

Christ as Sustainer | Psalm 23:1-6 and Hebrews 13:5-8

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[0 : 00] Welcome to Ontario Community Church, where we're dedicated to encouraging, equipping, and engaging lives for Christ. Located in Ontario, Oregon, Pastor Patrick Daly preaches insightful sermons from the Word of God, offering practical applications for modern living.

We're delighted to share this sermon with you. Well, good morning, everyone. It is great to be here today with you, see all of your faces.

As we're finding our way back to our seats, we are going to finish our series as Christ, the Creator, Christ the Redeemer, and Christ as the Sustainer.

As a reminder in your notes, you'll see that this entire series is based off of there's passages in Colossians, Colossians chapter 1, 15 through 20, John chapter 1, verses 1 through 14, and Hebrews chapter 1, verses 1 through 3.

The goal in our objective here at Ontario Community Church is to encourage people to love God and to love others, to equip people with the Word of God and what it means to be a Christian and to engage lives for Christ, through sharing in our faith, and through service.

[1 : 23] All of this is centered around Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God, for it is all of us need to have that saving knowledge and believe in who Christ is.

In order for us to come to know who Jesus is, we must hear the Word of God. We must discover the Word of God. We must hear the Word being preached.

God provided a way of salvation in Christ in him by believing in him, having that faith in him. We've learned so much about who Jesus Christ is, and that all who believe in him, that they will live forever, they will not perish, but they will have eternal life, amen.

Jesus said when he spoke to Martha, I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me though he die, yet shall he live.

And everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this church? I sure hope you do. Faith comes through hearing the living Word.

[2 : 30] The Word of God is pure. It is truth. It is living and active. The purity of Scripture, it molds us to who God wants us to be.

And I pray that everyone here today will come to know who Jesus Christ is and receive the gift of salvation. And for the ones who have received, I pray that your life, that you will grow into the man or the woman of who God wants you to be.

Going from that milk to that solid food of the Word. May we, as a community, as a church, grow in Christ.

And so today, we are going to go into what Scripture says about Christ as the sustainer. You know, we have been created with intentionality.

We are made in the image of God. We're created with purpose and with God-given potential. We have been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, by the atoning sacrifice, the Word that became flesh.

[3 : 37] And the same God who made us, the same God who sent his son, Jesus, to redeem us, will sustain us and hold us in his arms.

And no matter what we go through, no matter what trial or tribulation life throws at us, no matter what war, rumor of war is happening in the world, we are protected by our Lord, our God.

He will never leave us. He will never abandon us. For Christ will sustain us all the days of our life. And this is what we would call that blessed assurance.

There is no greater time to believe in the Lord, to be protected, to be saved by grace through faith, and to be blessed. There is no greater security than that which exists in Christ.

And with all of this being said, let's pray together. Will you pray with me? And Father God, we thank you for giving us this ability to come here today as we are finishing off this series based off of your son, Jesus, the Christ, the Messiah, who is the Creator, the Redeemer, and the Sustainer.

[4 : 55] We pray for those that who do not know you, that you may reveal your truth, your love, that you may open their eyes to see that you are the way, the truth, and the life.

We pray for transformation, that lives will be changed, that people will come to believe in you. We pray for those who have been distanced or who are hurting.

May your comforting and healing hands be upon those who are struggling, those who are suffering, those who are distanced, or those who need comfort.

May they be restored in you. For those who are in sin, may they turn from their sins, may they repent from their sins, and may they live a life for you.

And we pray for those who do not know you well, that they continue to grow in you, in living and loving like you. We ask that you're with us this morning as we go deeper into your word.

[5 : 54] It is in Jesus' name that we pray, amen. So the first question I have for you that comes on the slide here is, is there anything to fear in knowing the Lord?

I want you to think about that question as we go forth today. I was mentioning earlier that we are all created in the image of God with intentionality, with God given potential, and with purpose.

Christ was there at the foundation of the world. God sent his son as the sacrificial lamb who was slain, the atoning sacrifice.

Christ fulfilled so many prophecies in the Old Testament by his birth, his life, his ministry, his death, and his resurrection on the third day.

The Lord provides salvation to all who believe in the Son, Jesus, the Christ. Christ is the Redeemer, as we have learned. And it is Christ who is the sustainer.

[6 : 56] It is Christ who holds things together. God takes care of his own. As we are saved by grace through faith in him, we are sustained.

And I'm speaking of the sustenance of Christ. What matters the most in this life is that you find Jesus Christ and that you believe in him.

