

August 2/3, 2014

My God In Whom I Trust

Psalm 91

2014 Summer in Psalms Series

Pastor Bryan Clark

It isn't unusual to hear someone say, "Christianity's not a religion; it's a relationship." Well, I would suggest there are a lot of people that think to themselves, "I don't even know what that means," especially highly religious people. They roll their eyes and they think, "I don't even know what that means," and in some way they are offended by the statement. But there would be others of you here this morning who would say, "I understand that statement deeply. There was a time in my life where I was up to my eyebrows in cold, dead religion, and then I experienced a personal relationship with the God of the universe and it completely changed my life."

So what is the difference between a highly religious person and someone who's experienced a personal relationship with God? Some people might say, "Well maybe it's behavior, like morality." But I don't think that's what it would be at all. Most highly religious people—they're very moral people; they are very ethical people. As a matter of fact they tend to be very wonderful people. But I would also say that is equally true of most of the atheists I've met in life. They do tend to be very ethical, very moral; they often are very wonderful people. I don't think that's the difference. I suppose we could discuss many ways in which they might be different, but I think one of the most profound differences is felt when the bottom drops out of your world. I have seen this over the years—that it's often when tragedy strikes and life punches you in the face—that the difference between religion and a deeply meaningful relationship with God becomes very evident. In those moments, religious people tend to find their religion just isn't working. It seems empty; it seems powerless, and it's often in those moments that people walk away from God because, for them, their religion was not there in their hour of need. Whereas others, in their time of tragedy, run to God. They cling to God, and they find God to be a place of refuge, a place of safety. It's the one place they can go and believe somehow, someway, "I'm going to get through this thing."

That's what we want to talk about today. If you have a Bible, turn with us to Psalm 91. Nobody knows who wrote Psalm 91. There are those who think it might have been Moses, but about the only reason they think that is because Moses wrote Psalm 90, and that's really not real credible evidence. So we're just going to say, "We don't know." It does appear from the psalm that whoever wrote it was in danger, in a time of need, and this psalm flows out of that. Maybe the best way to understand the context of the psalm is to think of it this way: We talk about salvation kind of in generic terms, you might say. But the Bible talks about salvation with three tenses—past tense, present tense, and future tense. *Past tense* is the idea of conversion. "I was saved," and I would suggest that's the one we talk about the most. But it's worth noting that's the one the New Testament talks about the least. That, in essence, is the ticket to heaven.

Then the Bible talks about *future salvation*, which is the hope of the gospel—the acknowledgement that this life is full of pain and suffering and tragedy. This is not the world as God intended it to be, and the hope of the gospel is that one day my soul will get what it longs for, and that is a better place. That is the hope of the gospel, and it's worth noting that is the one the New Testament talks about the most.

But in between that is *present tense*, how I experience that salvation today—salvation from the struggles, the trials, the heartache, the pain of this world. I would suggest to you that many, many Christians have their ticket to heaven (past tense); they will experience the fulfillment of that promise of salvation on the basis of God’s grace (future tense); but they will never really experience what it means to experience God’s salvation in the midst of struggle and the heartaches of this life. Why is that? The psalm tells us why. The key to this psalm is in verses one and two. We’ll spend more time there and then go through the rest of the psalm. It says:

**He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High
Will abide in the shadow of the Almighty.
I will say to the LORD, “My refuge and my fortress,
My God, in whom I trust!”** (*NASB, Psalm 91:1-2)

Verses one and two are the key. I’ve said it multiple times this summer; I’ll say it one more time: “To know God, is to trust God.” You can’t expect that, in your hour of need, you can flip a switch and suddenly you know God, and therefore you trust God. It just doesn’t work that way. No relationship works that way. Why is it that God can be our fortress, our shelter, our refuge in our hour of need? A lot of it has to do with four names that are used for God in those opening two verses: The first one in verse 1 is the name **Most High**, remembering that the names for God are descriptions for God. That’s the Hebrew *Elyon*. It means the possessor, the owner of heaven and earth. It’s a reminder that God owns heaven and earth. He has adequate resources, unlimited resources for whatever you are going through.

