

What Can the Righteous Do

by Glenn Meldrum

When the foundations are being destroyed, the righteous can take refuge in God and stand against the destruction, trusting in His presence and power.

Duration: 1:02:24

Scripture: Psalm 11:1-2

Topics: "People Of God"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher addresses the mindset of individuals who believe that society is beyond repair and that there is no point in trying to change it. He challenges the idea that we should only focus on our own lives and interests, emphasizing that the Gospel calls us to pursue the heart and ambitions of God. The preacher expresses his heavy heart over the spiritual condition of the nation and the crumbling foundations of society. He highlights the decay in various aspects of society, such as education, politics, and the judicial system, and urges Christians to not ignore these issues but to actively engage in making a difference.

Transcript

For more messages by Glenn Meldrum and in his presence ministries, go to www.ihpministry.com You are welcome to make additional copies of this CD for free distribution. Psalms 11 says in the first verse, In the Lord I take refuge. How can you say to me, flee like a bird to your mountain? For look, the wicked bend their bows, they set their arrows against the strings, to shoot from the shadows at the upright in heart.

When the foundations are being destroyed, what can the righteous do? The Lord is in his holy temple, the Lord is on his heavenly throne. He observes the sons of men, his eyes examine them. The Lord examines the righteous, but the wicked and those who love violence, his soul hates.

On the wicked he will rain fiery coals and burning sulfur, a scorching wind will be their lot. For the Lord is righteous, he loves justice, upright men will see his face. The Psalm of David sets two contrasts that we will look at and we will examine.

The first contrast is a contrast between believers, between those that are faithful and those that are unfaithful, or those that are walking near him and those that are walking in doubt and unbelief. The second contrast is between Christians and non-Christians, between believers and non-believers. And we will examine these two contrasts.

And I want to establish the setting of this psalm so we would understand a little bit of what's taking place. Most scholars and commentaries believe that this took place before David was king of Israel. The persecution against him was just beginning from King Saul.

King Saul was the first king of Israel. He was a very strong man, not a good leader though, but he was a big old man and grew very proud of his position and proud of his stature, and as a result did not submit and yield to the Lord. And he started acting in some very terrifying and horrifying ways, even with the oppression of his own people.

Then he strove to try and kill David multiple times and persecuted him, even though God had used David in wonderful ways in the deliverance of Israel and for the defense of Israel. And it was probably through this time that he was being persecuted from Saul and those in the court that this is taking place, that these events are happening and that's the dynamics that's bringing this about. So what's happening is as he's being persecuted, his friends are coming to him and saying, Look it, you're not going to win.

What's the use of trying? What's the use of fighting? Just flee. Run away. Just get away.

Have a nice life out there. You don't need to face these battles and these trials. Just get away from it all.

You have a right to your own happiness. Pursue your own happiness. Get out of here.

And so that's basically what the thought was being presented to him. Just flee. You're not going to change anything.

Why should you stand in the face of all this onslaught of evil and stuff? Why should you do it? You're not going to win anyway. They were trying to dissuade him, but David was a man after God's own heart. And not just that, he was a man that was to be the next king of Israel.

And he was a man fit to be a king. He was not like so many politicians today. And I don't want to get into any of that, but it's just I'm kind of tired of the whole wishy-washy, waffling, cowardly politics out there where people don't have the courage to stand up for what's right.

They put their finger to the wind and they follow that. David was not that kind of man. He was a man who knew what God wanted.

He was willing to follow it no matter what the price would be to himself. A man that could be respected. And I have respect for him just from what I read in the Scriptures.

Even though he was frail and he did fail in various ways, but yet he was a man that loved God and as a result had a strength of character to him. Beginning with the first contrast between the faithful and the unfaithful within the church, in this situation within the people of God which would be Israel at that time, and today it is within the people of God which is the church. A contrast that is presented between the faithful and unfaithful.

David sets the tone of the entire psalm with his first statement where he says, In the Lord I take refuge. He establishes this because this is so important. When he gets into the situation where it says the foundations are being destroyed, why remain? Just run away? Get out of here? It is David's concept of God that keeps him, that sustains him.

He says, I take refuge in the Lord. And the idea of him taking refuge in the Lord in the Hebrew there gives the idea of an act, of an abiding place, that he has gone into this place of refuge. He dwells continuously in that refuge and as a result, living in that refuge he has the constant benefits, the constant fruit of living in that place.

And so David was a man that was different as Caleb in the book of Exodus was praised by God to say that he was a man that had a different spirit. He did not have the same spirit, the doubting spirit of Israel. He was a man who trusted his God, who believed in his God.

So David is that type of man. Contrary to so many people of the day, he was a man that loved God, determined to be faithful no matter what became of his own life. And as we look at that we will see how desperately that is needed today in our day and age.

People that will stand and not cower to the ways of the world. We can in essence be like waffling politicians in our own life. We can put our finger to the wind and say, what's the easiest route of my life right now? Now I'm just going to take the easiest route.

Not the right route, but the easiest route. And so many times we run from situations as a result. The doubters begin with a little statement.

They say, flee like a bird to the mountain. And it's a statement to David saying, David, it is difficult. Life is getting very hard.

Why fight it? Why fight it? Why stand against this onslaught, against the difficulties that you are facing? And I think I could very safely say with all of us as adults, we have all had seasons in our life where we have wanted to run away. We've all felt it. We felt the pressure, whether it's coming from just within us or from without.

But one way or the other, we have those situations saying, I'd like to just run away. I'm tired of the fight. Whether it's in their marriage, they're just tired of the battles.

They're tired of the situations and the constant contention and the feeling of walking on cracked eggs all the time. They say, I'd just like to be out of this. I'm tired of it.

