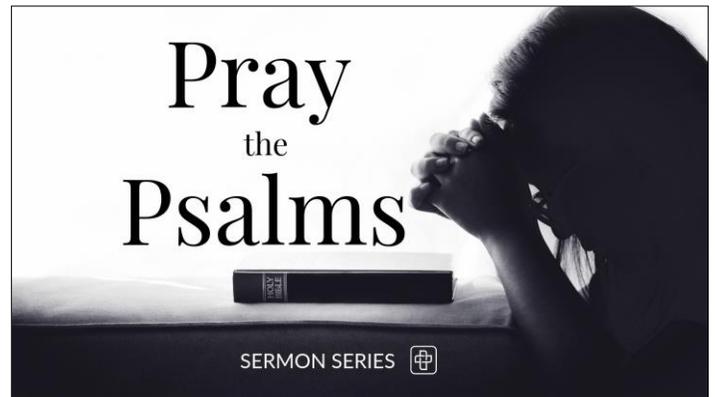


## Prayer-Walking the City of God

### Psalm 48

David Sunday    June 23, 2019



Let's open God's Word together and hear His voice speaking to us through His Word in Psalm 48. It's a song, a psalm, of the Sons of Korah. I'll be reading out of the Christian Standard Bible today. Hear the living Word of God:

<sup>1</sup> *The LORD is great and highly praised  
in the city of our God.*

*His holy mountain, <sup>2</sup> rising splendidly,  
is the joy of the whole earth.*

*Mount Zion—the summit of Zaphon—  
is the city of the great King.*

<sup>3</sup> *God is known as a stronghold  
in its citadels.*

<sup>4</sup> *Look! The kings assembled;  
they advanced together.*

<sup>5</sup> *They looked and froze with fear;  
they fled in terror.*

<sup>6</sup> *Trembling seized them there,  
agony like that of a woman in labor,*

<sup>7</sup> *as you wrecked the ships of Tarshish  
with the east wind.*

<sup>8</sup> *Just as we heard, so we have seen  
in the city of the LORD of Armies,  
in the city of our God;  
God will establish it forever. Selah*

<sup>9</sup> *God, within your temple,  
we contemplate your faithful love.*

<sup>10</sup> *Like your name, God, so your praise  
reaches to the ends of the earth;  
your right hand is filled with justice.*

<sup>11</sup> *Mount Zion is glad.  
Judah's villages rejoice  
because of your judgments.*

<sup>12</sup> *Go around Zion, encircle it;  
count its towers,*

<sup>13</sup> *note its ramparts; tour its citadels  
so that you can tell a future generation:*

<sup>14</sup> *"This God, our God forever and ever—  
he will always lead us."*

Thanks be to God for His living Word. This is a Psalm that helps us find where we can see security and stability in this world. What do you base your security on? Where is it you find your security? Where is it that you find your stability? That's what this Psalm is asking us today.

Back during the Cold War, the superpowers of the world relied on a doctrine called "Mutually Assured Destruction," otherwise known as MAD. In this doctrine, the leaders of the world betted that nations would not use nuclear power, because if one nation attacked another nation with nuclear weapons, the nation that was attacked would have enough nuclear power left to launch a counterattack. What would result is the destruction of the whole world. Mutually Assured Destruction was what gave the leaders confidence that no one was actually going to use those nuclear weapons.

But not everyone felt very confident in this MAD doctrine. So one man living in British Columbia by the name of William Curtis did an extensive study. He wanted to determine where the safest place on earth would be where he could move his family. He ran statistics, then finally determined that the safest place in the world was the British-owned Falkland Islands in the south Atlantic Ocean, off the coast of Argentina. So he moved from Canada to the Falkland Islands in 1981.

A few months after they moved, Argentina decided to invade the Falkland Islands, but Britain didn't appreciate that, so they fought back. The final battle of that war took place just a few miles from the Curtis' farm. Over a thousand soldiers and islanders died in a place where the population was only 2,000 people. It turns out the Curtis family would have been safer had they stayed in Canada.

That's the way it is a lot of times in this world. Just when you think you've found security and stability, the bottom drops out. You buy a house. You've got equity. You think this is a great investment, then the market crashes. The next thing you know, your house is under water. All your equity has vanished and then some.

You marry someone. They covenant to love you, cherish you, provide for you, protect you, but then they cheat, abuse, take and abandon.

You think you live in a safe place, but then there's a school shooting.

You take good care of yourself. You exercise and eat a healthy diet, then you get cancer.

