

121.2 HOW TO MAKE IT TO THE CELESTIAL CITY (pt.2): Psalm 121

INTRODUCTION/CON(TEXT). Brothers and sisters in Christ, friends and visitors, Psalm 121 is a Song of Ascents. One of the things that means for us is that it is a song we should sing as we travel through this life toward the Celestial City.

This is a song designed to help us get to heaven!

This is a song written to direct the saints on their pilgrimage toward everlasting life!

This is a song penned down and preserved in Scripture to aid us in our travels toward the Celestial City!

~~I) So A Song of Ascent can easily be understood today as a song you and I could sing on our way to church, when we gather with the saints on the Lord's Day to offer Him holy worship! But there is another way you and I can understand and easily sing these Songs of Ascent.~~

~~II) A Song of Ascent can be sung by those Christians who have been saved by Jesus, and are marching to God's presence in Heaven and thereafter the New Earth.~~

Remember the song Come Ye That Love the Lord by Isaac Watts? Well, this is why Robert Lowry (most likely) added a refrain, or chorus, to that hymn. You may remember it if you grew up in a Baptist Church:

~~"We're marching to Zion;
Beautiful, beautiful, Zion.~~

~~We're marching upward to Zion,
The beautiful city of God."~~

~~— Come Ye That Love the Lord, Isaac Watts, Robert Lowry~~

So this Psalm is one that can easily be understood and sung as Christians march through this life toward what Bunyan calls in *The Pilgrim's Progress*—the Celestial City. My desire, such as is surely yours, is the same desire Christian had in *The Pilgrim's Progress*.

~~"This [Celestial] City is the end of my pilgrimage; and though the way be rough, and the enemies many, yet my heart is fixed, and I shall see the King in His beauty."~~ — John Bunyan

How can we get to the Celestial City (Heaven / the New earth)? Psalm 121 teaches us is that we need encouragement. Christians need encouragement along the way.

OUTLINE.

- **1. David encourages Himself** (vv. 1-2). Learn: *You need to encourage*

yourself.

- **2. David encourages others** (vv. 3-8). Learn: *You need to encourage other Christians.*

DOCTRINE. Christians need encouragement if they are going to make it to the Celestial City.

First, let me briefly remind you what is in verses 1-2 of this Psalm, though our particular focus will be on verses 3-8 in our time together today.

I. YOU NEED TO ENCOURAGE YOURSELF (Psalm 121:1-2).

I) You need to encourage yourself by continually look to Jesus in faith (Psalm 121:1-2a).

Psalm 121:1-2a

"I lift up my eyes to the hills.
From where does my help come?"
My help comes from the Lord,"

(i) You need to constantly look to Christ's Person—who He is and what He has done (Hebrews 12:1-2).

"I lift up my eyes to the hills.
From where does my help come?" *FROM CHRIST'S PERSON!*

(ii) You need to constantly look to Christ's Prescriptions—the Moral Law (Psalm 119:105; Psalm 119:97; Matthew 5:19).

"I lift up my eyes to the hills.
From where does my help come?" *FROM CHRIST'S PRESCRIPTIONS (LAW)!*

(iii) You need to constantly look to Christ's Promises (2 Corinthians 1:20).

"I lift up my eyes to the hills.
From where does my help come?" *FROM CHRIST'S PROMISES!*

(iv) You need to constantly look to Christ's His Providence (Ephesians 1:11 Romans 8:28).

"I lift up my eyes to the hills.
From where does my help come?" *FROM CHRIST'S PROVIDENCE!*

II) You need to encourage yourself by remembering the Lord is your helper, and nothing is impossible for Him (Psalm 121:2b).

Psalm 121:2b

who made heaven and earth."

TRANSITION.

But then there is a shift in verse 3. David turns from encouraging himself to encourage others. He spends two verses encouraging himself and 6 verses encouraging others. Maybe you should learn from that.

There are many like Herod who want to destroy the church.

There are many like Annanias who want to deceive the church.

There are many like Simon the Magician who want to use the church.

There are many like the Sadducees who want to constantly critique the church.

There are many like the Pharisees who want to control the church.

There are many like Demas who only want to help themselves & not the church.

But what we need are more like Barnabas who will encourage the church.

II. YOU NEED TO ENCOURAGE OTHER BELIEVERS (Psalm 121:3-8).

QUESTION. What does it mean to encourage someone?

ANSWER. To encourage means to literally call someone to your side so that you can stand shoulder to shoulder with them, and comfort them in the midst of life's battles.

BOYS AND GIRLS...

QUESTION. What is the big deal with encouraging others?

ANSWER. Consider what God says just from a few verses in the New Testament:

I) Paul and Barnabas were commended for strengthening the souls of the disciples through encouragement.

– **In Acts 14:22 Paul and Barnabas were**

"Strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying that through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God."

II) Christians are to mutually encourage one another.

- **Romans 1:11-12** "11 For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you— 12 that is, that we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith, both yours and mine."

III) Christians are to encourage one another through reminder about the second coming of Christ.

- **1 Thessalonians 4:18** "Encourage one another with these words."

IV) Christians are to continually encourage one another by pointing to the Person, Precepts, Promises, and Providence of Christ.

- **1 Thessalonians 5:11** "Encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing."

V) Christians are commanded to gather together for worship and mutual encouragement.

- **Hebrews 10:25** "[Do not neglect] to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near."

QUESTION. HOW CAN I ENCOURAGE OTHER BELIEVERS?

ANSWER. Here are some good options from Psalm 121:3-8:

Encourage other believers by telling them:

I) The Lord will sleeplessly keep your foot from sliding into apostasy and ruin (Psalm 121:3).

Psalm 121:3

"He will not let your foot be moved;
he who keeps you will not slumber."

- **HENRY:** "God will provide that his people shall not be tempted above what they are able, shall not fall into sin, though they may be very near it (Ps. 73:2, 23), shall not fall into trouble, though there be many endeavouring to undermine them by fraud or over throw them by force. He will keep them from being frightened, as we are when we slip or stumble and are ready to fall." — **Henry, Matthew. Unabridged Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible (best navigation) . OSNOVA. Kindle Edition.**

IMAGINE YOUR BROTHER OR SISTER KNEELING DOWN IN ANGUISH FROM BATTLES AGAINST SIN.

Get to their side and say something like, "The Lord Jesus Christ will keep you stable and steadfast. Look to Him in faith. He will not let your foot be moved as long as He is awake, and He neither slumbers nor sleeps."

Encourage other believers by telling them:

II) The Lord will sleeplessly keep His Church from sliding into apostasy and ruin (Psalm 121:4).

