

# The Overwhelmed Heart

by David Rubio

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*When we are overwhelmed, we must pray and trust in God's ability to lead us to the rock of salvation and preservation, Jesus Christ.*

**Duration:** 1:30:39

**Scripture:** Proverbs 19:11, Matthew 6:33, 2 Timothy 3:16

**Topics:** "Prayer In Suffering", "Gods Faithfulness"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher shares the story of a missionary in Brazil who spoke out against the government's policies and was subsequently imprisoned and tortured. Despite the intense suffering, the missionary found solace in reciting the 23rd Psalm, demonstrating the power of prayer in times of distress. The preacher emphasizes that when life becomes overwhelming, we can cry out to God in prayer and trust that he will listen and answer. Additionally, we can find comfort in remembering God's past deliverances in our own lives and in the lives of biblical figures. The sermon encourages listeners to trust in God's protection and love, comparing it to a mother hen sheltering her chicks. Ultimately, the missionary's experience affirmed his belief in God's faithfulness and serves as a reminder that we can find strength and hope in the midst of overwhelming circumstances.

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## Transcript

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Oh, we thank you, dear Jesus, that you are that bread of life. And with that bread, Lord, we will never hunger again. We will not have those pangs in our hearts evermore.

Because you are that bread of life. Oh, we come this morning full, Lord. Full of anticipation as to what you are going to do this morning and what you have already begun, Lord.

We are so thankful that we have the privilege of being here together. Gathered together to lift up the holy name of our Savior. To lift up the infallible Word of God that is everlasting to everlasting.

Oh, Lord, we praise you. And we thank you for this time. Clear our hearts, Lord, from any obstruction, any distraction this morning.

Calm the little children here this morning, Lord, that their mommies can hear. Remove the distractions, Lord, of phone calls and other things, Lord, that have happened already this day. And may we focus on you and on you alone, Lord.

For in the end, that is all that counts, is Jesus. That's all that counts. Help us be faithful.

And we thank you. In Jesus' name. Amen.

You may be seated. This is the day which the Lord hath made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

And I pray that your heart this morning, that you are rejoicing, that you are here. That you can be gathered here with the saints. This is just a small, minuscule fraction of the saints that we'll be with in heaven someday.

And we should be rejoicing. And I know that verse often is used for the return of Christ. But, you know, we don't know when Christ is really going to return, do we? So let's rejoice now.

For this is the day that he hath made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it. There was a verse, as I was pondering today, that came to my heart.

It's a powerful verse, and it's found in the book of Habakkuk. And it says this. The Lord is in his holy temple.

Let all the earth keep silence before him. The Lord is in his holy temple. Let all the earth keep silence before him.

We acknowledge this is not the temple in Jerusalem. But this is a place where we meet. And God is here.

And it is a holy place. Because wherever God is, it is holy. And this is his holy temple here this morning.

He is here. And he says, let all the earth keep silence before him. And why are we usually silent? We're silent because we are there to listen.

And my hope this morning for you and for you is that we will listen this morning as to what God has to say from his holy word. The Lord is in his holy temple. Let all the earth keep silence before him.

Being a missionary is never easy. No matter how strong your faith in God, still there are times when you turn to God and ask, Why am I here, Lord? Am I really making a difference? Aside from facing these occasional doubts and the usual poverty and the lack of education found in many third world countries, many missionaries also have to deal with governments and law enforcement officials who are corrupt and seem determined to make life as difficult and as hard for their country and the towns and the cities in which they serve. Well, one missionary in Brazil a number of years ago had exactly this problem.

In frustration, he watched as government policies supposedly aimed at promoting economic growth did nothing more than rob people of their land, took away their food, brought poverty and starvation and death among many. Unwilling and unable to sit aside and watch all this happen, this missionary prayed and ended up writing to magazines here in the United States concerning the serious situation. And in those articles, he criticized Brazil's government for its policies and for the way it was handling situations there.

Well, he must have known that he was doing a dangerous thing, but his conscience would not allow him to do otherwise. And he did pay the price. You see, one day the police did come and they did take him away and they took him to a prison.

And there for four days he was beaten and he was tortured by his captors. During that time, he said later, his only hope was prayer. And his only prayer he could rise up was the 23rd Psalm.

And he recited it over and over as he was being beaten, as he was being tortured. Then God brought a ray of hope into the midst of that dark situation. One of the torturers came up to him and mockingly, in a mocking voice, said, Do you know that you have some of your friends in the local village that are meeting at a church praying for you? And the torturer went on and mockingly said, You know, they're wasting their time.

They can't do anything. Their prayers are not going to do anything for you here in prison at this moment. But, you know, unbeknownst to that torturer, that was the encouragement that that missionary needed.

You know, to be there, knowing that he had people that he had been ministering to for a number of years that had risked their lives, their lives were now in danger, as it was known that they were meeting in a local village church praying for this missionary. And he said, that gave me such hope. It gave me such hope to know that God is a God who answers prayer.

And he heard my cry and he has sent that ray of hope, that encouragement that I've needed at this point in my life. Well, the missionary said later that during that torture, he also learned something about himself and his own faith in Jesus Christ. And this is what he learned.

He said, all things that I had been saying that I had been preaching about for the past 20 years were true. And now, after experiencing God's mercy and all of the things that I preached about, I know that it's true. I know that it's true.

Intervention by the American embassy later resulted in the missionary's release. And sometimes after his return to the United States, he said that he was almost grateful to his captors. He said before the torture, he had been like many Christians, fairly secure in his faith, but harboring a few doubts about how strong his faith would be when it would be tested.

Tested by torture, tested by isolation, tested by torment and imprisonment, with the possibility even of martyrdom. I know I've visited with a number of you men, and we've sometimes asked that question. If persecution came upon our land, how strong would my faith be? Well, this missionary had the privilege of experiencing that, and he came out on the other end saying, yes, God is faithful, and our faith does stand.

Well, I relate this story to you this morning, not necessarily as a call to the foreign mission field, but as a real life example of what reactions, unexpected occurrences can bring into our lives as Christians. And how these unexpected occurrences or circumstances can at times overwhelm us. Sometimes they overwhelm us over a short period of time of maybe a few seconds, a few minutes, maybe an hour or two.

And sometimes life circumstances can overwhelm us for longer periods of time. For days, for weeks, for months, and even for some, even for years. At any rate, God's Word, thank you Brother Noel, you reminded the children this morning, that's a reminder to us.

But God's Word gives us clear instructions on how we can deal with those times in life. When we are stretched and when we are overtaken and often caught off guard by life circumstances. So this morning, I've entitled today's sermon, The Overwhelmed Heart Passing Through Life's Tunnels.

The Overwhelmed Heart Passing Through Life's Tunnels. The word overwhelm is defined this way, it means to overpower in mind or feeling, to burden excessively. Overwhelm means to overpower in mind or feeling or to burden excessively.

