

# Security

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[ 0 : 00 ] Psalm chapter 125 as we continue in our pilgrim songs. I love the idea of pilgrims headed to a destination together and then singing songs together to encourage each other along the way.

Something I enjoy about a midweek service, hearing songs like the one we just heard or singing together. Well, when we end the night, we'll sing, He Will Hold Me Fast one last time. But before that, we'll have Greg and Grace come up and pray for Kevin and Beth and Taylor and Titus before they head back to Bolivia.

Because we're an unmovable people who seem to always be on the move, right? And so in one regards, we had people, two people announced that within just a month or two, they're headed to the foreign field.

And that's something I pray we never take for granted as a chance to get to have an update like that and hear it. But being unmovable people. And it's wonderful that God would allow us to be on these pilgrim journeys together.

We need each other. We need the encouragement of one another. We have to share special times together, special days together. And it's a trite cliché when people say we share life together.

[ 1 : 02 ] But we certainly do. We share lives together. We share moments together. Here's these pilgrims traveling to Jerusalem together, encouraging one another, singing songs. I may mention to you that some of these pilgrim songs would have been sung by Jesus and the disciples as they would have walked out of the garden.

And it continues. And now we study it today. Today, and we look at it. And these words should be our words. I just went on a little journey to New York City with Selah this weekend.

I sent a little update. I'm going to show you a couple pictures before I get into the psalm tonight. This is a picture that's... Okay, this is in Flushing. And this is the area in which Ken and Nancy have started Truth Baptist Church.

And just take that to show how busy it is. Everywhere you look, you're just finding tons of people. If you don't like people, don't go to New York City. All right? And there's just people everywhere.

So in the next picture here, one of the most beautiful things you'll see in New York. All right? And this is Truth Baptist Church. And they told you by testimony on Sunday that 11 of these people made up the church.

[ 2 : 08 ] They had been... Nine had come to Christ. They'd been baptized. And a couple others had come that were already previously saved or came from another church. And they signed the charter there on Sunday.

And it was just such a sweet and special time. With Ken and Nancy, we know that God had moved them and ordered their steps. You know, they're in a different place than they planned to be at. But it wasn't just Ken and Nancy that realized it.

It's the testimony of so many of those people. The next picture here of that Sunday night, these guys are around the table and getting to talk to them, Ken and translating, and just doing a Bible study together and hearing their testimonies.

Leslie, the next picture here, you saw the video of him. Leslie, he hung out with us on Saturday. But Leslie's testimony is, I knew I wanted to be a better person, so I thought if I went to a better country, I'd be a better person.

But I didn't need a better country. I needed to meet a better person. I needed to meet Jesus. And he, over a year's time, he hitchhikes and hikes from Ecuador and makes all his way to New York City so that Jesus could change his life.

[ 3 : 19 ] And it's just, he's so aware of God's goodness in his life. And Leslie, God's using him as such an encouragement to Ken and him. They go a lot of places together. They went with us on Saturday and took us around and showed us things.

But there's another man named Henry. And churches are made up of people like Leslie and Henry. And you often don't, when you drive by them, you just see the name of a church. But you don't know the different members in them and how God's using them.

Is a guy named Henry. He's been saved now for about eight months, if I remember correctly. And on Saturdays, he gets on WeChat and he looks for people that have immigrated into the city recently.

And he goes and helps them and says, you're coming to church with me on Sunday. Almost every Sunday, he has a family in church with him, hearing the gospel, many for the first time. That Sunday, he had a single mom and two kids that he had picked up at the airport on Saturday in church.

And I told Ken, and I said, if the Holy Spirit wasn't working in and through your life, we would have sent you on a suicide mission to come to New York to start a church, right? But I said, but he is working.

[ 4 : 26 ] And so I told you, he baptized, you know, nine of those, 11. And one quick story here before we get into Psalm 125, I think I have one more picture of this gentleman that I'm going to send to.

I guess I don't. Imagine an older version of Leslie, all right? And this man, when Andy and Lily were there, you know, Andy and Lily, and when they were in the service, Lily got up and she went and hugged the man.

And she, well, he was the pastor that had baptized her in China many years ago and had no idea that he was in Flushing there. And he started attending the church.