The second name for God is in the second part of verse 1: **the shadow of the Almighty**. **Almighty** is the translation of the Hebrew Shaddai. It means God the Provider, that God not only has infinite resources, He has a generous heart. Part of how God defines Himself, His name, is He is the Provider. He delights in sharing those resources with you in your hour of need.

The third name for God, verse 2, is **LORD** (all caps), which always tells us that’s the Hebrew *Yahweh*. Religious people tend to think of God as God who is out there, God who is distant, God who is far away. But the idea of Yahweh is the idea that God is actually very personal. He’s intimate; He makes promises; He keeps promises; He knows His people intimately. As a matter of fact the personal pronoun, “*you*” is singular. It’s saying that in your hour of need, God knows you and He knows exactly what you are going through, and He knows what you need. He has unlimited resources. He has a generous heart, and He knows your story.

The last name for God at the end of verse 2, that’s **God**—Elohim. That’s the Genesis 1: *In the beginning, God*—a God of unlimited power, unimaginable power, a God who created the universe out of His spoken word. How does God become our place of refuge? It’s because God has all the power, all the resources, a generous heart, and He knows exactly what you are going through and what you need. That’s why the text says, “*God then becomes our shelter, our refuge, our fortress, our place we go in our hour of need.*” Everybody, in their hour of need, seeks refuge.

God has made Himself available to those who seek Him as a place of refuge, but we live in a culture where we have pushed God away. We’ve been determined to be our own god and we keep God at arm’s length; therefore we find other places of refuge. People in our culture find refuge in alcohol. They find refuge in drugs. They find refuge in pornography. They find refuge in pleasure. They find refuge in money and success and material things, and I would suggest we, as a culture, find refuge in our busyness. I’ve been convinced for years we are so busy as a culture because we are in so much pain as a culture. And so we just get busier and busier and busier. We can’t stand the

thought of stopping and looking in the mirror and dealing with it. And so we just get busier and busier and busier, and that avoids the issues and, in essence, that becomes our place of refuge. But all of those places of refuge, at the end of the day, destroy you—except God!

If you were here last week, Matt shared his own personal story of his wife dying of cancer. If you weren't here last week, I would highly recommend you get the CD, or you get the transcript. It was a tremendous message! One of the most powerful points of the message was when Matt was sharing when, at that point when he realized that Julie would die of cancer, and the hour was getting close, and he was wrestling with God, that he finally said, "God, I will go through this, if You will go through it with me." That doesn't just happen by flipping a switch. For years, Matt cultivated a deeply, meaningful relationship with God, and in his hour of need, he knew God would hold his hand through the most painful moments of his life. How does that happen?

I can't stress it enough; it's not automatic. That's why many Christians, while they have their ticket, and while they will experience salvation in the future, don't really experience it in the moment is because they aren't ready for *the moment*. The text tells us that. Who experiences this? Verse 1: **He, who dwells in the shelter of the Most High, will abide in the shadow of the Almighty.** Two key words there: *dwell* and *abide* . God becomes that place of refuge to those who dwell. The word **dwell** , there, literally means to pitch a tent. Now probably in our modern language, to pitch a tent means we are going camping, so what an interesting metaphor—God goes camping with us! Well, that's not what it means at all. In the ancient world, to pitch a tent was your home; that's where you lived. It was the idea that he who builds his home in the very presence of God lives with God.

Religious people believe, practically speaking, that God lives in the church. People even refer to it as *the house of God*. And once a week religious people visit God for an hour a week and then they go back home and they go about their business for the rest of the week. But people that pitch their tent in the presence of God live with God 24/7. Their lives are full of God. It affects their decisions, their values, their emotions, their moments. It's people that walk with God on a daily basis. That *is* a choice you make.

