

Psalm 86 "Facing Haters"

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[0 : 00] Hi, my name is George Sinclair. I'm the lead pastor of Church of the Messiah. It is wonderful that you would like to check out some of the sermons done by Church of the Messiah, either by myself or some of the others. Listen, just a couple of things. First of all, would you pray for us that we will open God's Word well to His glory and for the good of people like yourself?

The second thing is, if you aren't connected to a church and if you are a Christian, we really, I would really like to encourage you to find a good local church where they believe the Bible, they preach the gospel, and if you have some trouble finding that, send us an email. We will do what we can to help connect you with a good local church wherever you are. And if you're a non-Christian checking us out, we're really, really, really glad you're doing that. Don't hesitate to send us questions. It helps me actually to know, as I'm preaching, how to deal with the types of things that you're really struggling with. So God bless.

Just bowing our heads, let's pray. Father, sometimes, Father, we read your Word and don't see ourselves in your Word. But Father, we confess that the problem is not that your Word isn't addressing us, but that, I don't know, there's something blind in our eyes and clogging our ears and dull with our conscience. Father, we ask that you help us to hear your Word. It's a Word directly to us, a Word that speaks to us as we really are, at the center of who we are, not only at the center of who we are, but the real life that we actually live day by day. And so, Father, we ask that your Holy Spirit would do that gentle but very important work in us all the time and this morning now as we spend some time looking at your Word. And we ask these things in the name of Jesus, your Son and our Savior. Amen. Please be seated. So the psalm today is going to talk about haters, having to live your life with people who hate you. And there might be a... Obviously, hate's a very, very strong word, and for some cases, it might not be hate, but it might be constant irritation. It might be severe.

It might be real dislike, or it might literally be haters. And one of the things is some of us might say, well, you know, I don't think I'm dealing with any haters right now. I don't think I'm dealing with anybody who wants me to fail, who wants me to land, you know, on my face, not pick myself up. I don't know if I'm dealing with people who want to defeat me. I don't know if I'm dealing with haters. Well, actually, every... Probably every single one of us in this room, in fact, are dealing with haters.

[2 : 57] Because there's a range of topics that we, as those of us who are here who are historic, biblical Christians, that if we were to say it out loud, people would hate us.

And so it's not unusual that if you're in a Starbucks, or a Tim Hortons, or some other place, and you discover you meet another person who holds some of the same views as you, you talk like this.

And you sort of look around a little bit. Because we don't want to be hated. Don't bring it up at our workplace. We don't want to be hated. Now I know there's a few people here who, I don't know, you're built out of titanium, and you go through a life scene, whatever you want.

But for most of us, most of us Canadians, we, in a sense, do have to live with haters. And we live with them by avoiding them. So this psalm is a psalm that actually talks about how do you live in a world where there are people who are hating you. And it has some surprising, counterintuitive advice. So let's look and see what it says. We're looking at Psalm 86. Psalm 86.

And here we go. It begins like this. Once again, I'm not sure if it's on the screen, but it begins by saying, A Psalm of David. Just want to remind you, those, if you read the psalms for yourselves, and you know, like in my version right now, there has this thing in the bullet print, Great is Your Steadfast Love. That's just the editors thinking that that's a good title for it.

[4 : 28] But right underneath it, there's usually emboldening bullet print, not always, because they don't always have an ascription, but something like a Psalm of David. I think I've said this before, but not for a few weeks. One of the differences between a Hebrew Bible, like a Jewish Bible, and

ours, is they count that as the first verse. So their verses, where there's an ascription at that at the beginning, their psalms will always be off from ours by a verse. And if that's why, that's why they consider it. But it's original, a Psalm of David. And then it continues, verse one.

Incline your ear, O Lord, and answer me, for I am poor and needy. Now just pause here before I go any further. David is the king of Israel, and he's just said he's poor and needy.