Psalm 121:4

"Behold, he who keeps Israel
will neither slumber nor sleep."

- **TRAPP:** "He repeats that sweetest promise that we may roll it as sugar under our tongues, that we may [taste] and be satisfied (Isaiah 66:11), and sets it forth with a 'behold.'"

- **Isaiah 27:3**

(speaking of the Church as His vineyard)

"I, the Lord, am its keeper;
every moment I water it.
Lest anyone punish it,
I keep it night and day. . ."

- **TRAPP:** "[The Lord] shall not fetch one wink of sleep. We slumber before we sleep; but God shall do neither. His seven eyes (Zechariah 3:3) are ever open, yea, they run to and fro through the whole earth (Zechariah 4:10). Howbeit, He looks with special care and complacency on the godly (Isaiah 66:2)."

Encourage other believers by telling them:

III) The Lord is your Refresher (Psalm 121:5).

Psalm 121:5

"The LORD is your keeper;
the LORD is your shade on your right hand."

- **Isaiah 32:2**

(speaking of His King who shall reign in righteousness)

"Each will be like a hiding place from the wind,
a shelter from the storm,
like streams of water in a dry place,
like the shade of a great rock in a weary land."

IMAGINE YOUR BROTHER OR SISTER SITTING DOWN IN WEARINESS FROM LIFE'S SUFFERINGS.

Get to their side and say something like, "The Lord Jesus Christ is your keeper, He is your shade on your right hand. You can rest in His promises."

Encourage other believers by telling them:

IV) The Lord will protect you from the heat of the day and the cold of the night (Psalm 121:6).

Psalm 121:6

"The sun shall not strike you by day,
nor the moon by night."

- **HENRY:** "The sun shall not smite thee (with his heat) by day nor the moon (with her cold and moisture) by night." — **Henry, Matthew. Unabridged Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible (best navigation) . OSNOVA. Kindle Edition.**

IMAGINE YOUR BROTHER OR SISTER HIDING FOR FEAR OF LIFE'S DIFFICULTIES.

Get to their side and say something like, "The Lord Jesus Christ will protect you and provide for you everything you need to glorify and enjoy Him both now and forever—the sun and its heat will not burn you by day nor will the moon and its coldness freeze you by night."

Encourage other believers by telling them:

V) The Lord will protect you from all evils (Psalm 121:7).

Psalm 121:7

"The LORD will keep you from all evil;
he will keep your life (or soul)."

- **HENRY:** "He shall prevent the evil you *fear*, and shall sanctify, remove, or lighten the evil you *feel*. He will keep you from *doing* evil (2 Cor. 13:7), and so far from suffering evil that whatever affliction happens to you there shall be no evil in it. Even that which kills shall not hurt." — **Henry, Matthew. Unabridged Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible (best navigation) . OSNOVA. Kindle Edition.**

USE FOR CORRECTION

To you believers who ever think the Lord is not for you, but against you.

THE LORD IS FOR YOU, BELIEVER. LOOK AT THE INCARNATION. LOOK AT THE CROSS. LOOK AT THE EMPTY TOMB. LOOK AT THE PROMISES.

IMAGINE YOUR BROTHER OR SISTER BEATEN DOWN BY SICKNESS OR SUFFERING.

Get to their side and say something like, "The Lord Jesus Christ will keep these evils from actually doing you eternal harm—the sickness and sufferings you go through now will only serve to sanctify you, prepare you for glory, humble you, and wean you from worldly lusts. Christ has redeemed your life by His death and resurrection. He will give you a new glorified body one day along with a perfected soul. The LORD will keep you from all evil; He will keep your life."

Encourage other believers by telling them:

VI) The Lord will preserve you, as you labor in your duties, all the way to glory (Psalm 121:8).

Psalm 121:8

"The LORD will keep
your going out and your coming in
from this time forth and forevermore."

- **HENRY:** "You shall be under his protection in all your journeys and voyages, outward-bound or homeward-bound, as he kept Israel in the wilderness, in their removes and rests. He will prosper you in all your affairs at home and abroad, in the beginning and in the conclusion of them. He will keep you in life and death, your going out and going on while you live and your coming in when you die, going out to thy labour in the morning of your days and coming home to your rest when the evening of old age calls you in" (see Ps. 104:23)." — **Henry, Matthew. Unabridged Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible (best navigation) . OSNOVA. Kindle Edition.**

IMAGINE YOUR BROTHER OR SISTER SLACKING FROM WALKING THE PATH OF THEIR DUTIES FOR FEAR OF LIFE'S DIFFICULTIES.

Get to their side and say something like, "The Lord Jesus Christ has Created you for a purpose. He has saved you for a purpose. He has entrusted these things or people to you for a purpose. Be diligent in your duties and 'The LORD will keep your going out and your coming in from this time forth and forevermore.'

CONCLUDING EXHORTATION.

Encourage one another by pointing one another to the

Person, Precepts, Promises, and Providence of Christ.

The encouragement your fellow saints need sounds less like, "Keep going, you can do it!" and more like "Keep going, Christ will do it!"

BOYS AND GIRLS (repeat)

READ ENTIRE PSALM to finish.

USES FOR APPLICATION

- USE FOR COMFORT / ENCOURAGEMENT*
- USE FOR EXAMINATION / TRIAL*
- USE FOR EXHORTATION / DIRECTION*
- USE FOR INSTRUCTION / DOCTRINE*
- USE FOR WARNING / AWAKENING*

PSALTER

1650 Psalter

- 1 I to the hills will lift mine eyes,
from whence doth come mine aid.
- 2 My safety cometh from the Lord,
who heav'n and earth hath made.
- 3 Thy foot he'll not let slide, nor will
he slumber that thee keeps.
- 4 Behold, he that keeps Israel
he slumbers not, nor sleeps.
- 5 The Lord thee keeps, the Lord thy shade
on thy right hand doth stay:
- 6 The moon by night thee shall not smite,

nor yet the sun by day.

- 7 The Lord shall keep thy soul; he shall preserve thee from all ill.
- 8 Henceforth thy going out and in God keep for ever will.

A Song of Ascents.

Psalm 121

- 1 I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come?
- 2 My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.
- 3 He will not let your foot be moved; he who keeps you will not slumber.
- 4 Behold, he who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.
- 5 The Lord is your keeper; the Lord is your shade on your right hand.
- 6 The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night.
- 7 The Lord will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life.
- 8 The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time forth and forevermore.