Or whether it's a child that grows sick of the situation in the home and they say, well, I'd just like to be out. I'm tired of my parents telling me what to do. I just want to flee.

I just want to get out of here. Or whether it's the job situation or whatever. Whether it's just stress of life or loneliness or something that brings us to the point where we want to hide, we want to run away.

We wish that we could all disappear. We really wish that there was a paradise that we could go to that was not like the rest of the world, where there was true peace and true tranquility and not the stress and the strain and the bills and the problems and all the news and all the junk that's going on. This place of refuge, but there is no paradise on this planet.

It does not exist. We long for it. We dream for it.

But it does not exist. But we have all come to that point. And there may be many in this room right now that you are wanting to flee.

People flee from churches sometimes because problems arise. Because you know what's in churches? People. And you know what people have? People have problems.

And so we bring our problems to church. And sometimes we take our problems out on one another. And so because there's difficulties, then sometimes we'll say, well, you know, I'll just go some other place.

And people flee from their problems. They flee from marriages because the marriage is growing difficult. And they figure it's just easier to get out, which it never is.

To flee is always the worst thing to do because we're running away from the problem. We're not ever dealing with it. I bring out occasionally in preaching on how we live in a Prozac nation.

A nation consumed with Prozac. Giving it to children because they supposedly have depression problems where the majority of their problems are discipline problems. And one thing that has bothered me so greatly about it is you have a person that has a character flaw.

And instead of dealing with the flaw in their character, they go to Prozac. They go to a drug. Somehow, just, I want to be happy.

My character is the problem. I don't want to deal with my character. I just want the problem to disappear.

So I'm going to take a drug to make it disappear. We want to flee. We want to run away from it.

We don't want to face the difficulties and the problems we face. And so David was facing the same identical thing. And people were telling him, David, run away.

Get out of here. You don't need to do that. You don't need to stand in the face of that.

But these doubters were also advising him to flee for another reason. Flee for self-preservation. Flee because of selfishness.

And flee because of love of pleasure. Sometimes we want to run away from difficulties because we have such a love of pleasure. And I want you to think about this.

If my life revolves around pleasure, and I refer to pleasure not necessarily that which is evil in and of itself, but it could be the pleasure that you love fishing. You live to fish. That is what drives your life.

Every time you can get a pole in your hand, you're out there to fish. And if your life revolves around pleasure, what happens when things stop that pleasure? What happens in your life when that pleasure cannot be satisfied? Whether it is an immoral thing or a seemingly innocent thing. What happens is we grow to a place of anxiety and despair.

We grow to a place of depression because we want to be happy. We think life is about happiness. We think life is about possessions or things or the pursuit of pleasure.

And when those things are not accomplished and fulfilled in our life, then we are no longer happy. And so we fall in despair. And I'm not talking just about the world.

I'm talking about the church here. That it's the church that suffers under this. Because ultimately Christians should be the most joyful, happy people on this planet.

Whether they got a little or whether they got a lot. But we can be just as miserable as any hedonist. And what is hedonism? Hedonism is the philosophy that the pursuit of pleasure is the purpose of man.

And we can make the pursuit of pleasure, the pursuit of prosperity, the pursuit of ease of life as much as any acclaimed hedonist would. And be just as miserable. There are so many Christians that are miserable in their life.

Because they have made these things the core of what their Christianity is. I have real problems with the prosperity doctrine because I have come to find that that it is a thoroughly hedonistic, pleasure-driven, humanistic belief system. It is man is the center of everything.

God is the sugar daddy to supply the needs. And what happens if you are believing that God is going to give you something and you don't get it? Then you know what we do? We blame God. We get angry at God.

We cop attitudes at God. We fall in depression. Maybe there's sin in my life.

Maybe I've not been confessing it enough. Maybe I need to confess it better. Because my confession is not good enough.

Or whatever, all the lies that can come into it. Because we've made a religion that revolves around us, not a relationship that revolves around the living Savior. And so we can flee, want to flee because of difficulties of life.

Or we can flee because the prosperity and ease of life is not being fulfilled. Or we can flee in our desire of self-preservation. Because what happens in self-preservation? It's about our own life.

And we seek to save our life. And Jesus told us that if we seek to save our life, we'll lose it. That if we wanted to gain our life, that we must give up the control.

We must lose our life. There's this precious man of God called Brother Young. Brother Young was one of the main leaders of the home church movement in China, which is the underground church.

Phenomenal book. I'd recommend you trying to track it down. It can be hard to find.

I know it's available on the internet. It's called The Heavenly Man by Brother Young. Y-U-N.

He was persecuted so much. Imprisoned two, three times. I mean, just horrendous things that he went through.

Eventually, he had to flee the country for his own life. In 1999, he was preaching in Finland at a conference. The main conference speaker was some famous American preacher.

And every sermon he preached on the love and the goodness of God. And then at the end, they prayed for people. And when they prayed for them, they fell down and they laughed.

I'm not against people being slain in the spirit. I believe it is very much. But there's that which is very selfish and self-centered in the pursuit of it.

Then Brother Young preached. He said, after I spoke, I commanded the people to kneel down at the foot of the cross. And they wept.

Tears always come first before the Lord truly moves. He will never pour his blessing on unsanctified and selfish flesh. The cross of Jesus must be at the center of everything we do.

He will not bless when our Christianity revolves around our self-preservation. When it revolves around our selfishness. When it revolves around our pursuit of pleasure.

He cannot bless it. He will not bless it. And so, in their selfishness, they're going to David's flee like a bird.

Peter goes to Jesus once. After Jesus went and told his apostles that he was going to die upon the cross. And Peter goes to him and says, No, Lord, that can't be.

You can't let this happen. And Jesus turns to Peter and says, Get behind me, Satan. For you do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men.

