

6/30/19 - Psalm 5 - "God's Perfect Judgement"

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[0 : 00] Please join me in prayer. Father, this is your word. This is the means of communication with revealing yourself to your creation.

Father, let us not take this lightly this morning. Let us come to your word in discovery of how you want to communicate to us today. Father, this is living and this is breathing. This word is active. It is sharp. It's a double-edged sword. Father, it's going to cut today. Father, we have in our possession right now very difficult words. And I pray, Father, by your spirit you communicate it to this body in love. And Father, that you reveal yourself, your true character, to this church today. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. We're going to be in chapter 5. Today. And so, once you guys are all there, it should be up on the screen too.

[1 : 07] Psalm chapter 5. Please read with me. Verse 1. It says, Give ear to my words, O Lord.

Consider my groaning. Give attention to the sound of my cry, my King and my God. For to you I do pray. O Lord, in the morning you hear my voice.

In the morning I prepare a sacrifice for you. And watch. For you are not a God who delights in wickedness. Evil may not dwell with you.

The boastful shall not stand before your eyes. You hate all evildoers. You destroy those who speak lies. The Lord abhors the bloodthirsty and deceitful man.

But I, through the abundance of your steadfast love, will enter your house. I will bow down toward your holy temple in the fear of you. Lead me, O Lord, in your righteousness because of my enemies.

[2 : 04] Make your way straight before me. For there is no truth in their mouth. Their inmost self is destruction. Their throat is an open grave. They flatter with their tongue.

Make them bear their guilt, O God. Let them fall by their own counsels. Because of the abundance of their transgressions, cast them out. For they have rebelled against you.

But let all who take refuge in you rejoice. Let them sing for joy and spread your protection over them. And those who love your name may exalt in you.

For you, bless the righteous, O Lord. You cover him with favor as with a shield. Today we arrive at a section of Scripture that basically can be surveyed as a general prayer.

It's kind of generic in its presentation. And David is, again, speaking of two elements. He's been contrasting a lot throughout these first couple psalms.

[3 : 08] He's contrasting between the wicked man and a holy God. David broadly paints a picture to identify a certain rite of passage that a Christian has.

So the person who is declared righteous as a Christian is through the blood of Christ, through their faith in Christ, declared righteous. We see righteousness in this passage. And how a Christian must approach God if we are to be heard by Him.

And additionally, what we can expect of Him when we do come to Him in this manner. Verse 5 is actually unique in how it's like literary structure, how it's presented in this text.

Because it consists of five stanzas, which I want to highlight today. However, the even-numbered stanzas and the odd-numbered stanzas are actually working against each other.

David alternates in these stanzas going down within the five. The odd ones are focused on God's holiness or the righteousness. And then the even-numbered stanzas two and four that are sandwiched between the other ones are actually with the wicked man in view in this text.

[4 : 18] And so the psalm alone has a rich content of theology concerning, number one, who God is, and also additionally, who man is. It is very rich.

The first point today is called the first fruits of faithful prayer. Concerning verse 1 through 3.

I'm going to take this stanza by stanza. So yes, that means five points today. I'm so sorry I'm going to be a five-point preacher today. Point one, the first fruits of faithful prayer.

Verse 1 says, Give ear to my words. Look with me. Give ear to my words, O Lord. Consider my groaning. Give attention to the sound of my cry, my King and my God.

For to you I do pray. O Lord, in the morning you hear my voice. In the morning I prepare a sacrifice for you. And watch. Within this first line of the psalm, we identify a man in this psalm, the writer of this psalm, David, who is in dire need of speaking to his King and his God.

[5 : 35] We see this how we see him speaking and him declaring this communication to his King and his God by the sound of his cry. We see this by his groaning.

Words like that in this text. And groaning denoting a deep inarticulate sound conveying pain or despair or displeasure. Remember, any prayer in this type of tone is one of the many ways that God's children come to him and he hears you.

