

# Who Can You Trust?

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Psalm 146. I keep saying I'm going to jump into the Psalms some time ago and just saying I'm going to look at this again and it won't let me go so we're going to look at Psalm 146 tonight, all the verses, verses 1-10. You can't really grasp what the Psalmist is saying if you don't understand salvation by grace through faith. Sometimes we use the phrase "sovereign grace." David got, he understood the saving power of God in grace and if you don't get that, you miss what he's saying. The Psalmist is not just writing nice true things about God, he's writing from one who knows the covenant saving faithfulness of the one true God.

Psalm 146:1,

1 Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD, O my soul! 2 I will praise the LORD while I live; I will sing praises to my God while I have my being. 3 Do not trust in princes, In mortal man, in whom there is no salvation. 4 His spirit departs, he returns to the earth; In that very day his thoughts perish. 5 How blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob, Whose hope is in the LORD his God, 6 Who made heaven and earth, The sea and all that is in them; Who keeps faith forever; 7 Who executes justice for the oppressed; Who gives food to the hungry. The LORD sets the prisoners free. 8 The LORD opens the eyes of the blind; The LORD raises up those who are bowed down; The LORD loves the righteous; 9 The LORD protects the strangers; He supports the fatherless and the widow, But He thwarts the way of the wicked. 10 The LORD will reign forever, Your God, O Zion, to all generations. Praise the LORD!

You know, everyone is looking for someone that they can trust, someone that they can rely on and someone they can depend on. I was talking to Claire, she just got home from school and we were talking about people she has met at school and she talks about how, you know, so many of these kids don't have families or parents like she has had and it seems like they're just desperate to find somebody they can look to, somebody they can trust in, somebody or something they can rely upon and no wonder we see so many young people going in the wrong direction because they have been left abandoned in many ways. Maybe not in an absolute sense, but in many ways abandoned by their dads and sometimes dads and moms. So many live lives of pain and many live lives of

disappointment because they trust they wrong ones. The Scripture says, "But he who believes in him will not be disappointed."

The Psalmist, though, understands what it means to trust in the Lord. Now, there is a real intertwining. As a matter of fact, it's impossible to separate worshiping God from trusting God and trusting God from worshiping God and there is a real sense in what you worship you trust and if you put ultimate trust in something, that's really where your worship is. Those always seem to go together.

Now, notice what David says about the worship of those whose trust is the Lord and it's like when you read this Psalm, it's like David is just contemplating the great wondrous mercy, love and covenant faithfulness of God to him. Again, David knew the same grace, the same saving grace that you and I know so he just sort of explodes in verse 1, "Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD, O my soul!" What's interesting here is that David, in effect, is saying God is so wondrous so he talks to himself, "Praise the LORD, O my soul!" As I said earlier tonight, our sinful souls because we're not perfect yet, have to be coached, if you will, to do the right thing toward God. You have to sometimes, if you will, throw yourself into praise. Praising him is the proper thing to do and there is a sense in which you should live your life as a child of God constantly coaxing yourself to praise the Lord. As you drive down the road, as events happen during the day: disappointments, heartaches, joyous things, whatever. Teach yourself like David is talking to himself to say, "Well, praise God. Praise God. I know where this came from and even in this heartache and in this disappointment, praise God. I know he knows what he's doing because I trust that all things do work together for the good to those who love God and those who are called according to his purposes."

Now, if you've walked with the Lord very long, you've already experienced a bunch of that. You've already seen how certain things start a certain way and you think, "What good could be coming down this road?" and all of a sudden at the end of it, you go, "Ah, I can see the love and the wisdom of God. I never would have dreamed that when this whole scenario of events began to unfold." So you have no excuse, old man, older lady, for not praising the Lord. You've seen God's faithfulness. Think about what you have. Think about what he has given you. We have so very much so David says, "Man, I just need to praise the Lord."

An old timer said this. You've heard me say it numerous times but you can't take it literally as a truth but you know the spirit of it and that is when you can't pray your way through, you can praise your way through. Have you ever been there? Of course, praise is prayer, but there are times when you can't just get on your knees and quietly pray. The anxiety is too much. The pressure is too much. The grief is too overwhelming and all you can do is just raise your hands in an act of truth and obedience and say, "Well, I'm going to praise God anyway." You just praise God for it. Some of you will overcome the distresses of your soul if you will throw yourself into praising God, trusting his covenant goodness and faithfulness to you. Can I get an amen there? Trusting. "I know he's good and faithful. I don't care what the circumstances are. I don't care what it feels like. I will choose to praise my God who knows what he's doing."

