

# Psalm 36: Self-Flattering to your depths

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[ 0 : 00 ] Just bow your heads in prayer. Father, I've made my voice all croaky from leading singing, and so I ask that you help my throat to be fine for the rest of the service.

Father, a small prayer, but we know that you care about even the small things in our lives. Father, far more importantly, you have written a text of the Bible that we turn our eyes and our ears and our mind away from.

At best, we think it applies to others and not to ourselves. And so, Lord, we ask that you would do a gentle but wonderful work of mercy and grace in our lives and bring this word deep into our hearts, that we might know the full warning and the full promise, the depths of both in our lives, claiming, heeding the warnings, believing the promises, and growing in liberty and freedom as we live to bring you glory.

And we ask this in the name of Jesus, your Son and our Savior. Amen. Please be seated. Amen. So, true story.

I once, once was invited to give the commencement address for the graduating class, the graduating ceremony at a small Christian university.

[ 1 : 29 ] And so I was thinking about what to say, and they think I could say whatever I wanted. And I don't know, like me being me, a bit angular, I guess, I chose the Acts 17, which is the story, the part of Acts 17 where Paul goes to Athens.

And the message I gave them was that there's only one place in the Bible where it talks about the city or the area being completely and utterly full of idols.

And the one place in the Bible where it says that there are many, many, many idols is the functional equivalent of the modern university or college.

And then I went on to talk about idolatry, and I've never been invited back to give a commencement address. Probably what they were hoping I would talk about would be something like the normal commencement addresses, probably at Christian universities, but definitely if you go to the University of Ottawa or Carleton or Queens or some other university, McGill, you go to a high school or junior high, and usually when there's a commencement address, they say that you need to know yourself.

You need to be true to yourself. You need to, only you can do you. You need to follow your dreams, follow your desires, that you need to go and change the world, that you've now been equipped to do great things and good things, and you should pursue that, and you should go for that, and you should do that.

[ 3 : 04 ] And that is probably what they were hoping that I was going to say to the Christian university students who are graduating and their family and the current students and the professors, and I neglected to do that.

But if I had done that, I would probably, maybe I would have gotten invited back. The thing that I should not have done if I was to give a talk like that was to actually use Psalm 36 as my text, because Psalm 36 says that all of that advice is rubbish.

And not only rubbish, it's actually quite dangerous. So let's look at it. Psalm 36. And it's, in fact, not what we'd like to hear, but it's what we need to hear, because it's true.

So Psalm 36, what does it say? It begins like this. Remember I said the normal commencement address would be, you know, look deep within, you know, figure out your desires, pursue your desires, be you, all of these types of things.

And Psalm 36, verse 1 begins, Transgression speaks to the wicked deep in his heart. There is no fear of God before his eyes.

[ 4 : 21 ] Now, if you're interested afterwards, you can talk to me. There's some translation issues with chapter, you know, one, Psalm 36, verse 1.

One of the things that the original languages do sometimes is they have bad grammar. It's almost as if the writers were looking down the ages and wanted to speak like Yoda occasionally, in Yoda-like sentences.

And modern translators don't know what to do with stuff like that, so they try to smooth it all out and make it good English. And that's sort of what's going on there, which is why the NIV and others have, you know, slightly different translations.

There's a Yoda-like moment at the beginning. But if you're looking at your own Bibles, you'll see the little note. And, in fact, the better translation is that this is a psalm of David.

It's meant to be sung, believe it or not. Well, and it's not only meant to be sung, but he describes himself as a servant of the Lord.

[ 5 : 25 ] And it actually should say, transgression speaks to the wicked deep in my heart. So he's not talking about other people. He's talking about himself.

And he's just described himself as a servant of the Lord. Transgression speaks to me deep in my heart. And the word for transgression is a word that's not just sort of stepping over a boundary you shouldn't step over.

But it's a word that implies, it's like a military term, and it implies rebellion. It implies revolution against lawful authority.

