

What If I Make The Wrong Decision? — Delivery Transcript

Psalm 25 (CSB) • Wes Terry • Sunday, January 19, 2025 • Facing Fear

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If you have your Bibles, you can open them to Matt Matthew. You can open them to Psalms chapter 25. Matthew 25. That's a but that's a big one too. But Psalms chapter 25 is where we're going to be this morning. And as you're turning there, I want you to think back to the last time you found yourself in a situation that had no easy answers. I can thank to a handful of occasions in my own life where I didn't know which way to go forward. It was one of those danged if you do, danged if you don't type of situations.

And even if I knew the right thing to do I had no idea how to get from where I was to getting the right thing implemented. It was just a complicated, chaotic mess. And one of the reasons that those times in our life are so difficult is because it's not just we didn't get there just because of the bad things that people did to us or the bad circumstances that we experienced that that kind of brought us to that place, usually it's a series of bad decisions we made ourselves that put us in the mess that we're in.

Can I get an amen on that? In other words wrong decisions make the right decision even harder to make. And the more wrong decisions there are leading up to that moment, the more challenging it is to actually find a difficult way forward. Now I've not only experienced this in my own life, I've seen this as a pastor doing counseling with people. Used to when I would hear like these super crazy stories. From from people in our congregation I think to myself, well I you know, I guess I've heard it all now.

You know that is unreal. You guys are crazy. But then a couple years will go by and it's like. Well now I've heard it all, you know, and then another two or three years go by, I go, okay, for sure I've heard it all. And then it never it's never true. I always hear something crazier. But I have noticed one thing in common with all of those crazy, crazy stories, and that is the greater the sin, the greater the mess. In other words, human beings are already complicated

because they're human beings and they're nuanced and they're they're messy and they have different things that motivate them.

But then when you add human sin to the equation, I think sin or wrong decisions, however you want to use the language, sin has a way of compounding chaos in our life. And the more sin you add, the more the chaos increases. And it really does create a situation sometimes where I'll listen to some people's stories and I'll think to myself, good grief, good luck. I'm praying for you. I have no idea how to get you from where you are to where you need to go because it's so messy. And it's messy because of sins.

Wrong decisions make hard decisions even wrong decisions make the right decision even harder to make. And that's really the culture behind Psalm 25, or that's the question that's resting behind Psalm 25. Now Psalm 25 is an interesting psalm for a lot of reasons. It's similar to the Psalm we looked at last week in that it's built on a co it's built on an acrostic. Of the Hebrew alphabet, and I get super nerded out by some of this stuff, and some of you don't care whatsoever. But it's just like last week in that it's built on an acrostic.

And it's just like West last week in that it's structured on a chiasm, which you can forget that word, but all it means is that the main point of the psalm is at the very center of the psalm. And the way the argument is structured is that first premise is at the beginning and the end. Second premise is after the beginning and right before the end. Third premise after the middle and three steps up from the end and they kind of make their way into an X at the very center.

What I found so crazy is that this psalm is weird in that it skips a couple of letters of the Hebrew alphabet. But it skips the same exact letters of the Hebrew alphabet that Psalm 34 skips, which I think is kind of weird. And it also adds a P at the end of the chapter. Just like Psalm 34 adds a P at the end of the chapter. And as I began to kind of wrestle through that, I went in this rabbit trail, and turns out not only is Psalm 25 and Psalm 37 and a lot of Psalms arranged in a chiastic pattern.

There are certain key psalms that serve as like a foundation or a pillar for meta structures in the psalm. And you can even make an argument that the entirety of the Psalms is a chiasm, because we see the book of Psalms as one book, but in the original Hebrew it wasn't one book, but five books. And if you arrange those five books chiastically, you can actually see it at the bottom of this graphic, book one, Psalms 1 to 41, is the is the is the kind of beginning, which corresponds to book five.