We desperately long for security, safety and stability, but where do you feel safe in this world? How do you define security? Who or what gives you the sense of stability in this life? For a faithful Israelite in the Old Testament, the answer to that question was Zion, the City of God. Psalm 48 is inviting us to take a prayer walk through this City of God and consider the safety, security and stability of this city, because this is the place where God dwells in the midst of His people—and you're always safe and secure when you're in the presence of God. No matter how dangerous or disappointing this world may be, the people of God can find stability in the presence of God. You're always safe, you're always secure, there in His presence.

In Psalm 48:1-3 we see the beauty of this City of God. In verses four through seven, we see the agony of those who try to attack that city. In verse eight, which is the heart of this Psalm, we see the eternal security of the City of God. In verses 9-11, we see the ecstasy of worship that fills that city. And finally, in verses 12-14, we find the legacy that we are called to pass down to future generations who will dwell in that city. So let's go on this prayer walk together, starting with verses one through three.

## **1. The beauty of the City of God (Psalm 48:1-3)**

Let's imagine the guide saying, "Before we enter into the city, I want you to get a panoramic view. Look at the city as a whole and notice how beautiful Zion is." You look out and see the city of Jerusalem on the hill of Zion. On that hill is located the temple. Then the guide says, "I want you to notice something. What makes this city stand out is not these buildings, not the architecture—it's the Person Who dwells here in that temple. God is there."

Therefore, verse one, "*Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised in the city of our God!*" Unlike the cities of the world, here is a city that's centered on God. All human cities are attempts to glorify man, but this city is centered on the glory of God. He is greatly praised here. So infinite is His power, so incomprehensible His majesty, there is no limit to the degree of praise He deserves. Here in this city, the glory of God will be praised to an extraordinary degree. That's what makes this city great.

Then the holy mountain that rises splendidly is beautiful in its loftiness. Verse two says it is "*the joy of the whole earth,*" because on that mountain stands the temple, where God has chosen to

make Himself knowable to sinful people. In that temple, on that holy mountain, sacrifices for sin will be made. Those sacrifices will point forward to the ultimate sacrifice when, on that holy mountain in the future, the Son of God will be crucified, making final atonement for sin once and for all.

Here is the place where the curtain of that temple will be torn in two from top to bottom. Here is the place where the words “It is finished” will resound from the only Voice Who has the authority to break down the barrier that stands between God and humanity, canceling the debt of our sin and opening a new and living way for sinners to come into God’s presence. That’s why this beautiful mountain is the joy of the whole earth. And that’s why Isaiah says in Isaiah 2:1-5 that all the nations will stream to praise the Lord on that mountain.

Mount Zion, it says in Psalm 48:2, is in the far north as the ESV says. But other versions like NIV and CSB speak of Zaphon which means “north,” but it was also a place. It was a very high mountain that stood between the border of the Holy Land and Syria. On Mount Zaphon, the Canaanites would offer sacrifice to the Baals, to their idols, to their deities. By comparing Mount Zion, which was really kind of a little mountain, to the summit of Zaphon, which was a high peak, the psalmist is saying, “God—the God of Zion, Yahweh, the Lord of His people—He is greater than Baal. His dwelling place is greater than Baal’s. He is the God of all the nations and the God Who reigns over all.”

So it’s God’s presence in the City of the great King that makes Zion beautiful. In verse three, God is known as a stronghold in its citadels. A citadel was the fortified area of the city, usually at the highest point, where you could have a “last stand” when an enemy is coming to approach. You could mount a defense from that point. The psalmist is saying, “A mighty fortress is our God. He is here in the citadels guarding the city.” The beauty of Zion is because God is there.

## **2. The agony of those who attempt to destroy the City of God (Psalm 48:4-7)**

Then the tour guide says, “Now, let’s walk to the site where a battle almost took place. I want to tell you what happened here at this site. I want to tell you about the agony of those who attempted to destroy the City of God. Look! Do you see over there? The kings assembled and advanced together. They thought they were going to destroy us.”

We don’t know exactly what this psalmist is thinking of, but it could be that time in Israel’s history when King Sennacherib of Assyria came with a huge army and was going to attack Jerusalem. But God had spoken to King Hezekiah and said, “Don’t be afraid. They’re going to flee

the way they came.” As the army encamped outside Jerusalem, the Assyrians were destroyed by the angel of the Lord. King Sennacherib came to attack, he saw the city, but he did not conquer. When he looked into that city, he was terrified because God was there. God was protecting that city. We read in Isaiah 37:33-35 that Sennacherib went back the way he came with his tail between his legs. It doesn't talk about his tail in Isaiah, but that's the picture we get. He was terrified. The psalmist says in Psalm 48:7 that he was trembling.

