

Open our eyes, O Lord, that we might behold wonderful things from your word. Fill us with the knowledge of your will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding. We might walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, be fully pleasing to you, to bear fruit in every good work, and to increase in the knowledge of God. And grant us that knowledge of God, O Lord, that would lead us to love you with all of our heart and soul and strength. Teach us then this evening, O God, by your Spirit. And if anyone here this evening does not love God, we pray, O Lord, that you would work in his heart or her heart. Open their eyes to see the waywardness and darkness of a life a person made in the image of God who does not yet love the God in whose image they have been created. We offer these prayers in Jesus' name. Amen. If you would, please turn with me in your copy of the Word of God to Psalm 18. We're going to read this whole Psalm. through the course of our sermon this evening. Let's begin just with the first three verses. This is the word of God. Please take heed how you hear. To the choir master, a psalm of David, the servant of the Lord. who addressed the words of this song to the Lord on the day when the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies and from the hand of Saul. He said, I love you, O Lord, my strength. The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my God, my rock in whom I take refuge, my shield and the horn of my salvation. my stronghold, I call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised, and I am saved from my enemies. Amen. The grass withers and the flower falls off, but this is the word of God and it endures forever. What were human beings made for? Why did God create you? Why did God create me? And the answer, of course, is to love God, to love our neighbor. God, the God in whose image we have been created, is a God of love. We were created by Him. We were created like Him, and we were created for Him, to serve Him and to honor Him. I was struck by that this afternoon reading a quote from John Stott, who put it like this. Take a fish, for example, Stott says. God created fish to live in water, be it salt water or fresh. Its gills are adapted to absorb oxygen from water, so the water is in one sense the element in which the fish finds its identity and also the element in which the fish finds life and liberty. You might say the fish is limited to water, but in that limitation there is both liberty and life. Now, suppose you had a little fish, a tropical fish, in one of those round spherical bowls, and it's swimming around there quite happily, as fish are wont to do. But the fish longs for a better life outside the water, and one day it musters all of its strength and energy and jumps out of that water. Now, let's say it landed instead out of the bowl in a pond in your backyard. And if that pond was clean and larger than the bowl, it would find a greater environment in

which to live and move and have its being. But if it landed on the concrete or on the carpet, then its bid for freedom would spell death. Now, if fish were meant for water, Stott says, what are human beings meant for? It would be interesting, he says, if we had time to sit down together and share our answers to that question. If fish were made for water, what are human beings made for? What is the element in which human beings find themselves as water is the element in which a fish finds itself? God says, I don't hesitate to say that according to Scripture, the answer is love. Human beings are made for love because God is love. When He created us in His own image, He gave us the capacity to love and to be loved. So human beings find their destiny in loving God and in loving their neighbor. Now, thinking about that this afternoon in preparation for this sermon, it occurred to me that the thing you need to realize about your wondrous capacity and your wondrous appetite for love is that that love must go in both directions if it's to go in any direction at all. You must love both God vertically and your neighbor horizontally. And if you refuse to love in either of those directions, you'll quickly lose the ability to love in any direction. and your soul will begin to wither. And after it withers, it'll die. So the question that we face in our psalm this evening, it's a long psalm, it's a question I tremble to ask in our sermon, is why should you bother to love God? Do you love God? If not, why not? And why should you reconsider the bent of your soul if, in fact, you don't love God as you ought. And David is writing, in a sense, an apologetic for the love of God. He's telling you why he loves God and why you should share that love for God yourself. And there are a number of reasons. It's not the most elegant outline of a sermon I've ever written before, but I hope it does capture the essence of this psalm. The first reason you should love God, David says, is because I find everything a beleaguered man could ever need in the direst emergency. Because in God, I find everything a beleaguered man could find in the direst emergency. Now, we'll get to that emergency in a second, but David here, at the end of his life and looking back over his life and the long history of his relationship with God and the many remarkable deliverances he has enjoyed, And he says, I love you, O Lord, my strength. And the word used for love here is an unusual word. It's a very passionate word. It's full of guts and heart and emotion. I love you, O Lord, my strength. And with a rush of metaphors, David describes the sevenfold perfection of why he loves God. And it's found in God's sufficient preserving power. Seven, the Lord is my rock. and my fortress and my deliverer. He's my God, my rock in whom I take refuge, my shield and the horn of my salvation, my