Peter was wanting to save his life. In essence, he was going to Jesus saying, Flee like a bird. You don't have to die on the cross.

Because if you die on the cross, then I'll have to die on the cross. So just get out of here, Jesus. Just protect yourself.

Save yourself. We try and do the same identical thing in our own lives. We move from us all pain, all suffering, all difficulties.

Because we think happiness is the pursuit of life. These doubters made a true statement. They said the wicked bend their bows.

They set their arrows against the strings to shoot from the shadows of the upright in heart. They were right. This still goes on today.

Charles Finney, the revivalist of the mid-1800s, he made a statement that all sin is selfishness. Every form of sin. Pride is selfish.

Lust is selfish. Rape is selfish. You name the sin, every sin is selfish in its very core.

And so whenever we sin, we are acting in selfishness. And he then referred to the wicked. All they know to do, all non-believers know how to do is live in selfishness.

Even when they do good works, supposedly good works, it is still selfish at the very core because that is all that they know. And they know nothing outside of selfish acts. That's all they know.

And so the wicked in their selfishness were reaching out and trying to harm the righteous. And it still goes on today. It is still happening within our society.

It is still taking place. The idea here of the upright in heart refers to those who, as Jesus said, is the pure in heart. Blessed are the pure in heart.

And the ungodly would come against the pure in heart. Jesus Himself is a perfect example. He went in His high priestly prayer in the 17th chapter of John, and praying to the Father, He says, I have given them Your Word, and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world.

They hated Jesus because He was not of this world. He did not live by the system of this world. He did not live by the philosophies of this world.

He did not live in any way, shape, or form according to the principles and standards of the world. He lived by a different principle, the standard and the laws of heaven, not by the laws of this earth. And so He was hated.

And then He says, All of Mine will be hated as well, because they will not live by the standard of this world. In the book of Galatians, Paul rebukes the Galatian church, because in so many words he says, You have not been persecuted because you have compromised the gospel, because you don't want your lives upset. That's the Glenn Meldrum version.

But that's basically what he was saying. We compromise because we don't want to upset life. We don't want to upset things.

We want things to be status quo. We don't want people mad at us, so we don't want to be too forcible with the gospel. We don't want people to be upset with it, so we're not going to go and stand in the face of the onslaught of evil to proclaim righteousness.

So we cower to it. We begin to give in to it. But Jesus referred to the pure in heart, and He referred to those that would stand in the very face of the onslaught of evil that would come against Him.

And Jesus Himself did not cower. When evil came knocking at the door, when Judas went and brought his kiss of death upon the cheek of Christ, He didn't run away to try and alleviate His pain, but He went to the cross for our salvation. And He's called us to walk in such a way.

Now I want to take a little bit of time, and I want to look in the third verse. And this is what my heart has dwelt upon, and my heart has been heavy over. My heart has been heavy over the state of our nation.

It's like God has been doing something in my own heart, and breaking my heart more and more with the state, the spiritual condition of our nation. There was a friend of mine I was talking to on the phone, and he happened to bring this verse up in our conversation on the phone. And ever since that time, I've not been able to get it out of my heart.

It says, when the foundations are being destroyed, what can the righteous do? This is a statement from the unbelievers. This is not David saying this. This is the unbelievers, the people that are doubting God.

And they say, the foundations are being destroyed. Why stick around, David? The foundations are being destroyed of society. Why try and change it? Just go and live your own life.

Do your own thing. Don't worry about it. It's going to get worse anyway, so why try and change anything? It was unbelief and selfish fear that was causing them to say this.

Why fight any longer? You better look after your own life. How many times have we heard that? How many times has that thought come into our hearts? How many advertisers use that same concept that you deserve? You deserve. Look after your own interests.

But the very concept of the gospel is thoroughly the opposite of it. That it's not the pursuing of our own interests. It's not the pursuing of our own ambitions.

But it's pursuing the heart of God and the ambitions of God in our life. And knowing that ultimately in that place, He is at refuge in the time of struggles and the time of difficulties. And He is an ever-present help in the time of need.

So I want to take some time and look at what some of the thoughts are of the foundations being destroyed. The foundations being destroyed begin always in a personal basis. It always begins with individuals.

The foundation of lives of individuals are being destroyed. And then when you have a multitude of individuals, you make society. And so society is being destroyed because individuals, their lives are being destroyed.

The foundation of the standard of this nation is crumbling from life after life after life. All you got to do is go to the prisons and go to the bars. And go to houses of prostitution and go to the crack houses.

And all you got to do is go to the places of business with immorality that can sweep through it. And as you look at it, you will see the foundations. The moral fiber, the spiritual fiber of our nation being destroyed before our eyes.

As I thought of this, I went back to the time of 9-11 when the Twin Towers collapsed. Can you imagine what the people in those towers had to feel? Not just when the plane hit, but after the plane hit. And the structures beginning to let go.

The very foundations of those buildings were beginning to collapse. And they felt the rumbling under their feet. They felt the shaking of this entire structure under their feet.

Probably trembling with fear going, what in the world is happening? Never dreaming, never dreaming that buildings like that could just disintegrate in moments. Believing they were in something that was secure and could stand. But yet it was trembling under their feet.

They could feel the whole building shaking until the collapse came upon it. And we can feel, if we pay attention, the trembling of the foundations of American society. And the foundation of the church trembling as the foundation is letting go.

The problem is we don't think it's happening, so we ignore it. We believe it's not real. We believe that, well, it's gone on for a couple hundred years, it'll go on further and it's not going to happen to us.

It couldn't happen. We're America. We couldn't stumble.

We couldn't fall. We wouldn't see anarchy or chaos happen to our nation, would we? But it's trembling, it's shaking. And if something does not stop the destruction of the foundation, the building will fall.