It's a prayer of lament by crying out to God and groaning. And also within these first two passages, we can identify a certain urgency and desperation in the midst of his groaning.

Look with me. You see words like, give ear, consider, give attention. This man is in dire need.

There's an urgent, desperate matter that he needs to call unto God, his King and his God.

And we clearly see that this man's desperate direction of his words are going to be received by his King and his God in verse 2. Interestingly enough, he's allowed to enter in.

[6 : 48] We learn through the direction of his words, he acknowledges not only that his dependence of being a man, being weakened by his flesh, but also the supremacy of God in his prayer life.

That he is coming to God and he is trusting God with the words. Charles Spurgeon calls David's usage of words here in his book, A Treasury of David, as the path and the marrow of the plea. And Derek Kinder calls David's usage of words here as the covenant relationship expressed by the repeated my, which gives the prayer a firm footing.

Like my words, my groanings, my cry, my King, my God, my voice. You see that drawing through this text and it gives the prayer a firm footing as Derek Kinder analyzed.

In verse 3, as we look down, it draws attention upon a certain time frame of his groaning and plead to God.

[7 : 50] It says in verse 3, In the morning you hear my voice, in the morning I prepare a sacrifice. Wasn't that interesting? A sacrifice. What does that even mean?

A sacrifice, like with goats and things like that. What was he meaning by this sacrifice in the morning? It is his prayer we see in this text.

The first fruits of his day was his prayer. You see, prayer was far from a mundane thing. It wasn't just a programmatic checklist of the daily tasks of David's day.

This was a holy commune with God of the universe. It was an extreme time of lament in this situation, where as we go through the Psalms, there's going to be a couple times where, man, David's like shouting for joy.

He's at the top of a mountain shouting, Great is our God! But in this time, we see him lamenting. In which, as we get to the end of the Psalm, we'll actually see that the Lord actually turns his doubt into confidence, his weakness into strength.

[9 : 02] And this was David's sacrifice to the Lord. His first conversation in the day, in the morning, was with God. This is something to highlight today. It wasn't his TV.

It wasn't the news. It wasn't what happened overnight. It wasn't his phone. It wasn't checking his emails, checking his social media notifications. It was on his knees before God.

This was his first sacrifice. The first fruit of his day was rested on his knees. And at this particular time, groaning. Think about it. Groaning to his king and his God.

And just a side note, the usage of the king and his God is something very important because these are the very first words that Thomas, after the resurrection, and when Jesus appeared to Thomas, and he felt the wounds and everything, as weird as that might sound and gross, that's what it took for Thomas to believe.

And the very first words he uttered was, my king and my God. That he knew, Thomas knew, that this was no ordinary man. This was the son of the living God. And David had that very same faith with his king and his God.

[10:17] But as any good used car salesman, but wait, there's more. There's, you know, infomercials at night. But wait, there's a little bit more to be revealed.

I failed to mention one word that is actually crucial to make all the difference within David's prayer at this time, within his prayer life. A term which brings great confidence in the words uttered during his groaning and his crying.

A word which rests in God's timing and provision alone. This word is found at the end of verse 3. Watch. The end of this verse says, and watch.

By David recalling not only the tone of his prayer, his groaning, his crying, and the direction of his prayer going to his king and his God, he also recalls now the expectation of his prayer as he watches.

There's a vital element within the words we utter to God. This vitality rests within our faith, just as David's faith, when we wait to see God fulfill our prayers.

[11:25] David anticipated an answer, and we should too, out of faith. Remember, James 1, 5 through 6 says, if any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.

But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, church. What depths of a prayer life that are found in just three verses?

Literally, we could spend the rest of our time on this very topic. Because what depths that three verses hold that beautifully convey a beautiful, healthy prayer life, and what this truly looks like in our day, and what our first minutes, our time is limited on this earth, and how we spend our first minutes of the day in just nonsense, just scrolling through useless notifications, how many people liked an Instagram post, or how your Snapchat streak is going.