Wow, that's just a great way to live. You see, it's just right to praise him because he's always worthy of praise. Now, let that just run off your brain now. Grab it and hold it a little bit. He's always worthy. Listen, he's always worthy of praise. My, my, my, what a way to raise kids. What a way to raise grandkids and great grandkids, to let them see you in your life talk to them about, "We're going to praise our Lord when it feels good and when it's exciting and when things are going our way and when they are difficult and they're not. I want my children and my children's children to know we look to God."

Well, David is saying that and then he adds a little phrase there in verse 2, "I will praise the LORD while I live." That's a good time to praise God, while you live. So the next time you get to living, praise God, alright? David says, in other words, "I'm not going to wait until I'm translated to be glorified with him. It's just good to praise the Lord." Now, if you're a born again child of God, if you're a child of covenant grace, you know your heart's been changed. You have been born again and you are beginning and have been on that pilgrimage of treasuring and joying in Jesus Christ and in the unlimited wonders and glories of all God has given you in Christ Jesus, then there is at least the seed in you that always desires to praise the Lord. Yet even though the seed is there and there is a heart for it, yet many don't do it. Now, I'm not suggesting we all have to praise the Lord the same way. Personalities are different and I'm certainly not talking about just when we're in our worship service here together. I'm talking about in the totality of our lives. Some people seem to be saying, in effect, "I know God is real. I know I am the object of his unmerited favor. Though I can't grasp the dimensions of it, I know from the word of God that he chose me in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world and he sent his precious Son who died on the cross and there he redeemed my soul and then in time and space history, he made sure I heard the Gospel and the Spirit of God has regenerated my heart. I know I'm his. I do love him. You know, I think I'll just save my real praise for later. Maybe I'll save that for when I get to heaven." Well, you will praise him in heaven but do you know why you'll praise him in heaven? Because you'll be so close to him in heaven. You'll be really, really, really close to him. I don't mean just geographically necessarily or proximity, I mean in heart and in spiritual intimacy. Here's the point: to be close to him is to praise him. You just cannot be close and really begin to know him and not have something, if you're a converted child of God, and then not have something grow up in you to praise him. You see, the closer you are to him and the more you praise him, the more it humbles you. The more you say, "Oh, my, my, what I am, just a speck of nothing compared to this glorious, glorious God."

That's a good place to be. You see, we literally have to throw ourselves in praise while we live down here. Now, when we get to heaven, it's going to be just like breathing, but you're not in heaven yet. You're not glorified yet and you still are housed in this unredeemed humanity that doesn't naturally praise him. The new you, the new man, the new self as Paul calls him, the new creation, is there and it wants to praise him but the old man is there too. So you throw yourself into praise, but when we are close to him, we praise him. The Bible says even he inhabits the praise of his people. Now, if you praise him with a clean heart, he comes close and when he comes close, you praise him so there

is a reciprocal thing going on here. Praise brings him close. He gets close, I want to praise more.

Think about the cherubim, the seraphim who sing and praise God around the throne. You know, Isaiah in Isaiah 6 gives us that glimpse of the seraphim flying back and forth. They're just active around God. Do you know what they're doing? They're active with, now look, angels are more powerful and more intelligent beings than any of us, far more, and they're in God's presence and they zoom around God with intricately designed systems to be attuned to any desire he might have so they might serve him quickly and fully. And as they are flying around God, just glorying in the greatness of God and, if you will, feeling it a marvelous privilege to be the close attendants of this one true holy God, the Bible says they cry out, "Holy, holy, holy!" Do you think they're praising him and crying holy because they have to? No, they're praising him because they must. They can't help it. They're just close to him.

You know, we had probably the first 10, 15, 20 years of, of course, I was converted at age 19 and went right into the ministry just right after that so they are kind of one thing with me and I remember all this stuff. There were Baptist churches and these specialists and these seminars were teaching all of us on how to get our people to loosen up and praise the Lord. Do you know how you get people loosened up and praising the Lord? You teach them who God is. You teach them the grace of God. You teach them the glories of Jesus Christ. You teach them the undiluted word of God and let this truth be melded into their souls by the application of the Spirit of God and something in you. You may be the quietest and meekest outward person, but I'm telling you, if God, if you know him and you study him and you learn about him, something in you rises up and says, "He must be praised. He must be praised."

