

Hope in God Alone

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[0 : 00] Good morning. It is a pleasure for us to be with you.

! We love the Mosses.

And we are so grateful to be here. I'm so grateful to get to bring God's Word. Because I have nothing worthwhile. But God speaks to His people.

What a privilege for us to hear from the Word of God. To be addressed directly by our God. Who knows us. Who loves us. Who knows every circumstance of our lives. It's an amazing kindness.

So, would you please pray with me as we begin. Father God, You are an awesome God.

[1 : 16] You are awesome in Your holiness. In Your power. In Your goodness. In Your love. That You would set Your love on men and women like us.

Who would not otherwise seek You. That You would seek us. That You would take every step of reaching out to us. And taking out hearts of stone.

And giving us hearts of flesh. Giving us new desires. That we would want to know You. And want to love You. And want to serve You. That is amazing kindness and grace.

And so, Father, as we gather under Your Word. We pray that You would, by Your Spirit, work in us. That You would speak to us.

That the truth of who You are would rightly affect our hearts. That our hearts would rise in worship and love towards You. That You would receive the glory that You are due.

[2 : 17] And we pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Well, if you haven't already, please do open your Bibles to Psalm 62. Hope is powerful.

It can make the difference between life and death. Hope can provoke in us surprising endurance in the face of soul-crushing trials.

But on the other hand, the absence of hope is draining. Hopelessness tells us that life is pointless. Hopelessness is powerful nourishment for self-pity.

We all need hope. But not all hope is real. Not all hope is grounded in truth or consistent with reality. We're all familiar with hope.

But we're also familiar with false hopes. With those promises that don't pan out the way that we intended. Nearly 80 years ago, on September 30, 1938, British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain landed outside of London and spoke to the crowds there.

[3 : 26] He told them, the settlement of the Czechoslovakian problem, which has now been achieved, is, in my view, only the prelude to a larger settlement in which all of Europe may find peace.

This morning, I had another talk with the German Chancellor, Herr Hitler. And here is the paper, which bears his name upon it as well as mine. Some of you perhaps have already heard what it contains, but I would just like to read it to you.

We regard the agreement signed last night in the Anglo-German Naval Agreement as symbolic of the desire of our two peoples never to go to war with one another again. Later that day, he stood outside 10 Downing Street and concluded, My good friends, for the second time in our history, a British Prime Minister has returned from Germany bringing peace with honor.

I believe it is peace for our time. We thank you from the bottom of our hearts. Go home and get a nice, quiet sleep. The very next day, Germany invaded the Sudetenland.

And by March, Hitler had attacked the rest of Czechoslovakia. And on September 1st, 1939, less than one year after this speech, World War II was officially begun. Chamberlain's intentions were no doubt honorable, but he was unable to deliver what he had promised, peace for our time.

[4 : 48] Four words that Chamberlain might desperately wish to take back, but which history has shown to be little more than false hopes based on empty promises.

Christians are often accused of offering false hopes. We believe in a God whom we cannot see. We find guidance from an ancient book and we look for direction in this life.

Many of the values that we hold dearest are terribly inconsistent with modern ideas of equality and virtue and progress. We invest our time and our monies, our affections and our energies in the church.

And we seek to live as though this world is not our home because it isn't. And why? Why are we willing? Why are we eager even to live so differently?

Because we have met the risen Christ and our hope has been firmly grounded in him. So when it comes to the big questions of life, our hope is clear.

[5 : 54] We hope in God. More specifically, we hope in the grace and mercy of God as offered to us through Jesus Christ. That is our hope. But life seeks to rob our hope.

We have an enemy and the devil always aims to convince us that God is not real and he's not good. That he's unreliable at best. And so even though we know where our hope should rest, we face a battle every day, every moment actually, to truly hope in God.

In the trials and conflicts of life, our hope is revealed. When things aren't going the way we'd like or planned, our affections and our choices make it plain. Are we hoping in God?

Or are we hoping in money? Or in relationships? Or in progress? And the list could go on. Well, thankfully, we're not the first ones to look for hope in this world.

King David was a man very familiar with trials and dashed hopes. He experienced glorious highs. Think of him defeating Goliath and becoming king and uniting the kingdom of Israel.

[7 : 04] And he experienced crushing loaves, being hunted by his father-in-law, having a wife turn against him, having a child die in infancy, having a son usurp his throne.