The problem, or not necessarily a problem, but the problem that we think we have with God is that he's in control of the plans. He's in control of the timing as we watch, and we wait for him to work our prayers out.

Sometimes it takes a lifetime of faith-filled prayer to finally watch God do that which you pled for. Many of us have things that we have on our hearts in our prayer time that God just can't take away from us, and we sometimes find ourselves pleading and pleading and pleading, and sometimes at the same time, losing our faith as the longer time goes on, wondering if God is actually hearing, if God's going to do anything.

[13:09] I am a living testimony of a mother who prayed constantly for me and my salvation, and God to wake me up drastically. And sometimes it takes a lifetime of faith-filled prayer, church.

Persistent prayer is a challenge within a healthy prayer life. Persistent prayer. Because even though we may not understand why the answer is delayed, the promise is that, remember 1 John, remember when we were talking through 1 John, I remember preaching the sermon, 1 John 5, 14, that this is the confidence that we have toward him that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.

Man, this is good news. As Christians, we cling to the faith that God will not refuse to act forever. The second point today is God's relationship with the wicked.

Look with me as we continue in verse 4. It says, This next stanza brings the wickedness into subjection, the wicked in subjection, as a contrast to God's relationship with the wicked, or actually lack thereof.

If we actually read this, there's not much of a relationship with the wicked, with the holy God. And over the past several weeks, we've kind of chronologically been studying through Psalms, just chapter 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5, of man, man's weakness, man's, the enemy of David's being evil, but also the holiness of God.

[14:55] And within just three verses in this next stanza, we get a reality check of who God is. And we need to hit this really hard today as a church and in a culture today, where this is kind of a mixed bag, depending on which church you attend and things like that.

So we're going to hit this hard, and so bear with me. Verse 4 says, God does not delight in wickedness. And it also says, look with me, evil does not dwell with Him.

There's a clear separation between the wicked man and a holy God. There's a separation, there's a wall between wicked man and a holy God. But as we continue, we actually see that as these verses go, the description actually gets stronger.

Look with me. In verse 5, it says, the boastful, or the arrogant in some translations, will never be in God's presence. And look with me. It says, God hates those who do wrong. Some may say, Brent, you, no, you've got to be mistaken. That's not what this passage is meaning. God surely doesn't hate. God loves. He's all about love.

[16:04] Well, don't take my word for it, church. Let's continue. It gets even stronger than that. In verse 6, look with me. It says, in verse 6, God destroys those who speak lies.

It says, God abhors a deep hatred for the bloodthirsty and the deceitful man. At this point, you're like, okay, okay. This is getting a little bit rated R for my fluffy Christian, you know, life years. You know, let's go back to 1 John and talk about God is love and, you know, the good things. You know, can we go back to that? Maybe I'm overanalyzing. Maybe there's nobody in this room who's thinking that.

I pray that there isn't. Maybe, maybe listening online, anybody tuning in online. But in our current culture, in the rise of like a moralistic, therapeutic belief in God, a deism, belief in God, of, of that God is just a, an old, you know, just an image of God being the old man up in, up in the clouds, sitting on his rocking chair, looking down.

Yep. Yeah, it's good. You know, you just help the lady across the street. Good work. You're coming up. You're in the, you're in the, you're in the club, you know, working your way up to heaven, watching, getting, having, having this, this, this unjustified love and approval based on works and deeds.

[17:22] And it's absolute rubbish, church. It's taking Christ and the cross completely out of salvation. We see there's a distinction between wicked and a holy God.

Within these three verses, within this stanza, we see a clear, a new picture painted. And please note that this is not a specified picture calling out individuals necessarily, but their character and the relationship with sin.

Notice church, it's, it's poetic. Notice it's poetic manner and structure. The progression of God's response to the wicked grows stronger and stronger and more descriptive throughout these verses describing God's relationship with the wicked or actually lack thereof.