So is this political posturing? We all know of people like politicians who try to pretend that they're working class and just scraping by, and they have lots of mansions that are worth millions and millions of dollars. I've done funerals for people who live in a mansion in Rockcliffe, and when they're talking about the deceased, they talk about how they're just managing to get by like everybody else, as if they're working, living in some of the poor areas of the town, but they go to elite school. Is that what David's doing here? He's not. And you'll go on and you'll later, like for instance, towards the end of the psalm, he's going to refer to himself as God's servant, a son of God's maidservant. What's going on here isn't political posturing. It's not make believe and pretend. It's, which you'll see as you go through the whole psalm, everybody is poor and needy in regards to God. It doesn't matter if you're one of the richest people on the planet, you are poor and needy. You need God for life, you need him for your breath, you can't buy your way into heaven. And so there's a, this is a type of a humbling phrase of David's, which is important to notice. It's not a cynical phrase, it's heartfelt, and it's heartfelt in the context of the living God.

So I'll read that verse again. Incline your ear, O Lord, and answer me, for I am poor and needy. Preserve my life, for I am godly. Save your servant who trusts in you, you are my God. Be gracious to me, O Lord, for to you, for to you do I cry all the day. Gladden the soul of your servant, for to you, O Lord, do I lift up my soul. For you, O Lord, are good and forgiving, abounding in steadfast love to all who call upon you. Give ear, O Lord, to my prayer. Listen to my plea for grace. In the day of my trouble, I call upon you, for you answer me. So verses one to six are sort of covering some important things about him in terms of his heart and his attitude, and he's getting to the point right here at verse seven. I'm in trouble. And we're going to see later on in the psalm that the trouble is that he's dealing with haters. Haters who don't just want him to fail, they actually want to kill him. And that's the trouble that he's dealing with. Now, a couple of things, you know, about this. Now, the first thing is, you know, I think every one of us, as soon as I said we have to deal with haters, that maybe some of you right now are consciously dealing with somebody. Maybe it's a parent, maybe it's a neighbor, maybe it's your boss, that really does, is out to get you and hates you.

[8 : 17] And maybe we're just avoiding saying certain things so we don't develop haters. But here's the other thing about this psalm. You'll notice that David keeps talking about his need for grace and mercy.

And the reason he's doing that, there's a couple of things that we can get from that. The first one is this. There might very, and so this whole psalm is going to teach us how to pray into a situation where people hate us. And that sounds like something we're going to look forward to hearing more about.

We need to also remember that there might very well be people praying this psalm because of us. In other words, there's people in our office or our neighborhood who perceive us as hating them. And maybe they're in another church, maybe they're somewhere else, maybe they hear about this online and they watch it and they're thinking, I really need to hear this because that's, I need to deal with that George. You know, I need to deal with that, you know, Andrea. That's just something in here.

There's implicit within this call for grace and mercy, this double-edged thing that we need to understand that it might be us that others are praying about. Now, before I say anything else, I'd like to, if you could put up the first point, Claire, that would be very good. The biggest lesson of this whole psalm, but especially these first few verses, is this. Life is difficult, so prayer is necessary. Life is difficult, so prayer is necessary. In Canada, and probably in the United States, and probably in many other countries, the basic assumption that we're brought up with is that life should be easy. And so when life is not easy, what's the problem? And many Christians, those of you who are maybe watching this or are here, and you don't know much about Christianity, a lot of times Christians, when life isn't difficult, when life is not easy but difficult, they say they're under demonic attack.

[10 : 28] Well, maybe they are. But they're operating from the assumption that life should be easy, not that life is difficult. And often, if life isn't easy, maybe our finances aren't as easy, our

relationship, our work, etc.

And then for some of us who are prone to depression, we start to think that the problem is with us. And we can be overwhelmed with great guilt, because our money isn't the way we would like it, our relationships aren't the way we would like it, our living situation isn't how we would like it, and we can start to beat ourselves up. And we can say, you know what, why am I such a bad person? Why am I so incompetent? Like, why can't I lead well? Why can't I manage well? Why can I do this well? And we beat ourselves up. But underneath that, we're assuming that life is easy. The more common Canadian response to when life is not easy is it's somebody else's fault. Dang the government, like, dang my boss, my parents, my kids, my wife, my husband, it's all their fault. If I could just have a better one of those, life wouldn't be difficult, it would be easy, because somehow or another, we actually think that life should be easy. But that's something that idols tell us. And it's not true. Now, the Bible's not telling us this, so we will be depressed. It's not telling us this, so we can be like, you know, the sort of person who does the exam, and they think, oh, I probably only got a, you know, a D plus. So that way, if they get a B, they're really happy, you know, whereas if they think they got an A and they got a B, they're unhappy, if the Bible's not telling us this is a weird way to be happy, life is difficult. Like, raising kids can be difficult. I have great kids, by the way. You know, it can be difficult in a marriage. Being in a church could be, you know, being a scholar. Life is difficult. And so the message of the psalm is because life is, that's how you should just begin to expect that life is going to be difficult. And so prayer is necessary.