Now, I have learned not to question the Lord. You know, we came off a really charging, exciting message last week with Wes. And it seemed like, wow Lord, why would we want to hear something this morning about an overwhelmed heart and life's tunnels.

But I have to just trust the Lord this morning that there is someone or some group of people in here, a number of people in here that need to hear this message this morning. For those of you who feel maybe that this isn't for you, listen up, because it might be for you tomorrow. It might be for you next week, it might be for you next month.

But let's trust the Lord that this is for all of us. Now, the reason I say this is because I know there are probably some this morning here who know exactly what I'm talking about, who have an overwhelmed heart this morning. Overwhelmed by life.

And life does that to us, does it not? Catches us off guard, something comes around that we hadn't anticipated, and we get caught off guard and we get overwhelmed. In many of these circumstances, we sometimes wonder and think, I have no control over this, Lord. I have no control over this.

Well, if you would this morning, let's turn to a passage of scripture and we'll start here. And it's a psalm that brings much comfort to my heart. Let's turn to Psalm 61.

And I would like to read that this morning to you as we prepare our hearts for this message, the overwhelmed heart. This psalm was written by King David. At this moment in his life, he had been kicked out of Jerusalem by his own son, Absalom.

And David was fleeing for his life from his own son. And this was David's cry unto the Lord. Psalm 61, we'll read all verses.

Hear my cry, O God. Attend unto my prayer. From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee.

When my heart is overwhelmed, lead me to the rock that is higher than I. For thou hast been a shelter for me and a strong tower from the enemy. I will abide in thy tabernacle forever. I will trust in the covert of thy wings.

Selah. For thou, O God, hast heard my vows. Thou hast given me the heritage of those that fear thy name.

Thou wilt prolong the king's life and his years as many generations. He shall abide before God forever. O prepare mercy and truth which may preserve him.

So will I sing praise unto thy name forever that I may daily perform my vows. The words of David. The words of David spoken from an overwhelmed heart.

So what did David do first? He did exactly what Brother Noel told the children to do. The first thing he did is he cried unto the Lord in prayer. He cried out to the Lord in prayer.

In his distress and in his trouble, he called out. You notice he didn't call out to some other God. He called out to the God.

The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He didn't call out, as many do today, to some self-help program. He did not dial some 1-800 number to call up some horoscope witchcraft outlet.

He did not call up his psychologist. He did not go to some drug. He did not turn to alcohol.

He did not turn to some drug that was going to dull his senses and take the circumstances away. He was not going to start spending money and feeding his flesh with food, with material items to cover the pain and the overwhelming feeling in his heart. No.

He went to God. The God Almighty. And may we do likewise here in this room.

When life begins to overwhelm us, let's take David's lesson. And it's a simple one. We know that.

But so often, we fail to do these things. And in the flesh, we run to the idols, to the world around us, rather than the Lord God Almighty, first of all. So, when you feel overwhelmed, run to him first and foremost, and cry out to him in prayer.

Talk to him. He is there, as he was for King David. And also, if you notice here, he said, Hear my cry, O God.

Attend unto my prayer. Attend to here means to pay attention to. You know, David says, Lord, listen to my prayer.

But do more than that. You know, God, you're listening to prayer from all over the world at this very moment. From Christians in many, many places.

O Lord, would you pay attention to my prayer? Would you pay attention to my prayer in a personal way? That's David's plea. And isn't that the way we feel sometimes? We say, Lord, would you please listen to my prayer? Please, Lord, pay attention to my prayer. And David, in faith, says exactly that.

He says, Hear my cry, O God. Attend unto my prayer. And then he goes on in verse 2 to say, From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee.

You see, David had been kicked out of Jerusalem. Jerusalem was David's sanctuary of prayer. Jerusalem, the city of God.

And he was removed from there. He was probably hiding in some cave up in the mountains. Hiding from his son, fearing for his life.

And yet David knew that he could call out to God no matter where he was at. And God would attend, pay attention to his prayer. And the same holds to us today.

And we know, you can pray in your kitchen. You can pray on the job site. You can pray when you're out shopping.

You can pray when you're fixing someone's roof. Or under someone's house, fixing some plumbing. God hears your prayer no matter where you're at.

But you know what? God also hears your prayer when it comes from the most remote, the most obscure, and the most distant part of your heart. Do you understand what I mean here? How many of us here in this room at some time in our life have had something hidden, remotely, distantly, in some obscure part of our heart that we don't want to touch? Because as soon as we touch that thought, as soon as we touch that memory, as soon as we touch whatever is there, it begins to overwhelm us. And we close it back up.

While David here is telling us, we can cry unto the Lord from wherever we are at, not only physically, but we can also cry unto the Lord wherever we are at emotionally. Those little places. Maybe it was that death.

Maybe it was that broken relationship. Maybe it was that really immoral sin that was committed. Maybe it was that argument.

Maybe it was that dishonesty, that lie, that gossip that you did, that you hid and you sewed it up in that heart and you put it in a far corner. And God is saying, you can deal with that. Open up your heart.

And God will attend unto your prayer. When we are overwhelmed, we must pray. And when we call out to Him with a broken and contrite heart, He will hear and pay attention to your plea in your time of need, no matter where you are.

Geographically, emotionally or spiritually. You know, in America today, over the last 50 years or so, we've developed these laws in our land called the equal access laws. Those are laws that were developed over the years and that's why we have handicapped parking at certain places, handicapped bathrooms, handicapped accessible buildings, so that the handicapped can have equal access into those buildings.

We've done the same thing with the civil rights bill. There are certain parts, government buildings and buildings, that have equal access to all, no matter what their race, color or creed. Well, you know that heaven has equal access? You know heaven has equal access? Heaven is equally accessible from all places and from everyone.

Heaven has equal access. And that's what we're encouraged about here in this psalm, is that God is telling us, you can access God. All you have to do is pray with the heart that is seeking Him and wants to find Him.

So when you're overwhelmed and burdened, pray. Now whether you weep openly, as David said he did here, he cried out with tears, physical tears, tears that wet his face. I'm not a crying type of man, so I don't cry that much, with physical tears.

But you know my heart cries a lot, with spiritual tears. So, he will hear them either way. God accepts them either way.

He loves a broken and contrite heart. In James 5.13 the Lord says this, this is the passage that deals with being anointed by oil, the elders coming to your house. The first phrase of that verse in 5.13 says this, Is

any among you afflicted? Are any among you afflicted? Let him pray, is what the verse says.

Let him pray. Which answers the question, why does God allow affliction to come into the life of a Christian? Well, one of the reasons is to get us to pray. To get us to pray.

To get us to pray. So, if you're sitting here this morning afflicted in some way, maybe you had an argument with your spouse this morning. Maybe you had an argument with one of your teenage children, one of your youth.

Maybe you had an argument on your phone with someone yesterday or last night. I don't know what the situation would be. Maybe you had a bad experience at work this week.

And you say, Oh Lord, why me? Well, maybe the why me is because God wants you to pray. God wants you to go to Him in trust and faith and say, Yes, I trust you Lord. Please attend unto my prayer.