I guess it's sort of what Trudeau thought was happening with the bouncy castles on Parliament Hill and brought in the equivalent of the War Measures Act. But, you know, that this was something rebellious against lawful authority.

And that's what he's saying. Actually, you know, Claire, I was going to do this after the second verse. Could you put up the first point, please? That would be very helpful if you did now. What the text is saying is that transgression, this rebellion, speaks to you and to me all the way down to your depths.

[ 6 : 39 ] Transgression. That right down to your depths. Transgression.

Most of the time it's just whispering. George, did God really say? That's not really wrong. George, it would be way better if you did this. I mean, sometimes, as we all know, with transgression, it shouts at us, grabs us by the collar, and makes us come.

But it's always speaking to us. The deeper we go, it's still there. And then it has this really weird line. Transgression speaks to the wicked deep in his heart.

There is no fear of God before his eyes. And, you know, if you were to ask most Canadians what would their criteria be for God to exist and for him, she, or it, or they to be worshipped, I think the average Canadian would say that you should never fear them.

That's like a criteria for the average Canadian to define their God. And actually, the text here is even worse in the original language than it is in English.

[ 7 : 57 ] The word, we've been reading a book on the fear of God, and that's not the Hebrew word which is used here. Actually, more literally, it says the dread of God.

There is no dread of God before his eyes. Now, I'm not going to talk about that right now, but I am going to talk about it in a couple of verses, and hopefully I don't forget. If I do forget, make sure you talk to me afterwards.

But this is how the psalm describes you and me as human beings. It describes us. In fact, it gets even worse.

Look at verse 2. So, you know, verse 1 is, transgression speaks to the wicked deep in my heart. There is no fear of God before my eyes, for his eyes.

For he, and this is where the Hebrew gets word, because he uses my in that first thing, doing the Yodism, and then he goes back to his. That's why they have trouble translating it. Verse 2, For he flatters himself in his own eyes.

[ 9 : 01 ] That his iniquity. Iniquity means here, evil that you do that troubles others. That's what iniquity means.

Evil that you do that troubles others. That his iniquity cannot be found out and hated. And obviously, others know that you're doing evil, but that you flatter yourself so that when you're doing troublesome things to others that are wrong, you don't see that you're doing that.

You flatter yourself that you're doing something different. Yes, it was good that I shared that slander. It's going to be very helpful to people if I share that slander.

It's very good that I tore a strip off of that person at the office in front of other people, because now everybody will learn, and it was a really important, helpful piece of feedback, which is only going to make them perform.

We find ways to flatter ourselves to not actually realize what we're doing. In fact, if you could put up the second point, what the psalm is saying, to your depths, you are defined by self-flattery.

[10:18] To your depths, to my depths, in and of myself, I am defined by self-flattery.

Now, the Bible has a lot more to talk about about our inner life than this, and there's balancing texts, but even for many of us who deal with despair about ourselves, part of our despair is that at certain times, it's impossible for us to flatter ourselves as much as we've been flattering ourselves, and our inability to flatter ourselves in this situation can lead us to a moment of crushing despair.

But most of the advice that we get about how to deal with it is ways to appeal to us to be able to flatter ourselves out of the issue.

Now, most of you are probably thinking, this all seems a little bit extreme, and I'm going to give you an example about why on one level we know this is true, but we don't want to acknowledge that we believe it's true.

In fact, I'm going to give you an example in a moment that Hollywood knows that this is true.

Tinseltown. But it both knows it's true and actually models verse 2 in a very, very subtle and a way that we can easily drink down, and so we understand this about human beings, but we do it in such a way that fills us with self-flattering pride.

[11:59] But before I do that, let's look at verse 3 and 4, and then we'll go back. Look at verse 3. It goes like this. It continues. The words of his mouth are trouble and deceit.

In other words, they're not true. They deceive. He has ceased to act wisely or prudently and do good. He plots trouble while on his bed.