stronghold. He's the rock beneath my feet. He's the strength in my heart. He is the craggy mountain fortress from which no enemy can assail me. It's a vantage point in which I find complete and absolute safety and security. He's my shield in battle. He's the horn of my salvation, a symbol of strength and the power of a bull to butt and to gore its enemies. God has all these things for me, and he ransacks the Hebrew alphabet, dictionary, to give you a sevenfold sense of just how safe he is in God. I love God, David says, because in him I find everything a beleaguered man could ever hope to find in direst emergency. The second reason David loves God, he says, is because his power is triggered by prayer. Now, to really feel this, and David wants you to feel this, he's gonna give you some very graphic imagery here of the apocalyptic devastation God unleashes from heaven when he prays on earth, and when you pray on earth as well. David wants you to see a number of things about the way this God's power is, or the kind of God, you might say, that we engage when we pray. Verse three, I call upon the Lord who is worthy to be praised, and I am saved from my enemies." And he's going to describe the kind of God he's calling upon. Before he gets there, though, he shows you the trouble he felt. Verse 4 and 5, the cords of death encompassed me. The torrents of destruction assailed me. The cords of Sheol entangled me. The snares of death confronted me. Before he prayed, David found himself in great trouble. He felt like a bug wriggling in a spider's web. He could see the spider scurrying down the web, about to inject him with his fangs with poison that would kill him. The cords of death encompassed me, and the spider is death itself, the last enemy. The torrents of destruction assailed me. It's a maelstrom. I saw a video this week of a man swimming just off a pier in England, and it was kind of an interesting and very distressing video because his friend was taking a picture of him. He's in a wetsuit. He's swimming around this whirlpool in the ocean, and he's playing with the torrent, the currents sucking down this big maelstrom of water. And he spent about 30 minutes swimming around this whirlpool. But then he got too close. And the whirlpool sucked him down, down, down into the depths. And his friend lost sight of him and actually drowned. But you could imagine yourself being in a torrent. Or maybe you've seen, I saw another video some years ago of this sinkhole that opened under a lake, I think in Alabama or Louisiana, deep down south, and there were these cedar trees. And as this maelstrom sucked the bottom out, as this sinkhole sucked the bottom out of the lake, the waters became just a swirling mass of chaos. And then the most awesome thing,

so the trees, these mighty cedars, started moving as if they were walking out into the middle of the lake. And then one by one, they were sucked down, down, down beneath the bottom of the lake. And they vanished into this sinkhole. And David felt like that. And if you want to feel the glory of his God and why David loved God so much, you've got to feel the panic in his soul, the chords of death, Like a lasso came up out of the grave and wrapped itself around my legs and was pulling me toward the pit. I was being sucked down in torrents of muddy destruction, assailing me. The cords of Sheol entangled me. The snares of death confronted me. He felt trapped. He could not escape the trouble David felt. And of course, beyond David's trouble, We see the trouble of a greater David, Jesus Christ, as he hangs upon the cross, and is consumed in the blackness of darkness of everlasting destruction as the gravitational forces of God's infinite fury tug at his soul and at his body. As the Hymn writer says, the deepest stroke that struck him was the one that justice gave. And David, William Still says in his sermon in the psalm, felt closer perhaps in his agony with Saul and his many enemies, closer than any other human being had ever felt before or since to the agonies Christ would feel as he went to the cross to become sin in the presence of the Holy One of Israel. The trouble David felt, the help David sought, in my distress I called upon the Lord. To my God, I cried for help. How simple the action. Here's David overwhelmed at the end of his tether, about to die, feeling sure the grave has got him. And he simply raises his voice to God. A wee man on earth raises his voice to the great God of heaven. That's a perfectly logical thing for David to do. God is his rock, my fortress, my deliverer, my God, my rock in whom I take refuge. What's the point of having such a refuge, Christian, if we never take refuge in him? What's the point of having such a rock if we don't comfort our souls by feeling his strength, a rock of ages beneath our feet? What's the point of having such a fortress if we never run therein time of trouble? The trouble David felt, the help David sought, the audience David received from his temple. Verse 6, he heard my voice. And my cry reached him to his ears." Now, we take that for granted, right? We pray God listens. But think about it. Here's David on earth, a man, an individual human being on earth, calling out to the God of the heavens, far above the universe, the galaxies, the nebula, the vast, almost infinite expanse of space that scientists can't even begin to get their arms around. quadrillions of miles, so many zeros, we couldn't even begin to understand what the numbers mean, the size of the universe in light years. And above that, there's a throne. And on that throne, there sits the God who made it all. And when David calls, and by