The enemy was trembling in agony like a woman in labor. The defeat of that army was just like when one of those great ships of Tarshish faces an east wind in the Mediterranean Sea and sinks. When the enemies of God attempt to destroy the City of God, their attack fails the moment they see God's glorious presence defending His people.

### **3. The eternal security of the City of God (Psalm 48:8)**

Then in verse eight, the tour guide says, “Okay, you've seen this 'almost' battlefield. Let's step aside over here and pause for refreshment. Here's what I want you to understand. This is the heart of what you need to know about this city.” Verse eight is the heart of the Psalm and everything builds to this point and from this point.

“*Just as we heard...*” We've heard how God created the world out of nothing. We've heard how He brought Israel out of Egypt. We've heard how He brought them into the Promised Land as their inheritance, destroyed all the peoples who were living there and gave them the land. Just as we heard in our history, “*...so we have seen...*” God has come through for us. We have heard about Him through our ears and now our eyes have seen Him. He has acted on our behalf here in this city.

Then here's the main point: “*...God will establish it forever.*” Or as the NIV says, “*...God makes her secure forever.*” Here is the place of security. Here is the place of stability. The City of God is forever, eternally secure, because God is in her midst. As long as God is with us, nothing can cause us to fall. We're always safe and secure in the presence of God which is why John Newton could write:

Glorious things of thee are spoken  
Zion, City of our God  
He Whose word cannot be broken  
Formed thee for His own abode  
On the Rock of Ages founded  
What can shake thy sure repose?  
With salvation's walls surrounded  
Thou mayest smile at all thy foes

You are secure when God is with you, when God is surrounding you, when God is defending you.

#### **4. The ecstasy of worship that fills the City of God (Psalm 48:9-11)**

Because of the security God's people experience in God's presence, they worship Him. They worship Him in verses nine through 11 with an ecstasy of joy that fills the city. Here the tour guide says, "Okay, we've taken the panoramic view. We've seen the almost battlefield. We've had our break. Now let's go into the sanctuary. Let's go to the temple and see what God's people are doing there."

They are filled with an overwhelming feeling of happiness and joyful excitement. They are glad. They are filled with delight, because in that temple they meditate on three things. Friends, this is what worship should look like. This is what should be happening when we gather in this place to worship our God.

Number one, we should contemplate His faithful love. That means not just a passing thought—it means meditation. It means reverent, attentive contemplation and prolonged attention. It means reining in all the distractions and saying, "God, I need to think now. I need to ponder Your faithful love toward Your people, Your covenant love, Your eternal mercies, Your tender kindness that will never cease, the fact that You will not break any of Your promises." It's that wonderful word *chesed* that we can't translate into one English word. The steadfast love of God, the unfailing love of God—they meditate on that in the temple.

Secondly, they meditate on the righteousness of God. We see that at the end of verse ten: "*Your right hand is filled with justice.*" That means, "God, You act to do the right thing in rescuing Your people and defending them from their enemies. So we will meditate on Your covenant love and meditate on Your righteousness. God, Your right hand will come to our defense. We believe that."

Then thirdly, they meditate on His judgments. Verse 11: "*Because of your judgments...*" These are God's judicial decisions in favor of His people and against their enemies. Whereas justice is God's overall commitment to set wrongs right, His judgments are the particular actions, the particular wrongs, that He comes to set right, the decisions He makes for His people and against their enemies.

Because of Who He is, because of His unfailing love, because of His righteous justice, because of His judgments on behalf of His people—because of this, His people are filled with an overwhelming feeling of happiness and joyful excitement. Verse 11: "*Mount Zion is glad. Judah's*

*villages rejoice.*” This is a city that’s teeming with gladness. This is a city that is bursting with joy because of Who God is. And because of Who He is, His praise is going to reach to the ends of the earth. Do you see that in verse ten? *“Like your name, God, so your praise reaches to the ends of the earth.”*

Notice, friends, it’s not simply personal deliverance—personal forgiveness—that makes the people of God gather together to worship God’s faithful love. No, it’s what He has done in preserving them as a people. It’s what He has done in their history. That’s why they gather in His temple, and that’s why we gather for worship. We didn’t come here just because we felt like it today, nor do we stay away because we feel like it. We don’t wait to see, “What has God done for me lately?” before we come to worship.