Attend unto my prayer. Look in verse 2. What did David ask God for in his prayer? What did he ask? And that's key for us because we get overwhelmed. We have a lot of things bombarding us in our emotional state.

So, it's good to follow David's thoughts here. We cry. Ask God to attend to our prayers.

But listen to what he says in his prayer. He asked God to lead him to the rock. It says here, in the middle of verse 2, When my heart is overwhelmed, lead me to the rock that is higher than I. The rock that is higher than I. A rock, a rock is a place of safety.

It's usually high and lofty and lifted up where the enemies cannot reach it. It's a rock. It's a place of safety.

We're overwhelmed. When we're overwhelmed, that's what we want. Is it not a place of safety? A place of refuge? A place where the enemies cannot touch us.

So, David cries out, Lead me to that rock. You notice here, he couldn't get to the rock by himself. He had to be led.

He had to be led, just like a child has to be led by his parent, taking the hand and carrying them along. We too have to humble ourselves before the Lord when we get in these places in life. And we can't say, I can do it myself.

I don't need any help. The only way we're going to get to the rock, brethren, is by asking God to lead us there. Lead me to the rock that is higher than I. By God's leading.

And who is that rock? That rock is Christ Jesus. That rock is Christ Jesus. He said of Himself, Upon this rock will I build my church.

Well, are you going to let Him build His church? He is that rock. He is Jesus Christ, our Lord, our Savior. It's a beautiful thought.

It's a wonderful thought. But it's a saving thought. That Christ is the rock of our salvation.

And upon Him we are secure. But He's not only the rock of our salvation, but He's also the rock of our preservation. He will preserve us.

He will keep us. He will hold us. Just as you mothers pick up your little children when they fall and get hurt, hold them dear to your heart.

God does the same with us. He wants not only to be our rock of our salvation, but He's also the rock of preservation upon whom we can depend. The rock that is higher than I. Remember, God is not overwhelmed.

God is never overwhelmed. And we've heard that often. He's not only overwhelmed, He's never caught off guard.

He's never caught by surprise. He doesn't say, Uh-oh, I don't know how to handle this one. God doesn't do that.

God is never overwhelmed. He is there for us, and He's there with us. Jesus Christ will lift us above whatever adverse circumstances that confront us.

Lift us above. He will lift us above. And that means that He will have His way with us.

Now, not necessarily maybe the way that we maybe expect, but He will have His best and perfect way with us. I think of the Apostle Paul. He had a thorn in his flesh, did he not? And he prayed unto God to remove that thorn.

And God told him this. God said to Paul, My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness. And Paul's response to God is this.

Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in my infirmities that the power of Christ may rest upon me. You see, God can take those things in our lives and He can make them glorious in our lives if we but trust Him. And if we say, as Paul did, we'd rather glory in my infirmities that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

There's a familiar account of a little girl who had taken a train ride. It's a story maybe that some of you have heard before, but it's a profound and very deep story about a little girl who took her first train ride across the countryside with her parents, with her mommy and her daddy. The train took off down the track and they came to a tunnel.

And the train went into the tunnel and it turned dark. And the little girl who had been sitting by the window scooted over on the bench close to her parents, close to her mommy and daddy, and put her arms around them and just hugged them real tight because she was afraid. It was dark in there.

The trip went on. During the trip, they passed through a number of tunnels. And at first, she'd again scoot over to her parents and grab them again.

And when they got out of the tunnel and she could look out the window and it was daylight and she could see the countryside, she'd scoot over near the window. But then another tunnel and she'd scoot over and grab her parents again. But as the trip went on, she didn't scoot over as often to her parents.

And right as they were approaching the last tunnel, she looked over to her mother and she said, Mommy, I like tunnels. Well, her mother was kind of surprised because she'd known the whole trip the little girl was scooting over and grabbing her or her daddy and fearing. And she said, I don't understand.

I thought that you were afraid of tunnels. And the little girl replied, Oh, Mommy, I like tunnels. I like tunnels because tunnels have light at both ends.

I like tunnels because they have light at both ends. And isn't that true about life, brethren? Isn't that true about life? There are many tunnels we pass through in life. Tunnels of deep hurt.

Tunnels of deep disappointment. Tunnels of sorrow, of confusion, of pain, of grief, of fear, of loneliness. And in the middle of these tunnels, when it is the blackest, there are some things that we need to remember.

And David reminds us of them right here in Psalm 61. Call out to the Lord. Trust in Him.

He will attend unto our prayers. He will hear us no matter where we are at or where we are calling from, whether it's someplace geographically or the inner part of our hearts. He is there and He will lead us to the rock that is higher than I. Our Lord, Jesus, is with us.

He's working with us, brethren. He's not working against us. Even when we are not aware of His presence, He is there.

Even when we are not aware of His presence, He is there. God doesn't hang out a big sign on us and says, God the Almighty is working here. I can look across here and I don't see that sign sticking on any of you.

But if you call out to Him, He is working in you. And He is working in your heart. He is working in your life.

And He might be doing it quietly, unseen by us, unheard by us, unnoticed by us, but He is working. You might not think He is, but He is. And He does care for His little children.

You might ask me, well, does God really hear my prayer? Does God really hear my prayer? Does He care? You know, so often we get deceived that we think that God didn't hear my prayer because I didn't shout it loud enough. I didn't shout it loud enough. God didn't hear my prayer because I didn't pray it in the King James.

You know, I didn't use these and thous in it. God didn't hear my prayer because it wasn't like, you know, long and eloquent. You know, the preachers, they get up and they give these long and eloquent prayers.

I don't have that kind of vocabulary. So, maybe God didn't hear my prayer because I didn't say the right words. Or maybe God doesn't hear prayers in English.

Maybe He hears them better in Hutterish or Spanish or French or Low German or High German. Maybe God... Does God really hear my prayer? Yes, He hears your prayers. Yes, He hears your prayers.

And does He care? You might say, but you know, it's something I dealt with 15 years ago and I never did business with God on it. I mean, does He even care anymore? It happened so long ago. Yes, He still cares.

He still cares today just like He did yesterday and just like He will tomorrow. There's a beautiful quote that I read. And this is what it says regarding the answer to that question.

Does God hear my prayers? Does God care? This is the quote. It says this, The softest whisper of prayer never goes unheard. The breath of prayer is never exhaled in vain.

The softest whisper of prayer. I don't know about you, but I've been caught in situations before in my life where it takes the breath out of me. I hear some news and it just like takes the wind out of me.

And I know there are those here this morning that know what I'm talking about. Well, you know that whisper. When you can hardly talk.

When you feel the wind has been blown out of you through a circumstance. God can still hear that whisper. He hears that whisper and He cares.

It never goes unheard. He listens. You might think, but I've got to shout it for Him to listen.

No, you don't have to shout it to listen. You can whisper if that's all you can do. And if all you can do is just let out a little breath of a prayer, it's not breathed out in vain.