He sets himself in a way that is not good. He does not reject evil. And those last three little lines, which all sort of connect with each other in the Hebrew poetry, is that even while we're on our bed, before we go to sleep, or in the morning when we wake up, we think about ways that we can get even or we can make that deal or we can talk in such and such a way that we're going to get what we want or get out of trouble or whatever.

And then the second one, he sets himself in a way that is not good. It's that there's times that we just, we're not going to move. We're not going to change. You know, on one hand, others might say what you're doing isn't right.

It's not helpful. It's wrong. But we set ourselves in that way. We're not going to budge. We're going to be persistent in it. And then the final one is that we don't reject evil, either when we're plotting or thinking about or scheming about what we're going to say to get what we want or to get out of trouble or to gaslight people or to do some other type of thing like that.

[13:27] But we don't want to, we sort of don't want to reject anything that actually might be wrong. Now, as I said, many of us probably think that this is too extreme.

But here's a couple of things to consider. First of all, every single one of us, if we're honest, knows somebody who this has described. That often what we describe now, it's a common problem, is flaming narcissists.

And probably every single one of us knows somebody that's a narcissist. And they're causing trouble in their own life and they don't seem to see it. And one of the things about people like this, like these narcissists, is if they were to hear a text like this without me talking about it, or maybe I'd just say a couple of very simple things about it, they'd say, oh yeah, I know somebody that that describes.

You know, one of the funny things about the narcissist who thinks it describes another person is that they don't think it describes themselves. But what if others, what if you were to, after church, you were to discover, or, you know, after you've left your coworkers or whatever, if you were to discover that your coworkers were talking about you and say, you know, there's a lot of ways that describes, you know, Bob, there's a lot of ways that describes Sue, there's a lot of ways that describes George, you know, he won't bend, he won't change, even though it's wrong.

And he seems completely blind about it and he sees it in others, but doesn't see it in himself. Like, what about that if that's a possibility? If we all know people that to some degree this describes them, is it in fact possible to our horror that there are people in the world who think that this text describes

you and me?

[15:27] Wow. One moment. You don't want to think that. Why? Because we flatter ourselves. But here's how Hollywood shows that we are, that this text is true.

there's lots of examples. I'll just give one. But you see, one of the things that we'll say, well, George, that might be true. You know, that there's a type of superficial thing that we do that's sort of wrong. And it's superficial, but, you know, deep down, like one of the things that, I don't know if Jordan Peterson still says this, I don't follow Jordan Peterson really closely or anything like that. But, I mean, one of the things that he talks about all the time is the divine spark, which implies that there's very, very deep down at the very center of us, there's some type of divine spark, which is good. And it's a very, very common, in other words, what Psalm 36 says goes against what Jordan Peterson says.

It's a weakness in his thinking. And, but maybe he's changed. I don't know. Maybe that's from a couple of years ago. But, you know, many people will say, well, George, you know, you know, but maybe at the superficial level, you know, we say things to hurt people, but deep down, deep down, deep down, we're not like that.

But think of disaster movies, or like movies where, like the world is about to end in some way. On my holidays, one of the things I did at the beginning of my holidays was re-watched the Brad Pitt film, World War Zed.

[16:45] Nothing like zombie invasions to get the, to say you're on holidays. And in lots of ways, I really liked the movie. By the way, if you're curious, the book is a hundred times better. But, you know, it's a fun movie.

But, but what are movies like that show? What are movies like, you know, the aliens have invaded, the virus is spreading, the zombies are invading, the world as we know it is about to come to end. It always features two things. And one of the things it features is this, that when it comes down to your self-preservation, and all the external things are gone, we reveal ourselves as we really are. And what we really are is looting, violent, raping, transgressive people. Take away the veneer, take away the worry that if I was to fully act on that, I'd be fired from my job, and people wouldn't like me, and my wife would divorce me, and my kids wouldn't want to have anything to do with me. Take away all of those external things that sort of keep me under some type of control, and deep down, every one of those zombie virus, alien invading movies, Hollywood is saying, we will just become these violent people.

[18:07] Grasping. And one of the reasons those movies are popular is because we say yes. That is what people are really like. Good grief.