And so this is an older Christian gentleman who's been a great help to Kenyon. It's a real blessing that something that he would need. He needs grandparents and older people in the church to help him along the way, him and Nancy.

And the man told Kenyon that he had baptized people, but him, he himself had never been baptized. And Kenyon got to baptize him a few months ago. And he's now a member of that church as of Sunday.

[ 5 : 28 ] So it was beautiful. This is great to see. Just so mindful of the fact that we're all on a pilgrimage. That group of believers there just really seemed to know that they were just through life on a journey and headed to the end.

But that last picture, the one where we're sitting around the table, one of the men asked me there, we were talking about the role of evangelism in your personal discipleship. That you, you'll know the Bible better when you're involved in sharing the gospel.

Sharing the gospel brings you to it. You'll love the Lord more. Your love for the Lord will grow because you'll share it with somebody and they'll accept it and it'll grow. You'll share it with somebody, they'll reject it, and then your compassion for them will grow.

And then there's just many wonderful things that will happen in your life that outside of evangelism, there's not enough Bible study that's going to produce the same thing in your heart because it's the application of God's word.

That's why I'll know our sign when you leave. We're not just hearers of the words, but we're doers also. And so I was talking to them about the need, not just for their friends, but for their own sake. And the last thing I said was that it brings a persecution in your life that can bring patience.

[ 6 : 32 ] And one guy just raised his hand and he just said, are you going to tell me, he says, there's no persecution here in America. And I was thinking, well, I guess in contrast to coming from a communist country, well, certainly in many regards, there's not the persecution like that.

But I said, the Bible tells us all that live godly will suffer persecution. So we must come to the same Bible understanding of what it was. And we talked about that. Here in this psalm that we're looking at tonight, this psalm tells us to trust in God in a nation that had a wicked government.

Either it was corrupt Israelites that were leaders, which happened many times as you read the Bible, as you follow the kings in it, or a Gentile dominion, another country, oppressing them.

Verse 3, it speaks of the rod of the wicked. And this is referring to wicked government. There's no clear indication of the setting of this psalm. But whatever the occasion, the psalmist is convinced that those that will live faithfully will not be caught up in the wickedness of the state, of the leaders.

The emphasis throughout psalms we see is in the security of believers, even in trying times, and the insecurity of those that aren't truly believers of Christ. And that's exposed during difficult times.

[ 7 : 47 ] That this trial and pressure that we're put under exposes those who really love the Lord and those that don't. And that's a contrast we see here in this psalm.

I like how one man, one pastor described this psalm. He says the emphasis in Psalm 125 is not a danger of the Christian life, but how we have a solid footing living as a Christian is not walking a tight rope without a safety net high above a breathless crowd, many of whom would like nothing better than the morbid thrill of seeing you fall, but it is sitting secure in a good fortress.

That's the encouragement I get to bring you tonight. I'm thankful to get to meet with my friends and I'm thankful that when I come to you with God's word, I get to bring you encouragement. And I get to share with you in the psalm here that we're not people that are walking over a tight rope the night with everybody waiting for us to fall, but we are people that have our feet planted solidly on truth and we should be grateful for that.

So here's the structure of it. The first three verses give express why we should have a confident trust in the Lord. Then that's expressed in the form of a prayer in verse four. And then we get a warning and we end with a closing, a benediction in verse number five.

I'm going to read the verses to you and then pray. Verse one, They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth forever.

[ 9 : 14 ] As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about His people from henceforth even forever. For the rod of the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous, lest the righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity.

Do good, O Lord, unto those that be good and to them that are upright in their hearts. And for such as turn aside unto their crooked ways, the Lord shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity, but peace shall be upon Israel.

Believers are secure as the mountains round about them were surrounded by our God and those who have turned aside their wicked ways will have the same fate as the wicked.

Heavenly Father, I thank you for this song, Lord, as it was sung to be an encouragement so many years ago and as it has been kept for us, Lord, through the generations for Christians to read this and be encouraged.

Lord, I want my friends tonight, I want my brothers and sisters in Christ to feel the weight of this passage, Lord, to feel the rest in your arms around them, Lord, as we just see that you take such good care of us, that even though we're in a fast-paced life and we always seem to be on a move, that we can be unmovable, that we find our security in you.