Second is the word **abide** . It is a little more difficult word to define. Maybe the best way is to understand how Jesus referred to it in John chapter 15. In John chapter 15, basically what's happening is Jesus has been in the upper room hours before He is to be arrested and then crucified. He's talking with His disciples; it's really the last time He would teach them before His arrest. They leave the upper room and they are walking from the upper room to the Garden of Gethsemane, most likely walking past vineyards, when Jesus identifies those vineyards as a metaphor and says, "*I am the vine; you are the branches. You will not bear fruit unless you abide in the vine.*" It's worth noting that the longest teaching that Jesus had, hours before He was to be arrested, was around this concept of *abiding* .

Think of it this way: Maybe you have like a prize-winning fruit tree in your yard or a tomato plant that produces lots of tomatoes, but you get tired of always going outside into the back yard, picking the fruit and bringing it back into the house. And so you come up with a plan: I'm just going to go out there; I'll cut off that branch, and I'll leave it in the kitchen, and then whenever I want fruit, whenever I want a tomato, it's right there. Well, of course, within a matter of days, the branch would die—no more fruit, because the branch was no longer *abiding* in the tree. It was no longer *abiding* in the vine. That's exactly what Jesus was saying. That was the metaphor—that unless those branches abide in the vine, there's no way that they will bear fruit. The nourishment, the life that comes through the vine goes out then into the branches. So the idea of *abiding* is that we are

grafted into, that we are connected to God in a deep and meaningful way. That's where our life comes from; that's where our energy comes from. That's what it means to abide in God. So you take those two concepts—to **dwell**—to live in the presence of God, to **abide** in God, which is something that is cultivated over years of time.

Think of it this way: Those of you that are married, imagine trying to make a marriage work by living in separate houses and visiting your spouse one hour a week. What would be the level of depth and intimacy and pleasure in that relationship? It is no different with God. To experience God, to dwell with Him, to abide with Him is to cultivate that relationship because you never know what tomorrow holds. If tomorrow is the worst day of your life, to experience God as your place of refuge, you have to know God.

Starting in verse 3 and on, then, the psalmist talks about the benefits—kind of the outflow of that. Over the summer we've actually talked a lot about this idea of experiencing a deep, meaningful relationship with God. To know God is to trust God, and the question always arises, "Well, I don't even know what to do. What do you mean by that?" And I understand that. It's not a simple thing. It's like people saying, "How do we make a marriage work?" There's no way to say, "One, two, three—there, you've got it." There's no formula. There are no check boxes. It's more complicated than that. But one of the things that really helped me is a book called *Sacred Pathways*. There are a couple hundred of them at the Publication Booth. I would strongly recommend the book by Gary Thomas. If they run out there, you can get them at Amazon or anywhere else. But, basically, he talks about the fact that we're all wired up differently. Some people really experience God deeply through creation—others through music, others it's more cognitive, others it's more emotional, but he kind of helps you think through: what is your sacred pathway? What are the ways in which you connect with God deeply? The more you understand that, the more you pursue it, and the more meaningful that becomes. To go from kind of an obligation—a check box—fulfilling the requirements to something that breathes life into your soul is a really important part of the journey. Why does it matter so much? Verse 3

For it is He [God] who delivers you from the snare of the trapper, [This would just be the idea of somebody out to get you. They are setting a snare for you.]

And from the deadly pestilence, [which would be disease. There is a reality that sometimes the deliverance is in the hope to come but, at the end of the day, disease doesn't win for the believer. God wins.] Verse 4:

He will cover you with His pinions,

And under His wings you may seek refuge; [Pinions would be like wings, basically the idea of small birds under the wings of the mother bird finding shade and protection there.]