PURITAN QUOTES

- "God's presence with His people is not only a comfort, but a certain pledge of victory and success." — Manton, Thomas. *The Complete Works of Thomas Manton*. Vol. 2. London: James Nisbet & Co., 1871, 342.
- "Fear not, Christian, you are never out of God's sight, nor out of His care." — Gurnall, William. *The Christian in Complete Armour*. London: Printed for Thomas Parkhurst, 1662, 321.
- "Though the way be thorny, yet it leads to glory; and the end will make amends for all the difficulties in the way." — Flavel, John. *The Fountain of Life Opened Up*. London: Printed for Rob. White, 1673, 214.
- "God's promises are a believer's cordials in all their fainting fits." —

Brooks, Thomas. *Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices*. London: Printed for John Hancock, 1652, 89.

- "Let not your heart be troubled; Christ is yours, and heaven is yours, and all things are yours in Him." — Sibbes, Richard. *The Complete Works of Richard Sibbes*. Vol. 3. Edinburgh: James Nichol, 1862, 127.
- "The Lord will not cast off His people, neither will He forsake His inheritance; be of good courage, for He is your God." — Watson, Thomas. *A Body of Practical Divinity*. London: Printed for Thomas Parkhurst, 1692, 156.
- "When you are in the dark, Christ is your light; when you are weak, He is your strength; when you are distressed, He is your comforter." — Baxter, Richard. *The Saints' Everlasting Rest*. London: Printed for Thomas Underhill, 1650, 234.
- "Your afflictions are not eternal; time will end them, or God will end them, or death will end them; but your mercies are eternal." — Brooks, Thomas. *A Mute Christian Under the Rod*. London: Printed for John Hancock, 1659, 45.
- "Take heart, believer, for the Lord is with you, and His rod and staff shall comfort you in the deepest valleys." — Burroughs, Jeremiah. *The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment*. Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth Trust, 1964, 112.
- "The promises of God are a Christian's anchor in the storm and a staff to lean upon in the journey." — Flavel, John. *The Method of Grace*. London: Printed for T. Parkhurst, 1681, 93.
- "God's faithfulness is your shield; though the floods rise, they shall not overwhelm you." — Owen, John. *The Works of John Owen*. Vol. 9. Edinburgh: Johnstone & Hunter, 1851, 176.
- "Be not dismayed, for the eye of God is upon you for good, and His hand is stretched out to uphold you." — Sibbes, Richard. *The Bruised Reed and Smoking Flax*. London: Printed for R. Dawlman, 1630, 78.
- "The Lord delights to lift up those that are cast down, and to give beauty for ashes." — Manton, Thomas. *The Complete Works of Thomas Manton*. Vol. 6. London: James Nisbet & Co., 1872, 189.

- "Your trials are but for a moment, but the glory that follows is eternal; press on, therefore, with hope." — Baxter, Richard. *The Reformed Pastor*. London: Printed for Epworth Press, 1656, 142.
- "God's love is unchangeable; though clouds may obscure the sun, it still shines, and so does His favor toward you." — Goodwin, Thomas. *The Works of Thomas Goodwin*. Vol. 2. Edinburgh: James Nichol, 1861, 305.
- "The weakest saint is safe in the arms of Christ, who is stronger than all the powers of hell." — Gurnall, William. *The Christian in Complete Armour*. London: Printed for Thomas Parkhurst, 1662, 489.
- "Let the promises of God be your joy, for they are as sure as the God who made them." — Watson, Thomas. *A Divine Cordial*. London: Printed for Thomas Parkhurst, 1663, 67.
- "The Lord is near to the brokenhearted; He will not despise the cry of His children." — Sibbes, Richard. *The Complete Works of Richard Sibbes*. Vol. 1. Edinburgh: James Nichol, 1862, 245.
- "Courage, Christian, your Redeemer lives, and He will never leave you nor forsake you." — Flavel, John. *Christ Altogether Lovely*. London: Printed for R. White, 1672, 56.
- "Though your strength be small, God's power is infinite, and He works mightily in those who trust Him." — Owen, John. *The Works of John Owen*. Vol. 6. Edinburgh: Johnstone & Hunter, 1850, 321.
- "The Lord is your keeper; He will preserve you from all evil and guide you to His heavenly kingdom." — Burroughs, Jeremiah. *An Exposition of the Prophecy of Hosea*. London: Printed for R. Dawlman, 1643, 198.
- "In every storm, look to Christ, who walks upon the waves and bids you come to Him." — Manton, Thomas. *The Complete Works of Thomas Manton*. Vol. 8. London: James Nisbet & Co., 1873, 412.
- "Your present sorrows are but the seedtime; the harvest of joy is coming." — Brooks, Thomas. *Heaven on Earth*. London: Printed for John Hancock, 1654, 123.
- "God's delays are not denials; wait on Him, and He will renew your

strength." — Watson, Thomas. *A Body of Practical Divinity*. London: Printed for Thomas Parkhurst, 1692, 201.

STUDY AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Introduction/Context

1. How does the imagery of a "Song of Ascents" in Psalm 121 reflect the Christian's journey toward the Celestial City, and why is this metaphor significant for believers today?
2. In what ways can singing or meditating on Psalm 121 as a Song of Ascents strengthen a believer's faith during their pilgrimage through life?
3. How does the hymn refrain by Robert Lowry ("We're marching to Zion") complement the themes of Psalm 121, and how can it inspire believers to focus on their eternal destination?
4. Reflecting on John Bunyan's quote from *The Pilgrim's Progress*, how does the idea of a "fixed heart" despite a "rough way" and "many enemies" encourage believers to persevere in their faith?

Doctrine: Christians Need Encouragement

5. Why is encouragement essential for Christians to persevere toward the Celestial City, according to the sermon's doctrine? How does this align with the Reformed understanding of perseverance of the saints?
6. From a Reformed perspective, how does the doctrine of God's sovereignty provide a foundation for the encouragement Christians need in their spiritual journey?

I. You Need to Encourage Yourself (Psalm 121:1-2)

7. The sermon emphasizes looking to Christ's Person, Prescriptions, Promises, and Providence. How can believers practically "lift up their eyes" to these aspects of Christ in their daily lives?
8. Why is it significant that the Psalmist looks to the Lord as the Creator of heaven and earth (Psalm 121:2b)? How does this truth encourage believers to trust in God's power and care?
9. Discuss how focusing on Christ's Person (Hebrews 12:1-2) can help a believer overcome discouragement in moments of doubt or trial.
10. How does meditating on Christ's Prescriptions (the Moral Law, Psalm 119:105, 97; Matthew 5:19) provide encouragement, and what role does the Law play in the life of a believer from a Reformed perspective?