They're saying transgression speaks to the wicked deep in his heart. There is no dread of God before their eyes, and they flatter themselves in their own eyes that their iniquity cannot be found out and hated, and their words are trouble and decease.

They've ceased to act wisely and do good. They plot trouble on their bed, set themselves in a way that is not good, and they do not reject evil, and they say that's actually true. It's what World War Z says.

But then it flatters ourselves, because why do we watch movies like that? We watch movies like that because inwardly we think, I'm not those bad people.

I'm Brad Pitt. I'm the noble one protecting my family who's going to save the world. What have we just done?

[19:20] You see, that's what Hollywood does. It says this is what human beings are like, but then it provides a means by which we say that's what all the other human beings in the world are like.

But I'm Brad Pitt. In other words, I'm saying, what's going to happen to all of you, the zombie thing, you're all going to turn into those types of people, but not me. I'm Brad Pitt. And you're thinking to yourself, George, that's completely ridiculous.

I'm Brad Pitt. You're going to be one of the guys out there doing all those terrible things. And we're all thinking that. And in an odd way, movies like World War Z show that we actually believe that this is true and that we actually act on it.

In fact, if you just think about it at work, if you think about it, the other co-workers and stuff like that or your neighbors, and you think, really? You think you'd be the one who'd be Brad Pitt? No way. You'd be one of the first people out there doing all the bad things and hoarding things.

Now, if the sermon and the psalm just ended right there, I say, go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

[ 20 : 28 ] It's just a pretty depressing type of thing. But the psalm does something which is very different. And what we expect now from our culture and our hearts is we expect now the psalm, if it's going to continue to do certain types of things.

We expect that now it's going to extol the virtue of mindfulness or yoga techniques or it's going to talk about how you should go to mass every Sunday or how you should homeschool your kids or how you should listen to a show on Christian radio on a Sunday afternoon that will tell you the four types of steps that you need to do to have success or it's going to talk about how beside your mirror you need to have a Bible verse that says, you know, I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

I love the Bible, Babylon B meme that says I can do all things through a Bible verse taken out of context. But that's, those things sell lots of books and make lots of money and that's what we expect to do.

But the psalm does something completely and utterly unexpected. well, let's look. Verse 5. So verses 1 to 4, it's been this sobering reflection that transgression speaks to you and me all the way down to your depths and it speaks to my depths and that to my depths I am defined by self-flattery. and then that the psalm goes like crazy. Verse 5. Your steadfast love, O Lord, extends to the heavens.

[ 22 : 09 ] Your faithfulness to the clouds. Your righteousness is like the mountains of God, the greatest mountains. Your judgments are like the great deep.

Man and beast you save, O Lord. Completely different direction from what we're expecting. You know, all of a sudden it says your steadfast love and steadfast love means it means that God's love is steadfast.

It means it's unfailing and it means that it's pure and it's also a type of love. that word it's a type of love that's relational love that includes human beings.

It's a love that's described that's of God's very nature that he extends to the human beings described in verses 1 to 4 and that he will make a covenant with them.

and this steadfast love extends to the heavens. In other words, as far as you can go, as high as you can go, you will never go so high that what characterizes the triune God is steadfast love.

[ 23 : 35 ] It doesn't matter how high you go into God. It doesn't matter how further in and higher up you go into him. At every moment that you go higher up and higher up, all you see is the steadfast love of the triune God.

And then it says your faithfulness and the word faithfulness, that faithfulness is a good word, but in Hebrew it also has this aspect of dependability, of solid ground.

It would be as if you know, in February and March in Ottawa, it's hard to believe, but we'll have a big snowfall and then after the snowfall it'll get warm and they haven't plowed the sidewalks yet and so everything is sludge.

You know that when you're trying to walk through that snow that's like this, it's just all sludge. And then finally you get off of that onto something solid, something you can step on and stand on and walk and you just like, you feel like you have an energy boost because you can step on something which is solid, dependable, and that's what the word faithfulness means about God.