Because of David's role in salvation history, we know quite a lot about his trials. Many of them inspired the Psalms. And it's in today's Psalm, Psalm 62, that he has a very simple message that will help us all to face our own trials and sufferings.

So how might we distill David's wisdom from Psalm 62? I believe it boils down to four simple words. Hope in God alone.

Hope in God alone. They are simple words. They may even seem too simple. Simplistic. Or they may sound like bumper sticker theology.

But hope is only as good as its object. And in those four words are exactly what we need to live life fully and faithfully in this age.

[8 : 09] Hope in God alone. So we're going to unpack how and why to hope in God alone under the two categories of suffering and trial that David provides for us.

First is hope in the face of opposition. And secondly, hope without regard to circumstances. So hope in the face of opposition and hope without regard to circumstances.

And so as we turn now to read David's inspired instruction, let's look to quiet our hearts because hope in God is rarely loud and flashy. Trials and temptations may be loud in our ears and the world's success can clamor with compelling volume.

But hope in God is often quiet and calm. It's like a strong keel on a ship which keeps us steadfast in the midst of life's storms. You know what a keel is, of course.

It's the backbone of the ship, the very first component of construction that holds the whole ship together. And it has a very important function for a ship. The keel converts sideways energy into forward motion.

[9 : 15] That's what hope does in the Christian life. It converts the sideways currents of sufferings and trials into forward motion of faith in God. But it requires some thoughtfulness, some consideration from us, some engagement with the living God to know this kind of soul-quieting, peace, and hope.

It doesn't come quick and easy. David's words will sound just like slogans to us if we're looking for a quick action plan and ready bullet points. As we're going to see, hope in God actually requires silence.

So let's read Psalm 62. For God alone, my soul waits in silence. From Him comes my salvation. He only is my rock and my salvation, my fortress.

I shall not be greatly shaken. How long will all of you attack a man to batter him like a leaning wall, a tottering fence? They only plan to thrust him down from his high position.

They take pleasure in falsehood. They bless with their mouths, but inwardly they curse. For God alone, oh my soul, wait in silence.

[10 : 30] For my hope is from Him. He only is my rock and my salvation. My fortress, I shall not be shaken. On God rests my salvation and my glory.

My mighty rock, my refuge is God. Trust in Him at all times, oh people. Pour out your heart before Him.

God is a refuge for us. Those of low estate are but a breath. Those of high estate are a delusion. In the balances, they go up.

They are together lighter than a breath. Put no trust in extortion. Set no vain hopes on robbery. If riches increase, set not your heart on them.

Once God has spoken. Twice I have heard this. That power belongs to God. And that to you, oh Lord, belongs steadfast love. For you will render to a man according to his work.

[11 : 31] Hope in God alone. So this is our first point. Hope in the face of opposition. Verses 1-2 serve as a header for this psalm. They tell us what David's aims are for us as we're immediately brought into David's distress.

He has clearly been unsettled by some circumstance. And so he begins by professing faith in God. Now maybe you've read these words before perhaps many times and because the words are simple and familiar Bible terms, we can be tempted to read quickly past them without truly pausing to consider the claims that David is making.

These are very rich verses. Just 29 words that are packed with meaning. So let's slow down and examine them a bit. Verse 1, For God alone my soul waits in silence.

We noted before that hope is only as good as its object. And here David is hoping in God, the very best object, and God alone. That's a very important word, isn't it?

Alone. David is fixing his eyes on his Savior exclusively and determinedly. He's not looking to anyone else. He waits for God alone.

[12 : 45] When you're suffering, where is your hope? Is it in God alone? And David tells us that he waits in silence. No demanding.

No complaining. His waiting is faith-filled. He's waiting for God alone in silence because he has a rightly grounded conviction that from him comes my salvation.

The challenge here is to silence our hearts and to silence the devil's accusations against us. When we face suffering or injustice, everything within us wants to cry foul.

It's not fair. I've been wrong. Something needs to change. And all of that may or may not be true. But in the midst of our response, we often jettison God and start casting about for any solution which we think will give us what we want.

That is a fatal error. When we cast about, it kills our hope. But David's been patiently building something for us here.

[13 : 54] He's in distress and he waits for God alone, silently. Now this isn't fatalism. It's not laziness. He's not waiting for God because he has no other options.

