

7.16.23 / Strong Fortress, Sacrificial Protector / Psalm 5

The Psalms proclaim that God is **creator** / we **creatures**.

He is **King** / we His **subjects**.

Shepherd / **sheep**.

He deserves our worship / requests our allegiance / offers His loving care. The Psalms teach us about **intimacy** with the Living God.

This morning we're going to spend some time in Psalm 5. (Infallible, Inspired, Authoritative)

v1-3 I need you.

1. Note self-reflection, desperation & declaration

- I need help – powerful king admits need for help
- Desperation – cry for help
- God and King – who does he cry to?

David knows he needs help. He's feeling desperate. He cries out to His God and King. Last month I found myself in a spot...

Car problems. Pulled off the side of the road – stuck. About 9:30pm. Hour and a half from home. Uber? Hotel + Uber? Tow?

We can all recall a time when difficult circumstances/evil/brokenness – threaten to over take us. We realize that the difficult thing that is happening to us (or is about to happen to us) is out of our control. It's going to hit – or it is hitting – and we can't defeat it on our own. **We need help.** This is where David is as he writes these verses.

Imagine the threat that David had in mind...

- Philistine Army killing his brothers
- A Giant destroying him in hand to hand combat
- A king throwing a spear at him
- A king and an army of men searching for him to kill him

I don't know which of these David has in view when he cries out for help... but I see that **he knows** he can't do it on his own, he's desperate for **refuge and protection**, and He's looking to the Lord – who is His God and His King.

2. Note frequency of prayer – “in the morning” implies every morning; this is a daily practice.

Do you have a daily practice of crying out to God for help? We should. It's a naive perspective to think “I've got this.”

3. Note expectation – Actually expect the Lord to help.

The Lord placed two ideas in my head for solutions to my dilemma.

Now... it doesn't always happen right away.

[Car problems: An hour later we had secured a tow but nothing else.](#)

Keep talking to God and wait expectantly... (involves not losing hope)

v4-6 You are perfect.

At first read it seems David is spinning off on a tangent about wicked people – **but** that's not **primarily** what's going on.

As he cries out to – and looks to - the Lord – who is his God and King he sees, God... and He realizes...

- You're the kind of person I need on my side.
- You are Trustworthy!
- You are good.
- You are utterly and in every way against evil.

There is evil and world brokenness which brings about my circumstances **and**... there is the Lord – who is utterly opposed to evil. David declares that the Lord is the one He needs.

But here's what all of us are thinking as we read verse 4-6. *Wait... I'm glad God's against evil but does that mean He's against me?*

"You hate all who do wrong." I do wrong... what do I do with this? [Did the Psalmist exaggerate or Mis-speak?](#)

God's character is completely opposed to and free from evil. He is Holy. There is God and there is evil. The two can never be mixed. *"God hates all who do wrong."* Man... that is so uncomfortable to say... yet... I don't want to water it down. [Compare your feelings about evil to God's.](#)

Consider this in the mix...1 John 4 and Romans 5:8. Hate all who do wrong & demonstrates love for those who are sinning. [How?](#)

Remember... God's revelation doesn't need to fit into our understanding of reality. Our understanding of reality needs to fit into God's revelation.

Summary so far: David needs help. He's crying out to God. He sees and knows that God is perfect and utterly opposed in every way to the particular evils that are threatening him.

v7-8 You are merciful and wise.

David – I don't deserve your mercy.

In gratitude for the mercy of God, David commits to following God's path. Through some **life experience** we learn that God's path/way is not without trouble, but it's **His** good and gracious path designed for us. - [Car problems: two friends & parents - gracious rescue.](#)

God's path is not without trouble, but it's His good & gracious path designed for us. Wait for, look for, embrace and follow His path.

v9-10 My enemies are dangerous.

David contrasts the path of the Lord with the path of evil. The Lord's is a path that can be trusted. My enemies cannot be trusted. Their way leads to death. (*Evil path is so deceptive!*) Do not mistake evil for good. Critically examine your heart in all circumstances. Critically examine the messages around you in all circumstances.

There is an evil one who seeks to devour you. 1 Peter 3:15

Last week we pondered the beautiful image of God as shepherd watching over His sheep. Our Psalm today reminds us that there are predators lurking who seek to devour the sheep.

We are living amidst a real and present threat. 1 Peter 3:15 (again)
As predators look to devour sheep, the evil one looks to destroy us.

How careless it would be for a sheep to take on a lion (*image it*). How arrogant and foolish it is for us to take on the evil one... with our power. We absolutely need the **refuge and protection** of someone more powerful than our enemy!

v11-12 I rest secure in you.

God is refuge and shield – Ps 18:1-3

Rock and fortress –

What makes you feel protected? (*house, bank account*). There are a lot of evils in this world that a nice house and a big bank account **will not** protect you from. **God is our refuge and shield!**

Don't be that puffed up sheep who believes he/she can withstand the attack of the wolf just fine. A sheep's only hope in the face of danger is to find refuge in the shepherd.

God is our refuge and shield. When we face danger – and make no mistake it is lurking all around us (*examples here*). When we face danger our only hope is to find refuge and protection in the Lord.

What does that refuge and protection look like?

Romans 8:38-39 speaks beautifully to this.

Did you hear that... nothing can separate us from **His love**? While the evil one is more powerful than us, the Lord is by far more powerful than the evil one. He is our refuge and protection. **Nothing** can separate us from His love.

As you take refuge in Him, you are secure in His love.

David's proclamation is that the beloved of the Lord will rest secure in the loving hands of the living God.

And... we all know that in a given moment we're not convinced that God's love is the refuge we want. We **want** a quicker fix. We're tempted to run after comfort, popularity, success, or financial security as **our refuge**. And the sad truth is that the further we get down those roads the more they undo us. The evil one is deceptive and powerful in laying out alternative paths

that **seem** attractive... but they are lies and he is out to harm us. **The Lord is our refuge** – we will find security in **His Love**.

But... **doesn't He (vs 6) hate those who do wrong?** Yes... He rains down punishment on all who do wrong. **Yet** for those who trust in the refuge of the Lord – they experience His protection spread over them through the blood of Jesus shed on the cross.

In Jesus, we find that the Lord is not only our mighty refuge, He is our sacrificial protector!

Not only does the Lord protect us from the wrongs of our enemies, He protects us from the punishment that we ourselves have called upon ourselves for our wrong doing. It's not that the Lord **withholds** the just punishment for our sins, it's that he **shields** us from it by receiving it himself on the cross.

Read 12 in closing / Challenge to memorize Psalm 18:1-3