And this is a really important lesson to me. In fact, if you could pray for me, this would be the case. I too often fall into the habit that I do, I do, I do, I do, I do, I do, I do, I do, oh, no, I guess I better pray. Or I do, I do, I do, I do, I do, I do, and I'm in really trouble, so I pray. But if life is difficult, not impossible, just difficult, so we need to pray, then we should begin with prayer, and continue with prayer, and end with prayer, because life is difficult.

The idols of our age try to tell us that life should be easy, therefore worship us. The Bible says, listen, I'm not causing you to be depressed. Life is difficult, so prayer is necessary. Now, the other thing which is going on in this, if with the whole language of him being, like, asking for grace and mercy, is another very, very important thing to think about when we're thinking about life as difficult. And part of the reason that life is difficult is because of, part of the reason my life is difficult is because of me. What I mean is this, there's a fellow by the name of John Maxwell, he's, like, famous for a lot of power of positive thinking and leadership stuff, and by the way, he has a lot of stuff that's worth reading, by the way, and I have to confess, he was very helpful for a season in my life, and he really was. But John Maxwell, one of the things he famously said was, he said to an audience one day, you know, if I could kick the person who's causing me the most trouble, I wouldn't be able to sit down for a week. In other words, he'd have to be kicking himself, because a lot of times I bring my own trouble upon myself. And this is, once again, why we need to pray to God, that I not make my own life more difficult than it needs be, in the sense that I wake up, or be more attentive, or just be a better person. But life is difficult. So, now, just, by the way, sometimes I mention movies in this, on eSermons, and when I mention a movie, it is not a movie recommendation, okay? So, one of the things that's, over the last couple of months, some Saturday nights, Louise and I, with the two of our kids, will watch a movie together on Saturday night, and often we'll let them pick the movie. And a couple of weeks ago, trying to decide what to watch, and we decided to watch Mad Max Furiosa. This is not a movie recommendation to people, necessarily. [15 : 06] If you don't like violent movies, don't watch this movie, okay? Anyway, to our surprise, like, everybody liked it. Even Louise liked it. I liked it. I'm fine with sort of violent, some types of violent movies, or lots of action, or fighting. So, those of you who know this movie, Mad Max Furiosa, you know that it just came out. It's a prequel to a movie that came out a couple of years ago.

So, last night, we watched the movie that it was a prequel for called Mad Max Fury Road. Now, there's this really funny scene. It's very short. It's close to the end of the movie. So, there's, you know, Furiosa, and Tom Hardy, and Nicholas Holt, and some young women, and they're fleeing a group of really unbelievably fearsome-looking, cruel, violent people, and they know that if they get caught by these cruel, violent people, they're either going to be... Everybody except the young women are going to be killed, and the women are... The young women are going to become sex slaves, and they're being chased, and it looks like they're going to get caught, and they're in this war rig in the back, and there's this one young woman at the back, and she's doing... Doing hand