His faithfulness is a shield and bulwark. [A bulwark is like a bigger shield.] Verse 5:

You will not be afraid of the terror at night, (Vs. 5a)

This whole idea of **at night** is the idea that you just don't know what's out there. The psalm kind of gives the flavor that somebody's after him. There's an enemy after him. He doesn't know what's out there in the darkness of night. But we could just simply say the whole idea of night is all of these things out there that potentially cause fear. I would suggest to you that, at least in my lifetime, I don't remember a time when the world was more unstable or there was more to worry about. Every direction you look, whether it's domestically or around the world, this is a very frightening world, and it is entirely possible to come up with a hundred things to keep us up at night and to worry about. But life is too short to worry your life away. You can't change anything. You can't

fix anything by worrying. So what the psalm is saying is, “I don’t know what’s out there in the darkness, but I choose not to live in fear because I trust God. He’s big enough; He’s powerful enough; He’s generous enough; He cares enough. I will trust Him, no matter what’s out there in the darkness.

**Or the arrow that flies by day;
Of the pestilence that stalks in darkness,
Of the pestilence that stalks in darkness,** (Vs. 5b-6)

Some of you deal with this every day. You battle a disease that’s in your body and you never know how it’s going to flare up or change, or will it go away, or will it not go away? And again it’s one of those things that always lurks in the shadow and can control your life, or you can choose to find refuge in God and trust Him with that, and choose not to live in fear. Verse 7:

**A thousand may fall at your side,
And ten thousand at your right hand;
But it shall not approach you.
You will only look on with your eyes,
And see the recompense of the wicked.** (Vs. 7-8)

Verses 7 and 8 are basically the psalmist’s version of Romans chapter 8. As a matter of fact, 7, 8, 9, and 10 fit into that category. Seven and eight are really talking about judgment and the psalmist is looking as God mediates out judgment to the evil, but with the confidence that you will not experience God’s judgment; you will not experience God’s wrath because you are—what we would say in the New Testament—you are *in Christ*. It’s Romans 8:1: *There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus*. To understand that on my best days, but more importantly on my worst days, that I still can run freely into the presence of God. I am no longer under the wrath of God. I am no longer under the judgment of God. I am no longer under the condemnation of God, and I run to God, and He hugs me, and He holds me, and He breathes life into my soul.

The only way you are ever going to experience God as a place of refuge is if you have a deep, full, rigorous theology of grace, if you understand that the truth has set you free from the condemnation of your sin, and that even on your worst days, I am safe in the presence of God. You will never experience peace; you will never experience safety; you will never experience intimacy with God unless you really understand the grace of God deeply. You cannot be intimate with someone that you fear, that you’re afraid of, that is unpredictable. And so the psalmist is saying that even though I see God’s wrath and judgment mediated out against the wicked, God has promised I am no longer under that condemnation and for that reason He is safe and He is my place of refuge. Verse 9:

**For you have made the LORD, my refuge,
Even the Most High, your dwelling place.
No evil will befall you,
Nor will any plague come near your tent.** (Vs. 9-10)

The word **plague**, again, would carry the idea of judgment—that this judgment is not going to be experienced by the psalmist because of his relationship with God. The first part of verse 10 gets a little bit confusing. If you understand the words **befall you** as *no evil*, basically, *you will experience*. The whole point of the psalm is that you *will* experience hard times; you *will* experience tragedy. Life *will* get very difficult for you. Life *will* get confusing for you. That’s the

whole point of the psalm. You don't need a refuge if life doesn't beat you up. There's nowhere the Bible promises that if you are a good Christian, nothing will happen to you. Actually it promises the opposite. In this life, it will get very hard. That's why you need a present day salvation. That's why you need a place of refuge. The word **befall** is a Hebrew word that means *conquer you*. It will not beat you—it will not conquer you. At the end of the day, it cannot defeat you. Why? Because you are *in Christ*. It's Romans 8 again. "*Nothing can separate us from the love of God.*" We are more than conquerors.