There are always other options. The devil will see to that. David is waiting for God because he's convinced that God is the only one good enough and strong enough to help him.

He is the only one who can actually save David from his distress. These are David's convictions and they are grounded in the character of God that David had before the trials came into his life.

God is good and he is fully and exclusively trustworthy. So we're going to tease this out in the verses to follow but I want us to note here that David, the truths that David employs when he's confronting trials in God's world.

David operates out of the biblical position that this is his father's world and that every circumstance that he is facing is ordained by his Lord.

[14 : 58] Do you ever pause and think about that? Every circumstance that you are facing is ordained by your Lord. There is no circumstance in your life that God has not ordained will be there.

He has good purposes in every circumstance, in every trial, in every suffering. Because David knows and is convinced of his father's goodness, he is looking to him alone in silence for salvation. He is fundamentally oriented to God. At the deepest level of who he is as a man, David is fundamentally oriented to God.

He was a man like us and so he was tempted to turn to other sources for salvation. But here, he's walking in faith and his eyes are turned toward God.

He continues into verse 2. He alone is my rock and my salvation. God alone. Notice how many times through this psalm that David speaks of God alone or only.

[16:06] There is an exclusivity to hope in God. In fact, the more exclusive our hope is in God, the more clearly it glorifies God. The more exclusively we hope in God, the more clearly it glorifies Him.

Because by hoping in God alone, we magnify Him. We could look elsewhere. We could hope otherwise. But by hoping in God, we are declaring that from Him comes our salvation.

There is nowhere else that we're looking. So having fixed his hope in God alone, David calls Him His rock and His salvation. He continues, My fortress, I will not be greatly shaken.

This is David declaring that God has been tested and found true. And more than true, He's been found to be safe and mighty and secure. He is a rock.

He is salvation. He's a mighty fortress in the midst of our storm-tossed world. But David's soul was under assault. And as he turned to God, he found safe harbor.

[17:12] He found peace and rest. God is a fortress. He's a rock. He's dependable. He's steadfast. He's unshakable and true.

Now we might imagine that these are hard-earned truths for David. You don't know God as your fortress unless you're in need of shelter. Unless you feel some sense of assault and turmoil and danger.

David certainly had many experiences of needing shelter in his life. And this psalm has traditionally been linked to David's flight from Jerusalem when his son Absalom usurped his throne.

You know the story from 2 Samuel beginning in chapter 15. Absalom was David's son. He was the most handsome man in the kingdom. And he was very ambitious.

So after a disagreement with David about the treatment of his sister Tamar, Absalom plots to make himself king. The Bible tells us that he flattered and stole the hearts of the men of Israel.

[18:13] And he succeeded in taking the throne from David. So it's under this distress that David writes this psalm. And I encourage you this afternoon, read the story of Absalom in Psalm 62.

And then read this psalm and consider how David wrestled with God and his word. Well that history certainly fits with the next verses, verses 3-4.

David's expressing his dismay at being under attack. It's apparently been going on for some time for he cries, how long will you attack a man? He's been battered.

He's on the verge of collapse like a leaning wall, a tottering fence. That's not how we normally think of a king, is it? A king in his strength and power and pomp and ceremony.

But he's a tottering fence. He's about to fall over. Well no doubt some of us can relate. Hope in God doesn't deny our circumstances.

[19:11] Life can be very hard. You may be desperately beaten down. Still, you must hope in God. But perhaps your prayers have been beginning this way lately like David.

How long, O Lord? When will this end? Why must I suffer so? I think it ought to encourage us that David responds in this way. His questioning of God comes after his declaration of faith.

So this is not unbelief. He's not charging God with wrong. This is a faith-filled question. It's not Christian to sit impassively in the face of suffering and trial.

That's stoicism. It is Christian to engage with God honestly and humbly. So we note here that David's silence in verse one is not total.

Just as Jesus' silence on the cross was not total. They were both silent toward other hopes, but direct and passionate toward God. And we must be too.

[20:12] God, I know you are here. I know you are good. Save me. I have nowhere else to go. That is the cry that honors God by looking to him for salvation.

Continuing on, we learn something about David's enemies here. Just as David has a singular focus, he is hoping in God's salvation, his enemies have one aim, to thrust him down from his high position.