That the triune God is, this is what characterizes him and once again it doesn't matter how high you go that you'll always meet this about God. And then verse 6, your righteousness is like the mountains of God.

[ 24 : 52 ] In other words, the hugest mountains. It's like being in Vancouver or in Canmore, Alberta and the mountains are just there and they're obvious and they're huge and they're majestic and they're awe-inspiring and they're immovable and you can't ignore them and they're hard and unbending and if you crash into them it's just going to hurt you not the mountain.

You try to, you know, you can say you're a Chuck Norris type of joke but Chuck Norris runs into the Rockies it's him who's going to get hurt not the Rockies. Like that's just the way it is and that's what God's righteousness is, goodness, his justice, that's what it's like.

It's this reality which is just so hard and solid and judgments is not only the fact that God makes decisions out of his steadfast love and faithfulness and his goodness and his mercy and he makes judgments.

It's the word there, judgments, in the Hebrew is I know there's at least one lawyer in the room, maybe there's at least two lawyers in the room and that's when the judge has made a decision and it's written down and it implies both everything from the fact that they make decisions and that it's like the Bible.

It's been written and we can read it and we can know it and then the way that we know that all of these things are true is that God saves us. If you read the New Testament, if you read John's Gospel in particular, it's very, very clear that the way God is most perfectly known and understood is when you see Jesus dying on the cross.

[ 26 : 29 ] that's when you know most perfectly and completely that he's good. If you could put up the third point, that would be very helpful.

The triune God is real and true and he is love, goodness, justice, and mercy. And in a sense, you cannot think about God enough.

The real God. And then the fourth, if you could put up the fourth point, you need to be saved down to your depths and he can and will save you.

I have here the 1662 Book of Common Prayer, which is basically unchanged from 1552.

1552. And we're a church of the English Reformation. And in a communion service, these are after you've confessed your sins, these are the four words, the four scripture sentences.

[ 27 : 38 ] It's called the comfortable words. that was part of to be the weekly life of Christians. 1552.

Here are the four words. Hear what comfortable words our Savior Christ saith unto all that truly turn to him. Come unto me all that travail and are heavy laden and I will refresh you.

In other words, for those of us laboring under the ways that verses one to four of this psalm bend us out of shape and beat us up, he quotes a word of Jesus saying, I know that is what who you are.

Come to me and I will give you rest. Listen to the second word. God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son to the end that all that believe in him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Hear also what St. Paul says. This is a true saying and worthy of all men and women to be received that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.

[ 28 : 53 ] And finally, hear also what St. John says. If any man or any woman sins, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous and he is the propitiation for our sins.

And propitiation means that act of God that takes away his anger at sin. You need to be saved down to your depths.

He can and will save you. Now, we're going to wrap up in a couple of minutes by looking at the other verses quite quickly but I want to go back to that earlier thing. I said to you the very first verse was transgression speaks to the wicked deep in their heart.

There is no dread of God before their eyes. And this is profoundly anti-Canadian Canadians would say this is completely and utterly wrong-headed.

So, well, here's the thing. My wife just stepped out for a moment. We have some grandkids visiting. Probably have to go to the bathroom. If I was to tell you while she's out of the room, you know, my wife and I have been married for over 40 years and she's never been mad at me.

[ 30 : 16 ] I can't even say it without laughing. Like, how many of you would, let's say I could do it with a, like, like, like a straight face, like Matt Walsh interviewing people in what is a woman and I can't believe he wouldn't laugh actually.

And, and, you know, my, my wife, she's never been mad at me in 40 years. You'd just say, George, you're lying, you know, or if it turned out it was true, you'd think, what's the secret to how you gaslight her so that she never actually, she gets talked out of her anger all of the time.

And, and, you know, one of the problems that people have is they, especially, I mean, I know, I know they're, they're single people in the room. Part of the problem that we, when you're single you have is that when you think of your girlfriend or your, if you're a guy and you're thinking of your future girlfriend or your future wife is it's very easy to have an imaginary, like an image of what they're going to be like, which is imaginary.