When I understand, because of my relationship with God, that no matter what this world throws at me, no matter what life throws at me, no matter what lies ahead, it cannot take away or defeat that which ultimately matters, that which is mine in Christ. At the end of the day, in Christ, God wins! So the psalmist has this sense of calm in the midst of the storm that, at the end of the day, no evil, no one, no thing can ultimately defeat this or take it away from me. Verse 11:

**For He will give His angels charge concerning you,
To guard you in all your ways.
They will bear you up in their hands,
That you do not strike your foot against a stone.
You will tread upon the lion and cobra,
The young lion and the serpent you will trample down.** (Vs. 11-13)

Now first of all, it has been interesting to me over the years that we as Christians seem so willing to believe in demons, but yet so dismissive of the army of angels. It's not that we deny them; it's just like we seem to think they are a non-factor in anything that matters to us. And yet from cover to cover the Bible continually reminds us that God has an army and the army is deployed on your behalf, and the whole idea on this part of the psalm is that this army's job is to do everything that's necessary to make sure that you finish your God-given assignment. Basically, what this part of the psalm is saying is that every person was born on purpose for a purpose, that you have a God-given mission, and there's nothing in this life that can stop you, that can prohibit you from accomplishing that mission, if you yourself choose to be faithful and accomplish the mission that God has given you.

Now here's where it gets confusing. If you think the purpose of life is health, wealth, and prosperity, there's a hundred ways that dream can be dashed, because it's not God's dream for you in this life. If you think that it's the American dream and you kind of have this plan, and how you are going to execute the plan, and everything is going to work out perfectly—there's a hundred ways that that plan can get blown up. Then you think it's all been unfair and the dream has been turned into a nightmare, and people walk away from God because somehow God hasn't been fair in all that. But the problem is we're claiming things that God never promised. The promise is that God is big enough; He has resources enough; He has compassion enough to give me what I need to complete my assignment.

I have a God-given mission and so do you. And because God is big enough, and because God is personal enough, and because God is adequate in every way, I can accept that whatever comes into my life, comes through God's filter, and it comes into my life for a reason. I may not understand it; it might not make any sense to me. It might be deeply hurtful but, at the end of the day, for reasons I may never understand, it is necessary for me to experience this, to go through this, in order to have what I need to accomplish the mission that God has given me. Those things are not blocking my ability to complete the mission; they are part of the mission. They are part of what is necessary for the mission to be accomplished and, if that matters to you, then you can say that no matter what, no

matter what happens in life, no matter what comes upon me, no matter what I experience, there is no one, there is no thing that can do anything from accomplishing the mission that God has given me. And that's what those verses are saying. The angels are there to do whatever is necessary to remove the barriers and the blocks, and you can trample on this and that, but ultimately God gives you what you need to accomplish your mission.

Starting in verse 14, there is a very unusual twist. Basically starting in verse 14, the speaker is no longer the psalmist; the speaker is God. This rarely happens, but there's kind of this shift right at the end where God basically says, "I'm going to add this little appendix to say the psalmist is right." It's almost as if the psalm is so powerful, so important to experiencing God's salvation in this life, that God shows up and says, "I just want to add: the psalmist is right on this one." Verse 14:

**“Because he has loved Me, therefore I will deliver him;
I will set him *securely* on high, because he has known My name.
He will call upon Me, and I will answer him;
I will be with him in trouble;
I will rescue him and honor him.
With a long life I will satisfy him
And let him see My salvation.”** (Vs. 14-16)

It's pretty straight-forward, but the last verse can be a little bit confusing. The idea of **long life** isn't a Hebrew word that means you're guaranteed to live to be 80 years old. It is a word that means more the idea of a *complete* life, of a *fulfilled* or *satisfied* life. In other words, this is the life that God has ordained for you, whether it's 20 years, or 50 years, or 100 years. This is your life and God has promised that I will get you to the finish line of your life with a full, meaningful, satisfied life. In other words, it is what I was saying before—that nothing can prevent you from fulfilling the mission that God has given you. And then the last phrase of the psalm is the promise that God gets you to the finish line and everything in the future salvation that God has promised.