We remember Who He is and that we are His people. We are joined with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and all the saints who’ve come before us. We are the people of God who have experienced the great works of our God and who are going to experience His great work in the future. So we gather as His people Lord’s Day after Lord’s Day as a testimony to the world that there is a God Who acts on behalf of His people. We worship and praise Him, whether we feel like it or not, because this is Who He is. As we do that, we are filled with gladness and joy.

## **5. The legacy we must pass down to future generations who will dwell in the City of God (Psalm 48:12-14)**

As we do this, we are reminded that this God Who has acted so wondrously on our behalf needs to be made known to future generations. There is a legacy that needs to be handed down to future generations who will also become part of the City of God. We see this in Psalm 48:12-14.

- So in verses one through three, we have the panoramic view of Zion.
- In verses four through seven, we see a battle that did not happen.
- In verse eight, there is a refreshment break. God will establish us forever.
- In verses nine through 11, we’ve been in the temple and have seen it is the joy of all the earth and a place of overwhelming gladness because of the God Who is worshiped there.

Then in verses 12-14, our guide says, “Let’s walk the perimeter of this city. *“Go around Zion encircle it. Count its towers, note its ramparts ...”* (verses 12-13). The rampart is the defensive wall of a castle or a walled city. It’s what you see in the movies where there’s a walkway on the top and you can walk around the whole city. *“Tour its citadels...”* —the mighty fortresses on the high ground. Think about how beautiful, safe and full of covenant love this city is, because the Lord is exalted there. He is the stability of His people there.

As you walk around Zion, as you ponder His covenant love and faithfulness, get it in your heart and mind so that you can tell a future generation that they are secure, stable and safe in this world in one place alone—in the presence of God. This assurance comes by putting their trust in this faithful God. This God, verse 14, He is “...our God forever and ever...” That’s what we need to tell our kids. He’s our God. He always will be. He will be our Guide forever, even to the end.

The end of what? Kathy Keller says, “There are many endings in life, the greatest one being death, but the mystery and terror of death are made bearable by the knowledge that Jesus will be with us into death and out the other side.” This is the kind of God we have. He doesn’t leave us in hard times. He doesn’t leave us when we are old and forgotten. He doesn’t leave us when we’re sick and He doesn’t leave us when we die. He will be our Guide, even to the end.

Friends, your kids don’t need you to tell them how to operate their iPhone. They’re going to figure that out on their own; they’ll help you with that. But how are they going to know about the works of God on behalf of His people? How are they going to know the history of what He has done? How are they going to see His glory, splendor and might if we don’t tell them? We need to tell the future generations, “This God, our God, wants to be your God forever and ever. Put your hope in Him. Put your trust in Him.”

That’s Psalm 48. But how do we take a Psalm like this, talking about a city in the ancient past on a hill called Zion, and how do we translate that into our lives here in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. How do we get from Psalm 48 to New Covenant Bible Church today and into the future? I want to say I think it would be a great mistake to read a Psalm like this—and there are many Psalms that speak of Zion or Jerusalem—and think our stability and security are to be found there in that city in Israel today; that somehow if we want to be safe and secure, we’ve got to find our way to Israel and make a pilgrimage there. No. That’s not where our stability and security lie. We can even see this in real life. Israel is not always a stable place and has not always been a stable place in history. But to read this Psalm and think that somehow the promises of this Psalm rely on the temple being rebuilt in Jerusalem would be going backwards in the way the Bible unfolds. That’s not even what God wanted for His people in the old covenant to think. It wasn’t the city that made His people safe and secure; it was God’s presence there.

His presence can never be confined or contained within an earthly city. Even Solomon knew this when he dedicated the temple on Mount Zion. Look at what he said in 1 Kings 8:27: “*But will God indeed live on earth?*” No. “*Even heaven, the highest heaven, cannot contain, you, much less this temple I have built.*” Solomon understood that the temple itself was not the focus; it was the God Who dwelled there.

The prophet Jeremiah warned the people, “Don’t put your hope in this earthly city and this physical temple. Don’t think you can live however you want and not even know and love this covenant God so that somehow He’s going to keep you safe.” No. Look at Jeremiah 7:3-4. *“This is what the Lord of Armies, the God of Israel, says: Correct your ways and your actions, and I will allow you to live in this place”* (in security and stability.) *“Do not trust deceitful words, chanting, ‘This is the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord.’”*

“We’re safe. We’re in Mount Zion, the joy of the whole earth. He’s going to protect us because we’re here.” Jeremiah is saying, “No, don’t do that. Don’t think you’re safe if you don’t walk in faithfulness to this covenant God. It’s Him you need, not the temple.”