11. How do Christ's Promises (2 Corinthians 1:20) serve as a source of encouragement, and how can believers cling to these promises when facing spiritual or physical challenges?
12. In what ways does trusting in Christ's Providence (Ephesians 1:11; Romans 8:28) help believers remain steadfast, particularly when circumstances seem uncertain or adverse?

II. You Need to Encourage Other Believers (Psalm 121:3-8)

13. The sermon notes a shift in Psalm 121:3 from David encouraging himself to encouraging others. Why might it be significant that David spends more verses encouraging others (vv. 3-8) than himself (vv. 1-2)?
14. How does the biblical call to "stand shoulder to shoulder" with other believers (as described in the sermon's definition of encouragement) reflect the Reformed emphasis on the covenant community?
15. Discuss the examples of negative influences on the church (Herod, Annanias, Simon the Magician, Sadducees, Pharisees, Demas). How can being a "Barnabas" who encourages the church counteract these threats?
16. Using Acts 14:22, how did Paul and Barnabas strengthen disciples through encouragement, and what can modern believers learn from their example about enduring tribulations?
17. Based on Romans 1:11-12, how does mutual encouragement through shared faith strengthen the church? Share practical ways believers can encourage one another's faith today.
18. According to 1 Thessalonians 4:18, how does reminding believers of Christ's second coming provide encouragement? How can this truth be shared sensitively in a group setting?
19. Hebrews 10:25 emphasizes gathering for worship and encouragement. Why is corporate worship vital for mutual encouragement, and how does it reflect Reformed theology's view of the church?
20. The sermon lists six ways to encourage others from Psalm 121:3-8. Choose one (e.g., "The Lord will sleeplessly keep your foot from sliding," v. 3) and discuss how you could use this truth to encourage a struggling believer.
21. Using Psalm 121:4 and Isaiah 27:3, how does the assurance of God's sleepless care for His church encourage believers to trust in His protection over the corporate body?
22. Reflect on Psalm 121:5 and Isaiah 32:2. How does the imagery of Christ as a "shade" or "shelter" provide comfort, and how can this be shared to uplift a weary believer?
23. In Psalm 121:6, the Lord protects from the "sun by day" and "moon by

night." How can this assurance of God's comprehensive protection encourage believers facing diverse challenges?

24. Psalm 121:7 promises that the Lord will keep believers from all evil. How does the Reformed doctrine of God's sanctifying grace (as noted by Henry) assure believers that afflictions will not ultimately harm them?
25. Using Psalm 121:8, how does the promise of God's preservation in "going out and coming in" encourage believers to remain diligent in their God-given duties? How does this reflect the Reformed emphasis on vocation?
26. The sermon corrects believers who think God is against them by pointing to the incarnation, cross, empty tomb, and promises. How can these truths be used to encourage someone who feels God has abandoned them?

Concluding Exhortation

27. The sermon contrasts worldly encouragement ("Keep going, you can do it!") with Christ-centered encouragement ("Keep going, Christ will do it!"). Why is this distinction important in Reformed theology, and how can it shape the way we encourage others?
28. How can pointing believers to the Person, Precepts, Promises, and Providence of Christ foster a deeper reliance on God's grace rather than human effort in the Christian life?
29. Discuss practical ways your church or small group can cultivate a culture of encouragement that reflects the truths of Psalm 121, particularly in light of the Reformed doctrine of perseverance.
30. After reading Psalm 121 in its entirety, how does the Psalm as a whole inspire believers to trust in God's care and encourage one another toward the Celestial City?

SERMON TRANSCRIPT

Brothers and sisters, friends and visitors, Psalm 121 is a song of ascents. Look at it in your own Bible. A song of ascents, it says, which just means it was a song written so the Old Testament church could sing it as they were walking to Jerusalem a few times a year when they would go and worship the Lord at the temple. What that means for us today in the new covenant or one of the things it means is that it's a song we should sing as we travel through this life on our way to the celestial city on our way to heaven. It's a song to be sung as we march through this life toward heaven. This is a song designed to help us get to heaven. It's a song written to direct the saints on their pilgrimage toward everlasting life. This

psalm, Psalm 121, is a song pinned down and preserved in scripture to aid us in our travels toward that celestial city. So, how can we get to heaven? This is not just dealing with, well, by grace alone, through faith alone and Christ alone. This is a song dealing with the fact that the Lord says, "He who turns back from me, my soul hates. He who turns away from me, he who apostatizes, he who professes faith at one time and then walks away from me, he who doesn't persevere to the end, my soul hates." He's not a true believer. So, how can we get to the celestial city? How can you and I make sure as we walk this life for the glory of God? How can we make sure that I'm not going to abandon Jesus? Like, what are the means God uses? What are the instruments God uses to preserve his people and help us keep walking? Well, Psalm 121 teaches us that we need encouragement. We need encouragement. Christians need encouragement along the way. Look, and let me remind you again. Verses 1 and two, David, many believe, is the author of this psalm. David writes this. In verses 1 and two, he's talking to himself. He's encouraging himself. I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come? My help comes from the Lord who made heaven and earth. So, David encourages himself. So, you need encouragement in your Christian life. First of all, you need to learn to encourage yourself. Secondly, look at verses 3 through 8 and notice how it transitions to not do David encouraging himself or teaching us to encourage ourselves, but then David turns outward and teaches us to turn outward and encourage our brothers and sisters in Christ. He will not let your foot be moved. He doesn't continue to say, "He will not let my foot be moved." It's not a whole psalm singing about myself, encouraging myself. There's two verses encouraging myself and six verses encouraging other people. But the whole thing is encouragement for the Christian as he travels toward heaven. Christians need encouragement if they're going to make it to the celestial city. That's a means by which God will preserve you. You need encouragement from yourself and from others. Now, let me briefly remind you verses 1 and two. You need to encourage yourself. You need to encourage yourself by continually looking to Jesus in faith. Encourage yourself by continually looking to Jesus in faith. Look at verse one and two again. I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come? My help comes from the Lord. You need to constantly look to Christ's person, who he is, and what he's done. You need to constantly look to Christ's prescriptions, his law, his commandments. That's how you know how to live, how to walk in this life. You look to his law. His law reveals how to live for his glory and to enjoy him. You need to constantly look to Christ's promises. Lift up your eyes. Where does your help come from? Christ's promises. And you need to constantly look to his providence. That he is in control of all things and working all things according to the council of his will. And if you belong to him, he's working all things together for your good and his glory. So you need to look to Christ's person, prescriptions, promises, and providence if you're going to encourage yourself as you are taught to by Psalm 121:1 and 2. But you also need to not forget that last part of verse two where David is reminding himself, he made heaven and earth. My hope comes from the one who spoke the cosmos into existence. That's how powerful he is. Nothing is