Religious people don't really know God. They visit God once a week. When tragedy strikes, they find their religion to be lifeless and empty. In those moments they become angry at God; they throw stones at God; they blame God, and many of them, in those moments, walk away from God. But for those who *abide*, for those who *dwell*, for those who have pursued a meaningful, intimate relationship with God, they find in their hour of need, God becomes a place of refuge. He's the place of safety; He's the place I go and I dwell; He's the one I cling to. He's the One who is going to get me through whatever it is I'm going through.

I think it's all too tempting for people who sit in the pew to think that all of us that are in ministry live charmed lives and to think, "You don't know what it's like." We *do* know what it's like. Over the last eighteen months I cannot describe to you the depth of the tragedy and the struggle and the suffering that has defined our ministry staff. In thirty years of ministry I've never seen anything like it. We have been hit very hard and, as a family of staff, we feel it deeply. But if I could collectively pull our staff together and, in essence, be the voice for them, we would say together that we believe the psalm is true. We have spent a lifetime cultivating a deep, meaningful, intimate relationship with God and, in our hour of need, God has been for us a place of refuge, a place of safety, a place of peace, a place where we go and God hugs us and reminds us that we're in this together and, "I'm going to get you through it." I cannot emphasize this enough. You cannot just expect that in your hour of need you can flip a switch and suddenly God is intimate and personal and it all works out. It just doesn't work that way. *You* choose to abide. *You* choose to dwell. *You*

choose to pursue God. *You* choose to cultivate the relationship. You do that today because you never know—tomorrow may be the most difficult day of your life.

Our Father, we celebrate today that You love us, that You possess heaven and earth, that You describe Yourself as the provider because Your very essence is that You are a generous God. God, You created the universe with a spoken word, and You know each one of us deeply. You are eminently qualified to be our shelter in our hour of need. Lord, my prayer would be that every single one of us would pursue with all our hearts what it means to live with You, to dwell with You, to abide with You, that we would cultivate a depth in this relationship that would be there for us when the bottom drops out of our world. Lord, I pray this in Jesus' name.

Video:

(Greg) As I remember growing up, my mom just did everything she could to make sure that we were loved. A lot of times she would take the discipline herself 'cause my dad kind of took it too far. He was abused himself and he kind of passed that on, and so my view of God was such that as long as I towed the mark and did the right things, I wouldn't get zapped. At the end of my lifetime, if I had more good marks than bad, then I would get into heaven.

When I was in Junior High School—I was probably 13 or 14 years old—we started attending Berean and Pastor Curt Lehman gave an altar call and I went down there and I basically asked Jesus to come into my heart. The feeling I had that day was so incredible, and it dawned on me at a certain point in time, that what I felt was forgiveness. Through high school I was really kind of disconnected—a lot of partying, drugs and alcohol, sexual encounters. As far as the church went, I went on Sundays to kind of appease my mom. I felt it would appease God and I'd be safe.

I met a girl and when I met her, I realized I could spend the rest of my life with her. She and I were married in July and within 18 months, 2 years, we had our first child which was Jeff. We stayed very involved in the church and raised our kids up in that.

But I did have a dark side that I dealt with—this sexual addiction. It really dragged me down. I kept it a secret from my wife and my kids, but I came to a point where I crashed and basically I ended up in jail for a very long weekend. That not only happened once; it happened a second time. It was all the bad decisions that I'd made and just a continuous downhill spiral into this double life that I led, and it was at that point then, seeing there was the possibility that I was going to lose my kids and my wife and my friends, I just realized that I couldn't do without God.

I really felt like that, if I was going to be truly a man of God, that it would have to be God that would make those changes within, and so I just opened myself up to that through counseling and mentoring, and just my own study of the Word. I did make this decision to really pursue God but through this pursuit, I guess what I didn't know then—obviously, you can't see the future—but it did kind of prepare me for what was ahead.

My son, he wanted to go into the National Guard. After basic training he was deployed to Iraq. He came home from that; three years later was deployed to Afghanistan for a year. The following July he was deployed to a base in Kansas. While he was there, he and two other

buddies were in an automobile accident. The vehicle rolled and ejected all three of them out and they say that they think Jeff went out first. On the way down, I had this vision of Jeff and thinking we'd get there and he would be sitting up and smiling and cracking jokes. So they took us into the intensive care unit and stopped and immediately began to talk with us, and I could see him down at the end of corridor, and needless to say, my heart just nearly stopped.