And one of the differences between an imaginary girlfriend and a real girlfriend is imaginary girlfriends never get upset with you. Just like the difference between an imaginary wife and a real wife is that the imaginary wife never actually gets mad at you.

And not only do they never get mad at you, it's not that they've, they're right to be mad at you as well, which is the other thing, right? You might think of them being mad at you but then you win

them over but you're really good guy and good heart.

[ 31 : 39 ] But in real world you do things and they have every right. In fact, if my wife was to tell you some of the things I'd done and she got mad, you'd go, you go girl, like you're right to be mad at George if he did something like that.

And so it's a bit of a shocking thing but if, if, if the real God, his steadfast love extends to the heavens, his faithfulness to the clouds, his righteousness is like the mountains of God, his judgments are like the great deep.

And if that's true, you and I do things that means there's going to be consequences and we should dread them.

I don't recommend watching Peaky Blinders but I just finished the sixth season and there's a scene towards the end where one character says to the main, the main guy after he's killed somebody that, he says, I'm going to, there's some swear words in it which I won't say but basically he says to them, I can see how other people are going to go to heaven but you, I think you're royally and you can finish the sentence and we should dread the consequences of our action if God is real.

See, the fact of the matter is that the average Canadian, what they long for is an imaginary God not a real God because just like a real wife or girlfriend will get mad at you because you will do things which are wrong and they will be right to be mad at you if there is a God who's at all described by justice and goodness and mercy, you are doing and have done things that mean that you will have consequences and you should dread that and what describes the average Canadian is that if I was a stand-up comic and I got up and began, you know, lately I've been, you know, worried about how God's going to treat me for some of the things I do and everybody would laugh because it's ridiculous to even think like that and they'd know they'd go on and make fun of, you know, whatever the priests or the Bible or whatever types of things and that's what Canadians are like.

[ 33 : 58 ] We don't have anything that makes us think that this is wrong. You know, one of the things which is so brilliant about this text, remember the first four verses are so hard on us but so accurate that there's, transgression speaks to me down to my depths all the way down and that self-flattery is true of human beings all the way down and then we have this God who really does exist and no matter how deep you go, he's the same and no matter how high you go or broad you go, he is the same and he's real and he's like that fixed stuff, not like, not like the sludge and the slippery stuff but the stuff you step on that's solid and you're glad you're stepping on something solid and one of the things that this text does is you see that we human beings left to ourselves, we look in and we're consumed with ourselves and it's as if the psalm is saying there's a, not only is, are you not the only person in the universe, there's a person in the universe that you need to take account of and he's big and you know, the life of trying to, of justice and of goodness and of mercy and of beauty and of truth, it's big, there's this big world out there which is real and the sun shines, well, and look at the other things it's going to describe, verses seven to nine, this is after you've been saved, how precious is your steadfast love,

O Lord, precious means of great value, it's as, you know, if, it's just of, you know, great incomparable worth, your steadfast love to me, O God, is precious, the children of humanity take refuge in the shadow of your wings, it's just this image, remember verses one to four are all there but it's as if to know that God, once God saves you to realize that his longing for you is that not only do you need sanctuary from others, you need sanctuary from yourself and there's this image of being covered by his wing and pressed up against his side and you can, you get his warmth and you can feel his heartbeat and you can hear his breath and the children of mankind take refuge in the shadow of your wings, they feast on the abundance of your house and you give them drink from the river of your delights and a more accurate way of translating and delights is pleasure that you give them drink from the river of your pleasure for with you is the fountain of life in your light do we see light.

If you could put up the next points that would be helpful, Claire, you need to feed and drink from his hand in his presence. Yeah, I'll end up, you know, and then the next thing is, you know, you need to feed and drink from his hand in his presence.

It's, sure, that's, there'll be ways that I'll flatter myself and all of that, but you see, here's the thing about it. I need to be nourished.