In Israel’s history, there came a time—because of their unfaithfulness—that God removed them from this land and carried them off to Babylon and Assyria. And the temple was destroyed. When that happened, look at what it says in Lamentations 2:15: *“All who pass by scornfully clap their hands at you. They hiss and shake their heads at Daughter Jerusalem: ‘Is this the city that was called perfection of beauty, the joy of the whole earth?’”* Is this the place Psalm 48 was talking about? Seriously? Look at it now. It’s been destroyed. We know in Israel’s history that in the mercy of God, the people were brought back to that land after the Exile, then they rebuilt the smaller temple that existed for a few hundred years.

Then Jesus Himself warned His disciples that they shouldn’t place their hopes in that physical structure. Look at what He said in Mark 13:1-2. His disciples were passing by and looking at that temple. One of them said to Him, *“Teacher, look! What massive stones! What impressive buildings!”* And Jesus said to him, *“Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left upon another—all will be thrown down.”* This temple is coming down, Jesus said. He also said, *“Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up”* (John 2:19). He was talking about Himself there. Jesus was saying, “I am now the temple. I am now the dwelling place of God with humanity.”

If you want to know God’s presence, if you want to find stability and security in this life, come to Jesus; be united to Jesus. When you are with Jesus, He gives you His Holy Spirit Who comes to dwell in you. And we the people of God become the temple of God, because we’re united to Him.

So where do you find Zion today? Where do you find the City of God today? You find it wherever God’s faithful people gather, wherever those who are united to Christ are—here on earth and also in heaven. Zion is where God’s people are with Jesus, where His presence dwells. So we can think of the church as Zion today—the church on earth and the church in heaven. In fact, in our call to worship this morning, we heard these words from Hebrews 12:22-24: *“Instead you*

*have come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God (the heavenly Jerusalem)...*” We’re already connected to that city above, Jerusalem above. She’s our mother, Paul says in Galatians 4. We’ve come “*to myriads of angels, a festive gathering, to the assembly of the firstborn*”—all this lofty language is going on as God’s people gather.

What’s happening here is connected to what’s happening in heaven. Just as Jesus is with His people in heaven, He’s with His people on earth. He is our Protector, Defender, Guide, Leader, Savior, Shepherd and Friend. As long as we’re with Jesus, we are safe. He will keep us secure. It doesn’t mean no danger will happen in our lives, but it means there’s nothing that can touch us that will separate us from Him. In Him we are safe. “No power of hell, no scheme of man can ever pluck me from His hand, ‘til He returns or calls me home. Here in the power of Christ I stand.”

Friends, our hope is that one day He will return. Revelation 20 talks about the rebellion of Satan being crushed, then the Jerusalem that is above will come down to earth. Let me read this wonderful passage, Revelation 21:1-5a, because this is our ultimate hope:

*Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. I also saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared like a bride adorned for her husband. Then I heard a loud voice from the throne: Look, God’s dwelling is with humanity, and he will live with them. They will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them and will be their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; grief, crying and pain will be no more, because the previous things have passed away. Then the one seated on the throne said, “Look, I am making everything new.”*

This is the new Jerusalem. Heaven is going to come down. The City of God is going to come down and there is going to be a new creation. God’s dwelling will be among us and there’s not going to be anything to alarm, destroy us. Nothing will threaten, our stability or security there. That’s what we have to look forward to.

There have been lots of cities I’ve wanted to go to in my life. By the grace of God I’ve gotten to see quite a few: Chicago, New York, Paris, London, Prague—some pretty neat places. But I’ll tell you, every one of those cities had something disappointing in them. You get there, and you’re thinking, “I’m not in heaven yet. This isn’t everything my heart longs for yet. There’s so much lacking.”

But friends, this city is coming and you’d better have it on your bucket list. You’d better make sure, of all the cities in the world you want to visit, that you don’t miss the new Jerusalem.

Don't miss this city. The way you make sure you don't miss this city is you put your trust in Jesus. Trust in Him and you will become a citizen of the new Jerusalem.

How do we take Psalm 48 and pray it today? I want to give you five ways you can take this Psalm and incorporate it into your prayer life this week.

**Number one, pray for the ongoing beautification of Christ's church through the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit.** Jerusalem is supposed to be the joy of the whole earth, so pray that our church would be beautiful and bring joy to the community.