His presence, when he is close, evokes praise just like you have sunlight and warmth. Just like you have the moon and nighttime. Just like you have lightning and thunder. Just like a fish goes with water, praise is becoming to those in the presence of God. Can I challenge you on this Sunday night? As you go to bed tonight and you start your day tomorrow, I want you to consciously, now listen to me, be very intentional. Now, you can raise your hand and I do it sometimes in my truck. Sing out loud, I do it sometimes. We sometimes do it in our home. But more than that, from your heart, let it be, let there be a symphony of praise to God. Do you know what? You'll be a nicer person if you do that. You'll be a sweeter person if you do that. Your wife will like you better if you do that. Your husband will think, "My, my, my, she is doing good today." If you'll praise the Lord.

His presence demands praise. Goodness, I don't have time but I'm going to look over there. Revelation 4 real quickly. Revelation 4:8, "And the four living creatures, each one of them having six wings, are full of eyes around and within; and day and night they do not cease to say, 'Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD God, the Almighty, who was and who is and who is to come.' And when the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, to Him who lives forever and ever, the twenty-four elders will fall down before Him who sits on the throne, and will worship Him who lives

forever and ever, and will cast their crowns before the throne, saying, 'Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created.'" So we see a glimpse of heaven where there is just a compulsion naturally flowing out of the beings all around God to praise him. So for the converted, we desire to praise him while we live. As David says, "Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD, O my soul! I will praise the LORD while I live." That's just a natural normal part of the child of grace saved by the power of Jesus Christ.

Well, that's something, a little picture of the worship and the praise that comes from those who know the Lord. Notice there is a warning now here about those trusting in anything other than the Lord which is synonymous with saying trusting in man. If you're not worshiping and trusting God, then you are worshiping or trusting in man. It may be a man and without exception when we don't trust God, we idolize ourselves, and that's the culture that we live in today. The culture that we live in today says, "I am God. So when I have a desire, when I have a lust come across my perverse heart, then I am God and I am to release that and fulfill that and enjoy that." We live in a culture that says, "No external force, power or being is going to put any restraint on me. I'm throwing everything off and I will exalt myself as God." So we're seeing the result: vile, perverse wickedness filling our land. I mean, even the nonbelievers. If they are knowledgeable, if they have studied any of it at all, especially about American history and Western civilization in general, I think all of them might be saying, they wouldn't dare say it out loud and don't ever expect the media to say it, but they might be saying, "Are we sure we want to throw off all the restraints of the Judeo-Christian tradition?" What kind of chaotic morass of immorality and wickedness are we unleashing on our country?

Our founding fathers and I think this is quite accurate, I don't think many of them were converted believers in Jesus Christ the way you and I understand that to be. They were of a Christian consensus and if you'll study and read the people who have done extensive research on our founding fathers, you will hear them say things like, "But we must have the promotion of Christianity so that the people in this new place of freedom and liberty will behave." They knew there had to be the restraints of Christian truth or people would ruin and destroy the liberties we had gained from Great Britain. So at least they had some wisdom that our secularists today know nothing about.

But anyway, trusting in man is what the Psalmist looks to next and look at it there in verse 3, "Do not trust in princes." The word "prince" means "somebody of highness; somebody of nobility or dignity; or maybe they're just real popular"; it could just be a pop music star. "Or in mortal man in whom there is no salvation." Man has no salvation. If you worship man or put trust in a man and he allows you to worship him, remember this about him: he cannot save you. If someone allows you to follow them and there are some and they claim, these secular progressives that somehow they have been ordained with this superior, elite wisdom to know how people ought to live and if we put our trust in them and we exalt, "Oh, you're who we are going to follow. All your insights are so wonderful. We're going to follow your wisdom and your guidance and your viewpoints." Then all they are doing is seducing you for their own glory. If you get down to the base issue going on, now listen to your pastor, here's what's going on: they are immoral people

and the more people they can get in their immoralities, the more comfortable they feel violating their conscience. They couch it in all kinds of philosophy and pseudo-intellectualism but at the end of the day it's all about sin and enjoying sin and almost all men have a little bit of that God-ordained conscience in them and they know they feel guilty but if they can get other people to applaud and go along and congratulate and affirm them, then they feel like, "Well, I'm not so bad after all." So what they're looking for is affirmation to overcome their conscience. At the end of the day, it's always about self and sin. They can couch it, they can use all the sophistication they want to put on it, they can get the most powerful people in the world to applaud what they're up to but I'm telling you, it's about sin and wanting to feel comfortable in their sin and we see this stuff just evolving over and over and over again in our country today. People are trusting in man and not trusting in God.