Do you realize that you are secure when you believe in him? Do you realize there's a peace that surpasses all understanding? Do you realize that there is joy and comfort that comes from knowing the Lord?

I speak not of just knowing about God. I speak of knowing him. Knowing God is different than knowing of God.

I can know Tom Cruise. I can know of Tom Cruise. But do you actually know Tom Cruise? And I'm not saying God's Tom Cruise here. What I am saying is there's a difference between knowing of someone and actually knowing someone.

[8 : 02] And so ask yourself, do you know of God? How about knowing God? There's a fundamental difference there. I speak of having the saving knowledge to believe in him.

It is in him that we are saved, and it is in him that we are secure. In your notes, you'll see there's a marker in there for John chapter 10, verse 28, where it says where Christ is saying, I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.

And I love that language, right? No one will take you out of Christ's hand. What beautiful language that is. And we learn so much today.

Don't we get discouraged by the world today? Don't we get discouraged by the news and hearing about wars and the rumors of wars?

The world is changing. It seems like every day, almost by the hour, right? It seems like the world has just gone mad, as we've talked about before.

[9 : 10] And there's fear that's being spread in the news. There's fear that's being spread on social media. But going to our verses, I want us to remember that Christ will sustain us, that Christ is the firm foundation.

He is the solid rock on which we build our lives. He is the anchor for our souls. And with God at the center of our life, there is absolutely nothing to fear.

And I know that's very countercultural, isn't it? Doesn't culture want you to be afraid? Doesn't culture want to paralyze you almost? To thinking that, well, I can't go outside.

I need to be inside and be perilous, in this state of paralysis, if you will. But there's freedom. There's new life in Christ.

I'm reminded in Colossians chapter 1 verse 17, which says, Christ is before all things, and in him, all things hold together.

[10 : 22] All things hold together. And that verse not only speaks about how the universe is holding together with the laws that are established, like gravity, right? Or when we have things that are set in motion.

But also our own lives are held together by Christ. The idea of being held together, we have Christ that was there at the beginning. And he sees to it that things are set in motion and remain in order.

Consider the four seasons. Does summer just not happen sometimes? Maybe depending on your location, right? But we have the four seasons, the natural flow of what we can see in the earth.

The sun rises and the sun sets. It has its own motion, if you will. We have the earth that moves, right? We have the plants that grow and the plant.

We have seasons for everything. The same idea is we find this in Hebrews chapter one, verse three. This speaks of the power of Christ that upholds the universe by the word of his power.

[11 : 28] And that creation is held together by the power of Christ. In John chapter one, verse four, in him was life, and the life was the light of men.

The creation is maintained, so to speak. And in the same way, he sustains his creation. He sustains the plants, the fish in the sea, so to speak.

Don't you realize that Christ sustains us? Think about that. The same one that made creation provided a way for salvation.

Not only we're not only talking about the universe holding together, but how the Lord will hold us in his arms, so to speak, that God will sustain us, that Christ will be there for us no matter what it is that happens in this world.

That is a hopeful message that we should all take to heart. Despite what we read on the news, despite what's going on in culture, I'm not saying completely ignore it, but just understand that there is hope that exists in Christ.

[12 : 36] And because we are made in the image of God, and because Christ sacrificed himself for us, we have the greatest opportunity for us who do not know the Lord to come to know the Lord, and to be saved, and to be secure in Jesus Christ.

It all begins through believing in him. It begins through faith. And through faith comes sustenance. It comes sustaining, so to speak. And I'd like for us to turn our Bibles.

Please turn with me to page 1197. It's going to be Hebrews chapter 13, verses 5 through 8. We'll put that on the screen here.

So once again, it's Hebrews chapter 13, verses 5 through 8, on page 1197, if you're using the ESV, Pew, Bible. We're going to start with verse 5.

Are you there? All right. Keep your life free from the love of money, right? And be content with what you have.

[13 : 57] For he has said, what did he say? I will never what? I'll never leave you. Nor what? Nor forsake you.

So we can confidently say, the Lord is what? My helper, I will not fear what can man do to me.

We can stop right there. But let's keep going. Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you, the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith.

Verse 8, Jesus Christ is what? He is the same yesterday and today, and that's it? No, he is the same forever, amen?

And considering this context, this chapter starts off by saying that we should continue to love one another, that we should show hospitality to one another, and we should remember those who are in prison.