impossible for God. So encourage himself by remembering the Lord is his helper and nothing is impossible for him. That's what you need to learn. Encourage yourself by the by Christ and by the fact that nothing is impossible for the Lord. But then again, look at the shift. He will not in verse three. He will not let your foot be moved. He who keeps you will not slumber. Behold, he who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. And the rest of it, it's all directed out. You, you, you. He encourages himself, then he turns to encourage others. He spends, just stop and think with me for a second. David spends two verses in this psalm encouraging himself and six verses encouraging other people. Maybe you should learn from that. Two verses focusing on himself and what he needs and his spiritual nourishment reminder of the promises, my help comes from the Lord and six verses pouring it out to other people. I think the people who are the biggest encouragers of others are the most encouraged people. And the people that are so self-focused that they don't really care about encouraging other people, but they're just me. Those are the most miserable people. You want to be miserable, be self-absorbed. You want to be happy, serve other people. Like I've reminded you of frequently. Uh an older family member of ours would hear someone whining or complaining about how difficult their life is. And his grandma would say, "Oh, honey, you just need to go help somebody." She's like, "Your life is so hard. You just need to go help somebody else. Go serve somebody. That'd be good for you. Go help someone. This life is not all about you. It's very difficult." But the more you sit around and just like, "This life is so hard." Like that, it doesn't get any better. You know, from experience. And so, I think you should at least learn from the balance here. two verses for me, six verses for others. You should learn and I should learn, we need to be constantly encouraging other believers. There are many like Herod who want to destroy the church. There are many like Ananas and Sapphira who want to deceive the church. There are many like Simon the magician who want to use the church. There are many like the Sadducees who want to constantly critique the church. There are many like the Pharisees who want to control the church. There are many like Deus who only want to help themselves and don't want to help the church. What we need desperately are more men and women who are like Barnabas who will encourage the church. We need encouragers. You need encouragement from others if you're going to make it to the celestial city. So that's the second truth. That's what you should really link. You need to encourage yourself from verses 1 and two and then verses 3 through 8. The big the forest. We're going to look at the trees here in a minute. And I'm going to point out to you the six things that we can learn from this. Like here's some good encouragements to give to other believers. But we have to view the forest first or we're not really going to be able to make much use of the trees. So, we're still in the forest. You need to encourage other believers. What does it mean to encourage someone? You when you read the scriptures, the English translations, as long as you don't have a psychotic one that's trying to sound like Gen Alpha, those exist and they're not helpful. You got an ESV, NASB, King James, New King James. Those are great. Geneva translation if you want to go super old

school. Perfectly fine translations. You don't need to study the Greek and the Hebrew. You don't have to. The translations are good. But you need to sometimes know what words mean. And you need to know that when we read certain words in English that we might very easily bring our own interpretation or definition into that word and it's not exactly what it means. One example is the word hope. *Elpis* is the Greek word that is most frequently translated hope in your New Testament. And it I peace does not mean what we mean typically when we use the word hope. It has nothing to do with like crossing your fingers. I hope things go well. Hope when it's used in the New Testament especially that word *elpis* means a confident expectation of future salvation because of the trustworthiness of God. It's something that hasn't happened yet. It's going to happen because God has promised. It's just not here yet. That's way different than we use the word hope, isn't it? I hope you're not sick tomorrow when you wake up. That doesn't mean I have a confident expectation that because of God's faithfulness, you will not be sick. Because it's like, no, God didn't promise you you're not going to be sick tomorrow. You might wake up sick tomorrow. But I would say, I hope you're not sick. And so sometimes you need to understand the words to really be able to grasp what it means to have hope or in this sense we're talking about encouragement. What it really means to encourage someone so you can understand when Paul exhorts you or I to encourage other believers like what does that look like? The word it's *parakaleo* in the Greek and you don't need to memorize that but all it means is you're calling someone to your side or you are going and getting someone right next to their side like side by side shoulder-to shoulder. And sometimes that shoulder to-shoulder-ness is you're gonna comfort them. And sometimes it's you're gonna point ahead and say, "You need to go that way." Sometimes it's like your arm is around them and you're tapping them on the chest like, "It's going to be okay. It's going to be okay." Uh encouragement is more like that arm around them. I'm going to lift you up and comfort you, but I'm getting right beside you, standing next to you, and you should think of it like soldiers in the midst of a battle. A soldier is weary and someone comes up to him, puts arm around him, maybe lifts them up and says, "I've got you. I've got you." Reminds them of something, comforts them, and then exhorts them to go on their way. That's what encouragement means. The picture for our sake of encouraging one another as we travel toward the celestial city. You should see it as a believer walking on the path toward the city. Imagine pilgrims progress with John Bunyan's famous book. There's a Christian traveling on the path and they sit down because they're just exhausted or they're suffering or they just had a battle and they have wounds and you're going to go to them. You're not going to be distant and just yell at them. It's like, "Hey, dummy, stand up and walk." You're going to go right next to them shoulder-to shoulder and give them whatever you can possibly give them to help them keep walking towards heaven. Sometimes it's sometimes especially for men it is hey dummy stand up and walk let's go that's exhort—that's more like exhortation or admonishment but encouragement is I've got you grab you and help you stand up put my arm around you remind you of certain things and say let's go