There's a jealousy and a pettiness to their project. They want to throw off David's authority and see him humiliated. Well, verse four elaborates, they take pleasure in falsehood.

They bless with their mouths, but inwardly they curse. They enjoy lying and scheming, even while they present a pleasant front to the world. They are double-tongued, kind and deferring to David's face, but wicked at heart and behind his back.

They're the reason that David is waiting for God alone in silence. He is facing serious opposition.

Men who want to tear the throne from his hands, and though we can't relate exactly to that trial, we all can relate to being betrayed and maligned.

[21 : 26] We all have foes. We sometimes face earthly foes, those around us who want to see us suffer and fail, and we certainly have a demonic foe. The devil loves to see God's people stumble. He loves to see us flounder, most of all. He loves to see us question or forget about God. He wants us to live in this age as though God is not with us, that he's not for us, that he's not worth relying upon.

The devil cares less about our profession of faith, less about any spiritual-sounding words, and more about the actual quality of our faith. He's less concerned about us performing religious duties or using spiritual phrases, and much more concerned about us actually engaging with God.

In fact, I'd say he's terrified by that prospect, that men and women who would take God at his word and actually put our hope in him every day and every moment.

I've always loved how 2 Chronicles 16, 9 communicates this truth. A prophet is speaking to Esau, the king of Judah, that he should not have looked to foreign kings to help him.

[22 : 35] He should have looked to the Lord, and here's why. 2 Chronicles 16, 9, for the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth to give strong support to those whose heart is blameless toward him.

I learned it in the New American Standard that those whose heart is completely his. God cares for his own, for those who belong to him. He loves to show himself strong for us, and the devil knows this, and it terrifies him.

Nothing must be more demoralizing to the devil than when men and women who agreed with his assessment of reality in the Garden of Eden, that God is not good, not to be trusted, turn around and declare that God is good, and we will stake our very lives upon him.

We will live for God because he is worth living for. Standing on that truth shows the devil to be small and weak, and it magnifies the greatness of our God.

So let's apply this a moment. If you can, bring to mind a trial or a struggle, a suffering that you're going through right now. Who's involved? What are the circumstances that you're facing?

[23 : 48] What challenges do you find in your own heart as you look at that situation? What challenges do you find in the hearts and minds of others that are perhaps causing that situation? Now, what does faith look like in that situation?

What would it look like to trust God in the midst of your trial and suffering? What does it look like for you to say God is real and he is good in this today?

We don't want to move on quickly. Please consider. I think we can often look at our circumstances as though we're the primary actors, but God is always primary.

In every moment of every life, of every person, of every age, God is primary. And if we belong to him, if we've trusted in Jesus Christ, then we are the recipients of an even greater level of care and attention from our heavenly father.

He is working all things together for our good. He's maturing us. He's teaching us to love, to love him and to love one another. He means for us to take him at his word and to place our hope in him.

[25 : 06] If you've never trusted in Jesus, if the idea of having God as a loving heavenly father seems foreign to you, then you have something to consider. This is who God is.

He has revealed himself to be. He's opposed to his enemies and he is merciful. When we humble ourselves and we come to him for forgiveness, he is faithful.

And if you feel the conviction of your sins and you know that you need a savior, Jesus is that savior. Turn to him. Trust in him.

He will not turn you away. He is the only sure and faithful ground for true hope. Now, if our God were a God who is weak and ineffectual or who's cold and distant, then verses one to two make no sense.

Why wait for such a God? Why trust in him? Why even bring him into the equation at all? But if he's the God who has come near, the God who condescended to come as a baby and to live and to die for us and for our salvation, then let our hearts respond appropriately with love, a mighty love, a mighty affection that propels us to our savior, he is our rock, he is our salvation, he's our fortress.

[26 : 27] That is why David tells us to hope in God alone. And that brings us to our second point, hope without regard to circumstances. When I was a child growing up in Colorado, my favorite days in elementary school were the field trips.

We had lots of great field trips in Colorado. We'd go see dinosaur bones or Native American cliff dwellings. But the one that was generally the most exciting was when we went panning for gold in

the Rocky Mountains.

We would head up to a little town called Cripple Creek, Colorado, and there was someone who would meet us there with panning equipment. And then we'd wade into the water and begin. Now, if you've ever panned for gold, you might guess at what we found.