God listens to it. God hears the heart. He doesn't hear the vocabulary necessarily.

He hears the heart. Now, let us not deceive ourselves. We're pretty verbal here in America.

We use a lot of words. A lot of vocabulary. But God listens to the heart.

He listens to the heart, the man. He does care. He listens.

And He acts in His time and in His way. Psalm 27.6 says this, And now shall mine head be lifted above mine enemies round about me. Those are the words of David.

And now shall mine head be lifted above mine enemies round about me. See, King David knew that God was his deliverer. And we must believe that too.

We know that here because I know we hear a lot about that. You read about that in Scripture. But do we know it here? And that's my encouragement to you this morning is to know it here.

To know that He will care for us. We should by prayer and faith put ourselves under God's divine guidance and care that we may have His protection and His deliverance. Now if if your circumstances that are overwhelming you are due to your own sin, your own disobedience, your own rebellion, then you need to do business with God first.

You need to go to the Lord, confess His sin, repent of His sin. And then God can begin to work in your heart. And His answer might be yes.

His answer might be no. His answer might be wait. I'm not ready yet to answer that prayer your way.

But God will answer that prayer and He'll answer it in a way that is best for you and best for you in your circumstance. So David says first pray, go to the rock and then look at verse 3. This is what else we should do when we get overwhelmed by life's circumstances. Verse 3 says, For thou hast been a shelter for me and a strong tower from the enemy.

Thou hast been. The word hast there, that verb, is a past tense verb. And what David is telling us there to do is when we get overwhelmed, we need to remember the past.

And what are we supposed to remember? We are supposed to remember those things and those victories that God did in our life in the past to encourage us in the today. Brother Noel brought up this little story about King David. I'm sure David at this point in time when he said this verse, For thou hast been a shelter for me.

And he started remembering the past when God brought victories in his life. I'm sure he brought up that image in his mind, that memory of standing between these two great armies, the army of the Philistines on this side, the army of Israel on this side with King Saul and David's own brothers standing there, his brethren watching him. And he walks out into this open space and out walks this giant of a man, Goliath.

And David picks up the sling and the stones. And God delivered the victory to him that day and to Israel. What a powerful memory that would be.

Even in the midst of a current situation that seems unbeatable, we can remember back, as David did, to times when we had victory. And if we've walked with the Lord for any length of time at all, we know there have been victories. And that's what we need to do.

For Thou has been a shelter for me. A shelter. A shelter.

A shelter is a place high and lifted up like the rock. A place of safety. A place where you are sheltered away from danger.

And the high tower here is a mighty stone fortress that cannot be penetrated. It's high. And it's way out of reach of the enemy.

And it's strong. And it has thick walls. That is the fortress that God is for us.

He can protect us. And He can be our high tower. You see, refuge and high tower, that mighty fortress that God is for us, Christians, is more than adequate to deliver us from what life dishes out to us at any time.

It's more than adequate. So we are told to remember the past times and past victories. And He will be our refuge and our high tower.

You know, there's another interesting thing about overwhelming circumstances. Sometimes, those circumstances of our own doing, we do them ourselves. They are of our own doing.

Something that we've done. But you know, more often than not, sometimes we are overwhelmed by circumstances that are not of our doing. Something happens around us that somebody else did.

And the outcome overwhelms us. You know, the drunk driver that causes an accident that kills somebody dear to you or that disables someone dear to you. You know, that bit of gossip that went out about you.

That has damaged you. You didn't gossip, but the result of that damaged you. That broken relationship where someone was unfaithful or someone lied or someone betrayed you.

That was not your fault. It was someone else's action or sin. But you get caught in it and you get overwhelmed.

Well, let's look at that situation now. Let's turn in the book of Jeremiah, if we would. Because, you see, Jeremiah was in a similar situation.

He was a prophet at the time to Israel. And turn with me, if you would, to Jeremiah 2, verse 13. Because, you see, Jeremiah was in that kind of situation that I just described.

See, Israel had suffered a severe drought and had experienced various invasions by surrounding enemies. Why? Because of Israel's disobedience and departure from God. So it was a politically and spiritually very, very difficult time in the life of Israel.

And in Jeremiah 2, verse 13, the prophet describes Israel's condition. Let me read that verse to you. This is God speaking now to the prophet regarding Israel.

For My people have committed two evils. They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water. So here we have the sin of Israel at that time.

First, they had forsaken. They had rejected. They had ignored the Lord.

The fountain of living waters. Basically, they had rejected the Lord Jesus Christ. Is He not He out of whom flow rivers of living waters? It's Jesus.

And see, Israel rejected God. They rejected Him and ignored Him. The fountain of living waters.

Maybe this describes your life, where you were at at this point in life. Maybe you started out and God was working in your life. You committed your life to the Lord.

And now you've decided to go your own way. And you've chosen to reject or ignore His leading to do the things your way and not His way. And now you are overwhelmed by life's circumstances.

The second sin of Israel here was stated that they hewed them out cisterns. Hewed means they handmade them. They made themselves cisterns.

Cisterns were big pots. And they lived in a desert region and there was not a lot of water there. So whenever it rained or whenever the rivers were full, they would fill these pots up with water.

And they would live off that water. But you know what was interesting? It's described here in Jeremiah that those pots were broken. They could not hold water.

And these cisterns were symbolic of the idolatry. They were symbolic of the idolatry of the idols that Israel had made for itself. It had rejected the Almighty God and replaced them with these handmade idols.

Cisterns as an adjective here. But they were idols. And they were broken.

They were fashioned with the hands of man. They held no life. All they held was death.

Nothing was there. The idols were broken cisterns that could hold no living water. And he used this description.

Jeremiah used this description as an object lesson relating to the spiritual condition of the people's hearts. And I guess I have to ask, what are the broken cisterns in your life? Have you fashioned things out of your own hands? Have you fashioned a life, a reputation that's nothing more than a product of your own hands rather than out of the hand of the Lord Jesus Christ? If you have, then it's not alive. It's a dead work.

It's dead. It's a broken cistern. And it does not contain living waters of life.

Beware of these broken cisterns because they will bring events into your life that will overwhelm your heart. Instead, the Lord wants us to remember that cistern that has the fountain of living waters in it. And that's Jesus Almighty.

Turn to Him. Make Him the center of your life, not your handmade, broken cisterns. Don't do that.

Well, Jeremiah described the situation here. The state of Israel. But you know what? Jeremiah was a godly man.

But guess what? He was suffering the consequences as well. When the enemies would invade Israel, he would suffer just as the other citizens of Israel suffered. When they ran short of food because the enemy had destroyed their crops, he also was hungry.

He suffered also. When they ran short of water and there was thirst in the land, he also was thirsty. He suffered also.

But it was none of his doing. He looked around him and he saw that Israel had forsaken the Lord. He had departed from His Word.