[ 10 : 36 ] May, Lord, may it help us deal with all the insecurities and the fears that we would have in life, often when we feel alone, knowing that we are surrounded by you. In Jesus' name I pray, amen.

Amen. So we first see that those that trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion, an unmovable forever. And so this gives us a confidence, secure because of God's presence.

That's verse 1. They that trust in the Lord, and we could all say, should say amen to that, that is us in here. Those that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth forever.

And then verse number 5, but then it says, as for such as turn aside into their crooked ways. It's a contrast between trusting the Lord, faith in the Lord, obeying the Lord, and then those who don't trust in the Lord, what they trust in is their own direction.

Trust, it's a strong word. It means if you find your security in, you find your confidence in, you rely on him. That's your trust that is there.

[ 11 : 36 ] And so a true believer is secure and he's unmovable in his faith as a rocky Mount Zion. So I asked that to find a picture for me of Mount Zion and here is what he found on Wikipedia, I guess, and there it is today.

And if I was asked to show a picture of it 10 years ago or 20 years ago, it's going to look quite similar there. A mount will, I can't really see it but I assume I have a mountain behind me, okay?

And, but if I was to look at it through a time lapse, you're not going to find the deviation here on this mountain. It is going to stay the same. In Psalm chapter number 46 it says in verse 5, God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved, God shall help her and not write early.

Psalm 46 verse 5. He's not going to be moved. So as they're walking together, trusting the Lord, they're pointing out something that our God is unmovable, He can make us as unmovable as that mountain.

That mountain's always been there, that mountain is always going to be there and that is the picture that is given to us of what we can have in those that trust the Lord. And we can say that because we see that 100% of that confidence comes from Him and His faithfulness.

[ 12 : 52 ] So it's possible for us today. I could say the same thing to you if we were to go hiking, which probably won't be doing, all right? Sonny Mountain, we've done that before during COVID. We did that a good bit. I could take you there and say just as unmovable as that is, just as said as that is, you can be today as we've put our trust in the Lord.

So the first picture, those on this pilgrimage, they look at a mountain. The second one, they look and they say you can trust the Lord, as they are fully guarded forever. As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about His people from henceforth even forever.

God surround His people as the mountains would surround Jerusalem. It brought protection for them. It was a strategic location in which they were placed there. And so you could see the visual.

As they come upon Jerusalem, there they see the city and it's surrounded and it brings protection. And that's what we want. How is it said about us in John chapter number 10? We're told that God is our guide, our guard against the power of sin and Satan and the opposition of the world.

John 10, 27 says, My sheep hear my voice and they know them and they follow me and I give unto them eternal life. They shall never perish. Neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

[ 14 : 06 ] My Father which gave them me is greater than all and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. Two visuals, two examples here that show the same thing.

A city that's surrounded by a mountain that has protection, has confidence, also a person in the hand of our God. You cannot remove us from Him.

Paul expresses this in 2 Timothy. It's one of the saddest verses in the Bible if you're following the life of Paul. They want to see what he's doing. You see the different churches he goes to, the companionship that he has when he would go into church and be refreshed.

But in 2 Timothy chapter number 4 verse 16 it said, At first answer, No man stood with me but all men forsook me. I pray that it may not be laid to their charge.

Praying to God and says, My friends didn't show up for me. God, I pray that you'll forgive them. They were a bunch of bums. They weren't here when I needed them. But the next verse it said, Notwithstanding, the Lord stood with me and strengthened me that by me the preaching might be fully known that all Gentiles might hear and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.

[ 15 : 13 ] Paul knew what it was like to feel like a city that was surrounded by mountains. Paul knew what it was like to be a sheep that could hear his father's voice. He knew what it was like to be in the hand of God and have that security.

Maybe you don't think you deal with the lack of security. If you deal with fear, you're dealing with the lack of security. If you deal with the lack of decisiveness and moving forward and following him, you're dealing with the insecurity that is there.

And so Jesus knew this as well. One that was tempted like as we are, but we see this in his days of fasting. They are 40 days out in the desert and it says in Matthew 4, 11, Then the devil leaveth him and behold, the angels came and ministered unto him.