let's walk together that's encouragement so think of it like a weary traveler a wounded traveler on this path that I'm going to go right next to them. I'm standing shoulder-to-shoulder with them. I'm in this fight with them and I'm going to give them what they need in order to have their face lifted up and go, "That's right. That's right. Let's go. Let's keep going. Let's not give up." That's encouragement. Boys and girls, can you imagine someone walking on a path, a friend that you know that's a Christian, and the path, imagine at the very end of the path, the trail is heaven. and they need to keep walking. You got to keep walking. But you come upon one of your friends and they're just sitting down or they're lying down. Maybe they just got beaten up. Maybe they got robbed. Maybe they're sick. Maybe they're just depressed. If they've got to keep walking and persevere, what should you do if you find them sitting down, lying down, or beaten up on the side of the road? Yeah. Comfort them. Help them. Right? Help them stand up, encourage them, comfort them. I'll go with you. We can we can keep going. Jesus is worth it. Those kind of things. That's what it means, boys and girls. That's what it means to encourage someone. You get right next to them. You put your arm around them and you encourage them. You comfort them with the truths of God's word. Okay? So, we clear what encouragement is. I hope we have a good uh picture in our minds of what it is. Now, what's the big deal with encouragement? We're still in the forest. The forest is encourage other believers. And I'm helping you have trying to help you have a really good foundation for it. So that when we get to the particulars of verses 3 through 8, it's just going to be real easy and quick. And you're just like, "Oo, that's a good one. I want to use that one to comfort and encourage someone. I want to use that one. I want to use that one. I want to use that one." So, I'm trying to lay the foundation. And then once we get to verses 3 through8 in the particulars, we just blow through it and say, I'm ready to use these encouragements for my brothers and sisters. What's the big deal with encouraging others? Well, let me just point out to you a few things that God says from just a few verses only in the New Testament, not even the Old Testament. First, Paul and Barnabas were commended for strengthening the souls of the disciples through encouragement. They strengthened the souls, the scripture says, of the disciples in Antioch and the other cities that they ministered to through encouragement. They were strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith and saying that through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God. Acts 14:22. Christians furthermore are to mutually encourage one another. Paul says this at the beginning of Romans, Romans 1 11 and 12. I long to see you Roman Christians. I long to see you that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you. That is, now he's explaining what he means. A a spiritual gift to strengthen you. That is that we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith. Both yours and mine. We may be mutually encouraged by one another's faith, both yours and mine. The Apostle Paul needs to be encouraged by the Christians at Rome. That's what he's saying. I am desperate to see you in person because I need to be encouraged by you.

If that mighty mountain of a man needs encouragement from other believers, you think you're going to get by without it? I'm not.

But Christians are to mutually encourage one another, comfort one another, exhort one another, build one another up. Christians are to encourage one another through reminding one another about the second coming of Christ. Even this is Paul's point in 1 Thessalonians 4:18. After dealing with the second coming and specifics of it, the great promises of the second coming of Jesus for believers, he says, "Encourage one another with these words. Comfort one another with these words, remembering that Christ is going to return. Judge the wicked, perfect the righteous, and we will dwell with him forever." Ain't that great? Encourage. Comfort one another with those words. Christians are also to continually encouraging encourage one another by pointing to Christ. 1 Thessalonians 5:11, encourage one another and build one another up just as you are doing. The just as you are doing helps us understand that it's not something you do every once in a while. It's not something you do once. It's not something you set a reminder and you set in your phone that reminds me on this day once a year encourage other Christians. Oh yeah, I need to do that. The just as you are doing reminds us they're constantly comforting one another, coming alongside one another, helping one another walk the path to the celestial city. Encourage one another just as you are doing. Keep it up. Do not stop. So Christians are to continually encourage one another. Also, Christians are commanded to gather together for worship and mutual encouragement. When we gather together to worship the Lord as the Lord's people on the Lord's day like this, it is so that we can be an encouragement to one another. It's not the only reason, but it is one of the main reasons. That's why we sing songs because we're not only singing to the Lord, but Ephesians says we're addressing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. So, we're encouraging one another as we gather together for worship. Hebrews 10:25, "Do not neglect to meet together as is the habit of some, but encourage one another, and all the more as you see the day drawing near." Is the day closer today than it was then? Yep. So all the more we need to be gathering together and encouraging one another. So it's not just some one-off thing. It's a command. It's the constant example. It's mutual. You and I need to be encouragers. Your name may not be Barnabas, which means son of encouragement. That's what his name literally means. But you need to act like Barnabas. And so do I. Now, how can I encourage other believers? How can I do it? Well, let's now look at the specifics of Psalm 123 or 121, rather, 3 through 8. All of these things I'm going I'm turning into exhortations for you Christians saying here's how here's how you should encourage other Christians because that's really what we should learn from it. That's what David's doing, isn't it? He writes a song then turns out to others he will not let your foot be moved. Like what do I learn? That's I need to do that. I need to take his example. So, I'm phrasing it in a way that is an exhortation for you Christians so that you can be equipped to encourage other Christians. Okay? That doesn't mean these things aren't true for you. The all of these things are true for

you if you belong to the Lord Jesus Christ. Just because I'm phrasing it in an exhortation doesn't mean it's not also true for you. So, these are true for you. But the way that you should use this for application is to look beyond yourself like David was even in this psalm and give the encouragements to others. Consider others more significant than yourself. Just think with me for a second. If every single person in this room is seeking their own good, how many people are seeking your good?

Anybody? One, everyone's just seeking their own good. There's one person seeking your good. But if all of us are laboring diligently and we're seeking one another's good, you're thinking of other people's good, how to encourage, how to build up, how to help. If we're all doing that, how many people are seeking your good? 100 over a hundred. It's just simple math. Even a homeschooler like me can do it. But think consider others more significant than yourself. These true these are true for you. But you need to be equipped to say this is some ammo that I can use to encourage my fellow brothers and sisters. Okay. First, encourage other believers by telling them, "The Lord will sleeplessly keep your foot from sliding into apostasy and ruin."

The Lord will sleeplessly keep your foot from sliding into apostasy and ruin. Look at verse three. He will not let your foot be moved. That means as you're walking the path towards the celestial city, he's not going to let your foot slip off and slide down so that you abandon Christ. You make shipwreck of your faith and you finally go to hell. No, he will not let your foot be moved. He will continue to preserve you. You will be stable and steadfast. That's the encouragement, the first one that David turns out to give to other people. He will not let your foot be moved. What if he falls asleep? No, he doesn't slumber nor sleep. He who keeps you will not slumber.

So the Lord will the whole point of sleeplessly is that all of us, no matter who's protecting you, no matter who's providing for you, everyone has to sleep at some point. And what do you do if your protector is asleep when the enemy comes to attack you? You hope they can wake up quick and you hope they were sleeping with their boots on. But he's saying the Lord doesn't go to sleep. He doesn't slumber. He's never unaware. He's never pulled back from guarding you, from protecting you. If you think of it, he's never away from when you start to veer off the path from going, "Nope, nope, nope, nope, nope, nope. Stay on. Stay on." He's keeping your foot from sliding. The Lord will sleeplessly keep your foot from sliding into apostasy and ruin. Believers, as you slept last night, the Lord Jesus Christ was awake and he was preserving your faith in him. You woke up this morning a believer because Christ kept your foot from stumbling. He does not slumber nor sleep. Imagine your brother or sister kneeling down in anguish from battles against sin. Can you picture that? They're walking the path to the celestial city and you come upon them kneeling down and just in anguish from battles