inference, when you call, he hears. His voice speeds on the wings of a wind like an arrow flying through space and time. into the very throne room of God. The trouble David feels, the help David sought, the audience David received. And then the God David found, the God whose power was triggered by prayer. And there's a number of things we learn about this God. First of all, he's an angry God, verse seven. Then the earth reeled and rocked. The foundations also of the mountains

trembled and quaked, because he was angry. Smoke went up from his nostrils, and devouring fire from his mouth, glowing coals flamed forth from him." Just stop there a second and just take those words in. What's that tell you about God? It means God is not laissez-faire. when you're in trouble. He doesn't have a take it or leave it attitude. When one of his saints is in trouble, he loves you with a passion. He neither feels nor pretends indifference. When you're out of your depth and feel overwhelmed and have nowhere else to turn but to God and you call upon him His move, whatever our confession means, he's without body, parts, or passions. It does not mean that God is a block of theological granite or cold as ice. Our trouble moves him. These words mean something. The mountains trembled and quaked because he was angry. Smoke went up from his nostrils and devouring fire from his mouth. Glowing coals flamed forth from him. Peter Kreeft, who's a Roman Catholic philosopher, speaking about love says, love should not cast out terror, sorry, love should cast out terror for the Christian, but not awe. True love must include awe. This is one of the great truths that our age has tragically forgotten. God is love, but love is not love, L-U-V. Love is not nice. Love is a fire, storm, earthquake, volcano, lightning, and a hurricane. Love banged out the big bang and endured the hell of the cross. Next time you hear the Beatles say, all you need is love, think of the captain of the Titanic singing that to his passengers as the ship sank. As for me, Kreeft says, I'd rather have a lifeboat. And David says, God is that lifeboat.

When I'm in trouble, about to die, out of my depth, sinking in the maelstrom of the grave, and I cry to him, he comes. And he doesn't just come with his hands. He comes with his heart engaged, his infinite, eternal, and unchangeable passions engaged for my deliverance. An angry God. Secondly, an athletic God. You can't physically go to him.

Oh. But Christian, he can, and he will, and he does come to you. Verse 9, he bowed the heavens and came down, thick darkness under his feet. He rode on a cherub. The cherub or the kerevim, the kerev in Hebrew is is the word to draw near, and the cherubim, the cherubim, they guard the near approaches to God's throne, and God rides upon them like a chariot, and he flies swiftly,