As we dipped our pans into the silt of the river bottom and the water washed through and sorted things out, we were all excited by the discovery of these little shiny gold flakes. We had discovered gold, and I was certain that now I could have the best baseball card collection in the fifth grade. Of course, we hadn't found gold. We'd found pyrite, also known as fool's gold. And as our teacher explained, though it shone like gold, it was actually almost worthless.

[27 : 37] And so our momentary hopes of riches and fame were dashed on the cruel rocks of reality. Well, that's the way false hopes always work. They mimic true hope.

They offer us everything we could want and more. It's like the prosperity gospel. I grew up in the prosperity gospel. Offers everything you could want and more, but it never delivers. It's a demonic twisting of what the gospel is. It puts us at the center instead of God. It's a false hope. And false hopes never pay off.

Sometimes we find that out right away, but oftentimes we don't discover our error until we've been through great suffering and pain and expense. David wants to spare us that pain.

So he rehearses the truths from the beginning of the psalm again in verses five to six. The best truths always bear repeating, and these are certainly some of the best. So verse five, for God alone, oh, my soul, wait in silence.

[28 : 38] My hope is from him. He only is my rock and my salvation, my fortress. I shall not be shaken. Since we've already spent some time unpacking these truths under point one, I'm not going to elaborate again, but the parallelism reminds us that David's hope is fixed.

He hasn't changed his mind. Even in the face of the opposition in verses three to four, he has fixed his hope upon God. And if you look carefully, you'll see a few minor changes.

He goes from declaring that his soul waits in silence to addressing his soul. Oh, my soul, wait in silence. He's commanding himself to hope in God.

And he also changes his conclusion from I will not be greatly shaken to I will not be shaken. Period. We don't want to read too much into these changes. They might be just a bit of stylistic variety.

But given the truths he's going to declare in verses nine to ten, it seems likely that David's seeking to strengthen his resolve. His hope in God did not immediately remove his suffering.

[29 : 42] It rarely does. And so he needs to continue to hope. So he speaks to his soul and he studies himself in the Lord. He also elaborates a bit in verse seven.

On God rests my salvation and my glory. My mighty rock, my refuge is God. It's the same truth from a slightly different angle. God is his salvation and on God rests his salvation.

God not only accomplishes his salvation, he actually gives himself to us. So often seeing the truth from as many angles as possible is helpful in steering our souls rightly.

And that's what David's doing here. And then David turns for the first time in this song to address his audience directly. So far, he's only spoken to himself and to his enemies, but now he turns his attention to us in verse eight.

Trust in him at all times, O people. Pour out your heart before him. God is a refuge for us. David's picking up on the theme of hoping in God alone and he's expanding it.

[30 : 50] Hoping God alone means to hope in God at all times. And the most practical expression of that, the how-to of hope, is to pour out your heart before him.

It's an intriguing image. Our hearts like liquid full of desires and hopes and hurts and joys and discouragements and aspirations. And David's telling us to take all of that and to pour it out before God.

There's a risk in that, isn't there? When we pour out our hearts to someone, we make ourselves vulnerable. They could expose our dark secrets or twist our words or somehow take advantage of us in our failures.

It requires faith to pour out our hearts. And so David reminds us of a key gospel truth. God is a refuge for us. He's a refuge for his people.

Others will fail even sometimes if they love us, but God is a refuge for us. He's the one that we're to pour out our hearts to. His character, his perfect, his love is pure.

[31 : 55] He has demonstrated that conclusively by sending his son for us. The love that drove Jesus to the cross, that is our keel.

It's the foundational truth that we can build our lives upon. No storm can wreck it. No trial can take it down. That's why we can and we must pour out our hearts before him.

It's interesting in looking at your bulletin that the memory verse for this week is one of my favorite verses in all of scripture. Romans 8.1. There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

That is why we can hope in God alone. If my hope was in me and my character and my record, I would have no hope. But I have no condemnation because I am in Christ Jesus.

That is why we can hope in God alone. That's why you can pour out your heart before him. So what prevents you from trusting God right now, even with certain circumstances in your life?

[33 : 00] What pain is too great? What situation seems too desperate? God's calling us to pour out all of our hearts before him. He knows it.