In a culture who distorts the biblical view often of God, accepting our continuation of wrongdoing, repentance. Consider that just an old term terminology that we don't need in the church today.

That's just a historic term. You know, God is, he's just, you know, because Jesus died and everything, we're all in. It's, it's all good. The approval of good works to atone for our wrongdoing.

[18:32] This stanza battles, even the modern day theology, because it's telling us that God hates all who do wrong. God destroys those who tell lies and God abhors these people.

It's difficult church. It is. And it's very hard, but it is very biblically rooted description. And if there is anybody who's saying like, let's go back to something like a little bit more, more nice, you know, let's go back to first John.

I, I encourage us. Let's, let's look back at first John and see what first John has to say about this as well. First John one five. Remember in this passage, it said, God is a light and in him is no darkness at all.

And I want to make a point here in this, that he is light. God is light. This isn't just an attribute of him. This isn't just a thing that he puts on and puts off.

This is ingrained within his essence that God is light. His essence is light. There is not even a spot of darkness. There's not a blemish of darkness in him. And it is because of who he is, because of who God is.

[19:39] He is holy, perfect holiness church. His perfect essence defines the incompatibility between the wicked man and a holy God. It's not necessarily his actions, which are telling us.

It's his holiness. It's an essence of his being. Who he is, is drawing that line. There is no compatibility between wicked man and a holy God. And it has nothing to do with what they did. It's because of who he is, that we are all fallen. We have all fallen short of the mark. Man, I recall just how we deal with sin, even as a culture in the modern day church, and even just our society, how we deal with sin.

I often think of my son, who has the luxury of being up here right now, who, you know, when he gets a look on his face, when he does things wrong.

You know, you always know, you don't really have to ask him. It's just how he acts. You know he was up to something. You know there's crayon on the walls. You know that there's probably a big

water spot, especially with my youngest, down in the children's ministry right now.

[20 : 51] You know, just pouring, just finding, just a comedy relief of pouring a whole glass of filled water on the floor. I don't know. It just, it is, it's something that intrigues him, but it's something that is bad.

And something within him is telling him that it's bad. Because when we say, Levi, he speaks very directly, he just goes down. And he's just, and it's almost like he, he walks, you know, backpedals around the corner, you know, like around the wall.

And, and he has this guilt. I'm telling you, it is, it is, as cute as it is, it's aggravating too. I mean, we're all parents.

We're, we're all grandparents. We know, we know nieces, nephews. We, we've been, been dealing with, we know these, these types of, this type of age with kids, being three years old and five, five years old.

But how often, Christians often act like this in real time with sin. It's like the garden of Eden all over again, hiding from God.

[21 : 57] Church, I feel as if we, we have a tendency of taking sin too lightly, that when we get to this passage, it actually surprises us that God destroys wicked, the wicked. We may live life through, through this motto, whether like solely to this model, but it's kind of like we live life, like how much sin can we get away with and still go to heaven?

That we still want a little bit of, you know, our way on this life. Imagine living that way, because you're honestly saying in that, in that life, that, that your, that your priorities are split between serving the Lord wholeheartedly and serving yourself, and getting a little bit of, of what you desire. If this exists in our church today, if you're sitting here today, and you, you kind of feel as if, these words are kind of hitting home with you, as if, you know, you might be taking sin a little bit too lightly.

I, I please, I plead with you to repent of that today, to turn away from that mindset, and uphold the righteous living that God desires, that is actually the, the fruit of salvation in your life.

Because the good news is, church, is that the wall, as we study through scripture, has been completely crushed, between repentant, wicked man, and a holy, just God.

[23 : 15] Our advocate, Jesus Christ, has qualified us to enter in, to the holy of holies, a place that, people, being in his presence, at the Ark of the Covenant, you would die.