signs, and her eyes are closed, and she's nodding. And Lady A, we'll call her Lady A, looks at her and says, what are you doing? Like, what are you doing? Lady B doesn't pay any attention, just doing this, closing her eyes, doing hand motions, and stuff like that. Lady A says, are you praying? And the woman stops her praying and says, yes. Lady A says, who are you praying to? And she answers, whoever's out there to listen, which I think is really, really funny. Maybe you guys don't think it's funny. I just thought it's such a funny answer. So, you know, we say we're going to pray. Well, the question then is, if life is difficult, so prayers, who do we pray to? Well, that's the next few three verses. It's just, I mean, in a sense, the whole psalm is letting us know the God that we pray to, but the next three verses in particular are important. Look at them, verses 8 to 10. David prays, there is none like you among the gods, O Lord, nor are there any works like yours. Now, just sort of pause. At a first reading, this makes it look as if David believes that there are many gods, and in a world of many gods, there's also the Lord. That's what it looks like, but that's not what he's saying, and I'm going to loop back to it, but you'll see in a moment why that's not what he's saying. I'll read verse 8 again. There is none like you among the gods, O Lord, nor are there any works like yours. All the nations you have made shall come and worship before you, O Lord, and shall glorify your name. Just pause. It's beyond the scope of this one verse, but the psalmist here is not saying, David is not saying that every single person will come to a saving faith in Jesus, but it's a very important verse, as Steve, who's with the church, will tell you. It's reminding us that it's God's heart that people from every people group on the planet and in all of history, that he is calling people from every people group to a saving faith in Jesus, and that the church is something which is worldwide, that in a sense we can't just think of ourselves here as Canadian Christians. We need to remember there's Nigerian Christians, Singaporean Christians, Chinese Christians. It's one of the reasons why the work that Colin and Gail are doing, here as missionaries, is so important, is to reach out to international students, not only because some of these international students will stay in Canada and become Canadians, but some of them will go back to mainland China, or they'll go back to Iran, and sort of reach out to them and share the gospel with them as part of how we bring all the nations to come to worship and glorify the Lord. [19:12] So just read verse 9. So verse 8 again, there is none like you among the gods, O Lord, nor are there any works like yours. All the nations you have made shall come, and worship before you, O Lord, and shall glorify your name.

And here's the correction to verse 8. For you are great and do wondrous things. You alone are God. Clarifying what he meant in verse 8.

He means he knows there's lots of, in a sense we would say he knows there's lots of different religions. But in all of the religions of the world, in all the gods that the religions worship, there's no God like the Lord that he's talking to.

You are the only God. If you could put up the first point, Claire, that would be, the next point, that would be very helpful. And it's this, as a Christian we would say the triune God is the only God. The triune God is the only God. The God revealed in the Bible is the only God. Now, obviously, that's one of those statements that if I was to say it very loud in the average coffee shop, I would get haters.

[20:15] Because it's a very un-Canadian thing to say. It is considered to be impolite. It is considered to be imperialistic. It's considered to be implausible.

But just because the fashion makes us want to be silent, fashion isn't an argument. Never is.

And in fact, there's very, very good reasons to say that the triune God is the only God.

Just a couple of things. First of all, the very fact that the text uses the word gods rather than religions is very helpful. When we look at religions, we might say, well, like most, lots of religions like candles.

Or lots of religions like silence. Or lots of religion like prayer. Or lots of religions like this. And it can sort of get us a little bit confused about all of these things. But if you talk about gods, you'll see that that's actually a far better way to talk about the issues.

[21:17] Because all of the gods that peoples on the earth believe, they can't all exist. It's just impossible. Because they describe, the gods that are described, are radically different.

It would be a little bit as if I was to say that I'm married to Louise. And some of you might think that that means that I'm married to an elephant. Some to an alien.

Some to the Rocky Mountains. Or some to the person named Louise who's, you know, beautiful and, you know, this tall and all of that. Like, the difference between the gods is just as big.

The difference between Brahmin and the difference between pagan religions with many gods. And the difference between some types of philosophical Hinduism where God is everything or God is in everything.

Or where there's, frankly, just lots of different idols. And the God of the Trinity. They're radically different descriptions of God. And it can no more be true that they're all describing the same being than for me to describe my wife as either a person, an alien, the Rockies, or an elephant.

[22 : 19] Like, the differences are just as big. Nobody would say that those are all describing the exact same thing. And so, it's completely reasonable to say that they can't all exist.

We can maybe say that maybe none of the gods exist. That's what our atheist friends say. But you can't very well say that they're all describing the same being. And in this psalm, if you go back and look at verse 8, when it talks about God being, the Lord being his works, it's referring to the fact that he's created all things.

When you look at verse 9, it's talking about the nations. It's implying that he's sovereign over all things. And when it looks at verse 10, and it talks about his wondrous—how does it say here in verse 10?

You do wondrous things. It's talking about his miracles. The fact that he comes and he speaks by revelation. Or he does things like deliver the nation of Israel. Or now, for us as Christians down the road, the death and resurrection of God.

You see, why— Why do I say that only the triune God exists? Well, there's two basic reasons. The first one is love, and the second thing is evidence.

[23 : 26] In our culture, love is huge. In fact, you know, in a few more verses, we're going to talk about how the psalmist is asking us to pray to fear God. And for Canadians, that's just not something that makes any sense to them, that you should fear God.