It's not like we're informing him of something. We're not bringing him up to speed. Our pouring out in our hearts before God is a faith-filled act of trusting in the goodness of our Savior. And as we do that, we find him to be a faithful refuge.

David then turns his attention to address false hopes and especially the folly of hoping in our circumstances and abilities. He's going to give us a God's eye view of man.

He knows that we're always tempted to put our ultimate hope in ourselves and in our abilities, what we're able to do. And so he wants to save us from the mistake that that is as well.

So he begins to examine our reliance on our station in life, our financial position as the grounds for hope. And as you might expect, he's against it.

[34 : 00] So verse 9, those of lowest state are but a breath. Those of highest state are a delusion. In the balances, they go up. They are together lighter than a breath. Well, the imagery here is pretty clear, isn't it?

The poor are but a breath. That's the language that the author of Ecclesiastes picks up on. The poor are vaporous. They're unsubstantial. But the wealthy are no better off.

They're a delusion. OK, but there's many delusions in life. What kind of delusion are they? Well, if you pile them all together, rich and poor, and put them on a scale, they'll add up to something less weighty and less substantial than a breath.

So the delusion of the wealthy is in thinking there's something when they're actually nothing.

They're but a breath. Their lack of substance is compounded by their arrogant assumption that they're really important, that they've made themselves important and secure.

In the States right now, we're in the midst of Hollywood's award season. And if there's anything that Hollywood excels at, it's self-congratulation.

[35 : 06] They've set up an entire industry of talk shows and press junkets and award shows to remind themselves that they're very important, that their work matters. And David says, this is delusional.

Delusional. Today's starlet is tomorrow's reject. And the fame and wealth that gave her life meaning are gone. Hollywood stars and wannabe stars aren't the only ones who can hope in wealth and fame.

I think we're all tempted to look to money as our hope. We can even be tempted to improve our financial position by any means possible. Because with wealth comes security and importance. Or so we suppose. But David doesn't agree. Verse 10. Put no trust in extortion. Set no vain hopes on robbery. If riches increase, set not your heart on them.

You can try to gain wealth by extortion or robbery, which are both illegal and a violation of God's law. Or you can just gain wealth any way possible, including hard work. But however wealth comes, David's bottom line is consistent.

[36 : 11] Set not your heart on them. The problem with money is not the money. It's our hearts. The problem with money is the love of money. It's the lure of money.

And where it comes before God and promises us peace and security. And most of all, independence. That is what David warns us against. It seems that God wills to keep most of us in a place of obvious dependence on him financially.

Why does he do that? Why are we not all just independently wealthy? Well, Proverbs 30 verses 8 to 9 put it this way. It's a prayer to God. Give me neither poverty nor riches.

Feed me with the food that is needful for me. Lest I be full and deny you and say, who is the Lord? Or lest I be poor and steal and profane the name of my God.

The temptation of great poverty is to do something desperate and so dishonor God. And the temptation of great wealth is to be full of ourselves. To actually deny God.

[37 : 15] And to think that we achieve this on our own and that we can sustain ourselves on our own. Who is the Lord? And so God keeps us somewhere in between. So that we can learn to hope in him throughout the entirety of our lives.

So David addresses wealth here. But there are many areas that we can look to hope outside of God, aren't there? We're in February. And around New Year's Day is when many fitness resolutions are made and subsequently broken.

I used to work at a department store. And I sold a lot of treadmills in January that were not being used by February. So every so often the latest diet or nutrition fad comes along with amazing promises of who you can be.

And none of these things are intrinsically good or evil. They're just tools. They can be used humbly in faith before God. Or they can be the focus of incredible hope and longing and desire for salvation.

If they're the latter, they will always disappoint us. So to help us to gain perspective, let's import some of the idols of our age into David's verses here. And we'll see what we get.

[38 : 18] And to be clear, I don't mean to make a mockery or make light of anyone's struggles. I think it helps us to consider the specific ways in which we can hope outside of God. So David says, Those who are weak are but a breath.

Those who are strong are a delusion. Those who are lonely are but a breath. Those who are popular are but a delusion. Those are just a few examples.

I'm sure you could think of others. And hopefully if you've been hoping in something or someone outside of God, the Holy Spirit's at work at you, drawing you to hope in Him. Leading you to repentance and faith in Him.

God is jealous for our affections. He does not look kindly upon rivals, even as He is kind and patient in drawing wayward sinners back to Himself.