That now, because of what Jesus did for us, we enter in freely, made possible, not by our best deeds, but by, the satisfaction of, his death, Christ's death on the cross, and by the blood of his cross.

If you are not, in Christ today, maybe we better keep that baptismal filth. If these words are really hitting home for you, I'll, I'll keep this thing nice and warm for you. I'll find a way. Because, this is life-altering, truth, and reality found in scripture.

That God, takes sinful man, and cleans him up, by Christ's death on the cross. And we have access to him, through that. There is no separation, between the wicked man, and the holy God, anymore. We are justified, with the righteousness of Christ, that he bestows, upon us. And, the third point, this morning, is drawing near to God.

[24 : 20] And I'm going to look at this next stanza, with you. It says in verse 7, but I, David says, through the abundance of your steadfast love, will enter your house.

I will bow down toward your holy temple, in the fear of you. Lead me, O Lord, in your righteousness, because of my enemies. Make your way straight, before me. There's often a fallacy, in Christianity today.

I once had a boss, of just like, you know, being a Christian, it's sort of like, you're putting on like, a self-righteousness. Some people can actually be like, oh, you're a perfect Christian, you got it all together, and everything.

Well, good for you, you're a Christian. I'm not, and I choose to be that way. And they kind of, just apply this caricature, of you, of being self-righteous, and all that. I once had a boss, one of my first desk jobs, that I ever got, who had this sort of impression, of me.

You know, being a Christian, I'd have Bible verses, you know, around my desk, and you know, they're my little cubicle. And, I'd often bring my Bible, to read on my lunch, and he'd see all this, and he'd actually challenge me, because he, in his impression, in his Catholic background, he was, he was believing that, you know, it should be a more, of a private endeavor, because by doing this,

you're, you're labeling yourself, as a Christian, that you are, are righteous, over other religions, that you're, that he actually felt, that I was thinking, thinking that I was better, than him, in a strange manner.

[25 : 53] And, this passage, today, if you ever heard, that's, that stigma, with Christians, that oh yeah, you got it all, perfectly together, this actually refutes, that very fallacy.

Within this stanza, David directs our focus, back solely upon God. Remember how, they're alternating, going from, the holiness of God, with God in view, going to the wicked, now we're in stanza three, going back to God, and God solely in view.

We see in verse seven, actions towards God, towards God, sorry. In verse seven, it says, there's like a union, between God and man, it says, but I, through the abundance, of your steadfast love, will enter your house.

God, or in other words, it is by your mercy alone, Lord, that, that any human being, may approach you, that's justified by Christ. For any Christians in this room, your Christ dinger, should be going off, at this statement.

But I, through the abundance, of your steadfast love, will enter your house. And continuing, we see, actions for God, of David, bowing down, and fearing him.

[27 : 00] Or in other words, David recalls being a repentant, worthless, justified sinner, who worships God, even in his groaning. And David also reveres, this holy God, in fear.

You might miss it, just reading through this, but in, it took seven verses, to get to a certain point, in David's prayer, to God, in this passage. We see that he finally, makes his first petition, to God, in this entire passage.

Seven verses, to prepare himself, to finally get to God, and say, Lord, this is what I'm asking of you. And how many of us, within the first instance, of getting down on our knees, God, I just ask you to give me this, and that, and do this, and help save this person, and wake this person up, and kind of do away, with this person.

You know, we just come to him, just as a magical genie. It took seven verses, of preparation, of going through, of who God is, who the wicked are, proclaiming good theology, rich theology, of who God is.

And it delights God, for us to acknowledge him, in that way. That is our act of worship, and our sacrifice, in the morning, to him, as well. But he says, in verse 8, his first petition, lead me, and make your way, straight, before me.

[28 : 18] Church, there is good news, for you today. Saints, church, there is good news, for you today. And sinners, if there is anybody, not in Christ today, and you kind of know, that you're not in Christ today, there's also good news, for you today.