So we don't trust in man. Verse 4, the Psalmist continues on and gives you another good reason, "His spirit departs, he returns to the earth; In that very day his thoughts perish." All right, you trust in this guru of progressive liberalism and he's going to die one day. When a man tells you to follow his wisdom and his teaching and it is contrary to the Bible, here's what you need to ask him: can you overcome death? Do you have the power? Have you gained the wisdom to know how to fix this death problem? And when they say no, say, "Well, I think you're a little too impotent for me to put my trust in. I think you're a little too weak for me to worship you or have confidence or trust in your guidance." When people trust in man, man's wisdom instead of God, one of the first things you'll see in their lives is insecurities. Now, they may couch it and cover it in a lot of ways but it breeds insecurity because when you trust in anyone other than God, you trust in something that can be taken away from you and that's insecurity and when people are insecure, they do a lot of irrational things and we'll get to that in just a moment.

Also, it leads to impurity because when you trust someone, you're worshiping them, and trusting and worshiping is imitation. That's why the Bible says to be imitators of Christ. Paul said, "Imitate me as I imitate Christ." Why is that? Because you become what you're committed to. If you worship Jesus and learn of Jesus, you become more like Jesus and so you become like those people and those people are always impure. They're always immoral. I don't care what they say. At the end of the day, they reject God because they love themselves and if you love yourself, you exalt your lusts because that's the only life you have. Why do you think our world is the way it is? Our world is the way it is because we have taught a few generations now of kids that there is no God; there is no objective truth outside of yourself; there is no absolute deity you answer to who has a moral standard for conduct. So all there is is us, men, and so all there is to life is the pleasures you can find from your fallen, base heart and so that's what they look to and they always are a morass of immorality and immorality always has an instant pleasure but leads to ruin. It always, always, always does. It looks good for a while and then it leads to ruin.

Third thing, not only insecurity and impurity, it leads to irrationality. That means that there is just an unreasonableness. There is no sound judgment and, again, even if they were honest, unbelievers would say, "That's irrational. What you're doing is so unsound. We can just, it's just common sense to see that." You know, the worshipers who worship

man will follow these guys and, listen, man always fails. Now think about it: man always fails. So they have made this deity out of this philosopher, this teacher, this liberal whatever, some professor at the school, and then he turns out to be the rascal he really is. He is exposed for his failure and his immoralities and then they get into all these excuses as to why, "Well, that's not so bad anyway." It's just irrational and they try to cover it up.

Ahab is a good example of this, when Ahab confronted Elijah in the Bible. Elijah is preaching God's truth in backslidden, carnal Israel and it's really upsetting Ahab because Ahab is a pagan. He's worshiping a false God and he loves his sexual immoralities and other impurities and so Elijah's preaching convicts old king Ahab and when Ahab runs into Elijah, Ahab looks at Elijah the preacher and the prophet and says, "Aha, you Elijah, you're the troubler of Israel." That's irrational. That's just, common sense doesn't figure that out. Then Elijah, like Jesus being a man's man, looked back at the mighty king and said, "No, you and your father's house are the troublers of Israel. You're the one that's bringing us down into ruin and wickedness. Not me, I'm preaching the truth."

When you have the things that we have and have had in our country, the abortion industry, is there anybody who has 1/2 ounce of sanity that thinks it's rational to destroy babies in their mother's womb's? I mean, just stop and think about that for a moment. This whole notion that because a woman can't dare be behind a man, she's got to have all the advantages of the male species so if becoming pregnant might in some way hinder her, then she can kill her unborn child and all the world thinks that's just wonderful. That is the most unsound judgment you can imagine hearing. You see, you always get there when you worship idols and don't worship God.

This exposure of Planned Parenthood where we're seeing they are mutilating little babies and dissecting little babies and selling their parts for profit, monetary profit, who in heaven's name could even dare utter a word to defend such a heinous evil as that? You see, when you start worshiping man instead of God, you get into the most irrational nonsense.