It's a serious thing. What's destroying our foundation? There's so many things. I'm just going to touch on a few overarching thoughts of this.

I want to begin with the first one is the issue of practical atheism. Atheism itself is the belief that there is no God. And I don't want to get into the belief system of atheism, but atheism is a thoroughly, 100% illogical philosophy.

It is not just that it's wrong, it's that it's thoroughly illogical. If you look at it from a logical standpoint, it crumbles. It crumbles.

But practical atheism is different. Practical atheism is where people live their life on a day-to-day basis, though they may believe in God and believe that even His name is Jesus, but they live as if He did not exist. Practical atheists are people who live without Christ because they don't want the influence of Christ in their life.

And so you can have people that call themselves Christians that in reality are practical atheists. They, in their daily lives, as they leave church, they live in a whole different world. They live as if they will never give an account to God, as if there is no influence of God that should be in their life.

They live their own lives the way that they want to live without any influence, without ever inquiring, What is your opinion about this? What do you want of my life? The church is full today in America of practical atheists. Not just American society at large, but the church has so many of them, because we can compartmentalize our Christianity. We come to church, then we have that time of our life.

Then we go to work and we have that time of our life. And we can live at work eight hours a day, five days a week, without Christ being active in it. That's practical atheism.

Then we go home and we don't see Christ active in there. We sit down and we watch television and we see the ungodliness that comes over it. We embrace it, we partake of it as we watch it, because we become practical atheists.

Because God is not affecting every dimension of our life, which is what true Christianity is all about. The next point is moral relativism. Our society today is suffering under morals that are believed to be relative.

It's up to the individual to decide what is right and wrong. And here again is another philosophy that is bankrupt. Here is a philosophy that is thoroughly illogical.

It is illogical. It may seem on the surface a nice thing, that well, whatever you think is right is right for you, and whatever you think is right is right for you. So you two people get along.

But what happens if this person over here thinks that eating that person over there is the right thing to do? What happens with that? You have some real problems then. It falls apart, it is thoroughly illogical. But the problem is, is that the church itself has embraced this.

George Barna, a man who is a statistician, he studies the facts of culture and of Christianity. And after doing his research, he says two out of three born-again believers claim that there is no such thing as absolute moral truth. Two out of three born-again Christians do not believe in absolute truth.

Do not believe that God said what He said and He meant what He said. When He says homosexuality was wrong, that is wrong no matter what society says. That fornication, two people living together outside of matrimony, or two people sleeping with each other, or pornography on the internet, that those things are wrong.

And no matter what society says, no matter how it redefines it, God has not changed His mind. God does not believe in relative morals. Morals are right and there is that which is right and there is that which is wrong.

No matter what society says, no matter what the world says, no matter what the educated elite say, God has still established what is right and wrong. And that will never ever change, no matter how much the foundations of our nation crumble. Another problem is materialism, idolatry of materialism.

We have made idols after the things that we have fallen in love with. The idols of our possessions, the idols of our wealth, the idols of our ease. Materialism.

I remember reading this one account of a communist speaking to a Christian. And he says, America will not fall to communism. He says, but you have something more devastating and more evil than communism.

He says, you have materialism. Materialism has so bankrupt the church. God doesn't have a problem in and of itself of money.

The problem is, is we don't know how to handle it. That we think it's all about us. We think possessions is all about us.

And so we pursue possessions thinking that possessions will satisfy the aches in our life. How many of you know, whether it's been yourself or somebody else, you've had a bout of depression and you wanted to go to the store and shop till you drop. I mean, you know what I'm talking about? You think that buying is going to make you happy until of course you get your charge card receipt back.

And then you're more depressed. But what is it? There's a philosophy that's behind it that's broken to the church that's gotten part of our life that we think material possessions will satisfy it. That if I have another car, I'll really be a happy man.

No, I need that big 4x4 truck. But then it goes also to our marriages. Your marriages struggle, so flee like a bird to the wind, because you'll be happier with a new spouse, won't you? But all the things that broke down your first marriage will be the same things that will break down your second and your third and your fourth and your fifth or the people you live with.

The same identical sin that caused the first problem is perpetuated because it's never ever dealt with. Because it's never dealt with. The idolatry of materialism has grabbed hold of American culture and it has grabbed hold of the church.

We have incorporated the Constitution where it says that we have the right to pursue happiness and we've made that the gospel of Jesus Christ. But you cannot show me that anywhere in Scripture. God is out for our holiness, not necessarily our happiness.

He's out for our eternal welfare and He's wanting to give us joy that is lasting, not happiness that is fleeting according to circumstances. This and so many other things has brought the breakdown of the family and the redefining of the family. The statistics are absolutely horrifying.

The breakdown of the family, single parent families in inner city black communities is like 85%. 85% of children are born in single family homes. 85%.

In the white community, it's over 50%. Terrifying what is going on. The breakdown of family.

I'm an individual who lived in the breakdown of a family. My father went through multiple wives. It's a miserable thing for a child to grow up in.

So many of you in this room have experienced it. It's nightmares. My father inflicted upon his boys the agony of his own sin and rebellion.

In his pursuit of pleasure, in his pursuit of his own happiness, he inflicted sorrow upon his boys. Upon his first wife and second wife. And he inflicted sorrow upon his third wife now with the miserable life that he lives because he refuses to repent and turn to Christ.

Breakdown and redefining of the family. And now it's gotten so crazy. The moral breakdown has gotten so crazy that we are wanting to redefine the family even further than just that which began with single parent families now was acceptable.

Now it is homosexual families. The redefining of it. What is next? Do you understand what's next? Homosexuality is sweeping through the schools in this nation.