The veil, has been torn, between a holy God, and a sinful man. Jesus Christ, has made a way, and there is a call, to put your faith in him, for him to be, your king, and your God, over your lives. Clearly, a wicked man, cannot dwell with God, but only a justified, wicked man, may enter into the presence, of this holy God, as this verse says. And this man, is not clothed, in the righteousness, of his own.

It has nothing to do, really, with this man, with David. It says, lead me in, what, in verse 8, your righteousness. It's not leading him, in his righteousness, it's your righteousness.

But by the works of Christ, you qualified him, by the abundance, of his steadfast love, in verse 7. This is good news, indeed. And so, refuting that fallacy, of Christianity, what strength, do we actually have, coming to God?

[29 : 27] It is all because of his, abundant, steadfast love. It's because of his, righteousness. It has little to do, with us. And we are weak, and we are dependent, upon God, just as David is.

And so, as we reach, the second to last, stanza, of this morning, let's hold on, for just two more, contrasts. My fourth point, is the wicked tongue, and punishments, found, in verse 9, through 10. Bear with me. It says, for there is, no truth, in their mouth. Their inmost self, is destruction. Their throat, is an open grave. They flatter, with their tongue.

Make them, bear their guilt, O God. Let them, fall by their own, counsels, because of the abundance, of their transgressions. Cast them out. They have, rebelled against you.

In this stanza, David turns back, to the wicked. Just focused on God, holy God, and his righteousness, the unity between, a holy God, and the righteous man.

[30 : 31] He turns back, to the wicked, and he describes, their speech. The words that are, coming out of their mouth. And this, this is not a speech, of David's words, of groaning, and crying out to God, but of evilness.

And also, it's not an attitude, of reverence for God, but it's false innocence. They're ignorant, of their very own, of their very own, wickedness. Look at me, with verse 9, it describes the enemy's words, as being, being lies.

They're destructive, and throat of an open grave. Or in other words, it has, their words have this, strong stench, an open grave. Imagining opening a grave, that's been there for a while.

Imagine, the stench, coming out of the open grave. What, what David is, is highlighting here, is something that, stinks. Their words are like, an open grave.

Do you see the reality, of the words that he's, highlighting, here in these verses? Come on, we live in northeast Ohio, we have suicidal raccoons, and, and squirrels, lying all over on these roads.

[31 : 37] You know that smell, the decaying body, sitting there, and decaying. It stinks, it makes you want to puke, when you go, when you drive by those things.

But what a description, though, of their words. Paul even thought it was significant enough, to include in verse 9, in, no, he included verse 9, in his elaborate summary of sins, in Romans, Romans chapter 3, in his list of sins, chapter 3, 10 through 18.

I'm not going to get into it too much, for the sake of time, but his point, of including this, was to draw the very same reality, of sinful man, and the sins of man, being that of an open grave as well.

And his point, in Romans, was that there is no one righteous, no, not one. That all have fallen short, of the glory of God. David's words are noticeably different, in this passage, because he makes his second petition, to God, in this passage.

Bear with me, for just a couple more moments, as we come to a close. But this petition, is for justice. His petition, is for punishment, towards sin.

[32 : 50] And remember, like we spoke last week, that God sovereignly, established David, that it was God's will, to establish David, in his kingship position. So that an attack, on David, was literally an attack, on God, and what God, has chosen to do.

And so, literally, they not only, rebelled against David, in this passage, they've rebelled, against a holy, and just God, through their attacks, on David.

His concern, was that they rebelled, against God. And this second, this section of the psalm, is considered, an imprecatory psalm. It's calling out, justice, and punishment, toward the wicked.

Imprecatory psalm. We're going to get into, a little bit more, of that later. But, no English classes today. But if we really want to, like, get people hyped up, for church service one day, you know, Psalm 69, and Psalm 109, are, like, solely imprecatory psalms, calling out justice, and wrath.