Sometimes, sadly, when people come to church, they don't see beauty. Sometimes when people come to church, they see gossip, slander, pride and favoritism. When people come to us, we want them to see beauty. We want them to experience joy. I'd like us to pray for this right now, as we put this prayer on the screen. Make this your prayer this week. Let us pray this together:

"Lord, too many of our Christian communities are ingrown and invisible at best or unattractive at worst. Help me become one small important part of making my church beautiful to all around it. Help me, Lord, become one small important part of making my church beautiful to all around it."

**The second prayer: praise God that His presence and power are the only protection you and your loved ones need in a dangerous world.** Praise Him for that. There are a lot of things that bring us fear in this life. I've got two daughters, one who teaches in an inner-city school in Memphis; she had some danger this year. Another daughter is going to be on a plane to Hong Kong, spending 11 hours walking through that city tomorrow, then on to Taiwan. There are lots of things I could worry about, but I come back to this: God, in Your presence, they are safe. They are secure in a dangerous world. "What have I to fear, what have I to dread, leaning on the everlasting arms?"

We are safe in His presence. So we can feel just as safe in the middle of a battlefield as we can in our own bed, if we are trusting in the presence of this God.

Number three applies whenever you think about the unfinished work in your life—and there's a lot of unfinished work. Think of the church right now as a massive, beautiful building, but it's surrounded by scaffolding. The work is still in progress. It's going to be at that point in Revelation 21 that we read about when the scaffolding is finally going to be removed and the church will be revealed in all her beauty for who she really is. We'll be part of that too. But right now there's lots of unfinished work.

As you pray about that unfinished work, **pray with confidence and gratefulness that God will establish His church forever.** He doesn't start a work that He won't finish. He Who

began a good work in us will be faithful to complete it (Philippians 1:6). So when we fear that our faith will fail, Christ will hold us fast. When we're afraid that the tempter is going to prevail, He's going to hold us fast. The enemy will flee like a woman in labor who's trembling and like a ship that's sunk in the sea, because Christ is going to establish us, because we are His delight.

**Number four, rejoice in the Lord always, in His faithful love, justice and judgments.** Pray that His praise would reach the ends of the earth, as more and more people trust in Him, because He is the joy of the whole earth. His city is the joy of the whole earth. His city is a multi-national, multi-ethnic, multi-generational city that encompasses all the peoples of this world. So pray that His praise would reach the ends of the earth.

**Finally, five, marvel at the safety, security and stability we have in Christ committing to telling future generations that this God is our God.** Parents and grandparents, there's nothing more important for you to do than to tell your kids about this God. In our church, we have opportunities to do that in our children's ministry. We have needs, children wanting to know God, needing to know about God.

Think about our community too. Think about the Crossroads Ministry and all the children who were reached last past school year. There will be another opportunity opening up this year at Hillcrest Elementary in Elgin. Think about all the youth in our community who are being told, "Your security is found in your grades and performance at school, then getting into the right college, finding the right job and being successful in this life." That's what they're hearing, but then the bottom falls out of their lives and they're filled with anxiety, depression, loneliness and drug use—right here in our own community. They need to hear that this God, our God, can be their God and that He can lead them forever and ever. So pray about this. Pray about how you can be engaged in telling the future generations about our God.

Let's prepare now to come to the Lord's Table. As we come, we're going to put a prayer of confession on the screen. As I read through this, I invite you to be acknowledging your need for God's grace, acknowledging your sin, your false hopes, your false places of trust and safety. I invite you, God's people, to put your trust in Him afresh this morning. As I read this, you can be talking to God in your own heart.

"God, I take comfort today in the fact that Your eye is on those who fear You. I don't find myself trusting in kings or war horses, but I do trust in the modern versions of those things: political leaders, strong economies, self-sufficiency and prosperity." These are false hopes. Acknowledge your false hopes to God right now. Is what you are living for, is what you are trusting in, going to prove to be quicksand? Will it really hold you fast? Repent of false hopes.

“God, these false hopes are not You, and they don’t watch over me with the steadfast love and care that You do.” Thank Him that He does that. Thank Him for His steadfast love and care.

“So today I will fear You and wait on You. Let Your steadfast love be upon me today.”  
Contemplate His faithful love.

“Help me know it. Help me sense it. Help me feel it in ways that make my heart glad. Take what I know about You, God, and revive my heart with it today. Let it bring joy and gladness to my heart today. May my soul wait for You today, Lord, and may I trust in Your holy name.”

Pause for a moment and deal with God as He is dealing with you.

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