It's sweeping through inner cities. Do you know how long it's going to be until it's in your school's ear? There may be some of it now. It may not be knocking.

It may not be full force. But it's only a matter of time. The foundations of our nation are being shaken to the very core.

It's as if the devil is taking a big sledgehammer. And blow after blow after blow is coming upon the foundation of society. And it's crumbling.

And we Christians have ignored what is taking place. We have fled like a bird to our own little rest. Ignoring it.

We've been the ostrich that has stuck its head in the ground and acted like nothing was happening. Like nothing bad is taking place. Then you have the decay of the education system.

The decay of politics. The decay of the judicial system by the state religion. Do you know what the state religion is? There is a state religion.

Do you know what they call it? They call it humanism. Even the courts have went and clearly established that humanism is a faith. But yet humanism defines our government.

Defines our schools. Defines our court systems. What is humanism? The philosopher Protagorius of the 5th century BC defined it.

He says that man is the sum of all things. Humanism is man being the center. It is all about the individual.

The individual happiness. The individual rights. The individual wants.

Doesn't matter how it hurts anybody else. I want what I want. And what I want is what I will pursue no matter what.

Because it's my right to have it. And so you know what? Humanism has crept into the church. That's what the prosperity doctrine is.

Humanism. Raw humanism. It's all about the individual.

It's humanistic. It's all about the person. But it's crept into our own lives that we think God is there to make us happy.

Where He ultimately saved me and gave me the privilege to serve Him and adore Him. He did not save me to become my slave. And that's what we've made it to be.

How many times do we grow angry at God when we ask for something and He has not jumped to our beck and call? We've asked Him for something. We've not gotten what we wanted when we wanted it. So we cop an attitude at Him.

And we have to be honest. We've all gotten bitter at God. We've all gotten angry because we've asked something.

And we believe that He should do something. I prayed for my mom not to die and she died. Or I prayed for this not to happen and it happened.

We get angry at Him. John Dewey. The infamous humanist that is accredited with the greatest destruction of our schools.

He is the man that has been the greatest influence of getting humanism thoroughly integrated within our schools. From K all the way through doctorates. And this is a statement John Dewey made.

He says education is the most powerful ally of humanism. And every American public school is a school of humanism. What can theistic Sunday school meeting for an hour once a week and teaching only a fraction of the children do to stem the tide of a five day program of humanistic teaching? Do you think you're going to turn the tide of humanism that has grabbed hold of your schools with a little bit of teaching? There's only one way.

There's only one ultimate way that it's going to be done. And that's for the power of God to be released. That's the only hope.

I believe as Christians that we should be involved in politics. I believe that Christians should vote. And I believe that Christians should not vote according to their pocketbooks.

Too many Christians have voted for their pocketbooks and voted on ungodly individuals. And so they vote because of Medicare. They vote because of welfare.

They vote because of this. But they vote in people that believe in abortion, the slaughter of innocent children, and they believe in homosexuality and other things that are destroying our nation. How many people, because they voted selfishly, have voted in wicked individuals that have been the hand that the devil has put a hammer in to beat upon the foundation of the society and break it down? There's two responses that is presented in this chapter to the breakdown of the foundations of our world, of our society.

The first response we looked at in the beginning, it was run away. Run away. Do nothing.

Ignore it. Just ignore the problems. And that is what the majority of the church does.

We ignore society. We ignore the evil. The onslaught of the evil.

As we Christians sit down and we try to count the cost of what it's going to be to take the society, the devil has already taken it. And we are still sitting there counting. I don't know.

Do I really want to tell people about it? Do I really want to do something about the schools? And the whole time the devil has not ever stopped. He's never taken a break. He's never taken a day off, never a vacation.

He does not rest one moment while we sit and revel in the ease of our own lives. Because we have become the proverbial ostrich with our head in the ground. Ignoring the pain of a suffering world and what is happening as the foundations of individual lives and the foundations of society is crumbling.

And so what do they do? They cower and succumb and blend with society. That is called compromise. Blending with society because we don't want to disrupt anything.

We don't want to have people dislike us. We want to be so accepted that we will do whatever it takes to make people happy so we are silent. We're silent to our neighbors because we want our neighbors to like us.

We don't want them thinking we're wackos, do we? And so we are silent. We don't want to go to the school when garbage is coming into the schools. We don't want to go to the schools and say, look it, I disagree with that.

That is wrong, that is evil what you are bringing in here. Because we're afraid, well, they'll just think you're some religious fanatic. But they thought Christ was a religious fanatic and they crucified him.

And so we cower to the world, we cower to the devil because he's going to call us names. Or another thing we do is we have the pursuit of our selfish and worldly lifestyles. Because how many Christians are silent because they are so absorbed with their pursuit of pleasure and their pursuit of money and their pursuit of wants that they have no time to the decay of a nation, to the decay of life, to the destruction of those all around them.

And so they are silent. But you know, there's this terrifying verse that Jesus said. One of the shortest verses in the scriptures, not the shortest, but one of the shortest.

Three little words, Jesus said, remember Lot's wife. Remember Lot's wife. That issue is so important, Jesus made sure it was brought out.

And what was the issue with Lot's wife? She looked back in longing for the world. She did not want to separate herself from the world. So her leaving Sodom was always this looking back, always this desire.

And he tells us as individuals, remember Lot's wife. There are many of you in this room that you continue looking back, you continue longing, you continue thinking that the old things, the world, the money, the possessions is what's going to satisfy you. You are being as Lot's wife, looking back.

David had a different ambition. He says, God is my refuge. And as we will look in a moment, he had a whole different agenda.

His eyes were not fixed upon the past, upon his possessions, upon his wants or even upon the pain. His eyes were fixed upon a God that does not fail, that does not make mistakes. And so the second response comes from David where his response was to stand, to advance.