Fear just seems to be something you have when you don't have love and intimacy. And love is very, very important. We say, you know, love is love, and all of those things. It's a very, very profound value for us.

Well, once again, think of love in the gods. Only the Christian faith has a God that you could really say is a God of love.

Well, why is that? Well, if God is ultimately everything, how can everything be love? Like, you need another person for love. Like, I can love Louise because she's not me.

I can love my kids because they're not me. I can love you because you're not me. And if everything is God, then that, by definition, can't be love. And if you think of Allah, if Allah is all alone and there's no God, how can he be a God of love?

[24 : 37] Who is there for him to love? Does that mean that he's needy? He really wants to love somebody, and he can't find anybody to love, so he creates people so he can love?

Well, if that's the case, that's like a very imperfect type of love. That's not even really love at all. We would sort of think that's a bit cringy. Don't you think? That if you had a God that's so lonely that he has to create people? It would be sort of like if you discovered that, you know, somebody to get some partnership, they get an inflatable, you know, a guy gets an inflatable woman and sits and has supper with them or something.

That's really weird, like having an inflatable woman that you can hug at night. Like, you probably need to see a therapist. But the triune God, Christians say that when you know the triune God is to know love loving.

Because from all eternity, you have the Father loving the Son, loving the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit loving the Son and the Father, and there's this constant interplay.

There's only one God, the triune God, the unity of God, but there's three persons. And so only in Christianity is it actually the case that you can have a God that can really be described as a God who is loving.

[25 : 49] Only in Christianity. If you value love and you want there to be a God of love, there's only one option in the entire planet and the entire history of the planet. And that's the God that's revealed by Jesus.

And this gets us to the second thing, which is evidence, which is that Jesus changes everything if what is said about him is true. He really did die on the cross. He really did get buried.

On the third day, the tomb was empty, but the grave clothes were there. And on the third, they never found his body, and Jesus appeared alive. And there's good historical reasons to believe that

all of these things are true.

And if Jesus actually did die on the cross and rise from the dead, it changes everything. It's the most reasonable thing in the world to believe what he says.

And he reveals the Trinity to us. He reveals God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. It's completely reasonable to believe this. Those are part of God's wondrous works.

[26 : 50] God is love-loving. God is love-loving. Now, we still have to get to this part about how does this all fit with dealing with haters.

Well, the psalm is very wise. First, it's just reminded us life is difficult, so prayer is necessary.

Secondly, it's reminding us that there is a God that does exist.

There is a God that you can pray for, pray to, and this is a God of love. And by the way, just a small but very important point.

One of the problems we have when we're dealing with haters is that when we deal with haters or enemies or just people who really want us to fail, they can seem so huge.

I know that sometimes when I'm dealing with a conflict, that other person can seem so big, it's hard for me to have any mental or emotional space to do other things, to get the emails done that I need to get, to just to do anything, to even concentrate on a book that I'm reading or to work on a sermon.

[28 : 04] These things can become really huge. Because you see that often when we have people who are hating us, we're really opposed to us, they seem really big. And when they seem really big, it means that God is small.

So one of the really wise things that this psalm is doing is reminding us of proportion. God is big.

The hater is small. And so to spend time thinking about God is a way to put other human beings and other events that are troubling us in their proper perspective.

They're not that big. I mean, they might be bigger than me. And maybe they're going to win against me. But I can pray to the God who does exist who's way bigger. He's the one who created all things.

He's sovereign over all things. He reveals his words and does miracles. That's the God who really does exist. And everything else is small. But what the psalm is going to do now, it's going to be very, very wise.

Because you see, one of the things that we want, there's two types of things that we want in our lives. One of them is that we want surface change. Right? We want to have, you know, I used to have a problem of really putting people down in conversation.

[29 : 15] And I wanted to stop that. That's like a surface type of change. That, you know, you're going to say something and you just have that ability to zip your lip for a second. You know? And there's that type of surface change, immediate change, which we'd like.

But what we also want is deep change. We want to be changed at the level of our being, at the level of deep habits, the level of deep character, of the level of deep affections.

We want that double change, the immediate and the deep. And so now, for the rest of the psalm, the first three verses are going to, the next three verses are going to talk about deep change.

And then the last four verses are going to talk practically about five things we can pray for dealing with haters. But let's look at the deep change. And it's really interesting, because the deep change is going to go in a direction which we would never have expected.