he came down on the wings of the wind. It's a glorious picture of God shaking the heavens and the earth, an apocalyptic display of judgment, far beyond the imaginations, even of the CGI of Hollywood. Plummer says, God's power can easily convulse the whole frame of nature. The exercise is that power for your deliverance and for David's. An angry God, an athletic God, a hidden God. Verse 11, he made darkness his covering, his canopy around him thick clouds of water. Now as you read this, Sam, and the metaphorical you might say metaphorical exaggeration, right? Because you might say, when I read David's life, I don't read any such moments where God tore the heavens apart and shook the stars and came down in thunder and lightning to deliver David. I read of much more ordinary things, like a lucky shot with a stone taking down the big man, Goliath. I read of Saul closing in on David with a pincer movement about to get him, and then a Philistine raid came and distracted Saul. He had to go elsewhere. I read of Saul trying to pin David with a spear to the wall, and David managing, luckily, to evade the spear. I read of David, or Jonathan, sorry, warning David of impending disaster. I read of Michael rather unceremoniously letting the psalm singer of Israel down from the battlements with a rope and hiding an idol in the bed to deceive her father. I read of David running to Gath and narrowly escaping with his life when he's almost lynched by a crowd of angry, smelly, sweaty, hairy Philistines, then dragged, half beaten to death, face bloody and swollen before Achish, and David then, in a stroke of genius, pretending to be mad, and Achish saying, I've got enough crazy people in my, that's not David, he's a crazy person, and I've got enough of those in my retinue as it is. I hear of David hiding in the cave of Adullam, I read of David narrowly escaping the uprising of his two sons, Absalom first and then Adonijah. I read of Hushai frustrating Absalom's counsel at night and David escaping while he slept. I read of David's mighty men fighting valiantly alongside him. But you might say, I never read of such pyrotechnic displays of theological athleticism from the most high. Alec Mateer says, this is the meaning of David's vivid imagery. Behind all his circumstances lies the supernatural working of God. David took refuge in the cave of Adullam and the rocks of the wild goats, but by hindsight he saw that it was always the Lord who was his rock and refuge, concealing his glory, to be sure, behind the dark veil of ordinary circumstances, but reigning from his throne in the interests of his servant nonetheless. So David's using metaphor here, poetic imagery, right? But he's learned to view the events of his life through a theological perspective. The way I didn't last week when my dishwasher broke down, I didn't connect that to God. And therefore I was left in a bit of a panic on a Thursday afternoon. Small problem to be sure. Tiny

compared to many of yours. But we need to learn to connect the frustrations and the events, the victories and the defeats the dangers and the deliverances of our lives to God. God is the one, David says, who is the secret of my every success. An angry God, an athletic God, an often hidden God, and an almighty God. David's enemies were too strong for him. Just as your enemies, the world and the flesh and the devil, are too strong for you, but oh, my dear brother and my sister, they're not too strong for your God. Verse 12, out of the brightness before him, hailstones and coals of fire broke through his clouds. The Lord also thundered in the heavens, and the Most High uttered his voice, hailstones and coals of fire. And he sent out his arrows and scattered them. He flashed forth lightnings and routed them. Then the channels of the sea were seen, and the foundations of the world were laid bare at your rebuke, O Lord, at the blast of the breath of your nostrils. Plummer again says, we need no stronger girdle. Almightyness can protect any man in any circumstance. You don't need a stronger girdle, because you can't have a stronger God. He's almighty. And almighty can protect any man in any circumstance. an almighty God, a hidden God, an athletic God, an angry God, all engaged by prayer, and lastly, a personal God. Notice verse 16 to 19, the he me section of the psalm. Verse 16, he sent from on high. He took me. He drew me out of many waters. He rescued me from my strong enemy and from those who hated me, for they were too mighty for me. They confronted me in the day of my calamity, but the Lord was my support. He brought me out into a broad place. He rescued me because he delighted in me." Plummer again says, God's grasp cannot be broken. None can pluck his chosen out of his hand. It's Jesus in John 10, 25. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, and I give them everlasting life, and none can snatch them out of my hand. For my Father who has given them, my Father who has given you into my hand, none can snatch them out of the Father's hand. I and my Father are one, not just in being and in essence, that is true theologically, but practically, Christ says, my Father and I are one in our determination. not to lose any of my sheep, not one, which means not you, Christian. God the Son and God the Father have locked you in the grip of tender omnipotence, and He will not let you go. If that had ever even been on the cards, God would never have paid such an expensive ransom price for your redemption. So why do I love God, David says? Well, first of all, because in God I find everything a beleaguered man could need, even in the direst emergency. Secondly, because his power is triggered by prayer. You gotta feel the need of my