For God is enthroned. And this is a concept of victory. The one is a defeated concept that says run, flee, you know you can't stand, just get out of here.

That's a defeated concept. How many Christians are defeated because they are running all the time from their problems and their situations? But God calls us to stand. And so David said, the Lord is in his temple.

The Lord is on his heavenly throne. David responded to the doubt and the unbelief, to the fleeing. He says, God sits enthroned upon the circle of the earth.

He has not lost control of this planet. It's not out of his control. He knows what's going on.

And in the midst of human society, God is moving things, events to bring about his final purpose. Even when David was being assaulted, God was not up there letting it happen and not being involved. God was intimately involved in the protection, in the strengthening of David in the midst of his persecutions, in the midst of his struggles.

The Lord is in his temple. This is the issue that David refers to, which is an issue of faith in a sovereign Lord. Faith in a God that is all-powerful.

Faith in a God that does not fail. Faith in a God that is victorious, and no matter what he touches, no matter what he does, he wins. That there is no defeat in the language of heaven.

That only in the language of God is there absolute victory, because he will settle for nothing less. Because his very character is a character of absolute victory and triumph. He is not a losing God.

In the chaos of our world, in the chaos of our nation, God has not lost control. But the real issue is, have I made him my refuge? Or am I looking to the crumbling of foundations and growing panicky over that? David was not panic-struck over the crumbling foundation. He looked to his God, and ultimately God used that man to stop the crumbling foundation and to bring stability to the children of Israel.

God can take the church, and he can use the church to bring stability to a nation. It's not going to be politics that's going to bring stability to this nation. Though, like I said earlier, I believe the church should be rightly involved in politics.

I believe that politics is a calling. That men and women need to be men and women of God in the political arena, without compromise, without being bought off, without being for sale. I believe that's absolutely necessary.

But the answer to our nation is not in the politics. It is in the issue of men and women seeing the glory of God unleashed in their church and through their church to a perishing world. Because if you heal the crumbling foundations of individuals, then you can heal the crumbling foundation of society.

Until the individuals are healed, the foundation of society cannot be healed. For a nation to change, men must change. It begins with the transformation of individuals.

David had a radical pursuit of God. He was not a tame Christian. He was not tame in his pursuit.

He loved the presence of God. He loved nearness with his Savior. He loved, he loved his God.

He says, because your love is better than life, therefore my lips will praise you. He could not be silent because he knew the love of God. The love of God was not a dimension of his life.

It was his life. He lived and he dwelled in it because God was his refuge. And he constantly dwelt in that place of him being a refuge.

And then the benefits of that refuge was always poured out upon his life. He tasted of the mercy. He tasted of the love.

The radical pursuit of God in his kingdom. God calls us to the radical pursuit of it. You must understand, and I must say something here that is so important.

Until the church arises on the occasion, the foundation of the society will continue to crumble. The only way it can be turned back is that the church arises to the situation and says, Enough! Devil, enough! I've had enough of your onslaught. I've had enough of your destruction.

I've had enough of your death. And now we're coming after you. But we've not done that.

We have been passive. We've been passive to our own destruction, to the destruction of our nation. Hezekiah was a godly king.

He was dying. He rolled over on his side, facing the wall, and he prayed and pleaded with God for more life. Isaiah was walking along.

God spoke to Isaiah, the prophet. And Isaiah heard the word of the Lord that says, Go tell Hezekiah that I will give him fifteen more years. And so Isaiah goes back and prophesies.

And he says, As a sign, the sun will turn back ten degrees. And because that sign took place, the sun turning back ten degrees, which was a testimony to Hezekiah, the Babylonians, which are worshippers of the sun god, examining the sun on a constant basis, saw the sun turn back ten degrees. And they found out that it was because of Hezekiah's prayer.

And so they sent the son of the ruler of that city, which was not at that time a nation yet, and sent his son to go and try and make a treaty, in essence, with Hezekiah, because Babylon wanted to break ties with Assyria. They wanted to rebel against Syria and ultimately take over Syria. So because of that miracle, the ruler's son comes.

And Hezekiah shows them everything in his house, everything in his armories, everything in his treasuries. And then they leave. And Isaiah comes up to Hezekiah and says, Who is here? And he says, Well, people from Babylon.

And he says, What did you show them? He says, I showed them everything. And it was pride that he showed them everything. And Isaiah, by the word of the Lord, says, Because you have acted in this pride, everything that you have shown them will be taken away into Babylon.

But it will not happen in your lifetime. You know what Hezekiah then said? He says, Well, thank you, Lord. At least it won't happen in my lifetime, but in my children's.

I want you to understand. If we don't stop the crumbling of our foundation, do you know what we leave? We leave a nation so wicked, so ungodly to our children and great-grandchildren. We can go and say, My

life is not that bad.

I can sit back. I can sit in my ease. I can rock on my rocking chair.

I can have my retirement. I can ignore those things. I'll be dead soon.

But what about your children? Because I want you to understand something. The children of Roe v. Wade. Hear me now.

The children of Roe v. Wade that believes in abortion now produce children that believe in same-sex marriages. What will the children who believe in same-sex marriages now, what will they produce? Do you understand that there are political groups right now vying? They want to change the consent laws of children to lower the consent because they want to have sex with your children. Do you understand the laws that are trying to be passed right now? As homosexuality is getting a stronghold in this nation, there are more evil things even than that on the books that people are trying to advance because the wicked hate the righteous, and they hate the laws of the righteous, and they are out to tear it down in any way, shape, or form that they can.

Spurgeon says, Sinning times have ever been saints' praying times. Indeed, sometimes sin comes to such a height that it's almost all the godly can do to get in a corner and bewail the general pollutions of the age. I want to take a moment.