And that Israel had failed to listen to the prophets who were warning her. So not only was he overwhelmed physically from all this deprivation of food and water and the death and the suffering around him because of Israel's disobedience, but you know, he was also suffering internally. As I read this part, I thought of our elders here in the church.

Our three elders. Dear men. And you know what I'm talking about.

They stand up here week after week and they pray and they preach from the Word of God. And they plead with you regarding the Word of God, regarding sin, regarding doctrine. They plead with you.

And yet they look around and some of them visit your homes and talk to you about sin in your homes, disobedience in your homes, rebellion in your homes with some of you. And nothing happens. People ignore it like Israel ignored it.

And people depart from the Word. And imagine how our elders feel sometimes when they walk away from situations like that. And some of you men know that and some of you women know that too because some of you have helped to try to disciple women.

You've tried to point them how to love their husbands, how to love and raise their children. And you men, you've tried to disciple young believers and say, no, don't go that way. This is what God's Word says.

And over the years, you see them drift away and they choose their own way and that brings distress in your heart and sometimes you get overwhelmed as I'm sure elders do sometimes and they think, I've spent hours and days there. Is it worth it? Was it worth it? And I believe that's the way Jeremiah's heart was that day. He saw Israel falling off, falling away from the Lord and he cried out to the Lord.

He wanted to know what to do. And sometimes that happens to us, does it not? Circumstances beyond our control come in there and we try and we try and we try and nothing happens and people won't listen or situations keep rolling over us. Moments and periods where you feel defeated, depressed, and overrun physically, emotionally and spiritually.

But let's see what Jeremiah did. You see, Jeremiah found a key and turn a few pages over to Jeremiah chapter 15 and we'll see what Jeremiah did in a situation that was not of his doing. He wanted to keep pressing on with the Lord but everything around him was falling apart and I'm sure in his own heart he was discouraged and overrun as well.

Look at Jeremiah chapter 15 verse 16 and let's see what Jeremiah's personal reaction was in this situation. He said, Thy words were found and I did eat them and Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart for I am called by Thy name O Lord God of hosts. See, this is what Jeremiah found out and this is one of the keys that you can find out this morning.

First of all, he remembered God's call in his life. It says at the end of that verse, it says, For I am called by Thy name O Lord God of hosts. Well, what's your name? Christian.

Christian? Christian means what? Little Christ. See, we are called by His name even today in New Testament times. We have His name in our life.

And we must remember that calling, that that calling is that we can live by the Gospel, that the blood of Christ was shed for us, that we have hope in Him. So, Jeremiah first remembered his calling and our calling is in Christ, Jesus. And then he went on to say that as soon as God's word came to him, he eagerly ate it.

When the word of God came to him, he ate it. It says here, Thy words were found, that's the Scriptures, in his case, the Old Testament Scriptures as he had them. For us, it's the Old and New Testament here.

Thy words were found and I did eat them. He ate them. They supplied the nutrition, the spiritual nutrition that he needed in his life to have the energy and the strength and the courage to overcome all the sin that was around him that was bringing him down.

And it quenched his dry and parched and thirsty soul. So that's what he did. He said, Thy words were found and I did eat them and Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart.

See, that was the product of being obedient to the Lord there. It did not take away Israel's circumstance. It did not take away the enemies.

It did not take away the suffering that was going on around him. But in the midst of all those trials, he trusted the Lord, fed upon the word of God, and the result was that it brought joy and rejoicing into his heart. And it can do the same to you today.

Seek the Lord. Read His word. Trust His word.

Believe His word. Live in obedience to His word. And when you do, joy and rejoicing will be in your heart.

That's a promise from God. God's word does not lie, brethren. That's a promise from the Lord.

Go to the word. Go to the word. You see, it is God's desires that troubles in your life will drive you to His word.

I mean, haven't all of us experienced that? You know, our devotional life gets a little bit loose. We miss a morning here or an evening here whenever you do your devotion times. We miss a little bit here.

We miss a little bit there. The time gets shorter. You know what I mean? And then adversity comes into your life.

And what happens to your devotional life for most of us? We run to the word. Most of us. And all of a sudden, our devotional lives get sweeter because we're looking.

We're looking. We're looking. And they get longer and they get sweeter.

And God sometimes does that because troubles ought to drive us to the word of God, to the book, to the word, to the Bible. And it is that Bible, it says in 2 Timothy 3.16, that is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. That's the Bible that we run to.

So, in light of Psalm 61, let's go on. Let's go back to Psalm 61 there. We saw what Jeremiah's plight was and his circumstance and how he handled that.

Let's go back to Psalm 61 and continue on with David. For he prayed, he went to the rock, and he remembered past victories and the promise of the Bible in the Old Testament. Finally, there's a third thing that we can do to gain victory when life seems to be more than we can bear.

Look at verse 4. I will abide, David says, I will abide in thy tabernacle forever. I will trust in the covert of thy wings. Selah.

Now, Selah means stop, listen, pay attention, meditate on this. It's what Selah means. And it's interesting that it's right at the end of that verse or that section of verses, but it's interesting that it's at the end of that verse.

So God wants us to think about that verse. I will abide, David says, in thy tabernacle forever. I will trust in the covert of thy wings, the covering of his wings.

See, we should trust and abide in the Lord. If you notice here, the two I wills, look at them. I will abide, David said.

I will trust, he says. Now, what does that tell us? That tells us that David had the purpose in his heart. He had to say, I will, by an act of my own will, I will abide in the Lord.

It's something that we have to focus on. We have to pay attention to do it. Sometimes it will come, if I can use the term, naturally.

But more often than not, we have to purpose in our heart and say, I will abide with you, Lord. I will abide with you, Lord. I will abide with you.

No matter what it takes, Lord. I will trust you, Lord. I will trust you, Lord.

I'll trust my circumstance. I'll trust my marriage. I'll trust my child.

I'll trust my job. I'll trust my church. I'll trust that hurt.

I'll trust that courtship. I'll trust that marriage. And the list could go on and on.

But I will trust you, Lord. And we will trust the Lord for those things. We need to purpose in our heart.

That's what we will do. That we will trust Him. And the abiding life of Christ is the answer to the overwhelmed burdens of heart.

And abiding means walking in intimate relationship with God. Close and dear to Him and at His side. Close and dear to God.

Abiding with Him. This is God's appointed place of peace and power and protection for the believer when we abide and trust in Him in all circumstances. Well, often, the presence of God is more of a conviction than it is a feeling.

I guess that's what I'm trying to say here. The presence of God is more of a conviction that we say, I will believe that God is with me in this circumstance. Don't let your feelings deceive you by saying, I don't think God's here with me.

I know God's not here with me. And we start questioning ourselves and doubting ourselves. But David says, I will.

I will trust. I will abide. You see, we must believe.

And don't let your feelings deceive you. His presence, you see, is not dependent upon our feelings. His presence is not dependent upon our feelings.

Sometimes the hurt, the fear, the pain, and all those things are so great in the darkness of that tunnel. You know, that little tunnel we talked about a while ago. It seems so dark sometimes that we are not sure of God's presence there in that darkest moment with us.