[14 : 58] We should let marriage be in high honor. That's a good verse for us to remember. Then the verse goes on by saying, by keeping free from the love of money and be happy with what you have, be content with what you have.

These verses are encouragement to remain in the truth of God's word. But then we read that part that says, I will never leave you nor forsake you.

What an encouragement from our Lord and our God, that he will not abandon us, that he will not forsake us, that he will not leave us, that God was always going to be there, no matter what happens in this crazy world that we live in, no matter what happens to you, even on a personal level.

Let's say you're going through a really hard time. Let's say you're arguing with your spouse, or let's say there's something going on with you and your friends. God is still going to be there to sustain you.

It's a direct quote from the Old Testament, where God reminds his people that God will always be there for them. And this is no different than when Christ says that he will be with us until the end of the age.

[16 : 08] This quote is found in Psalm 118. You don't have to turn there. It's verse 6 through 7. It's the same thing, right?

I will never leave you nor forsake you. When we believe in the Lord and we receive in salvation, there is absolutely nothing for us to fear.

That question in that verse that we were reading, what can man do to us? What can man do to us think about that? No one can take us out of the hand of God, so to speak.

So there's nothing for us to fear. We are provided the Holy Spirit as well, who is called the Helper, just like it's mentioned in John chapter 14, verse 26.

How often do we find in the Word of God the words that are saying, do not be afraid, be not afraid, or some translations say, fear not?

[17 : 09] How often do we find that in scripture? It's scattered throughout all of scripture. We should be encouraged once we are saved to put on the armor of God, to grow into faith, and to live out our faith.

To know that we have confidence in Jesus Christ, why wouldn't you want to share that with others? Why wouldn't you want to tell your neighbor about what you believe in? Are you ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ?

Have you become complacent in your faith? Because we are secure. I would want to share in this security with others. I would want to let people know. I would want everyone to know that I am a Christian and that I am saved by grace through faith, that God is going to sustain me no matter what happens in my life.

We should be confident in knowing the Lord and that He's always there for us. Do you think the Lord is against you or is the Lord for you? The Lord will never leave us or forsake us.

And it begs the question, then, do you know the Lord? Do you believe in Him? If not, you have the greatest opportunity to believe in Him and to receive that gift of salvation.

[18 : 29] We should not be afraid of what happens in the world. It is in times such as this that should encourage us to come to know the Lord. The only time we should be afraid of God is when we don't know Him.

To have the fear of the Lord is different than being afraid of God. It is being in that sense of awe and wonder of who the Lord is.

Have you ever been in awe and wonder of the Lord? Looking at nature, looking at the beautiful sunsets, looking, be like a child, right?

Look through a telescope sometime. Look at the heavens that declare the glory of God. Look at a microscope, the microscopic organisms that are existing, the little cute things that we can't even see, right?

Some of them look cute. Some of them maybe not so cute, but you get the idea, though. We should be encouraged to spread the good news of the gospel.

[19 : 29] In Luke chapter 19, verse 10, it reminds us when Jesus is saying that the Son of man came, and the Son of man came to seek and to save the lost.

For a life without Christ, we are lost. John chapter 10, verses 10 through 12, the thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy.

I, Christ, came that they may have life and have it abundantly. And it says in there that Christ is the good shepherd, good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

Isn't that what Christ has done for you? Laying down his life as the sacrifice, the atoning sacrifice, no longer following the Levitical law of sacrificing an animal to atone for sins, a once and one and done deal.

To know God, we receive salvation, and there is a peace that surpasses all understanding, just as Philippians 4-7 mentions. There's also the joy that is unspeakable or inexpressible, as some translations say, according to 1 Peter, chapter 1, verse 8.

[20 : 51] And that God will be there for us no matter what happens in our lives, from the best of times to the worst of times. How many of you have thanked God when you got that promotion, or you got that A when you studied, or you didn't study, right?

Do you thank God when something good happens in your life? Do you come to God when something bad happens in your life? Because God's always there, regardless of what's happening and what happens in your life.

And I know, look, this world isn't perfect. We're placed here in this sin-fallen world, this broken world, so to speak. But we're placed here as sinful people to come to know the Lord, to seek first the kingdom, to believe in Christ, and upon that salvation to live this life for the Lord, sharing in the gospel, and growing as a Christian.

And I want us to turn for our Bibles. We'll put this on the screen, Psalm 23. It's going to be on page 541.

Some of you know Psalm 23. The Lord is my shepherd, right? I shall not want. So we're going to turn there, because this has to do with this idea of Christ as the sustainer.