So if we want to make people, feel welcome to church, maybe we should open up, with Psalm 69.

Make people, feel warm, and cozy. Welcome to Youngstown Metro. Make God's judgment, get, you know, no. We won't, we probably won't do that, but, within a certain context, it's good and healthy to study these passages, because it brings to reality the, the fallacy that the culture can bring into our view of God, and actually his relationship with wicked, the wickedness.

[34 : 14] But, the most important thing that we must notice, with this imprecatory section, is that David's issue was not, had nothing to do with, the wicked people, personally, in this life.

It wasn't like a personal thing with the wicked. David was often known to be very forgiving, towards injustices done to him. But David's primary concern, with the wicked, in a general term, the wicked, generally speaking, who have rebelled against God, specific term, the general wicked, to a specific God, would be condemned.

It was not personal. He was not calling out, casting fire upon Ron back there, for the wrong that he's been doing. He wasn't calling out by name, the wicked. He was saying wicked in general, in a general sense, with a specific application, of their, their condemnation, through their wickedness, to a holy God.

And David petitions his second request, to condemn sin. Which we understand that, they apparently had no cognitive understanding, that they were actually in sin. These people were going about, their words were filthy, they were, they were evil, they smelled like rotten bodies, and they had no idea, that they were even in sin.

Notice in verse 10, it says, make them bear their guilt. There was no guilt. They were probably, they probably got their jollies, from the attacks, that they were having towards David. According to God's

divine plan, of establishing David, the wicked enemies, thought they were in the right, by attacking him.

[35 : 47] And David pleads for justice. And as we cruise, into the last stanza of this passage, David reveals his confidence in God, to come through, with his end of the bargain.

In which David calls, not for himself, to bear arms. I'm going to go out, I'm going to, I'm going to take care of it myself, God. I'm not waiting here anymore, I'm not going to, waste my time here on my knees.

I am bearing arms, I'm going to take care of it. You know, we fought for you before, we're going to fight for you, against these wicked men. No. David calls upon God, to bear his arms, which is in, rooted in his perfect, and holy justice, and his judgment, on the wicked.

David pleads for this, because our battles, are not against flesh and blood church, right? Last points, this warning, is that God, is our refuge and shield.

We're going to end on a happy note. In verse 11, it says, look with me, if you have any strength left, to endure this sermon today, look with me in verse 11, but let all who take refuge in you, rejoice.

[37 : 04] Let them ever sing for joy, and spread your protection over them, that those who love your name, may exalt in you, for you bless the righteous, O Lord. You cover him with favor as a shield.

This final stanza, is quite a bit more upbeat in tone, and it resolves, in a broader, more general application, because it brings into, all the righteous, in a general sense, just like all the wicked, in the previous stanza, all the righteous, to all who take refuge, all will be glad, all will sing for joy, he spread his protection over them, generally speaking.

I mean, looking back in redemptive history, we see through the Exodus, through Moses, through Deuteronomy, leading Moses, through Joshua, we see this protection, over the nation of Israel.

We saw this continuing, and actually foreshadowing, the protection that will be provided, to God's children, through Christ. We saw that foreshadow, and casting a shadow forward, into redemptive history, and this still rings through, as we're standing here, on this side of the cross, looking back to Christ.

This is still a protection, and good news for us today. We see this, another instance, of the righteous dwelling with God, in the united relationship, which exists between those, who belong to him.

[38 : 29] As we see in verse 11 here, there is a refuge, available to protect us, church. There's a refuge, available to protect us.

There's also an attitude, of gladness, within the confines, of that refuge. There's gladness, in that refuge. And there's also, a common melody, of joy, of which the righteous, will sing, within that refuge, under his protection.

We all have, we all love happy endings. You know, all the chick flicks out there, you know, the, we love happy endings. I think there's, there's not a Christian film, out there that, that ends, not in a happy ending.

