate our desires to make sure they are consistent with what God says will truly satisfy. King David was satisfied by putting first things first. Here in Psalm 37 we find him say '*trust in the LORD and do good...delight yourself in the LORD...commit your way to the LORD.*'

David found that trusting God and following His ways was the best way to live life. God has never made a promise He has not kept. He sent Jesus to the cross to save us from our sins. We can trust Him for our salvation and look forward to a place in heaven with him.

Interestingly we often misread verse 4 and think that if we live good and godly lives, God will give us all that we desire. What this verse really means is that if we truly delight in the Lord, then the chief desire of our heart will be to know Him better so that we can delight in Him even more, and the Lord will satisfy that desire.

Pray: asking God to help us know Him better so we can delight in Him.

Reflect: what are the desires of my heart at the moment?

I confess my iniquity; I am troubled by my sin. (v.18)

A leading Boston Puritan, Samuel Sewall, was one of the judges during the notorious Salem witch trials in early American history. Afterwards, his conscience began to eat at him. One day he heard his son reciting Matthew 12:7: *‘If you had known what these words mean, “I desire mercy, not sacrifice,” you would not have condemned the innocent.’* Sewall knew he had to repent. On January 14, 1697, he stood before his church with head bowed while his pastor read out his humble confession.

Confessing our sins before God is another type of prayer we should practice often. Psalm 38 is traditionally considered one of the seven “penitential psalms,” with the others being Psalms 6, 32, 51, 102, 130, and 143. The main point is found in verse 18: *‘I confess my iniquity; I am troubled by my sin.’* Thus, when the psalmist asked the Lord to help him, we understand that he was talking primarily about forgiveness.

David’s soul was sick, and he described these feelings in intense bodily terms. He had no health, his bones were unsound, his back ached, his wounds festered, he was mute and deaf, he felt crushed and helpless. All these symptoms afflicted him because he knew he had offended God (v.4). God was disciplining His child, exercising holy wrath to bring him to the painful point of repentance. The physical imagery is so vivid here that some commentators actually think the psalmist had a life-threatening illness! Have you ever confessed your sins with this kind of spiritual intensity? In addition, because David was Israel’s king, God had made his sin and its consequences public. As a result, his friends had dropped away and his enemies were waiting to pounce.

As 1 John 1:9 reminds us it is good to keep a short account of our sins and to regularly confess them before God who is faithful and just to forgive us.

Pray: confessing your sin before God and asking Him to forgive you.

Reflect: do I make a regular practice of confession?

Each man's life is but a breath. (v.5)

In the late 1990's Volkswagen brought out a new car. It was called the Passat. In some of the early adverts the big claim was "goes 0-40 as fast as you did." It went on to say, "What happened? One minute you're studying for school exams, then you take a little nap and somehow wake up 20 years later with a job, a mate, and a couple of kids."

It's always a little startling to be confronted with the speed at which our years fly away. David, the Psalmist caught a glimpse of that here in Psalm 39. He speaks of his life being fleeting in verse 4 and then in verse 5 says '*You have made my days a mere handbreath; the span of my years is as nothing before you. Each man's life is but a breath.*' David knew that life was short and that the days would pass swiftly; he also knew that he was frail and that one day he would die. He began to measure his days.

However, rather than concluding that nothing really matters because life is so short, David wanted to measure his life not by its length but by its depth. He asks of the Lord saying '*what do I look for? My hope is in you.*' (v.7) He looked at God and saw again just how holy and righteous he is. He looked at himself and realised once again his sin. Therefore in verse 8 he asks God's forgiveness for his sin; he asks God to save him from his transgressions.

And then he prays as he finishes this Psalm for God to turn away his frowning face and give him strength to return to life with its duties and burdens, and then one day enable him to pass into eternity. David has accepted his sin and confessed it before God. Now he asks for strength to get on with what is left of life. He wants to serve God well until the end. And then at the end he looks forward to being with God forever.

Life is short but let us live it well. Confess your sin regularly before God and ask for strength to live well for Him in this world.

Pray: asking for strength to live life well.

Reflect: do I seek to make my life count? How can I do this more?

He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand. (v.2)

In the Scripture reading today, you may have been puzzled by the beginning of verse 6: *‘Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but my ears you have pierced.’* Put aside all thoughts of jewellery - the explanation is found in the Mosaic Law. *‘But if the servant declares, “I love my master and my wife and children and do not want to go free,” then his master must take him before the judges. He shall take him to the door or the doorpost and pierce his ear with an awl. Then he will be his servant for life’* (Ex. 21:5–6).

In other words, to have one’s ear pierced symbolised a voluntary, lifelong commitment to service. Verse 6, then, is King David’s declaration that he is God’s servant for life. In the prayer of Psalm 40, he explained why he made this choice - God’s saving actions and character.

Who is God and what does He do? He hears and answers prayer. He saves and redeems people in trouble, giving them a secure place to stand. He even puts a new song in their mouths to praise Him for doing so - and if anyone was ever qualified to write that verse, it was David! Even beyond the mighty wonders God had done, though, the psalmist was amazed at the personal relationship God had made possible between Himself and mere humans. He has revealed to us personally His love, truth, and faithfulness.