[22 : 24] Are you all there? All right. The Lord is my shepherd. I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures.

He leads me beside still waters. And he what? He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his namesake.

And even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of what? Of death, I will fear no evil.

For you are with me. Your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil.

My cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life. And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord only today, forever.

[23 : 25] Amen. For it is Christ who is the good shepherd who provides the needs, provides for our needs.

This verse mentions that our shepherd, the good shepherd, Christ as the shepherd, will take care of you. That second verse, Christ gives us rest.

And that peace that surpasses all understanding. It is a reminder that Christ is that living water. Do you remember John chapter 4 verse 14, where Christ is speaking to the woman at the well?

Whoever drinks of the water that I will give will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.

That's always a good story to read. What water could I possibly drink where I'm never thirsty again, right? Not realizing that Christ is talking about the living water.

[24 : 28] And as we've spoken before about Christ being the Redeemer, Christ restores us and he sustains us. As we are saved by grace through faith, we are led on a path of transformation that God will work in and through us.

The path of sanctification, the path of purification, if you will. I'm reminded of that Psalm, create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit in me.

We are justified by faith in him. And we should all be on this path of becoming more like Jesus. Don't remain stagnant in your faith. Don't be a baby and just drink milk after a while.

I mean, it's good to have milk, but only milk. Be on a path of growth. And even in our darkest of times, the Lord is there for us.

This should be a motive of seeking God even after we are saved. And ask yourself the question, how can I be like Christ and live out my faith?

[25 : 39] Even in our darkest times here on the earth, God is there with us. Just think of the story of Job. Did God abandon him?

God was there even in trials. And I know that's very difficult and heavy language, but it's truth that God is always there, even in trials, even in afflictions, even during tribulations.

There is no war, no politician, no man, no woman, no individual, no government that can separate us from the love that God has for us.

The ones that do not know the Lord or do not know the truth of Scripture, I pray that we as a church will pray for those who don't know the Lord.

I pray that everyone here comes to know who Jesus Christ is. It's not about what you do. It's about what was done for you.

[26 : 40] It's about Christ sacrificing himself on the cross. Do you know how easy it is for us to fall into this continuous list of things that we must do? That's how the world works.

Come on now. In order to get an A, I must study X amount of hours. I must take certain tests and then I hopefully pass, right? That's how it is for our jobs. We have to do well in our job and then we get a promotion or we get a good evaluation.

But in terms of salvation, that's not how it works. It's something entirely different than the way that man understands things or the way people understand. It's done just as Christ said, it is finished.

Going from the old law, the old covenant to the new covenant. God will bless us with the promise of heaven.

God has never failed before and he will not fail us now. Do you think God will fail you? God is always going to be there with you.

[27 : 44] He is for you. He is not against you. And to know God is to be saved through faith in him. To know God is to have access to the depths of scripture.

Sometimes you read about artificial intelligence and you read about these computer systems. Are they going to know the depths of scripture? Well the answer is no.

You know why? They don't have a soul and they're not saved. So no technology can know the truth, the depths of scripture that gets revealed to us by the Holy Spirit.

Amen. That's why the Lord protects the word from evil intended people, people who have hardness of hearts that God will hide certain things in his word.

I'm not afraid of artificial intelligence in the same way. I'm not afraid of what man can do. That's just a great reminder. To have that relationship with the Lord, to receive salvation is to have access to the deeper things of scripture.

[28 : 51] And to know God is to receive protection, to receive assurance and the blessings of the Lord and how God blesses you may be different. I'm not just saying you're all going to get Lamborghinis though my friends.

I got to make that very clear. When we're talking about blessings it could be having a renewed spirit. It could be having a good marriage. It could be having a good relationship with the Lord. It could be having peace.

So when I'm saying blessings, I'm not saying you're going to get your, you know, your second Lamborghini in your fifth house. I'm not talking about that. I want to make that very clear here. The blessings of God, spiritual blessings, emotional blessings, a clear mind.

God will make your life more simple. God will bring peace to your life. You can't pay me all the money in the world to have peace.

I'd rather have peace than have millions of dollars. I'd rather have joy in my heart and in my spirit than to have a fifth Lamborghini or a second one or whatever it is.

[29 : 53] I mean, think about that. The way God blesses us is abundantly. And when we look at Psalm 23, it reminds us that we are promised eternal life, that God's goodness and mercy will be with us all the days of our lives.