And then book two corresponds to book four, and then book three, the very the very center, which is the rise and the fall of the Davidic king, anticipating a future king who is a better and greater David. I think that's fascinating. And Psalm 25 is one of those big pillars that

functions as a chiasm for the first book of Psalms. I'm not going to go into all the details of why, but just take it I say that to say that Psalm 25 is a big deal in the book of Psalms.

It's not just like one of the Psalms. And the Psalms are arranged intentionally. And arranged intentionally communicate singular truth. And the singular truth of Psalm 25 is that God's guidance is available. You can receive guidance from the Lord, but it's not going to come in the way you might think. And so that really becomes even more clear when you consider the surroundings of Psalm 25, the historical surroundings of when it was written. There are no specific details, there's no inscription like we had in Psalm 57, but there are some things that David says in this psalm that give me some clues of when he might have written it.

If you look in verse 1 and 2 of Psalm 25, he begins with this appeal to the Lord. Lord, I appeal to you. It literally is translated, Lord, I lift my soul to you. In you I trust. Don't let me be disgraced, don't let my enemies gloat over me. You could see David saying that at any point in his life, like when he's running from bears as a little boy shepherding, or when he's running from Saul trying to become king, or you know, he could have said it any time. But at the very end of the Psalm, he narrows the focus where he says, my God, I trust in you, in you I take refuge.

May integrity and what is right watch over me, for I wait for you. And then he appeals to God to redeem Israel. Redeem the nation of Israel from all of its distresses. And so when I ask myself the question, why does David conflate his deliverance with the deliverance of the nation of Israel? It leads me to believe that David is writing this psalm at a very specific point in time in his life where his kingdom, the kingdom of Israel, was under threat, and that was during Absalom's rebellion. Now, if you're not if you're new to the Bible, you're like, well, who's Absalom and why do I care?

Absalom was one of David's kids who tried to dethrone David. And was pretty much successful, at least initially. And the reason that Absalom did that is because David's firstborn son, Amnon Sleep with his stepsister, I shouldn't say slept, he raped his stepsister, Tamar, abused her sexually, forced her against her will to sleep with him. And Absalom was the biological brother of Tamar, and he did not take kindly to that, just like you wouldn't take kindly to someone exploiting your sister sexually. And so it's bad enough that he hated Amnon. He also began to develop a serious hatred for his dad, David, because David didn't do anything about it.

He just kind of let it go. Because Amnon's firstborn, heir to the throne, let's not make a big deal, just sweep it under the rug. David was bad about that sometimes. Inaction, not doing the right thing. And so Absalom let that fester. It became a murderous rage in his heart. He used some of his men to kill Amnon. So Amnon's not going to inherit the throne. He's he's eating worms in the dirt. And then he plots coup against his own father David. And it begins

kind of innocently enough, not innocent, he was deceptive the whole time, but he stands at the front of Jerusalem and he says, Hey, David's too busy to listen to you.

He doesn't really even care about you anymore. He's up there enjoying his prosperity. So tell me your problems because I love you and I want to seek the best for your life. And so he would entertain request and turns people's hearts against David. And then he lies to his dad David and says, Hey dad, I need to go down to Hebron To honor a vow I made to the Lord. And while he was in Hebron, he enlisted one of David's key advisors. He was it's actually his name's really hard to pronounce.

His name's Ethithophel. Ahithophel, something like that. It's spelled even harder than it sounds. Ahithophel was such a good counselor. It says that his words were likened to the words of the Lord In other words, he never erred. All of his counsel was solid and great. And one of the reasons that David enjoyed such great success is because of the wise counsel of men like Ahithophel. But Absalom co-opted Ahithophel. Why? Because Ahithophel was the grandfather of, guess who? Bathsheba. And you can imagine he wasn't too kindly on David for what he did to Bathsheba, especially with Bathsheba's old husband, who David killed to try to cover up his sin.

And Nathan told David You are going to pay for this, brother. Your house is going to be chaotic. It's going to it's going to be a mess, and sure enough it was. And your kingdom. Is going to suffer. And so David is basically unaware of the fact that his thirdborn son is developing an army. He's developing his wise counselors. He's developing a nation that is supportive of him and hating David. And then while he's in Hebron, he announces himself king of Hebron and says, we're going to Jerusalem and we're knocking my dad out of power.