I need to, I need to know his delights. I need to be fed by him and to drink and have him provide me drink. And yes, there'll be ways I flatter myself and all of those types of things, but, you know, it's not about, it's not about me.

[ 37 : 40 ] It's about the greatness of God and his love and compassion for me. And, and, and he's, he's, all those other things, you know, he saved me from them and it's to receive this nourishment in this, at his hands that I, I need.

So I can, in fact, even if I twist it for my own flattery, but it's still good that's done and it's still truth which is said and it's still love that's shown and forgiveness that is practiced and hope that is restored and justice which is done and beauty which is performed and spoken and appreciated. And if you could put up the final point, the final three verses end with a prayer, David conscious of the fact that on one hand, verses one to four describe him, on the other hand, verses five to nine are true and God is who he is and he saved me and in his saving of me he calls me and beckons me to eat of him and to drink at his hand and eat at his hand.

And so the final point is this prayer, Lord help me remember who I am. who you are and pray with trusting confidence.

Lord help me remember who I am, who you are and I guess I could add what you've done for me and are doing for me.

[ 39 : 12 ] Help me to remember that and to pray with trusting confidence. Listen to how it ends. It ends with a prayer. Verses 10 to 12 Oh continue your steadfast love to those who know you and your righteousness to the upright of heart.

He's saying just continue Father to send that to me. I desperately need, given how true verses 1 to 4 are, I need your steadfast love and your righteousness to continue to come to me.

You see, at the end of the day, it's only if it's as verses 5 to 9 become more real to our heart, that we have a place to stand to consider verses 1 to 4 in our lives.

It's only as verses 5 to 9 become more real to our heart and our imagination and our affections that we can have the courage to see how verses 1 to 4 are true in our lives.

So he begins by praying, verse 10, continue your steadfast love, continue that, have it come, Lord, I need it, have your steadfast love to those who know your righteousness to the upright of heart.

[ 40 : 30 ] Then he says, let not the foot of arrogance come upon me. In other words, don't let arrogance, the image is of somebody who's conquered another person and you have their foot on their net.

He said, don't let me be defeated by arrogance or the arrogant. And then it says, nor the hand of the wicked drive me away. Don't let me be so completely and utterly consumed by my culture that I turn my back on you, that I think that I want to turn my back on following you and trusting you. Don't let that happen. And then the very final verse is in the original language. It's a prophetic perfect.

It's a way of expressing the future as being so certain that you can use the past tense. And that's what it is in the original language.

The last verse, it's something so certain about the future that you can use the past tense. There the evildoers lie fallen.

[ 41 : 37 ] they are thrust down, unable to rise. They begin by describing the wicked as saying, we have nothing to dread.

Judgment of God. Good punchline in a comedy routine. But the psalm ends with this prophetic insight of the future which is so certain the past tense can be used.

But the point of this is not, the point of this is to have us say, Lord, I want to 5 to 9, 5 to 10, 5 to 11, Lord, have mercy on me.

Have mercy on me and may that be the story of my life and help me to grow in that. And that's what God wants. That's why the scripture has been revealed. I invite you to stand. And close with prayer. Let's pray. Father, it's a sobering truth to be told how transgression is something that speaks to us, even to our very depths.

[ 42 : 51 ] And that self-flattery is something which we do, even to our very depths. And Father, we give you thanks and praise for your kindness that you both warn us of our situation.

But then, rather than just warning us and leading us to destruction, in your mercy, you reveal who you are and you act to save us.

And you let us know that your heart for us, even though one to four is all true of us, that your heart for us is that we would come to you and we would allow ourselves to be saved by you, that we might enter into a covenant of love with you, that you would be our Father in heaven who is sovereign over all the earth, but you are still our Father who loves us and cares for us and who will

feed us and give us drink, that we might know the liberty of knowing you, both beginning now in this world and until the very end of the end of the end when you bring in the new heaven and the new earth.

And so Father, fan into flame within us these deep longings. Help us Father to have Psalm 36 rule in our hearts. And we ask this in the name of Jesus, your Son and our Savior.

Amen.