I just want to speak for a moment on prayer. You want to know, until I really understand the decay of our foundation in this nation, until we as believers understand that we will not be a really prayer for people. I appreciate that you had a 24-hour prayer here.

I appreciate that. I appreciate that immensely. God wants to grab hold of our hearts so we are more desperate than ever because we must understand that the only way our nation can be changed is that the glory of God is unleashed upon a nation.

And that will only happen when the saints get so desperate for His presence that they give Him no rest day and night. Like Joel 2 speaks of that the priests and the people go before the altar, before the Holy of Holies, and plead with Him, Spare your people, O God. Why should your people be an object of scorn? Spare your people, O God.

It's better for us to die in battle than to live as a coward. It's better for us to die in battle than to live as a coward. A precious man.

His name was Kipis Mpange. A pastor in Uganda during the reign of Idi Amin. And Idi Amin was Uganda's Hitler.

Slaughtered 800,000 of his own people in the most hideous, horrifying, mutilating, torturous ways that you could ever imagine. Dead bodies were everywhere. You could be in your house and next to you, you'd hear the screams of the tortures taking place in the house next to you and you would not open the doors.

You would not look out. You would sit there trembling, not knowing if your house was next. If you tried to flee, you were dead for sure.

The terror upon the people was horrifying. In Kipis' book, an excellent book called A Distant Grief, he made a statement that there is a place of God that is beyond human comprehension, but that there is also

the place of evil that is beyond human comprehension, where evil is so hideously exposed that we cannot even fathom the depths of its evil. It was unleashed in Uganda in the slaughter of men, women, and children in the most horrifying things that you could imagine taking place.

It is unleashed now in America in a different form, in the crumbling of a foundation of such wickedness and immorality that is sweeping our nation. The problem is because we have been numbed by the media. Hear what I'm saying.

The church has been numbed by the media. We've been numbed to immorality because we've embraced it through the television and all kinds of other ungodly ways. We've been numbed to its reality and to its effects, and so we are no longer disturbed by it.

Evil has encroached upon us. It is taking over our nation, and we do not understand it. Kipis made a statement in that book.

He says, in the face of tremendous evil, our task as Christians is to stand with God against the powers of evil which grip the world. To such men and women, God has promised that even the gates of hell will not prevail against them. At times, evil gets so great that all the church can do is just stand and say, I will not bow to you.

We're not at that place yet. We don't have to do that. We can be a people now that aggressively go after the devil and go after this kingdom to see it transformed by the power of God.

If we don't do something, there may be the day that all the church can do is just stand. Right now, do you understand that in Canada, there are pastors in jail because they preached against homosexuality because it's illegal? Do you understand that that same law that brought that to pass has come before our Congress? Now the second contrast. And I'm just going to take a moment on this.

This is a very serious contrast, though. This is a contrast between the righteous and the non-Christian. Between the Christian and the non-Christian.

I want you to understand something. Anybody in this room that's not a Christian, I want you to understand what I'm going to say here. God makes a distinction between the believer and the non-believer.

That is not saying that God loves the believer more than He loves the non-believer, but He has respect to the believer and no respect to the non-believer. You must understand that because if you don't understand that, you will think that you just have this little problem in your life and not understand you have placed your entire life at war with God. He makes a distinction between you.

He says in Psalm 11, the Lord observes the sons of men, His eyes examine them. The idea of His eyes examine them is the idea that His eyelids are squinting and He's looking in examination, deeply examining each individual. God examines us and He begins with the examination of the church of Christians.

Peter went and says, judgment must begin at the house of God. And if it begins at the house of God, what will be the end of those who do not know Christ? But in Malachi, the third chapter, it says the Lord sits as a refiner and purifier of silver. He will purify the Levites and refine them like gold and silver.

The Lord will have men who will bring offerings and righteousness pleasing to the Lord. The Lord examines the righteous for a reason. He wants to purify them because He wants them to offer their lives

that's pleasing to them.

Such as in Romans 12, that we give our lives as living sacrifice, that is, His pleasing will. That we can please Him. That we can please Him.

And so the Lord examines the righteous. He examines us. The problem is, do we want to be examined? Saints, do you really want the examination of God? David prayed a bold prayer in Psalms 139 where he says, search me, O God.

Search me, O God. That is a bold prayer. Am I willing for God to search me? And to see those areas where I have compromised.

Where I have compromised. So much that has gone on, and I failed to read a second part of a quote. And I do want to return back to this.

And let me take you to a quote, back again to George Barna. George Barna said, two out of three born-again believers claim there is no such thing as absolute truth. But, he went on to say, he says, The vast majority of Christians do not behave differently from non-Christians because they do not think differently.

THE MAJORITY OF CHRISTIANS DO NOT THINK DIFFERENTLY THAN THE WORLD. THEY'VE EMBRACED THE HUMANISM, THEY'VE EMBRACED THE MORAL RELATIVISM, THEY'VE EMBLACED ALL THE OTHER THINGS. THEY THINK LIKE THE WORLD SO THEY ACT LIKE THE WORLD.

THEY THINK LIKE THE WORLD SO THEY TALK LIKE THE WORLD. THEY THINK LIKE THE WORLD SO THEY LIVE LIKE THE WORLD. But the Lord says he would purify his people that he might make a people that will be Offerings of righteousness that are pleasing to him that their very lives would be a joy to his heart, but the Lord examines the wicked In the fifth verse it says the Lord examines righteous, but the wicked and those who love violence Church, you better be careful if you are a lover of violence.

I Know it's an Ezekiel you read Ezekiel and it brings out about the fall of Sodom and Gomorrah in the fall of Noah And it says that they loved violence. They loved violence. We love violence in America.