They brought him and he was surrounded. He was cared for. He was never forgotten. So we have a confident reminder. You're secure because of God's presence. Like those mountains there, just like that city that's surrounded by those mountains, you are secure, surrounded, and you're secure.

It can be unmovable. And then they realized this, that if you trust in the Lord, there is protection and evil will not last forever. Verse 3, For the rod of the wicked, an expression to speak about the power that the government would have or the power of those that would oppress them, shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous, lest the righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity.

[ 16 : 32 ] And so the Israelis will make life difficult for the righteous to hold to their integrity. And as believers, our fear when it comes to persecution and all the trials that we have from or all the challenges that we have in living out our Christian life in this culture, which is what that man said at the Bible study.

This culture is much more conducive to living the Christian life than maybe in a communist country. But it doesn't mean that it's free of persecution that you might find in your family. But the fear that we have is not being in the fire.

The fear that we have is bowing because of the fire. That we would change what we're supposed to do because of the pressures that we're facing. And so the point is that the true believer would not begin to get involved in the evil activities just because there's a wicked government making it difficult for them to hold their integrity or appealing the change.

1 Corinthians 10, 13. This basic way of escapes, this wholehearted trust in the Lord brings us security in our faith. It says, There hath no temptation taking you but as such is common to man.

But God is faithful who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able. But with the temptation also make a way of escape that you may be able to bear it. You know when you hear that word temptation also think of a testing.

[ 17 : 51 ] That whatever testing that you've been placed in or whatever pressure cooker of life that you've been under that there is a way of escape. I could speak about the world in which we live in.

I could speak about the culture we live in and I could tell you the pressures that we're feeling. But many of you feel it at a greater level than I would even understand at your workplace. The pressures to give in.

The pressures to call something that is not good to call it good. The opportunities that you have to say no to because of the pressures that are there. Opportunities for evil.

And that's always going to be the case. It's not going to be solved no matter who wins. Whatever election. That's the world that we are going to live in. And there's just the constant pressure.

There's very few people that are going to help you do right in life, right? That's why we want our kids to find good friends. If you find a friend that wants to do right then they found a good thing. You know? If you have somebody that's helping you.

[ 18 : 49 ] Because most of the world is wanting to take you away from the things of God. And there's a pressure here. But those that are ungodly, when you feel like you're just in an impossible situation you have to make decisions.

There's always a way of escape. There's always a plan. There's always something a way in which God will provide for you. We sing about this a lot. We sing a song by John Newton that says through many dangers toils and snares I have already come.

His grace has brought me safe thus far. Say it with me. And grace will lead me home. Good. You're good at this game. All right? And grace will lead me home. That's one of our pilgrim songs, right?

That's something that we're singing about. Through dangers, toils and snares grace will lead me home. Another song we sing that says when Satan tempts me to despair and tells me of the guilt within upward I look and I see him there who made an end to all my sin because the sinless Savior died my sinful soul is counted free for God the just is satisfied to look on him and pardon me.

And so we are fully dependent upon the Lord and the pressures of life and we say there's a shortcut I could do wrong I could compromise my integrity or I could do this in the flesh I could do this in my own which is what Gabriel was speaking about just trying to do things on your own strength but we say that is not what would have of us as a believer.

[ 20 : 12 ] So as people living in the world that's largely opposed to God the temptation is start to believe that God shouldn't be trusted to believe that the way of the world is more reasonable.

Therefore beloved 1 Corinthians 15 58 therefore my beloved brethren be steadfast and movable always abounding in the work of the Lord for as much as you know that your labrum is not in vain in the Lord.

Be steadfast and movable. This has a side note which is never a side note it's the main note it's that we must spend more time in God's word and with godly people in conversations than allowing ourselves to be influenced by all the media and all the things that we could see in this world.

Kind of like the frog being boiled alive right? You put the frog in there and it's slowly cooking. If you just allow your moral compass and your integrity to be decided by this world you're going to be very far removed from what God would have us to be as holy God honoring people.