And so they begin to march. And when David gets word that Absalom had the heart of the people and that he's coming to Jerusalem, he says, guys, we got to go. Probably in one way because he didn't want to have to fight his own son, but in another way I'm sure David realized this is this is my fault. This is this is this is disorienting. I have no good options. And so he and his faithful few leave the palace. They go down the hill of Jerusalem. I can almost see it in my mind's eye.

They cross the Kidron Valley, they begin to walk barefoot up the Mount of Olives and as he's looking over the Mount of Olives back towards Jerusalem and the throne and the palace and all of it, he's thinking to himself, what have I done? Where do I go? What do I do? My enemy is my own son. My bed is of my own making. Everything I used to take refuge in, everything that used to give me peace and prosperity has been taken from me. I've got literally nothing left. How do I not make the wrong decision now?

Do you feel the tension of that moment? You can begin to understand David's words in a maybe more personal effect. Sin gives birth to dilemmas that have no easy answers. And

David's sin created a dilemma in his life where there were no easy answers. And the thing about getting wisdom in a situation like that is it's not as simple as just God tell me what I need to do even if you know what you're supposed to do, it's like how in the world do I get there? Just like I mentioned sometimes when people come in with counseling, they describe their situation and there's so much chaos and such a thorny knot that you think to yourself, where do you even begin?

And when you're in that kind of a situation, you need something more than just the right answer. J. I. Packer likened it to the difference between a guide and a map. If back in olden year before the iPhones and the GPS and all the other stuff, we used to use these things called maps. You may remember that. Some of you are old enough to know about maps. When I first started driving we used maps and I remember. We would take trips to places unknown and we would go to the big city, you know, not Abilene, the big, big city, like Dallas or Houston or something like that.

And my dad's like most men too proud to ask for directions every every now and then until it gets really bad. And then when it's bad enough and the map doesn't make sense anymore, we'll finally ask somebody. And what you do in those kind of situations is you pull over to a friendly looking place and then you look for a friendly looking face, someone who's local, someone who looks like they belong there, and you say, You look like you're around from these parts. I'm trying to get to this destination and he'll look at you and go, well that's going to be hard from here, you know.

Goodness gracious, let's see here. You're going to have to take Avenue J down three miles, take a left at the second red light, and then turn right and then left and right and he starts giving you all these different directions and he tries to draw you this little makeshift map and you think to yourself, why did I even ask. And when he sees the look of despair on your face, he says to him, he stakes pity on you and says, you know what, I'm actually heading that way. Why don't you just follow me?

And this sense of relief fills your soul and you get in your car with your family and you have absolutely no idea where you're going and yet somehow you're not anxious, you're not afraid. Everything's good. Why? I got a guide. This guy's going to guide me exactly where I need to go. And that is the dynamic of biblical guidance that God is not inviting us to take his map or get his answer to our little problem. He's saying I'm actually wanting to bring you into a relationship with me as your guide because you are in a complicated mess that is even if you knew the right answer you wouldn't know how to get there and so why don't you follow me.

So that I can get you from where you are to where you need to be. That is what Psalm twenty-five is presenting to us, not a map but a guide, and the way to receive that kind of relationship requires a series of steps. And David demonstrates them in this psalm. And so let's pick it up in chapter 25 verse 1. Again, David begins by just being honest about a

situation. Lord, I appeal to you, to you I lift my soul. My God, I trust in you. Don't let me be disgraced.

Don't let my enemies gloat over me. No one who waits for you will be disgraced, but those who act treacherously without cause will be disgraced. You can see the word disgrace repeated, which is interesting. But David's essentially saying, Lord, I'm done. I'm out. My answers stink. My way broke everything. I am not interested in Ahithophel's advice anymore. I'm not interested in any of my other counselors' advice anymore. They can't fix my problem. You and you alone can fix my problem. I'm lifting my soul to you and your soul the Hebrew word for soul means your everything, your life energy, your creativity, your will, your ambitions, your hopes, your dreams.