against sin. Get to their side and say something like, "The Lord Jesus Christ will keep you stable and steadfast. Look to him in faith. He will not let your foot be moved as long as he is awake and he never sleeps. That's how to encourage someone as they travel toward the celestial city. He will not let your foot be moved. He who keeps you will not slumber. Look next at verse four where he turns from speaking of individuals and then he speaks of the church of the chosen people of God. He says, "Behold, he who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep." Not only will the Lord keep every individual believer from their foot sliding, not only will he keep them safe, but he's saying the Lord will sleeplessly keep his church from sliding into apostasy and ruin. That's an encouragement. What if I'm the only one left? The Lord promises me in verse three, he's going to keep my foot from sliding. He's going to keep me from apostatizing, from sliding away, from He's going to keep me from abandoning Christ. What if everyone else does? Can you imagine how miserable that would be? There have been believers in that situation in their lives. frontier missionaries who spend their entire lives mapping out continents and see like one convert their whole life. Can you imagine what it would be like to have the whole church around you slide into apostasy and ruin and you're the only believer? Well, the Lord says, "Behold, he who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep." He's like, "No, I'm not going to let my church apostatize. You're not going to be the only one. The Lord will sleeplessly keep his church from sliding into apostasy and ruin. You're going to have brothers. You're going to have sisters. You're going to have people come alongside you when you're kneeling down in anguish because of your failures, your sins, and they're going to be able to say, "The Lord will keep you."

So, the Lord will sleeplessly keep his church from sliding into apostasy and ruin. John Trap says, "He repeats the sweetest promise so that we may roll it as sugar under our tongues." He repeats the promise twice. He does not sleep. He keeps you. He keeps his church. He does not slumber nor sleep. Trap says, "The Lord shall not fetch one wink of sleep. We slumber before we sleep, but God shall do neither. His seven eyes are ever open. Yay, they run to and fro through the whole earth. How be it, he looks with special care and complacency on the godly. Imagine,

imagine what it would be like to come across the church of Jesus Christ, even a particular local church who's downcast. All these people are kneeling down on the path. What's your job? Come alongside them. Say, "Hey, Christ paid too high of a price to leave us. He's promised he keeps Israel and he will not slumber nor sleep. Let's keep going. Look. Thirdly, look at verse five. Here's another thing you can encourage other people with. Encourage other believers by telling them, "The Lord is your refresher." The Lord is your refresher. The one who refreshes you. Are you empty?

The Lord will refresh you. He's like shade on a hot day. That's the Lord is your

keeper. He's already said that the Lord will keep you. He'll not let your foot be moved. He'll keep Israel. Verse five, the Lord is your keeper. The Lord is your shade on your right hand. This is the refreshing coolness of the shade on a hot day. even when you're in the middle of a battle like you need that shade. The imagery is refreshment.

So there's a way to encourage other believers like if you're weak, if you're tired, if you're empty, what you need is the Lord and his mercy. You need the Lord to refresh you. You need to look to his promises. You need to look to his person. You need to look to Christ Jesus and faith and be refreshed. He is your shade. If you need rest, it's Christ that can give that deep rest. The Lord is your keeper. The Lord is your shade on your right hand.

Look or think. Imagine your brother or sister sitting down on the side of that road in weariness from life's sufferings,

empty, beaten, unable to desire to go on. Get to their side. come side by side to them and say something like, "The Lord Jesus Christ is your keeper. He is your shade on your right hand. He has promises for you that will come true. Look to the promises and be refreshed in Christ." Whatever promise the person needs to hear in the moment, if you can think of one, give it to them. The Lord is your refresher. You're empty, look to Christ. You need that spiritual rest, look to Christ and his promises. He's your keeper. He is your shade.

Look next. Look at verse six. The Lord will protect you from the heat of the day and the cold of the night. That's the point of verse six. That's why he brings this up. He's saying what we should learn is encourage other believers by telling them the Lord will protect you from the heat of the day and the cold of the night. The Lord's going to protect you from the harms. The sun shall not strike you by day, verse six, nor the moon by night. This is when you pull back a little bit and remember the context of a song of ascents as people are walking up the hill to Jerusalem from all over Palestine. And most of the year it gets hot during the day and the sun strikes you by day and then a lot of it surrounding Jerusalem are desert areas. And as you know often the desert gets very hot during the day and freezing somehow at night. So the metaphor is the sun is not going to burn you by day and the moon is not going to freeze you by night. It's just the harms of you're walking towards the celestial city. You're walking towards Jerusalem even as an old covenant believer and thinking like we're going to be so drained by the sun during the day and then we're going to freeze at night. Said, "No, no, no. The harms that you fear, they'll not strike you. I will protect you. I will preserve you. The things that you fear will be easy. I will keep you not from the pain of them, but from the eternal harm of them. The Lord never promises to keep you and I from pain. As the Puritans would say, he's promised to keep you from not from the smart of it, but from the harm of it. Smart like, "oh, that's smarts." i.e. "That hurts." Not from the hurt of it, not from

the pain of it, but from the harm. It's not going to eternally harm you. So, what do we do with that? Well, imagine your brother or sister hiding for fear of life's difficulties. Hiding in fear. Life is difficult. There are many threats. Someone is just hiding. They're not on the path. They're not walking because they know if they keep walking the path, there are many things that will strike them or attempt to strike them. So, you got a brother or sister hiding for fear of life's difficulties. Get to their side and say something like, "The Lord Jesus Christ will protect you and provide for you everything you need to glorify him and enjoy him both now and forever. He gives us all things that we need for life and godliness. Everything is necessary that he sins. Nothing can be necessary that he withholds.

That's John Newton. Everything is necessary that he sends your way. Nothing can be necessary that he keeps from you. He's promised the sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night. He's promised not to keep you from the smart of it, but from the harm of it. The sun and its heat will not burn you by day, nor will the moon and its coldness freeze you by night. When someone is hiding in fear because of life's difficulties, get on their side. Get to their side and comfort them. Encourage them. The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night. Now look, fifthly, look at verse seven.

Encourage other believers by telling them, "The Lord will protect you from all evils." The Lord will protect you from all evils. Says, "The Lord will keep you from all evil. He will keep your life." Or you could translate that word soul. It means more than just physical life. It means life, your soul. The Lord will protect you, keep you from all evil. Again, not from the smart, but from the harm.

Henry says, "He shall prevent the evil you fear and shall sanctify, remove, or lighten the evil you feel. He will keep you from doing evil and so far from suffering evil that whatever affliction happens to you there shall be no evil in it. Even that which kills shall not hurt. Saying all of the suffering that happens to you I'm working in for my glory and your good. I think verse seven the Lord will keep you from all evil. He will keep your life. I think you need to use that truth for correction.