We love it in movies We love it in TV shows. We love it in dramas. We love violence, but it's a corruptive of the heart Lord, but the wicked and those who love violence his soul hates his soul means his very being God's very being hates those who practice Wickedness who practice sin the idea of hate is not that he hates the person but he hates the very character He hates the very act of individuals and he brings upon them then the judgment that they deserve if you are not a Christian You must understand God loves you.

He died on the cross to save you, but he hates your very character He hates your sin. He hates your practices. He hates your thoughts, but he died to rescue you from them You must understand this this is not a small issue It's not a small issue to place your very life at odds with the Living God.

It's not a small issue It's not a small issue to be a person that God hates your very lifestyle that he hates your character Because it is so contrary to his holy character And so in his goodness in his mercy He calls us to repentance and Malachi the third chapter in the 18th The Lord says I make a distinction between the righteous and the wicked between the one who serves God and the one who does not God makes a distinction. He's making a distinction between those in this room right now that are Christians and are not

Christians The good news is though those who are not Christians He's offering you mercy He's offering you mercy That you might know his tender embrace that you might know the sweetness of his love The final point I want to come to is the beautiful statement of the seventh verse The Lord is righteous. He loves justice He loves justice.

He loves justice as a foundation to society as a foundation to an individual as a foundation to a family He loves justice Upright men will see his face Do you know that this is what the Bible is all about? Right from the very beginning God created man to walk with us in the cool of the evening that we might have face-to-face relationship with Intimacy with the Creator God that's what the whole Bible is all about man fell in willful rebellion against God and that fellowship was broke Jesus died on the cross that that fellowship might be restored. It's all about Relationship and David is saying you Oh God are sovereign. I will not bow down to the world I will not bow down to the devil.

I will not cower. I will not turn tail and run I will stand because you are still in control. You are God and Lord You want me to have face-to-face relationship? And so as a result, I will not flee I will not run away because the prize is you Oh God The prize is relationship.

It's worth the abandonment of our life It's worth everything that we might have their face-to-face relationship with the Living God which begins now in this world And is perfected in the next Perfected in the next Just want to close with a couple of verses of David because David was a man who had a passion for God. He had a passion to be face-to-face with his God He went and took the tent of meeting and he brought it into Jerusalem So he could go in and meet with God in that tent and he longed for the presence of God He reveled in the presence of God. And so he made a statement like this in Psalm 63 Oh God, you are my God earnestly I seek you my soul thirsts for you my body longs for you in a dry and weary land where there is no water David ached he understood desert, but he understood spiritual desert and he says I thirst for you Oh God, I thirst for you and in the 42nd chapter He says as a deer pants for streams of water.

So my soul pants for you Oh God, my soul thirsts for God for the Living God when? Can I go and meet with God? When can I be face-to-face? You know, I've heard this again and again I've read this again and again with my reading People being martyred for the cause of Christ Again and again, they says I Had never known intimacy with God Like I have known it in the face of suffering for his name's sake You think that in the place of suffering God leaves us alone? It is where he draws nearest to us and if we run from it, it's where he will be farthest from us God wants to awaken us So that will be a people that will stand and not just stand but it be a people who will take back with the devil Let's go Let's look to Lord Father we come before you now in the precious name of Jesus What a phenomenal God that you are that you care for us That you have not forsaken us that you have not rejected us that you've not abandoned us But in your desire for us you have said that you would be the refiner of fire And you would purify us so that we could offer up praises lives of praise Lifestyles of praise that are pleasing to you. Oh God that brings joy to your very heart Dear God you're wanting to bring change lives of people in this room God, there are Christians in this room that have been subject to the philosophies of this world They think like the world they talk like the world they act like the world and Lord you are wanting to change that Lord there are Christians in this room that are suffering so much depression in their life Because they think like the world they dream like the world They lust like the world and so they have the anxiety and depression of the world Because they have not known you as a refuge because they've not made you a refuge They look to things to satisfy the lust of their flesh But there is no satisfaction in the lust of the flesh Lord You told us through Solomon that there that the fire never says enough that the womb never says enough that the grave never

says enough That the ground never says enough Lord the lusts of life dear God never say enough because there is no Satisfaction in this world. It is only in you dear God.

It's only in you and God I pray that you would do a work in the hearts of your people dear God that they would see that the world will never Satisfy that compromise will never satisfy that putting their heads in the ground as an ostrich will never satisfy But that it's in the abandonment the reckless abandonment to you. Oh God That you grab hold of lives and you change them Lord I pray you'd be the deliverer this morning from depression that you'd be a deliverer this morning from people so bound up in Materialism and in the worldly philosophies and in humanistic concept of Christianity God I pray you be a deliverer to those who are sick and tired Lord They have fled from so many things They try to get out of problems all the time rather than overcome the problems dear God I pray for people that would want to be victorious and triumphant that would not want to continue Cowering but would want to say it is time. Oh God that I overcome you purchased it I want to know the power of your resurrection.

Oh God That you might bring change and transformation to lives Lord if there's anybody here that does not know you Jesus Help them to understand that you right now are making a distinction between them and believers Lord if they do not turn from their wicked ways from their sin, you will say depart from me. I never knew you Dear God may there not be such a person that were in this room that would ever Have to hear those words from your lips. You are offering mercy to who so ever will come May they not walk in rebellion out of this church that they would be cast aside from you forever May they know the wonder of your sweet love Jesus name Jesus name Anybody that's not a Christian just the moment I'm gonna open this altar If you want to surrender your life to Christ You need to walk this altar You need to walk up to me And I'm gonna have somebody pray with you The time of surrender.

It's a time of giving up. It's a time of saying I am tired. Oh God Will you save even me And if you will come to him this morning he will save you if you will come Please don't be foolish and walk out of here and say some other time later

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