This is for those who believe in him, though. There are scriptural reminders that show us how good it is to know Jesus Christ, who is the way, who is the truth and who is the life.

With so much that is going on in the world, the good, the bad and, well, mostly the ugly, it reminds us that we are saved by grace through faith.

At least we should all be saved by grace through faith. I'm reminded of how Christ paid it all on the cross and no matter what happens, I am protected by the Lord.

I want us to think about all of these things. Perhaps this is a call for you to spread the news of the gospel. Perhaps this is a call for you to share in your faith, share in your testimony, how God has worked in and through you.

[31 : 09] Perhaps this is a call for you to make a decision for Christ. Maybe it's time for you to believe in him. Maybe it's a call for you to grow in faith and not to be stagnant.

I don't know where you are in your spiritual walk, but quite honestly, I just hope that this message today encourages you to know God, to grow in him and to go in his name, doing good things, spreading the words, the good news of the gospel through serving people as well.

Perhaps it should be our prayer that people will come to Christ by hearing the word, reading the word of God or whatever way that leads them to believing in Christ.

We are called to not be afraid, amen, because God is with us. He is for us and God will sustain us being the anchor for our souls, the solid rock, the foundation for our lives.

God will be there no matter what happens or what we go through. Maybe this is a call for you to respond to believe in the Lord. Maybe it's a call for you to go deeper into the word of God or to go into the world dealing with everyday people.

[32 : 26] How can we share in our faith? It's an everyday interactions. It's what we speak to people. It's how we conduct ourselves.

We're called to be a light in the darkness to share the love of Christ. And as closing question I have for you, let's put it on the screen here.

Is there someone you know you can share the gospel with? I want you to think about that today as we are closing this sermon and this sermon series.

I want us to be encouraged to go into the community and be doers of the word, share in your faith, share in the gospel message.

Maybe you just need to buy someone a Bible. That's always a good way, right? Just hand them a Bible. Maybe you need to share in how you came to Christ. Do you remember before you were a Christian, my friends?

[33 : 23] Do you remember that life? How has God worked in your life? You don't have to answer this by the way, but think about it.

Let us share in the love of Christ with others and let the light of Christ shine through us and may we never be ashamed of the gospel or who we are in Christ.

For in Christ there is new life everlasting. From belief comes spiritual transformation. Doesn't this world need transformation?

Doesn't this community need transformation? You know, I found it shocking. I have a friend of mine who lives in Eugene.

The ratio for dispensaries to churches is at least on a conservative level, one to one. And I found that to be very shocking.

[34 : 19] That is a call for us to respond to culture, right? Can you imagine? Think about that. So let's just say for a moment, there's 25 churches in Ontario.

I'm just throwing out numbers here. One to one ratio, that means there's 25 dispensaries. That's crazy to think about. But when we think about transformation, this community, this state, this nation, this world needs transformation that comes from Christ.

May we be a church that encourages people to love God and to love people. May we be an equipping church to learn God's word and what it means to be Christian.

May we engage the community for Christ through the sharing of our faith and through service of others. And may we be reminded as we close that Christ as the Creator made you, gave you life.

God the Father provided God the Son as the redemption for our sins. And in believing in Jesus Christ, you will be sustained and that God will be with you all the days of your life.

[35 : 40] And so to answer that first question, there is nothing that we should be afraid of. No news on the television, no political agenda, whatever.

Our confidence and our trust should be in Christ and allowing for God to work in and through us to transform culture. Amen. And with that, let's pray.

Father, we thank you for giving us the time and this opportunity to see the sustenance, the sustaining love that you have for us. You loved us first and foremost and gave your son so that we can have salvation in you.

I pray that we may be on fire for you and that we are open to allow you to work in and through us. May your word transform our lives.

May you transform us. May we be more like you. But first, may we first come to know who you are and believe in you. I pray that as we go from this place, as we're closing in our song and as we're preparing to leave this place, that we remember how much you love us and that you call each and every one of us to have that relationship with you.

[37 : 00] You're always there for us ready to believe in you. You're always there for us, even in our darkest hour. And even though we may walk through the valley of the shadow of death, you God are there for us.

May we be reminded of this. We thank you. We love you. We praise you. We adore you. It is in Jesus' holy name that we pray. Amen. Amen.

Thank you for tuning in to the Ontario Community Church sermon podcast. For more about our church and how you can get involved or support our mission, please visit ontariocommunitychurch.org.

May God's blessings be with you.