David concludes this Psalm by saying *‘may those who love your salvation always say “The LORD be exalted”.* May we never forget who God is and what God has done. He has lifted us up from our sin and set our feet aright on the path. He is our helper and deliverer. In return for our salvation our cry ought to be like David’s that we will be God’s servant for life.

Pray: thanking God for your salvation and committing to serve Him always.

Reflect: am I ready to be the Lord’s servant for life?

O LORD, have mercy on me; heal me, for I have sinned against you. (v.4)

David's prayer of confession in verse 4 is the prayer most prayed by this man during his life. He has prayed again and again in the Psalms for God's mercy on account of his sin. Was David a worse sinner than you and I? Of course not. It is simply that he recognised his position and sought to deal with it regularly before God. He kept a short account before God. As we know from 1 John 1:9 '*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.*'

This is a good reminder for us. Yes Jesus died on the cross paying the punishment for our sin once and for all but that does not give us licence to keep on sinning. We will still sin because we are fallen humanity living in a fallen world but Jesus has forgiven us and restored our relationship with God. In that restored relationship we ought to come daily and confess our sin to God, asking Him to help us be stronger tomorrow in resisting temptation.

David knew this which is why he prayed often for forgiveness. He also knew that as a forgiven sinner God would watch over him. In the opening verses he speaks of the Lord delivering him in times of trouble, the Lord protecting and preserving his life, and the Lord sustaining him on his sickbed. He goes on to recognise that the Lord showed him mercy even although he did not deserve it and that one day on account of his great mercy God would set him in his presence forever.

We do not deserve God's mercy either. We are sinners. We have rebelled against God and rejected Him and His ways. And as a holy and righteous God, He has to punish sin. Fortunately for us He is also a gracious and compassionate God who allowed His own Son to die in our place. May we be like David and try to live a life of integrity. May we recognise God's great mercy and praise Him for it whilst daily recognising we are sinners and confessing our sin before Him.

Pray: asking for God's mercy for you have sinned against him.

Reflect: do I keep a short account of my sin?

By day the LORD directs his love, at night his song is with me – a prayer to the God of my life. (v.8)

Baptist preacher Charles Spurgeon once took a holiday at an isolated spot in England because he had been told that many nightingales lived there. To his great disappointment, however, it started to rain just as he arrived at the hotel. The weather turned unseasonably cold and Spurgeon feared that the primary purpose of his trip had been spoiled. But as he sat by his open window, he suddenly heard a delightful melody - a nightingale perched on a branch outside. The only light was a dim lamp burning at the entrance to the hotel. The nightingale, oblivious to the rain and cold, was exulting in that tiny bit of light. Spurgeon wrote of his experience, “I do not expect to listen to anything so sweet and thrilling again until I hear the angels sing in glory. The God of that nightingale is the same loving Saviour I serve. In spite of darkness, storm, or thorns, He always provides some ray of light and gives a song in the night.” When we turn to God and ask for help, we will find Him giving us a song in the night.

The Psalmist knew the truth of this. He was thirsting after God, trouble was around him and his soul was downcast. He was in a dark and difficult place and he wasn't sure what to do. And then it came to him – he would simply put his hope in God. God had helped in the past and God would come through again for him. He saw glimmers of hope even in the darkness. He recalled the one who directed his life and he remembered the songs of praise. And as he sang his spirit lifted.

How do you cope with discouragement? Certainly, if it is caused by guilt from unconfessed sin, you need to repent and ask forgiveness. Generally, the cure for being down is to hope in God and praise Him. Your hope in Him is well founded, for He is ever faithful to His Word. Are you discouraged? You may not be able to change your circumstances, but you can praise God. I have found the best medicine is to sing a song of praise...then my mind is lifted to God and His many characteristics.

Pray: praising God for the new song he places in your heart.

Reflect: do I sing praise to God even in my darkest moments?

Send forth your light and your truth, let them guide me. (v.3)

The way the old ship captains used to navigate the Norwegian fjords at night was by sailing towards the lights. Once they entered into a fjord, they would head towards a certain light that was stationed to direct the ships. Then they got to a point where they came around a corner, and could see the next light, and they'd turn the ship and head toward the next light. You can't get through the fjords in a straight line, you have to keep changing course as you see the next light.

We live in a dark world. We all have days when we feel as though God has forsaken us, when it seems as if the enemy is winning and we are losing. On such a day the psalmist prayed, '*Send forth your light and your truth*' (v.3). These words represent the deep desire of the psalmist to know and do the will of God. He was not having an easy time. He knew though that God's light and truth would guide him to God and through life.

Where do we find God's light and truth? In His Word. '*Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path*' (Psalm 119:105). God's Word is truth. '*Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth,*' Jesus said (John 17:17). The Word of God guides His children on the path He has chosen. And that path ultimately leads to Him. '*Let them [light and truth] bring me to your holy mountain, to the place where you dwell*' (v.3). The psalmist's trust and hope was in God. He might have been downhearted but he was encouraging himself to place his hope in God for God would send his light and truth to guide him.

We live in a dark and deceived world. But God has promised to guide and guard us through His Word. The Bible is a spiritual treasure, and without it, we soon lose our way and become vulnerable. Let's keep reading it and learning from it. May it continue to illuminate our way.

Pray: asking God to send his light and truth to guide you today.

Reflect: what stops me from following God's leading and guiding?