Be unmovable be steadfast always abounding in the work of the Lord. We need God's favor in life. Do good O Lord unto those that be good verse 4 and to them that are upright in their hearts. It's a prayer to protect to preserve and to provide as we would say in Romans 8 28 that God works together all things for good to them that love him and call it according to his purposes.

[ 21 : 32 ] God we want you to work in our lives we're asking for it. In our tradition in this Baptist tradition we don't often speak like this but if you ask somebody how they're doing if Jason was asking me in the four year that they how I was doing if I said I'm blessed and highly favored alright?

He wouldn't expect that from me but I could say if I wanted to probably won't but I could alright? But it's a good expression when properly understood. You know it's what's said about Mary in Luke 1 28 an angel came in unto her and said hell thou art highly favored the Lord is with thee blessed art thou among women.

And so what is good here? It gives the faithful what is needed in their lives and freedom from oppression and prosperity. That was the prayer. Do good O Lord unto those that be good.

You get to define what good is in this world. You get to define who is good. You have made us righteous and you made us good and so it's a prayer that we're asking for his favor and you most certainly should in all of your dealings in life you should be praying to the Lord and say God I'm going to trust you.

I'm not going to play by the rules of this world. They are broken. They're not pleasing to you but Father I'm going to trust if I live honoring to you that you will bless the way my life here.

[ 22 : 46 ] And upright in heart it said those that are upright in their hearts. I think we use that the opposite of how it's supposed to be meant. Somebody can be like a real rascal and you can be like well you know they have a really good heart which means they don't do anything right but somewhere deep down inside they must be a really good person.

That's the opposite of what should be said here right? The Old Testament the word heart is commonly used to mean to represent the will or the innermost capacity of making choices. If a person isn't making right heart decisions then they're not a person of a right heart.

And so it says those that are upright in their hearts blessed goodness for those that are upright in heart and that this reminder in verse 5 that compromise will not bring protection for you as those that turn aside into their wicked their crooked ways the Lord shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity.

This turning aside abandoning and not following the way of God but following the world and the ways that are not pleasing to him. And so the people here in their final analysis here are not upright.

1 John 5 19 says and we know that we are of God and the whole world lieth in wickedness. So it speaks about people who do not want to please God who have turned away to these crooked ways plural not referring to some small infraction of God's law breaking of God's law of sin but describing oneself that is given over the corrupt activities.

[ 24 : 15 ] I want God said go right so I want to go left. God tells me this is what should be done I'm not interested this I'm not going to trust in him I want my own way.

So Lord we shouldn't let we pray to him that the wickedness and the tyranny that lies and continues will be drawn into this we won't be drawn into the same sins of those that are opposed to him.

We live in a country that has relatively small persecution for some versions of Christianity. You know there's a type of Christianity that you can live that nobody seems to care about in the world we live in but we know that it's sliding that's constantly changing day by day that you can't just stay where you're at without facing more and more persecution and will we continue when COVID happened many people projected and they said churches we know it won't ever be the same people won't keep meeting together there's going to be too much opposition or when churches can't be tax exempt anymore when this happens or this happened churches won't cease won't continue to be and we know by God's word that's not the case there will be people that will be unmovable as the mountains because we will trust in him we will still continue to meet in homes houses caves wherever it's needed we will still gather together and we will honor him and we won't have to compromise because we we're afraid to compromise we're afraid to find our security in anything outside of him

Diedrich Bonhoeffer as you know he was hung by the Nazis for an attempt upon killing Hitler he wrote a hymn based on Psalm 125 it says by gracious power so wonderfully sheltered and confidently waiting come what may we know that God is with us night and morning and never fails to greet us each new day yet is this heart by its old foe tormented still evil days bring burdens hard to bear oh give our frightened souls the sure salvation for which oh Lord you taught us to prepare and when this cup you give is filled to brimming with bitter suffering hard to understand we take it thankfully without trembling out of so good and so beloved a hand yet when again is the same world you give us the joy we have the brightness of your son we shall remember all the days we lived through and our whole life shall be then be yours alone verse 5 it says for as such as turn aside into the crooked ways the Lord shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity but peace shall be upon Israel this benediction this closing here is the trust not all those that turn aside from the Lord will live in wickedness but we will trust in him and we will pray for peace the psalm ends with the desire for better times but in the meantime it reminds the faithful of their security in the Lord in contrast to the unfaithful that shall be judged