He wants us to hope in God alone. Well, David concludes this psalm with two important notes for us. The first is the gospel fuel that we need to actually hope in God and in God alone.

[39 : 43] Verse 11, Once God has spoken, twice I have heard this, that power belongs to God, and that to you, O Lord, belongs steadfast love. That saying, once, twice, is a fancy way of saying that this is certain.

It is true. It is repeated because it's unchangeably true. Power belongs to God. In context here, it seems that David is talking about saving power.

He needs salvation, and that salvation must be accomplished powerfully. Weak solutions won't do. The delusional power of the wealthy cannot save. In his day, no one was more powerful or wealthy than David.

He was the king. Where does the king turn? He turns to God because power belongs to God. All power and authority are his.

Thankfully, the God of power is also the God of love. And not just any love, but chesed, the covenantal love of the God whose affections are life-giving and unswerving.

[40 : 52] To you, O Lord, belongs steadfast love. If you're realizing that your hope has not been in God alone, then take heart. When you have wavered, God has not.

He is steadfast. He is faithful. His keel is strong. He is a rock. Turn to him. Pour out your heart before him.

Repent where necessary. And know his forgiveness and grace. How satisfying it is for us to finally turn from ourselves and to know God as a refuge and a sure hope.

David's final point is to tell us that God is just. For you will render to a man according to his work. There's two aspects to this justice here.

The first is a warning for David's enemies that God will render to them according to their work. And if you're opposed to God right now, beware. He will bring final justice into your life.

[41 : 59] But secondly, and much more than that in the context of this psalm, this verse is clearly reminding us that God will vindicate his people.

When David says that God will render according to our work, we don't make the mistake of thinking that we in any way earn or merit our salvation. That privilege belongs to Jesus alone.

Our works are a response to his work. And they always flow out of what he has done for us. Our works are done as we hope in God alone.

So I want to close with the story of a man whose death illustrated this point very well. So, J. Gresham Machen was born in Baltimore. And he was born into a wealthy and prominent family in 1881.

He trusted Christ as a young man. And he went on to attend Princeton Seminary, which at that time was a strong and conservative institution. He then came back as a professor of New Testament in 1906.

[42 : 59] And he served Princeton well for many years. However, the seminary began to abandon the authority of the Bible. And as Machen saw the writing on the wall, he worked to begin a new seminary, Westminster, outside of Philadelphia.

He wrote several notable books, including Christianity and Liberalism, which is an excellent book. And he was seen in his day as the go-to source for conservative evangelical scholarship.

If the newspaper wanted to know who's going to speak for God's people, they would contact Machen. He helped to establish the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and missions agencies.

Well, in December 1936, he was traveling out to the Dakotas to speak to some churches there, even though he had been in ill health and he was weakened. As his health declined, he contracted pneumonia.

Before succumbing to that disease on New Year's Day, 1937, he telegraphed his good friend John Murray these words, I'm so thankful for the active obedience of Christ.

[44 : 01] No hope without it. Here was a man who had achieved great professional success, written best-selling books, achieved national renown. He had started a church and a seminary.

He had established the legacy that continues even today. And his deathbed hope was in Jesus Christ, in what he had accomplished for sinners like you and me. The active obedience of Christ, Jesus' fulfillment of his Father's will so that we could be counted righteous in him.

That is what sustained and encouraged Machen on his deathbed. That same hope can be true for us. If you fail to hope in God, if you're worried that you're not worthy, then take heart.

You are not worthy. And you have a Savior who never fails. He is worthy. He is faithful. And he shows himself strong for all those who hope in him.

The more clearly we see our need for a Savior, and the more truly we know Jesus as our Savior, the more we will hope in God alone. Let's pray.

[45 : 11] Father, we thank you that you have, through every generation, been faithful and true, that you are a refuge to your people. That even now in the storms and circumstances of our lives, as we come before you, that we can cry out, we can pour out our hearts before you, and find you to be a faithful Savior.

That you never leave us or forsake us. That you will always be true to your word. That you will always be magnified in our lives. We thank you that someday we will stand back and we will look and see the full measure of your faithfulness.

As we stand before you face to face. As we know your goodness and love. As we are made perfect. As you are perfect. And as we rejoice in your grace forever. So Father, be glorified in our lives.

We pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.