But King David and many other people in the Bible felt that way. Even our Lord and Savior on the cross. Did He not say, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? But you know, God was with us in the darkest part of the tunnels, no matter where we were at.

But by the act of their obedient will, the biblical people, the martyrs of the past, they chose to believe in God, that He is the rewarder of all them that diligently seek Him and those that keep His commandments. That is the beauty here of those two I wills. We must purpose in our heart, brethren, to trust the Lord and abide with Him.

You see, as a little girl in our story said, tunnels have light at both ends. In faith, in prayer, and in His Word, we need to keep traveling through that tunnel. Jesus will help you get through.

Trust Him. Abide with Him. But don't stop.

Do not stop in the middle of that dark tunnel and give up in despair and say, There is no hope for me. You don't know my life, Brother David. You don't know what's in my heart.

You don't know what I've done. You don't know where I'm heading. You don't know what disappointments I've faced or what disappointments I've caused or what damage I've done in other people's lives.

You don't know. Well, God knows. And God says, Don't stop in that tunnel.

Trust Him. There is light at the other end. He is there.

And Jesus Christ, He is the light of the world for you. He is the light of the world. Another thing about God that we need to remember when in one of life's tunnels is this.

It's even when we feel that we did not pray eloquently enough or often enough or detailed enough, God continues to help us. God hears our heart. He will be there.

And you know, there are other times. You know, we look around and we think everybody's a spiritual giant and we are not. Well, they're not spiritual giants either.

Sometimes, the hurt, the darkness in life is so deep that we cannot utter well-worded prayers as we normally would. Perhaps, this might be hard for some of you to believe, perhaps maybe we even fail to think that God can even help us. Oh, Lord, this is just too big.

You can't help me on this, Lord. This is way too big. Far bigger than God.

And we fail to think that God can help. But let me ask you this. Does a loving parent always wait to be asked by his child before the parent begins to help the child? Let me ask you that question again.

Does a loving parent always wait to be asked by his child before he begins to help or she begins to help? Of course not. No. It's like you.

Mothers and fathers. Those of you who have little ones. You're teaching them how to tie their shoes.

They've got these chubby little fingers. They don't work real well. They're not as well acting as your fingers are.

You teach them how to tie their shoes one time and you leave them there. You say, okay, tie your shoes. We've got to go to church.

And they're there trying to tie their shoes. You come up and say, are your shoes tied yet? Trying to tie their shoes. You come back later.

Your shoes aren't tied yet? Well, you know, if you don't tie those shoes, we're going to go to church and leave you here. Here's this little child working hard to tie their shoes. They come back.

Your shoes aren't tied yet? We're leaving you. What are you doing? You jump in your car, in your van, you go to church and leave your little child there in their bedroom trying to tie their shoes. Is that your view, God? Is that your view, God? No.

A loving parent will come over and they will say, honey, let me help you. I've shown you once, but here, watch again. Tie the shoe.

The next time you go in, another day, and the child's trying to tie their shoe again. The child's so concentrated, they made a knot. You know? You know how you make knots when you tie shoes? And the child's there trying to undo the knot.

You come over and whack them on the head and say, oh, you tied a knot. What's wrong with you? No. You go over.

The child hasn't asked. You go over and you say, oh, honey, let me help you untie the knot and I'll show you how to tie the shoe again. And see, that's what God does with us.

See, sometimes, we're so concentrated on undoing the knot that we forget to ask God for help. We're so focused. But God, like a loving parent, He'll come along even though He didn't ask.

Right? Maybe that ruffles your theology a little bit about prayer. But I believe there is that part of prayer that we need to attend to. You see, God wants to help us learn how to tie our shoe of life.

We get it all tangled up sometimes. And yes, sometimes our children would say, Mommy or Daddy, could you help me tie my shoes? I made a knot. And you ask, and yes, you'll come right over and help them.

But other times, they're so focused on their knot. It's in such a tangled mess. Kind of like our lives get.

And we forget to ask because we're so focused on that. But God, as a loving Father, comes along and says, Let me help you begin to untangle the knots in your life. So you might think that I'm not asking right.

I forgot to ask. I didn't ask. I should have asked.

It's been a year ago. I should have asked. But I didn't ask.

I can't go back now because you know, prayer says you've got to ask when it happens. No, if you forgot to ask. Ask Him now.

And you know, also have this faith and this trust in your heart that He was already acting already. He was already helping you. He was already helping you.

He's not an unloving Father. He's a loving Father. He gave His only begotten Son for you.

And He forsook Him on the cross for your sins so that His Son could shed His blood and shed His blood for your sins and my sins. He's not going to hold you to the little detail that you didn't ask immediately. That's not the God that we serve, brethren.

That's not the God that we're served. So if you're here overwhelmed by situations, you think, Oh, I did that. Oh, it's so bad.

I can't go to God now. I forgot to ask Him immediately. He's not going to listen the second time around.

He'll listen as many times as it takes to get your heart where it needs to be. He begins to work. You know, I've counseled many individuals over the past who think that because their sin and their opinion is so great and they fail God that He has abandoned them.

You know, their shame is too big. Their sin too big. Their guilt too big.

But be of good courage, brethren. If we have given our life to Christ and have in the Holy Spirit's power been true and been faithful and been obedient and at His side, it is not His nature to run out on us and abandon us simply because we are hurt and our depression and pain are temporarily delayed to ask for His help. Don't let the enemy deceive you.

You know, our Lord knows us as a parent knows his children. He knows our need. He knows our innermost need.

He knows our personality. He knows how we are physically, whether we're a high energy person or a low energy person, whether we're a big thinker or whether we're a little more emotional. He knows every detail

about us.

And He custom fits, custom fits each way that He deals with us in that perfect way that is just right for you and for me. And He helps us even when we are stunned, when we are paralyzed by life circumstances and fail to immediately ask for help. Do you know what I mean? Your child falls and gets cut and you whip them up real quick and you take them through the emergency room and the emergency doctor is working on them and all of a sudden, you say, oh, I forgot to pray.

Oh, what a bad mother I am. I forgot to pray. You know, so and so, they told me when that happened to their child, they prayed right away.

They're more spiritual than I am. And guess what Satan's doing? He's saying, you're right. They're more spiritual than I am.

You are a loser of a Christian. That's not our God. If you forgot to pray immediately, but you remembered to pray later, pray.

Sometimes life is that way. We get paralyzed by the moment. And God knows that.

God knows that. So let's not condemn ourselves and overwhelm ourselves even more through condemnation that way, brethren. And I really want to encourage our sisters in that because I know, sisters, I know you are more susceptible to that than maybe some of the brothers are.

But don't condemn yourself. Pray. He's faithful.

He's a loving Father. He'll help you untangle those knots in your shoelaces of life. He'll take care of you.

It is a dark tunnel when life deals a hard blow, but God continues to help His little children. There is light at both ends of that tunnel. Don't stop.