Men marrying men and women marrying women. I want you young people to listen to your pastor this evening: I don't care what they say and what you see, I don't care how many people on TV are stars or anything, that's pure wickedness. It's pure wickedness and I don't care if it's just 27 of us left who believe that, it always will be and it always has been. Now listen, when you go to school and you've got in the community like Claire and all these other kids, you go off to college, you're kind to everybody and you're compassionate. Do you know why? Because you're a sinner too, but that don't mean we condone those things as right and normal and acceptable.

Look, this thing of gay marriage was never, never, it's never been about marriage. Here's what it's about: we want to enjoy all of our perverse lusts and we don't want anybody to judge us for it. That's what it's about. It's not about marriage. Do you know what the last one is? Let's see, there is gay, there is lesbian, there is transgender, there is bisexual, then they've got another one called queer. That's not my word, that's their word, because they're into so many bizarre diverse changing stuff you can't put title on it hardly. That's

their designations. Now they've got another one, it's called fluid sexuality. You've just got to be fluid. In other words, as I live my life, I want the freedom to whatever comes across my wicked heart, I want to be able to enjoy it and live it out and the rest of you all had better celebrate and applaud me for it. This is the kind of domino effect, a bizarre unsoundness, and irrationality that always comes about, now listen, when a people trust man and not God.

Now, we don't have any moral conscience. We don't have, every now and then when he comes on TV, listen to one of Billy Graham's earlier sermons. The early ministry of Billy Graham. Not that the latter was old and you know that I feel and Dr. Graham himself has said that there were some real issues with some of the decision times of his ministry, but Dr. Graham preached sin and sin is wrong and God is holy and you need to repent and believe on Christ. Where is that voice today? It's amazing how God has allowed us because of our own wickedness to not have a moral voice in our country anymore. All this happens when men trust and worship men instead of God because that's what you're doing.

Well, lastly, III. he talks about, first of all, what do we call it, the worship of those trusting in God, then the warning to those who trust in man. Then lastly, the wisdom of those who do trust in God. Look at verse 5. He gives the contrast now. Those who trust in man, they are in bad trouble because man dies and he's gone and now what are you going to do. Verse 5, "How blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob, Whose hope is in the LORD his God." Now, I love that word "help." My, my, my, we all need help. Can you name anyone that doesn't need some help? We all need help. Every year at tax time I need help and there are a lot of things like that but then there is that ultimate need of help because we know we don't measure up to the standards of this infinitely holy and righteous God. We need help.

Now, in what or to whom do you place your trust in for this help? Do you look at man or do you look at Jesus? That's why it's so very important that we guys who are called to preach preach to you the undiluted truth of the word of God because in the preaching of this word is when you see and find Jesus and you can't ever put Jeff Noblit in between that or any other man. I am a sinner saved by grace who wrestles with sin like you do. I am a repentor who glories in my conversion. But I am not your help, Christ is your help. I am not your Bishop, I am not your Cardinal, I am not your Pope, I am not your priest. I don't want to me. But Jesus is all of those things. He is our help.

Now, the Psalmist just giving the contrast talks about him being Creator in verse 6, "Who made heaven and earth, The sea and all that is in them." Look at all that God made. Look at all that God created. You know, the only thing man ever created was a mess. Starting in the garden of Eden when man did things his way, all he's ever made is a mess. Now, it doesn't mean that we go around and we don't have some respect and some esteem for men made in the image of God, certainly we do. Even though they are radically fallen and depraved in sin, there is something of a marred glory in man because man is made in the image of God so we do acknowledge that, but we see nothing in man that causes us to worship or trust in him. Not anywhere close.

But not only is he Creator, but notice another thing here: he's constant. He is consistent. Look at the third thing in verse 6, "Who keeps faith forever." It's a difficult word to translate, it probably should be truth, who keeps truth forever. It just means that he doesn't change. God is who God is and God never changes. That's a great person to trust in, someone who never, never changes. Have you ever heard somebody talk about another person and they are admiring them and saying, "You know, she never changes. She's always the same." Well, that's of good attribute because God is that way. He is truth and he never, never changes. He is the same yesterday, today and forever. The Bible says that he who keeps Israel neither sleeps nor slumbers. He doesn't need to sleep. He's not weak like us. You go to bed tonight because you're not God. You have weakness. You wear out, but God doesn't have weakness and he doesn't get tired. That's who you want to trust in.