Let's look at what happens. Verse 11. Teach me your way, O Lord, that I may walk in your truth. Unite my heart to fear your name.

[30 : 25] Whoa. Fear your name. We're going to talk about it. Unite my heart to fear your name. I give thanks to you, O Lord, my God, with my whole heart, and I will glorify your name forever.

For great is your steadfast love toward me. You have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol. If you could put up a point.

We're going to put up the point, and then I'll go back to look at the verses. The point of this thing is, be formed for day-to-day life and for eternity. In a sense, the Bible is forming us for day-to-day life and for eternity.

Now, just to go back and look at these verses 11 to 13, like, on one level, if you get nothing else out of the sermon, verses 11, and you get over a little bit in a moment this fear of the Lord thing.

Actually, I'm going to say this one thing. If, I don't know, I mean, there's lots of things if I could get modern Christians and Canadian Christians to do. I guess there's lots of things I'd do, but you know one of the things that would be really high on my list?

[31 : 32] I know I'm weird. I don't think enough Christians pray for the fear of the Lord. I don't think that's part of our worship services.

It's not part of our worship songs. I don't think it's part of how we think. It's not often part of counseling and spiritual advice. And it's so all the way through the Bible.

If there's one thing I would encourage Christians to do is just, you know, maybe you're going to be fearful of doing it at first, but there is something really powerful about praying to fear God. I know this is something that's not fitting in with our culture, but I, you know, forget the culture.

Like, don't care what Oprah says. Just, like, pray, or The View, or Jordan Peterson, or whatever. Like, be equal about, you know, people. Like, pray for the fear of the Lord.

Like, if you just think about it, well, I'll try to get over the, talk about the fear of the Lord more in a moment, but just, if all you get out of the sermon is that you're going to maybe put in your Bible somewhere that every day or once a week you're going to pray verses 11 to 12 or 11 to 13.

[32 : 36] Like, what a brilliant thing to pray. Teach me your way, O Lord. Like, I can, like, this, David has put, God has written a prayer for you to pray. Teach me your way. Like, a way means in terms of how to live, how to do each day.

Teach me that, Father. Teach me your way. You're the one who's created all things. You sustain all things. You're sovereign over all things. You're the miracle-working God. As we're going to see in a moment, you're the God who redeems.

You are love, and you are love itself loving. So teach me your way, O Lord, and that I may walk in your truth. What a good thing to pray. Like, you know, we live in a world that increasingly values lies.

Misinformation, disinformation are two really fancy words for lying. That's what misinformation is. It's lying. Disinformation is lying. You know, we live in a culture that says the end justifies the means. So if lying gets what you want, go ahead and lie.

[33 : 40] But that's not the way of Christ. That's not the way of God. God is inviting you to be a people of truth, people of the truth, and people of truth, that I may walk in your truth.

Unite my heart to fear your name. Now, if you think about it, if I was, like, this is a whole other sermon. Just this last little bit and the first bit of verse 12. Many of us here, many of us here, would say there's been times in our hearts, our hearts have been broken.

Our hearts have been bruised. Our hearts are scattered. Our hearts have a hole in them.

Something has happened to rip something right out of our heart. Our hearts feel like they're poisoned.

Our hearts, like, that's a really big thing. Our hearts don't feel whole and they don't feel united and they don't feel healthy. This is talking about the very center of who we are.

And the Bible here is saying that it's asking God to unite my heart. Knit my heart back together so it is whole and healthy.

[34 : 44] What a good thing to pray. Well, what is this thing about fearing your name that's fearing the Lord? And here's the whole, here's part of what you're praying for when you're dating. Like, and why is the word, well, here's the word, the word is there, is partially fear.

Is that because what you want to really know is when you, you want to know how moral God is, how just God is, how God is love-loving.

And if you start to really see that, like, goodness is untamed and it's deep and it's real and it's of God and to do something which is not good, to have that sense of horror of what you've done, to know the importance of truth and then when you say a lie, to not just say that it's just a lie but to have a sense of the horror of the fact that I have lied.

That love is so important and so to show indifference or hatred and to have a sense of the horror of that. To understand the importance of others and to be selfish and to have a sense of the horror of that and to know God and to know Him so that you know Him in these ways and that you can start to see when you do things that are not that and have an appropriate emotion.