Keep moving. Keep moving. And He will see us through.

One other thought about God will help in life's tunnels. Even when we doubt if God can help us, I mentioned before, He is still already working in our life. Moving people into position.

Moving Bible verses into position. Life's circumstance into position. You know, the phone call you get that just encourages you just that moment.

The children's lesson that you're listening to as adults. You say, Boy, that children's lesson that really spoke to my heart. That's where I am today.

Or the sermon or the opening. Or maybe at someone's home afterwards or in a fellowship meal, something is spoken and it just touches you. See, God is already moving.

And maybe you haven't even asked Him yet. But maybe He's moving and positioning things that you'll get to that point where you will ask Him. You'll say, God, I need help.

Oh God, I need help. I'm lonely, Lord. I'm dying inside, Lord.

I've got this plastic smile in my face, Lord, but it's not what's going on in my heart. I have hate, Lord, in my heart. I have rage in my heart, Lord, and it's wrong.

I have murderous thoughts in my heart about others, Lord. I mean, go to Him in prayer. He's already starting to work.

Remember, God is not limited by our finite minds. He's not limited by what we can think. He's all-knowing.

He's not limited like we are. Trust Him. Many years ago, there was an old Scottish preacher who spoke these words in a sermon shortly after his wife's death.

And he said this, I cannot comprehend how people in trouble and loss and bereavement can fling away, irritated from the Christian faith. Fling away to what? Have we not lost enough without losing that too? You people in the sunshine of life may believe the faith, but we in the shadows of life must believe it. This wise Scottish preacher had a handle on the overwhelmed heart.

He said here, he can't comprehend how people in trouble and distress and bereavement, that's in sorrow, can fling away, can throw away, irritated, angry at God, because God didn't work it out for them. How could someone do that? He said, what are you going to turn away to? What are you going to turn away to after you fling away the faith? What are you going to turn to? Haven't we lost enough without losing and throwing away our faith too? See, we people, right now, there are a number of us in here that probably feel life's going pretty good. The sun shines.

The sun is shining. It's green. It's bright in our lives.

We may believe the faith. We can open our Bibles. We can have discussions.

We can talk about the faith. But just like that missionary in Brazil that I opened up today's message with, it did not become real to him until he had everything lost and his life was at stake and he had to distrust the Lord Jesus with it. That's when we're in the shadows of life.

And when we're in the shadows of life, we must believe that He is and that He says what He is and that He will do what He says He will do. When passing through a tunnel of life, remember that there is light at both ends of that tunnel. Well, in finishing up here, Psalm 91.1 says, He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

That's a powerfully comforting verse to me. It's one that has helped me through many a trial and many a time of shadow. Psalm 56, verse 3 and 4. Another beautiful verse.

It says this. The psalmist is speaking again. What time I am afraid, I will trust in Thee, Lord.

In God I will praise His Word. In God I have put my trust. I will not fear what flesh can do unto me.

See, even in times of fear, David had victory. The psalmist had victory because he resolved and purposed in his mind and heart to trust the Lord. You notice in these two verses, you will see the words, I will, three times.

Again, it takes a purposed heart, a purposed heart to see. Verse 3, what time I am afraid, I will trust. Verse 4, in God I will praise.

In God I will put my trust. I will not fear. We have the three I wills here again.

I will trust. I will praise. I will not fear.

I will not fear. God wants us to purpose in our heart to do those things. And upon what did David base his resolve and purpose? The answer again is in verse 4 of Psalm 61.

Psalm 61, it says, I will trust in thy tabernacle forever. I will trust in the covert of thy wings. His wing is his word.

God's word in our lives. He would trust in God's word. David knew from experience and trust and faith in the word that God always performs what he promises.

That God performs what he promises. He will not fail us, brethren. With this pearl of truth embedded in his heart, David would not fear what the flesh could do to him.

Because he had the assurance that God would keep his promises. Especially the promise of deliverance. And that promise is yours today as well it was David's thousands of years ago.

He will deliver us. And we can trust in him. Well, solidly I know that this is what God wants for us to hear with our hearts today.

That when life, like sea waves billows low over us and pushes us around and we feel like we're suffocating and drowning in this life, we can cry out to him in prayer. He will listen. He will pay attention.

And he will answer the prayer of a broken and contrite heart. Secondly, we can remember his past deliverances in our personal life and the lives of those in the Bible. From these we know that whom he loves, he will rescue and deliver in his way and in his timing.

And three, we can abide and trust in him just as a mother hen covering her baby chicks with her wings to shelter and protect her loved ones, our heavenly Father does likewise with his children. The missionary in Brazil. He was overwhelmed.

Yet, it was all truth to him that after he had suffered in that prison, he could say that he really believed what he had been speaking for all those years. The God that he trusted him had proven himself faithful. Well, this pattern in times of distress and hardship seems to hold true as I read about those in the Bible who sought to follow God no matter what the cost.

The prophet Jeremiah in the midst of Israel falling apart around him, King David as he was fleeing for his life, Moses, the disciples, the apostle Paul, and the martyrs of the past, and even those believers today, in our land today and throughout the world, who suffer adversity because of their faith, adversity that overwhelms the heart. If we respond biblically this morning, the result will be the same as that that occurred in the lives of these individuals and the countless many more of the faithful over the ages who have suffered physical, spiritual, and emotional trials that overwhelm the heart, passing through life's tunnels. And the result? What's going to be the result of that? Well, there's a glimpse of it over in John chapter 9. And it's a verse that we would tend to skip over because it's in the midst of one of the miracles that our Lord Jesus performed.

It's in John chapter 9. And this is the result if we allow the Lord to take us through those tunnels to that light on the other side. And it was the miracle where Jesus healed the blind man, the man that had been blind since birth. And this miracle is always a fascinating one to me.

The Lord gave me the privilege for a number of years to teach anatomy and human anatomy and physiology. And we're always serious about how the body functions and how all the parts are there. And this man had been blind since birth, from his birth, which means that he wasn't born with all those optical nerve connections, probably to his brain.

It wasn't like he had gotten blinded later on in life or even in his infancy. He was blind from birth. The moment he was born, he was blind.

There was major neurological damage there. But yet, Jesus healed him. But the part that fits, I think, the sermon today is that found at the end of verse 3. Because people, the disciples ask, you know, why is this man blind? Was it the sin of his parents and all the other things? And this is what Jesus said.

Jesus answered his disciples, neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents. But this is the key for us, if we let God take us through the tunnel. But that the works of God should be made manifest in him.

That the works of God should be made manifest in him. See, if we let God take us through that tunnel, it's not for our glory, it's for God's glory. It's for His glory.

So that we become the brightly displayed work of God. So that all glory is given to Him. To our Savior, Jesus Christ.

So let's trust the Lord that He will lead us. That He will lead us through those valleys. That He will lead us through those tunnels.

Remember, there is light at both ends. Amen. And I pray that this morning that you will ponder these things.