difficulty, how deep was my darkness, and how dire my situation, and I called upon God, and this God came, an angry God, an athletic God, a hidden God, an almighty God, and a personal God came to me. The essence, isn't it, of Luther's famous observation that the central experiential truth of saving religion can be found in personal pronouns. God is not just a rock and a refuge and a fortress, but he's my rock and he's my fortress and he's my stronghold and my shield. He's my God and whom I take refuge. Can you say that, Christian? And maybe that's all you can say this evening, as the powers of hell assault you. And the powers of your own heart

rise up against God and try to deceive you. And the world, with its never-failing capacity to make the darkness look bright, allures you. And you're faced with trials on every side, trials in your marriage, trials with your children. Disrespecting you, disrespecting

God. Trials in the workplace, trials all around you. Oh, but David says, you still have reason to hope and you still have reason to love because God is in heaven and you're on earth. And when you call upon him, his almighty power is engaged for your deliverance. Thirdly, the reason I love God, David says, is because serving such a God is time well spent.

You see that from verse 20 onwards. The Lord dealt with me according to my righteousness. According to the cleanness of my hands, he rewarded me. For I've kept the ways of the Lord and have not wickedly departed from my God. For all his rules were before me and his statutes I did not put far away from me. I was blameless before him and I kept myself from my guilt.

So the Lord has rewarded me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands and his sight. With the merciful, you show yourself merciful. With the blameless man, you show yourself blameless. With the purified, you show yourself pure. And with the crooked, you make yourself seem tortuous. For you save a humble people,

but the haughty eyes you bring down." David, I believe, is writing this psalm at the end of his life. David is not teaching you or me that we are somehow saved by works. This is after Bathsheba, after Uriah, after he numbered the armies of Israel and provoked God to anger. David was a man who well understood his need of grace. What's David saying here? Well, he's saying, in a sense, he's learned to see past the insecurities of Asaph and Psalm 73. Remember

when the psalmist says, truly God is good to Israel, to those who are pure in heart. But as for me, my feet had almost slipped. My steps had nearly slipped, for I was envious of the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. And he describes how the wicked have an easy life and an easier death. And these men are fat in prosperity. And everything goes well for them. And they mock God to boot. They're



always at ease and wealthy. And the psalmist says in verse 13, I've been wasting my time. All in vain have I kept my heart clean and washed my hands in innocence. He says, I've been striving to serve God, and all I've got is trouble for it. Like a famous nun in the 15th century, Catherine of Avila, I think her name was, she fell off her donkey on this rocky road and landed on a heap on the ground. She had a very close relationship with Jesus, they say, and she looked up and said, Lord, if this is how you treat your friends, tis no wonder you have so few, right? And sometimes the hardship of the Christian life can make you think, am I wasting my time? Maybe you're here and you're battling against your sin, your besetting sin that claws at your soul and drags you. attacks you when you're hungry and angry and lonely and tired and you find it pulling you. attracting you, and you fight it, and you pluck out right eye, and you cut off right arm, and you're battling it with all your heart and soul, and you fall, but you get up and you repent, and you strive back to Christ, and you get your conscience cleansed with the blood of Jesus Christ, and you pick yourself up, and you say, Lord, work in me to will and to do for your good pleasure, and on you strive in your commitment. And the devil says, you're wasting your time, son. You're wasting your time, girl. Serving God has no benefits. And David says, oh no, they do. These are words of a man who's serving God, not perfectly, but passionately and personally and persistently. By his grace, David says, I have kept my hands clean, verse 20. I have kept my ways. I've not forsaken him. I've not wickedly departed from my God. The idea is I've not believed the lie that I can find life away from God and without God. I fought that temptation. I've kept his word before me. When the alarm went off in the morning, I got out of bed and I opened my Bible and I read it. Just a few verses maybe, and I thought about it, and I pondered it, and as I was musing, the fire burned. All his rules are before me, verse 22. His statutes I did not put away from me. I kept myself from my sins, verse 23. And so the Lord has rewarded me. He's not saying that I've earned his blessing or his salvation, but there is a sense in life for the Christian That as we serve God, as we strive and walk before Him with a clean conscience, and it's never, and always remember this, we never make the first move toward God, right? It may feel like it sometimes, but every thought of God comes from God. So whenever you find an impulse to pray in your heart, that comes from God. When you find an impulse to resist sin, that comes from God. When you find strength to resist sin, that comes from God. So God gives you grace, you do well, you grow in grace, and God rewards that grace with more help and more strength and more divine energy. But he's not rewarding you. It's like when your children, when you go to your dad, and you say, Dad, can I borrow 10