This needs to correct any of us who think the Lord is not for us but against us at any time. If you are a believer, if you belong to Christ and you've ever thought the Lord is against me, then this verse needs to correct that because he's never against you. If you belong to Christ, he's always for you, always working for your good and ultimately for his glory. The Lord is for you believers. Even as you walk through the valley of the shadow of death, the Lord has not abandoned you. He's not against you. He is for you. This life is about more than our comforts. This life is about far more than things going how we want them to go or wish they would go. This life is about the Lord assigning to each each one of you specific duties, specific situations so that you can best enjoy him and glorify him in that whatever the Lord has assigned to you, it's not because he's against you, even if it is very

difficult. It's because he loves you and because he will glorify himself through you. So the Lord is not against you. None of you look at the incarnation. God became a man, entered into our mess and misery. That God is for you. Look at the cross. The Lord Jesus Christ bore your sin and shame. Christian, he is for you. Look at the resurrection and the ascension back to heaven. Christ is ever present at God's right hand to be your high priest, to be your advocate, to plead his blood before the throne. He is for you. Just because you and I do not understand what he's doing and why he's doing it in no way means that he is against you. Look at the promises and look at verse seven. The Lord will keep you from all evil. He will keep your life. The Lord will protect you from all evils. Encourage other believers by telling them that. Imagine your brother or sister beaten down by sickness, by suffering, by other people sinning against them. They're beaten up. get to their side and say something like, "The Lord Jesus Christ will keep these evils from actually doing you eternal harm. The sickness and sufferings and even the sins committed against you that you're going through now will only serve to sanctify you, prepare you for glory, to humble you, to wean you from the world and its lusts. Christ has redeemed your life by his death and resurrection. He will give you a new glorified body one day. He will judge the wicked. He will redeem the righteous. He will keep your life. He will keep you from all evil. That's what your brothers and sisters need who are beaten up by sickness, by sufferings or sins committed against them. The Lord will protect you from all evils. Encourage other believers. Now, lastly, look at verse 8. He says in verse eight, "The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time forth and forever more." Going out, coming in is often just the simplest way they can talk about doing your vocational duties. all of the duties that you've got at home, abroad, when you're at home, when you're traveling, when you're going to work, when you're coming back from work, when you're doing family worship, all of that you're going out and you're coming in. It's talking about the Lord will preserve you in your vocational duties as you labor in the duties that he set before you. The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time forth and forever more. So encourage other believers by telling them, "The Lord will preserve you as you labor in your duties all the way to glory." The Lord will preserve you as you labor in your duties. He'll preserve you all the way to glory. Listen to what Matthew Henry says about this. I think it's helpful. You shall be under his protection in all your journeys and voyages, outward-bound or homeward bound, as he kept Israel in the wilderness, in their removes and rests. He will prosper you in all your affairs at home and abroad. In the beginning and in the conclusion of them, he will keep you in life and death. You're going out. You're going on while you live, and you're coming in when you die. going out to thy labor in the morning of your days, and coming home to your rest when the evening of old age calls you in. You shall be under his protection in all your journeys and voyages.

The Lord will preserve you as you labor in your duties all the way to glory. Encourage other people with those words. Imagine your brother or sister is on that

path and they're just slacking. slacking from doing their duties and walking forward in the responsibilities and the duties that the Lord has given them. Get on their side and say something like, "The Lord Jesus Christ has created you for a purpose.

The Lord Jesus Christ has redeemed you for a purpose. The Lord Jesus Christ has given you, entrusted to you certain things and people for a purpose.

Be diligent in your duties and the Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time forth and forever more.

Encourage other believers like that. Remind them your ordinary everyday duties. You're going out and you're coming in. The Lord has entrusted things to you and given you responsibilities for a reason. There's a reason, adults, parents, there's a reason your kids are your kids.

There's a reason your job is your job. Your employers are your employers. Your employees are your employees. There's a reason. There's a reason you were born where you were born. There's a reason you moved here. There's a reason that your husband is who he is, that your wife is who she is. There's a reason. And the Lord has given you ample opportunity to do your wonderfully simple everyday duties to glorify him and enjoy him. Every day matters. And the Lord has promised he will keep your going out and your coming in from this time forth and forever more. Encourage other people with the truth that the Lord will preserve them as they labor in their duties all the way to glory. Now, in conclusion, let me just say this. As you encourage one another, Christians, encourage one another by pointing one another to the person of Christ, the prescriptions of Christ, the promises of Christ, and the providence of Christ. That's the chief encouragement is you're pointing to Christ's person and the application of it. You're pointing to his promises and the application. You're pointing to his law and the application. you're pointing to his providence, his sovereignty over all things and to the application of it. But all of that's got to center in Christ. Let me paint try to paint one more picture for you before we close. Walking that path toward the celestial city, encourage yourself and then encourage others. And the encouragement you give to others, whatever the specific words are, the taste of it, the flavor of it needs to be less like we can do it. Let's go. The flavor of it, the taste of it needs to be more like Jesus has promised. Let's go. Not let's stand up. You can do it. It's like no. But Jesus can do it and he's promised he will. So let's keep walking. Let's go. The flavors, the flavor has to be not you've got what it takes. The flavor's got to be Christ has what it takes. He's promised he's worthy of it. Now get your rear end up and let's go forward. He's promised.

"I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come? My help comes from the Lord who made heaven and earth. He will not let your foot be moved. He who

keeps you will not slumber. Behold, he who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. The Lord is your keeper. The Lord is your shade on your right hand. The sun shall not strike you by day nor the moon by night. The Lord will keep you from all evil. He will keep your life. The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time forth and forever more."

Praise be to God. Pray with me. Our Father, we ask simply that you sanctify believers, that you save sinners. For those who are sick, that you comfort them, heal them. Those who are suffering, that you suffering, that you give them peace. those who are straying from you that you rebuke them and correct them and grant them repentance. Those who are striving forward you encourage them, strengthen them. We ask you to purify this local church. Make us holy and happy and make us a church filled with Barnabases, people who constantly encourage one another. Thank you for this means of grace that you've given us in Psalm 121 to remind us that as we travel towards heaven, we need encouragement. We ask you to work mightily by your spirit in each of our lives to make us encouragers. And may you be glorified through it. Please accept all of our songs and prayers and Lord's supper and offerings and fellowship. receive them all for Christ's sake as our great priest. It's in his name we pray. Amen.