That you will take them home. And if you're in a tunnel right now, brethren, that you will trust the Lord. And He will see you through.

Don't stop. Keep moving with the Lord. And He will deliver you.

For His glory and for His majesty. Amen. Thank you, Brother David.

Very timely and valuable message which I believe all of us can adapt and find real meaning in our own lives. Two Scriptures came to me concerning prayer as you were speaking. The one of them is that He knows what we have need of before we ask.

And the other one speaks of groanings that cannot be uttered. Both of those are an amazing avenue of prayer that we recognize that we can't even put into words. We have feelings.

We have emotions. We don't even know what we're needing the worst. But nevertheless, God understands those groanings.

It's right for us just to get on our knees before Him and groan. And He also knows before we ask, even though I do believe the Lord wants us to ask. But He already understands what we need of just like the mother or father with the child tying his shoe.

He knows what we need before we ever come to Him. Amen. Are you overwhelmed today? Open up your heart and just tell us.

Share it with brotherhood. If you have a word to add or give, we'll give you a microphone and let you share it. Raise your hand if there's someone that would like to say a few words.

Dave? Yeah, I just want to thank God for the privilege and the blessing of being here today. I think we heard about two very necessary components that need to be balanced for our Christian lives. And I want to confess that I haven't arrived, but I do want to live more accordingly.

I feel like the fear of God and trusting God are two, they sound almost as opposites, but they're really not. They are both very necessary components of serving the Lord. If we don't have a reverential fear, I don't know if we are able to trust like we should.

And if we don't have a trust, we won't have the reverence that we need. So I just want to thank both of the preachers this morning and thank God for the blessing of being here. Amen.

All right, Tommy? I want to say amen to the message this morning and I guess I have a couple of thoughts I'd like to try to bring together. Over the past several months, I have been going through a rather intense personal struggle in my life just trying to deal with some things from the past. And the word overwhelmed is exactly what my experience has been.

And it's caused me a great deal of anger and darkness in my life as I've tried to walk through it. And I guess the first thing I want to share is from Brother Dean's teaching Wednesday night. Paul Verbs, chapter 19, verse 11 was one of the verses he shared.

And the second half of it says, and it is his glory to pass over a transgression. And as I've meditated on that verse a little bit, I realized how much it reminded me of Jesus, the Lord Jesus, who is there like Jesus who has passed over transgressions, who in his prudence has deferred his anger towards us, towards me specifically. So many things that I could have been judged for.

And how great is his glory. How great is the glory of Jesus in passing over transgressions. And it's one of those things, one of those thoughts that makes me realize my need to be humble and contrite and broken and to have his grace at work in my life.

And today as Brother David Rubio was sharing, I thought of being in a wadi or a dry gulch, you know, and at times during the rainy season, you don't know that the water is coming down this dry gulch, but you're standing in it and all of a sudden you just get hit with this wall of water. This is something out in Wyoming. As a child, we were taught, don't walk in these dry ditches at certain times of the year.

And that's what my life has been like over the last several months, just feeling like there's just this torrent of water rushing over me and how am I going to escape it? And one of the verses that came to me today from also Habakkuk, For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. And somehow I just have to come to a place of realizing that Jesus is the one who will right all these wrongs and his glory, his glory will fill the earth someday and I need to be in him and not down in the dry gulch trying to work it out myself. And so I praise the Lord for his speaking to me today and thank you that I can just share my heart and ask for prayer and know that you care and that you love us and that God is taking care of us.

Thank you. Yes, very good. Alright.

Steve? Yeah, I had a testimony. I... Being asked to preach tonight, I was... I set aside yesterday as a day that I could just focus on the Lord and read the Bible and pray and seek the Lord and at 10 o'clock Friday night I got a call. We have a rental house in Akron and I got a call from one of the renters saying that the roof is... or the ceiling in the kitchen is leaking and it's coming from the bathroom and this is at 10 o'clock at night and I just thought, oh no, I don't want to be tied up all day or working on that, tearing the wall apart and stuff and I just asked the Lord to help in that and I called a couple of brothers up one that night at 10 o'clock and then another one early in the morning before 6 and asked if they could do it.

Both of them were busy and I just really felt like after praying about it... In fact, I was... This Psalm 61, when I was praying, I often sing also through the prayer or whatever and I just sang that. Hear my cry, O God, attend unto my prayer. I just... Over and over again, I prayed that... or sang that psalm and so then... I just really felt like the Lord wanted me to go and invite these people who rent the house from me, invite them to come to the meeting tonight and so I thought, well, I'm just going to go over there and not worry about trying to call anybody.

I had a plumber I was going to call but I decided not to do that. I was just going to go over and see what was going on and invite these people and then at 7.30, Mike Whipp shows up and he said, I heard that you need help with some plumbing. Can I come and help you? So, we both went over there and the people were gone and come to find out the leak had stopped.

It was coming from above the... from the tub, which is above the place there. We pulled out behind there. Nothing was leaking and they hadn't used the tub for five hours before it started leaking.

So, I don't know where the water started coming from but it was five hours before the husband took a shower and then five hours later at 10 o'clock it was... it started leaking and so I told Mike and it was just kind of a quirk thing. He says, well, you know, sometimes it's just a quirk thing. I told Mike, I said, I think the Lord just really wanted me to come and invite these people to come to the meeting tonight and that's how he got me here or something.

And so, they came home right when we were leaving and I had left a little invitation card because I made a couple of those out. I left one of those on their table and they came home and I was talking to them and he was... the man was even telling me, he says, you know, it's just such a quirk thing. The water came and it stopped and I don't know what happened there.

And I said, you know what happened is I think... I said, the Lord wants you to come to the meetings tonight. That's why. And so, I was telling Mike, he says, well, I don't argue with the Lord.

We'll be there. And so, I pray that the Lord will bring him here. But it was just... the message today with Psalm 61 and all that, I just felt like I really needed to share that.

Give glory to the Lord. Thank you, Steve. Yes, Marcus.

Yeah, I too was very blessed by the message. I was blessed by the membership testimony last time where it talked about discouragement. How somebody said there that discouragement is sin and when we begin feeling that feeling, it's a blessing.

And also, about going out and helping someone. Often, there was one time I was really discouraged and somebody came to me in the discouragement and requested for prayer. And we went and prayed together and God showered His encouragement upon me and upon the person.

And I often think about the story when we sit and watch ants and they go to work and how they busily work. If we take a handful of dirt and we just, you know, splash it on them, they'll freeze. They won't do anything for a long time because they're scared.

And they're in that frozen state. And I think that's often what the devil wants us to do. We can't get much done if we're discouraged.

We can't be excited about the Lord. We can't witness. We feel down and we're looking for ourselves.

And it's hard to look to other people and not be selfish when, you know, it's just about me and I'm discouraged. I don't feel good. You want people to cater to.

And that has really helped me just to see the example of the ants when, you know, you throw mud at them, they'll just freeze up. They don't move. And that just blesses me and encouragement today.

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