bucks? And he says, what for? And you say, I want to buy you a Christmas present. So your dad gives you 10 bucks, and then you go and buy him a Christmas present. And he's grateful, right? You're not earning his gratitude.

He's giving you the money you're using to actually buy the present with in the first place. And all of this, all of the, the righteousness David has been practicing here. And of course it's true personally and perfectly of Christ. But David himself as a sinner can raise these words to God with a straight face because he's walking by faith in Messiah who will come.

And he's pulling strength down from Messiah who will come. And he's using that strength to live for God, and therefore he says, God is with me. And in one sense, the reason

I say that this evening is, maybe there's a young person out here, and maybe you're a covenant child, and maybe you're playing footless and fancy free with God, and you come to church and you sing.

You might even sing in the choir. But you live in a double life.

Behind the scenes, you're out drinking and drugging and partying with the girls or the boys. And you think to yourself, well,

when I need God, I will call upon him. Now, God is gracious. He often meets people who run

from him, and he'll not reject you when you run to him. But

David in this psalm says, perversion and pride are a poor strategy for finding God in trouble. He says later on in verse 40,

you made my enemies turn their backs to me, and those who hated me I destroyed. They cried for help, but there

was none to save. They cried to the Lord, but he

did not answer them. Verse 27, for you save a humble

people, but the haughty eyes you bring down. And if you're

here as a covenant child or a covenant parent, and you're sporting with

God, you're playing both ends against the middle. You go to

church, but you like playing with the devil and hell at the

same time. You're playing a very dangerous game. It's like when

I was a child, I used to put up my soldiers in lines and get

an elastic band and fire at the soldiers. It was great fun, until

I pulled the elastic band too far. And then I got the slap

in my eye, not the soldier. And the thing about an elastic

band, when you stretch it too far, it doesn't warn you. You

don't know you've stretched the band too far until you have. And the patience of God can be

like that. Saul was a covenant child. But Saul stretched it too far.

And when it came to that moment when he called upon God and God

did not answer, he was left with the witch of Endor, who gave him no help. She came

from the darkness, spoke to him in the darkness, and left him

as she found him. I'm saying that to warn some

of you here who might be running away from God. Maybe you're here

this evening and God's awakening you and the devil's saying, you're

wasting your time, son. After all you've done, after

all the hell-raising you've done out in the town in Columbia,

you're gonna come back to God now? Fat chance you have. No,

the very fact you have an inkling of a desire in your heart to come back to God is a sign that you have not gone too far yet. But today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as a mariba. Don't harden your heart to that voice of God saying it's not too late, because tomorrow it might be. Tonight might be the last time God comes to you and says, son, come to me tonight and I'll receive you. Tomorrow, the desire might have left you forever. And then lastly, why do I love