I'm going to pray for Psalm 125 but let me just say something somewhat personal here as I was studying Titus chapter number 2 Titus 2 verse number 1 Paul is telling Timothy that he is to preach sound doctrine that's his job to preach sound doctrine but then it says that the older men should teach the younger and that the ancient ladies the old ladies alright the age ladies in there age ladies is what it says age women and they are to teach the younger and it's showing this picture that is supposed to be happening there the preach sound doctrine and it reminded me especially as I think about the ministry of discipleship and as we as a church and the world in which we live in is that the preaching the doctrine should remain the same and it should remain until Jesus comes back the Bible being taught but the application and the challenges are going to happen the older people have to help the next generation those of you that live in the corporate world you've got to help the next generation figure out how to navigate it those of you that run a business you've got to show the next generation how to do it because the world is getting more and more corrupt more and more opposed to



[ 28 : 21 ] Christian values and it needs somebody to help them walk them through it it needs examples so that the word of God is not despised and more than just life lessons and knowing how to do something they need examples of people that are just not being moved that they see they make hard decisions you know that they may they decided they were going to do right regardless of the cost and living that out that's what we ought to provide right now we're providing in the other room teachers and puggles and sparks and all those different things and they're teaching them the Bible but then those kids come home with us and they see it lived out and that's what's so very important let's pray that they would see us I don't know what it is you have different places in your journey throughout the week different lines of work different things going on in the family but there's just constantly a temptation to want to go a way that is not what would be God's way and you just say this seems to be the better way it seems to be the more profitable way it seems to be the place that would provide all this for me and you just got to trust in our

Lord see it as a mountain that's unmovable we are a city that's surrounded by mountains we can trust in him his commands bring the blessings in our lives his ways are the best way for us let's let's pray let's pray that God would let us be that example to the next generation can I get Kevin to come up here and Beth and we're going to have Grace and Greg that's who he is thank you good you remember here and if you could come up here I'm going to pray this song real quick and then I'm going to ask you to pray for them as they go back and they continue to be that example to many people in Bolivia and I know that in the churches in Bolivia they have Leslie's and Henry's and the stories like I was told that's what I love that's why I'm visiting the mission field so great you know I get to go to Chile this summer I get to see Jason and Laura here but I need to see those people that are living out the Bible and their own culture because there's so much can happen everybody should get the they should have a church that teaches the Bible they ought to get to have people that are living it out in front of them and they've been doing this for 60 70 years now how long y'all been there just kidding been there for for a while all right

I'm going to pray this song and Greg when I'm done if you'll pray for for Kevin and Beth can we get him a microphone yeah it's just three steps for you Greg it'd be like 12 for me all right if you want to get that all right let's pray together Heavenly Father I thank you for this word I thank you that my friends Kevin and Beth Lord that they would teach the same song and it would be just as applicable and true to somebody in Bolivia that there's never been a believer that has picked up this word in any culture under any circumstances that did not have these promises Father that's wonderful I thank you for that and so Father we trust in the Lord and Lord because we trust in the Lord we can be unmovable people Lord as Mount Zion that we abide Lord we trust in you as these mountains are surrounded by the city is surrounded by mountains Lord we know we are surrounded by your presence when we're like the Apostle Paul and we say our friends went around us we know that notwithstanding you were there with us and so Father I thank you for the comfort that we find the security we have on our journey knowing that you surround us with your love and protection

Lord there's a rod of the wicked it comes in our culture sometimes it comes in family sometimes it may come from government and when it comes Lord I pray that we will be people of integrity we will do right we pray Lord do good unto us oh Lord those that are good you have made us good and we thank you for that and now Lord we can be upright in heart we want to be pleasing to you we know Lord those that turn aside their crooked ways Lord those people will follow in that same destruction that is coming to the workers of iniquity and Lord we pray for the day where there is priests in Jerusalem we pray for the day Lord that heaven will come down and that we will spend all eternity in where a world Lord where you are king and where everything is as it should be but until that day Lord we are committed to remain faithful to you because we know you are so trustworthy in Jesus name I pray thank you