Everything is just like, you know, and everything was good, and everything worked out, and everything was great. They lived on. There's no Christian films. You know, maybe I should write some, write a note, to some, some editors, or directors.

We need a lamenting ending. We need, come on, like put off this, you know, we know that life isn't all fluffy, and rainbows, and unicorns. But we all love happy endings, one way or another. Happy resolves, from tension.

[39 : 36] The ending, for the righteous, is that of a storyline, with a very happy ending. However, those who are wicked, and actively pursue wickedness, in their life, separated from God, the storyline, is not so happy, but actually very dark, and very void.

So, as we come to a close today, I want to ask you a question. How will your story end?

Sinners, saints, where is your hope? Because David had the confidence, to plant his face, on the ground, pleading to God, and the wicked, has confidence, to bear arms, of evil words, against the holy, and the just God.

Where are you in this? How will your story end? For those of you, who are not in Christ today, for those who, identify clearly, with the wicked, I want to encourage you, that your story, is not over yet. It does not have to end, that way. Jesus Christ has made a way, to God the Father, and if you are here, with breath in your lungs, and are living, separate from God, and under his condemnation, it is by the grace of God, that you are here today, and your story, can be rewritten today, here, and now.

[41 : 12] Trust, in the Lord, his grace, is sufficient for you, remember in verse 7, the abundance, of his steadfast love, remember that, your story, is not over yet, it can be rewritten, by putting your trust, in the Lord God Almighty, turning from your wickedness, and submitting your life, wholeheartedly, to God, the Father.

Come to Jesus, this morning. And for those of you, who are in Christ, today, who are Christians, who are declared righteous, who have been justified, by the blood of Christ, and has put their trust, those who have put their trust, in Christ, I want to encourage you, to don't move so fast, to the righteous category.

Some may read this, with great confidence, like, thanks Brent, thanks for another, reassuring message brother, I feel filled this morning, I'm encouraged, I'm ready, thank you for reminding me, but do not minimize, your very own wickedness, which was exchanged, for righteousness, at the cost, of Christ's blood, on the cross.

saints in the room, remember, what you are saved from, so you are reminded, of the grace, which has bought you.

And oh, what amazing grace, it is. But regardless, of which side, that you are on, sinner, or saints, all mankind, has a bend, to live in complete, rebellion against God.

[42 : 55] The truth is, we were once rebels, against this holy God, and those who are not, using their breath right now, to confess Jesus as Lord and Savior, are living in rebellion.

This is not hate speech, but these are actually words of hope, because we know, the answer to this problem, and that is Jesus. Some may say, Brent, I don't deserve, I don't deserve any of this. I don't deserve forgiveness, because of the things that I've done. You just don't know my past. You don't know the things that I have done, Brent. Well, that's the best place you can be, at this moment.

Because that is literally, the theological definition of grace. It's the act of God, giving fallen man, the complete opposite, of what he or she deserves.

Grace. And saints in this room, I just want to encourage you again, to stop the childish games, of barely getting through life, on a thread of grace.

[44 : 07] Our conduct, must precisely, be pointing to Christ, back to the cross. Our speech, our actions, our communities. The church, does a good job, of blending in at times.

We must be the difference, and let our conduct, stand out, even under wicked oppression. We must hold fast, to scripture. We must hold fast, to convictions.

And we must not blend in. We must not give in, to sin, so quickly, as we sometimes, tend to do. Let our first sacrifice, church, in the morning, going back to verse 3, my first point this morning, let our first sacrifice, in the morning, be a moment with God.

Let us confidently, draw near to God, as qualified saints, by Christ alone, and not trust only, in the physical shield, of Christ, our refuge, but also the, eternal salvific shield, of Christ, our advocate, who bought us, at a price.

Church, let us sing, a new song of old, a song of confidence, as we draw near to God, as qualified saints, by the merits, of Christ alone, and at God's, holy judgment seat.

[45 : 26] Let's pray.