They said they needed to keep him in a coma so that they could get his lungs to heal so that he could breathe on his own. The accident was the 14th of July. On the 28th, we got a call and they said that we needed to come right away. They herded us into this room and basically they began to go over: this is what happened; this is what we've done; this is where we're at. He had told me if he was at this state and he would not recover, that I was to take him off life support. So that was the decision that I made.

My daughter asked the question, "Will we always wonder if we should have waited until tomorrow?" And the doctor said, "He doesn't have tomorrow; he has about three hours." After they removed the life support, I really had just one more piece of advice for him and I felt like he could still hear me, so the advice that I gave him was, I said, "Jeff, just run to Jesus... just run to Jesus."

Over the next several weeks and months, I processed this, or tried to, and really the conclusion I came to was that God is God, that we don't really understand, but He sees it all from the beginning to end—back and forth—and that my job probably more was to be faithful to my God and to understand that one day it will all make sense. Those are the things that I clung to, knowing that God was in control and that one day it will all make sense.

Two and half months after Jeff's passing, my mom passed from pancreatic cancer. So the pain and the loss that I was still reeling from, from my son's death, I think really overshadowed that that I felt for my mom, other than my helplessness, that I just couldn't do anything for her. But there again it was that opportunity for me to go back to what I knew to be true, and that was that the God that created all things, that created these lives, was in control of all things and I had to believe that.

As I look back, just through all of the ups and downs of my life, you know there was a lot of things I was happy about, where I could see God really blessed me, and even in the lowest parts, I could still see God's blessing. It was truly the struggles that drove me to Him. They say when you get down so far, that the only direction you can look is up, and I reached that point, and I looked up and there was God waiting for me, receiving me with open arms. And it was truly that relationship that was forged with Him, and that then, turning around all the years later, as I go through the dark and desperate times, those were the things that sustained me. My journey is not complete now, but I do know that I have a God that will see me through that journey all the way to the end, no matter what it is.

Worship Leader Brian:

To know God is to trust God, which requires us to dwell with Him. We abide with God—prepare today for what may come tomorrow. We are going to read through the psalm again and then just give you time to be quiet and reflect on what we have discussed today.

Reader:

**He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High
Will abide in the shadow of the Almighty.
I will say to the LORD, "My refuge and my fortress,
My God, in whom I trust!"
For it is He who delivers you from the snare of the trapper
And from the deadly pestilence.
He will cover you with His pinions,
And under His wings you may seek refuge;
His faithfulness is a shield and bulwark.**

**You will not be afraid of the terror by night,
Or of the arrow that flies by day;
Of the pestilence that stalks in darkness,
Or of the destruction that lays waste at noon.
A thousand may fall at your side
And ten thousand at your right hand,
But it shall not approach you.
You will only look on with your eyes
And see the recompense of the wicked.
For you have made the LORD, my refuge,
Even the Most High, your dwelling place.
No evil will befall you,
Nor will any plague come near your tent.**

**For He will give His angels charge concerning you,
To guard you in all your ways.
They will bear you up in their hands,
That you do not strike your foot against a stone.
You will tread upon the lion and cobra,
The young lion and the serpent you will trample down.**

**"Because he has loved Me, therefore I will deliver him;
I will set him *securely* on high, because he has known My name.
"He will call upon Me, and I will answer him;
I will be with him in trouble;
I will rescue him and honor him.
"With a long life I will satisfy him
And let him see My salvation."**

*Scripture taken from the NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE
Copyright 1960, 1962, 1963, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1987, 1988,
The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission.
Lincoln Berean Church, 6400 S. 70th, Lincoln, NE 68516 (402) 483-6512
Copyright 2014 – Bryan Clark. All rights reserved.