He always has all power. He always has all authority. He always has all wisdom. He always has all knowledge and whatever and wherever the need is, you can trust him. He'll supply it. You see, God cannot not be faithful. He cannot not be faithful. Did you hear that? He can't be God and be unfaithful. He has to be faithful and here's the thing, here's where the sovereign grace doctrine is so essential to understanding the Bible: if God chose you before the foundation of the world that you would be the object of his special favor, you would be the object of his saving grace, then God cannot not be faithful to give you that grace and save you and secure you and get you all the way to heaven. That's who you trust in, a God that can do all of that.

Now, measure man to that. A little puny man. My, my, my, what a contrast. God cannot not be faithful but man cannot be faithful. You may be the most devoted, committed, sincere man on earth but you may promise a man tonight after church, "I'll do this and this for you tomorrow," and you may always keep your word but you may get sick and you may die before the morning so you can't be faithful. Not in the ultimate sense. You cannot be faithful. Man cannot be truly faithful. He's too weak, but God cannot not be faithful. He's always who he says he is.

Not only is he the Creator, not only is he consistent, but he also cares. Thanks be to God that he has that heart of, listen, personal, passionate compassion for his children. Don't you love that about him? Now, we think on the infinite holiness of this awesome God that stirs awe and even reverent fear in our hearts, that's all true, but at the same time, there is an immensity to the great, deep compassionate care he has for his own children. Take 1,000 of the best moms on earth, they cannot care for their child the way God cares for his children. He cares.

Verse 7, "Who execute justice for the oppressed; Who gives food to the hungry." The idea here is that often God's children are oppressed in this world. Not in every generation. God has given Christianity some favor in early America. We are very, very, very fast losing that favor. We are becoming the objects of scorn, the objects of ridicule. We're the problem, the narrow minded, the judgmental; all the ways they will spin and twist the doctrines that we preach. But we have had seasons of favor in this country and some

places around the world but over church history and over biblical history in general, much of the time God's people are the oppressed people. What the Psalmist is saying, even in those times, God is faithful and cares. He is good to his children. The Psalmist wrote on another occasion, "I have never seen the righteous forsaken or his seed begging bread." God cares for his own.

Well, real quick, the last part of verse 7, what he can do: he frees. "The LORD sets the prisoners free." Now, you can't understand this if you don't understand what he's talking about. He's talking about a spiritual truth of being free from the burdens of sin. He talks first of all in this freeness, verse 8, "The LORD opens the eyes of the blind." I think that's an interesting thing because if you just conclude the Psalmist is only talking about God healing physical blindness, that's a challenge because culturally and contextually scholars tell us there is not one record of God healing the blind in the Old Testament. Now, you may have to correct me and I read that recently so if at the best it wasn't a common miracle God performed so why would the Psalmist pick that out? He picked that out because he's not primarily talking about physical blindness, he's talking about spiritual blindness. It's God that sets you free by enabling you to see something you could not see on your own. God enables you to see your sin and need and then God enables you to see your salvation in his Son, Jesus Christ. That's what David is talking about. David was saved looking forward to the promise of Christ so he sets us free by enabling us to see what we could not see before: the blindness and our sin and our need of a Savior.

But not only the blindness of our sin, he sets us free from the burden of sin. Verse 8, the next line, "The LORD raises up those who are bowed down." Oh, the burden of sin. The burden of sin. Now, there is only one, now listen to me, there is only one lifter of the sin burden. Every man, every woman, every boy and girl who walks planet earth, unless they're in that small, small minority where they have hardened their heart to where they no longer have a conscience at all, there is a sense of their burden of sin and guilt before God. There's just a sense of it. Now, that's why they are running around and doing all this junk we're seeing in our world today. They're trying to cover it and dilute it and escape it but it's there. When they lay their heads on that pillow at night, there is a sense of, "You're not right with God." The burden of sin is there.

Dr. Roy Beaman was my Greek professor and theology professor in graduate school and Dr. Beaman was a genius. Dr. Beaman was a country boy from a small town in Kentucky but he had an unbelievable brain. He could work in 32 languages and he used to take his down time and he would travel the world and just go to museums and look and study and research and read. I found that I liked doing that, isn't that crazy? A redneck from Lawrenceburg, Tennessee. I love to go to these museums and just look at the artwork. It just blows my mind. But he would go to these places around the world and he used to tell us, "Brethren." You'd have to hear Dr. Beaman talk. He had this little squeaky voice. He was an older man when I was there. He said, "Everywhere I've gone all over the world, when I would witness to people about the saving power of Jesus Christ I'd ask them one question: has your sin burden been lifted?" He said, "They might tell me about the works of Mohammed and the practices of Confucius and all the legalisms of Judaism and all the stuff in their culture," he said, "but I'd stop them and say: yes, but has your sin burden