God, David says, because of the strength he gave me to fight his, it's not lastly, almost lastly, because of the strength he gave me to fight his battles. He gave me light in the darkness, verse 28, for it is you who light my lamp. The Lord my God lightens my darkness. It's a terrible thing to be in the darkness with no light. But for the Christian walking with God, it may feel that way, but it's never that way. And he gave me strength over every enemy and every obstacle. From verse 29 down to verse 45, notice how the text alternates between what God does for David and what David then does for God as God gives him strength. For by you I can run against a troop, and by God I can leap over a wall. It's God who helps him run, but David does the running. It's God who helps him leap, but David does the leaping. This God, his way is perfect. The word of the Lord proves true. He's a shield for all those who take refuge in him. For who is God but the Lord, and who is a rock except our God? The God who equipped me with strength and made my way blameless. God is the one you see who made David blameless. This is not works righteousness. God is sanctifying him, and that sanctifying power made a difference in David's life and heart, as it should do. as it always will do. He made my feet like the feet of a deer and set me secure on the heights. He trains my hands for war so that my arms can bend a bow of bronze. You have given me the shield of your salvation and your right hand supported me and your gentleness made me great. You gave me a wide place for my steps under me and my feet did not slip. I pursued my enemies and overtook them and did not turn back until they were consumed. I thrust them through so that they were not able to rise. They fell under my feet. For you equipped me with strength for the battle. You made those who rise against me seek under me. You made my enemies turn their backs to me, and those who hated me I destroyed. They cried for help, but there was none to save. Verse 42, I beat them fine as dust before the wind. I cast them out like the mire of the streets. You delivered me from strife with the people. You made me the head of the nations. People whom I had not known served me. As soon as they heard of me, they obeyed me. Foreigners came cringing to me. Foreigners lost heart and came trembling out of their fortress. It was God who did this. I thrust them through. so they

were not able to rise. That was the very thing Saul did not do. Saul didn't thrust through Agag, the enemy. He spared him. But David did.

But the reason David did was because God was at work in his heart, which should be encouraging you, Christian. You come to God, you say, Lord, make me strong to fight against my sins, to fight against the devil, to fight against the flesh of the world and the powers of darkness. And with omnipotent strength, in your soul, tell me who can stand against you. And lastly, and this is lastly, because God lives forever, and so his help will never stop, his arm will never wither, and his people will never be left defenseless, lifeless, or hopeless. Verse 46, the Lord lives, and blessed be my rock, and exalted be the God of my salvation, the God who gave me vengeance and subdued peoples under me, who rescued me from my enemies. Yes, you exalted me above those who rose against me. You delivered me from the man of violence. For this I will praise you, O Lord, among the nations, and sing to your name. Great salvation he brings his king, David, then, and Christ now, and shows steadfast love to his anointed, to David and his offspring forever." See, this is available for you. David and his offspring forever. David's help, Christian, is your

help. David's God is your God. David's refuge is your refuge. David's strength is your strength. Because this God lives forever, and so I can be sure his help will never stop, his arm will never wither, and his people will never be left defenseless, lifeless, or hopeless. Oh, the reasons that we should love this great God. Let me say one last word to those of you this evening maybe who are deciding whether it's prudent to waste your life loving God. Think of all the pleasures you'll lose, the devil says. Think of all the doors that will shut to you. David says, let me put one thought in your mind as you walk out that door. If you serve sin and Satan, think of the God you'll lose, the mercy you'll lose, the refuge you'll lose, the fortress you'll use, the strength you'll lose. All these, though, can be yours this evening if you come to great David's greater Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, enthroned now not in Jerusalem on earth, but far above all rule and authority and power and dominion and every name that is named. Will you not love him who laid down his life for your soul? What will I say to you if you walk out this evening, young person or old person, determined not to love this God, what Paul said at the end of his letter to the Corinthians. If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed. Let's pray together. Oh, Father, we thank you for our Savior. What a wonderful Savior is Jesus, my Lord. A wonderful Savior to me. Pray you'll use these words, the meditation of my heart, O God, to be pleasing in your sight and effective in the hearts and souls of your people here. They'll be encouraged that David's God is their God. David's shield

is their shield. David's refuge is their refuge. And if there'll be any here, maybe one or two, who has yet do not love you, O God, we pray you'll use this psalm to incite in their heart the temptation to lay down their lives, to lay down their sins and their rebellion, to repent, and to seek first your kingdom and your righteousness, and to spend their lives loving the God who loved them at such cost to himself. In Christ's name we pray, amen.