I mean, that's part of, those are good words. And it has a sense of reverence and honor to know love, loving. Why wouldn't you want to honor and glorify love, loving?

[36 : 14] And also, it's implying, this is why all of the things, it talks about God's love and His steadfast thing and about knowing Him and knowing His grace and it talks about fearing Him. It's one of the most profound things.

As we all know, one of the hard parts about parenting is us not being able to understand that a parent is different than the child. And it's too easy for us to see the child reflecting on us or have our fears and foibles transferred and translated onto them or want what we think is going to be successful for our kids.

My parents did not want me to be a minister. They were Irish immigrants. I'm the oldest son. I was really good in math and science.

Up until my conversion, I told everybody I was going to be an engineer. They were in seventh heaven to hide the idea that they'd have a son who was an engineer. I was going to be a minister? Like, they were Christians, but they were disappointed. And so it's so easy for us to confuse ourselves with other people.

[37 : 20] It's even more easy for us to confuse ourselves with the invisible, immortal, transcendent, but imminent God. And the fear of God is a growth in knowing where I begin and end and where God begins and ends and that I am not God.

Wouldn't that be better if more people knew that they weren't God? Shouldn't that be something we should pray for ourselves? It would horrify us if we saw that somebody else said he thinks he's God. No, that should cause a fear that that would ever be within us. This is why it's such a brilliant thing to know him and honor him and the horror of idols. Don't we all want this?

And it's all done in the context of hope. Look at verse 13. It's the context of hope. You know, we can pray verses 11 to 13 in a way that David couldn't pray it. David has this prophetic vision or sense and the verb tenses here are this prophetic tense.

Look at verse 13. For great is your steadfast love toward me. You have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol. Now, David hasn't died yet and he's not talking about metaphors. But the verb tense there is there's a tense in ancient Hebrew and a tense in Greek where something in the future is so certain, the only way to communicate the certainty of the future is to use a past tense.

[38 : 46] Canada was founded in 1867. Jesus has come back. Now, Jesus has come back would be a bit confusing confusing in English. English doesn't have that sense. But that's what they're talking about.

This is so, David is so certain that he's going to be delivered from Sheol by God. Now, we as Christians understand that in some ways he's prophetically seeing Christ that he doesn't understand and we can say that in Christ.

You know, there's an Anglican minister who is also a Puritan and he has a hymn and I'm just changing the line a little bit. I love this line. What's the significance of the cross?

In the cross, love to the loveless shown that loved and lovely shall you be. That's what Jesus is doing in the cross. Love to the loveless shown that loved and lovely you shall be.

So, five ways to pray, right? So, life is difficult so prayer is necessary. Begin with prayer, continue with prayer, end with prayer.

[39 : 52] The triune God is the only God. He's the one that you should pray to. He is big, everything else is small. We ask God not just for the superficial things which we're going to pray for right now, but we ask for those deep changes in our character, the deep changes in our heart, the wholeness of our heart, the unitedness of our heart.

The heart would be alive and strong and rooted in him and now we still have to pray for the situation. So, in a sense, if you could put up the fourth point right now rather than a few verses, the fourth point is how to pray when faced with haters.

And the first thing, given all that we've just said, is 4A, if you could put it up, Claire, pray for the fear of the Lord. Pray verses 11 to 13.

And pray, the 4B is pray honestly. Look at verses 14 to 15. O God, insolent men, can be translated as arrogant men, insolent, arrogant men have risen up against me.

A band of ruthless men seeks my life and they do not set you before them. In other words, they have no time for God whatsoever. But you, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.

[41 : 05] Now, I mean, sometimes people really are out to get you. Like if you think people are out to get you, maybe you should talk to somebody and you talk to them and say, you know what, maybe when your dad said that to you it's not because he hated you.

Like maybe he just meant that. But really sometimes, you just need to be honest. I'm dealing with haters. I'm dealing with people who want me to not succeed. I'm dealing with people, everybody in

my office is trying to climb the greasy pole and the best way to climb a greasy pole is to kick other people who might want to climb above you so you can climb on their faces. And that's what I'm dealing with. And you pray into it. Right? Pray honestly. Verse 15 is going to be pray for strength to act.