been lifted?" "Well, I'm working it doing this and I believe if I do this and I believe if I fast to these days and if I do these things and if I go to the temple." He said, "No, I know what you're trying to do to get over that burden but has your sin burden been lifted?" He said, "No one anywhere in the world can firmly with affirmation and a joy in their countenance say yes. Yes, my sin burden has been lifted." The only ones that can do that are those who put their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. They're the only ones and that's what the Psalmist is talking about here. He raises up those who are bowed down in the guilt of sin. He brings them to the glory of salvation. Bowed down in sin and guilt but we get to stand in Jesus Christ in glory.

Well, lastly, I've got another page. I'm sorry, close to lastly: the barrier of sin he frees us from. "The LORD loves the righteous." That's a phenomenal statement if you'll think about it. First of all, there are no righteous. What is he implying? It's the doctrine of imputation. He is saying in grace the Savior has taken your place in judgment and imputed into Christ at the cross was all your sin and guilt and when you believe on Jesus, imputed into you is all of Christ's righteousness. So you stand righteous by the imputation of the righteousness of God's Son, Jesus Christ. Look, are you listening to me? God loves all of those to whom his Son has imputed his own righteousness. There was nothing lovely about us to God, but when God sees his own Son's righteousness in you, God loves you. You see it in movies, you read it in books or maybe you heard somebody say it, they'll meet somebody and they'll say, "I'm good friends with So-and-so," and you'll say, "Well, any friend of his is a friend of mine." That's what God the Father says, "If you bear my Son's righteousness, I adore you."

Did you know God adores you? That's what this verse means. He just adores those who have received, now listen, as a free gift, the righteousness of his Son, Jesus Christ. I want you to go home tonight, are you listening to me? I'm going to call you in the morning and ask you if you did this: you go home, you lay your head on that pillow and I want you to look toward heaven and I want you to say, "God, praise you that you adore me because I have the righteousness of your Son." That's pretty good stuff right there. That's pretty good stuff right there. That's good preaching. "God, you adore me. I know it isn't me, it's Jesus, but you adore me because I have been the sovereignly chosen object of your Son's grace and the imputation of his very righteousness." This may kick in and we might have revival. It's good stuff. It's good stuff. I don't know what's wrong with you guys but it's good stuff.

Boy, I don't have time. He furnishes security. I'm going to not much more than say it. Verse 9, "The LORD protects the strangers; He supports the fatherless and the widow." Again, certainly there is a grace God has toward the hurting and the needy but this is bigger than that. I think the bigger thing was that Israel was considered outcast and orphaned and alone and God had a way of coming in grace to hold them and secure them and bless them. The Lord keeps us and he secures us.

I don't have time for the cross reference. Let's go to the word "supply." He supplies us. "The LORD protects the strangers; He supports the fatherless and the widow." That support is the supply he always sees that we have. Remember when Elijah went to the

widow of Zarephath and he told her, "As long as I'm here until it rains, you just keep getting out that flour bowl and you keep getting out that jar of oil. I know you don't have hardly any right now but you just keep going to it and it's not going to run out." It's a picture of a never ending supply of grace and favor God has toward his covenant children. Did you hear me? It's not based on your works. It's not based on your performance. It's not based on your inherited goodness. You don't have any of that. God in his covenant choice to cast love and favor toward you says, "There is no end to my supply for you." You're going to get to heaven and 999 billion years later in heaven, God's still going to bring out loads of blessing and love and favor and grace and it's just never going to end because he doesn't have an end. You're just now seeing through a glass dimly; you're just now tasting. In that day you'll drink in the full.

Then, of course, tied into security and supply, of course, is the word "safety." Look at verse 9, "But He thwarts the way of the wicked." I think the obvious contrast is the wicked would oppose those of God but the wicked find that God knows how to confuse their ways and what we're going to find is the wicked destroy themselves. They think they've got it made. They think they are liberated when the whole time they're in bondage and their wickedness that they walk in comes back against them in destruction.

So David is just contemplating this wondrous, glorious covenant faithfulness of favor and grace that God has made toward him despite his own sin and weakness and so he gets to verse 10 and he says, "The LORD will reign forever, Your God, O Zion, to all generations. Praise the LORD!" Praise the Lord.

Let's stand in prayer.