Look at the first part of verse 15. But you, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious. Sorry, verse 16. Turn to me and be gracious to me. Give your strength.

to your servant. Pray for strength. Right? First one is pray for the fear of the Lord. Pray honestly.

Third, pray for strength to act. Fourth, pray for God's help.

[42 : 14] Verse 16. Turn to me and be gracious to me. Give your strength to your servant and save the son of your maidservant. That's asking God's help to save him. And finally, if I give my life to Christ and I understand that Jesus takes, Jesus died on the cross because he wants me to be the father's, the child of the father adopted by his grace and the power of the Holy Spirit.

And if I come to realize that that's the heart of the father, the heart of the son and the heart of the Holy Spirit for me, it should be my heart for others.

And that we can see in the final verse. Pray that the Lord will turn the hearts of the haters. Look at verse 17. Show me a sign of your favor that those who hate me may see and be put to shame because you, Lord, have helped me and comforted me.

So because you have helped me and comforted me, it's a good thing that others who are hating me will be ashamed of what they're doing and hopefully out of that shame turn to Christ.

Very wise way to pray. Very wise psalm. Encourage you to pray into deep change. To know Jesus who's died on the cross for you. He died for you.

[43 : 49] Love to the loveless shown that you might loved and lovely be. That's why he died for you. And to give yourself to that love. And to use the words of verses 11 to 13, not all the things, to remember how big God is and to pray that God would show you his way, that you'd walk in his truth, that he'd unite your heart to fear your name, that you can pray with your whole heart not only every day but into all eternity.

Brothers and sisters, let's do that. Let's stand right now. Father, we give you thanks and praise that Jesus came and died on the cross, that you, Father, and Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, three persons, one God, that you are love-loving, and that you showed love, Father, in the cross and the person of your Son, so that loved and lovely we will be.

We were loveless because we turned our back on you, but your Son came and sought us that loved and lovely we might be. And we ask, Father, that you help us to see you as big, haters as small in comparison to you, that you would help us to begin with prayer and continue with prayer and to end with prayer.

And we ask, Father, that you would teach us your way, help us to walk in your truth, unite our hearts to fear your name, so that with our whole hearts we might glorify and praise you each day and every day into all eternity.

And we ask these things in the name of Jesus, your Son and our Savior, and all God's people said, Amen. I invite you to take a posture of prayer as we go into a time of, oh wait, so there's not any intercessions at this time.

[45 : 44] Actually, I'm going to just say a short prayer. Take a posture of prayer and we'll just say a very brief extemporaneous prayer. Father, we give into your hands our city and our nation.

We thank you, Father, for those who are in government. We thank you, Father, for those who are in the civil service. We ask, Father, that you help them to do their jobs honorably and honestly, to be very good at what they do, and that you would use them for the true flourishing of this land, of this city.

We ask, Father, for our neighbor to the south in the midst of a very important election. And we know, Father, that tempers and spirits are very high.

And we commend that country into your hands, Lord. They are important in and of themselves and they are important for the rest of the world. And, Father, we ask that you would have, just as we will have an election next year, and, Father, and for our American brothers and sisters, we pray for both countries, Father, that you have mercy on us and that you do not give us the governments we deserve.

But that you would give us a far better government than we deserve. That you would raise up men and women in office who would seek the true good of their people, the true good Father of the world community, that would seek true prosperity and justice and righteousness for all.

[47 : 15] And we ask, Father, for each of us that you help us to be very faithful in the task that you have given us, that you help us to be faithful in prayer and sharing the gospel, help us, Father, to be financially generous, to have a deep life of prayer and to read your word.

And show us, Father, how we can do things both in the church and in the world and in our community that bring you glory and are good for this city. We commend into your hands, Father, our partner churches around the world, in particular, I think today, Father, of the missionaries that we support.

And I commend into your hands B as he prepares to go to Asia. We commend into your hands N and K in Northern Africa, Trish in Uganda, Norm and Audrey in Angola, Judah and Jesse in Colombia, and also, Father, for Samir and his work in Afghanistan and amongst Afghani refugees. Father, we ask that you would help these missionaries, that you would bless the churches that they partner with and are involved with, in particular, Father, for the underground church in Afghanistan and Iran.

We ask your blessing upon them. These are brothers and sisters in Christ. And we ask that you help us to be faithful in praying for them. And we ask all these things in the name of Jesus, your Son and our Savior.

[48 : 40] Amen.