Lord, I'm turning it over to you. You can imagine David as he's up the Mount of Olives looking back at everything that he's lost, he literally has nothing else. And it took that kind of situation in his life to bring him to a point that all of us must get to if we want to receive God's guidance, which is the recognition that God's guidance is my best and only hope. You've heard the phrase, until God is all you have, you won't recognize God is all you need. And it's a common say because it's actually a pretty solid truth.

Sometimes God will bring you to the end of your rope so that you're finally done listening to yourself. You're finally done relying on yourself or all the other people who you thought were better than God or wiser than God, and you finally see God's wisdom for what it is, the valuable thing that it is. It is. God, I used to reject it. I used to think it was crazy, but now I'm actually considering it's the thing I need the most. When you're there, you're ready. To get God's guidance. He says it again at the very end of verse twenty chapter twenty-five when he says, Guard me, rescue me, don't let me be disgraced.

Notice the repetition of the word, tying it back to verses one to three. Why? Because I take refuge in you. My refuge isn't the palace anymore, Lord. It's not my throne. It's not my money. It's not my influence. You and you alone are my only hope. May integrity and what is right watch over me, for I wait for you. So he begins by acknowledging God as his only hope, and then he begins to ask God for help. Verse 4 make your ways known to me, Lord. This is David praying to God.

Make your ways known to me, Lord. Teach me your paths. I use this background graphic of a trail walk because You know, who doesn't like walking trails? Literally, it's one of my favorite things in the entire world. And it's the perfect image for these Hebrew words, ways and path. The word ways is the a kind of a general orientation of how to live your life. And so what David is essentially saying and asking God for help is, God, I don't need an answer. I don't need you to come down and fix this little thing so that I can keep doing what I'm doing.

God, I need to totally reorient my life around what you're doing. My design is not working. I want to do your design instead. And I don't just need it in this little thing. I need it in everything. Would you please teach me your way. This macro big idea, how do I live life according to God's design in every arena? And the reason that that's important is because a lot of people, when they need guidance, they're not there yet. I've seen a lot of people come in for counseling. Preacher, I need God to fix my marriage and he'll fix it if you'll just tell her she's wrong and I'm right and you know and the Bible verse says this and so she should know better and no, no, it doesn't.

And no, it won't. It's not going to fix your problem. That little that little band-aid is not really what you need. What you need is to say, Lord, teach me your way. The big ideas, the big m overarching way of living life, not just the way I act in this situation, but the way I think, the way I feel, the way I speak. Teach me your ways and guide me in your path. If you go back to that that that other slide the word path is not the macro it's the micro not just teach me the general orientation to your way of living life but also show me the little steps A B C D E N F to get from where I am to your way of doing things.

Then he says again in verse five guide me in your truth and teach me this word for truth is God's this is God being the GPS system. God, you are never wrong. You never fail, so show me that. Guide me those things that never fail. They always come through because you're the God of my salvation and I wait for you all day long. If you want God's help, you've got to ask for it. And not just ask for him to fix your problem. You've got to ask for him to show you his way.

You've got to come to a place where you recognize I don't need God to fix what I've got going on. I want to orient my life so that I'm about what God is about. And the reason that a lot of people don't do that, David demonstrates in his follow-up to this idea later on verses 16 to 19 he says to the Lord turn to me it's another appeal in prayer turn to me be gracious to me but then he starts talking about his emotions I'm alone I'm afflicted. The distresses of my heart increase.

Bring me out of my sufferings. Consider my affliction and my trouble. Forgive all my sins. Consider my enemies, they are numerous and they hate me violently. I love that this is included in the Psalm because David is not just asking the Lord. In asking the Lord, he's having to overcome a lot of hurdles that keep people like me and you from asking the Lord. And the biggest hurdle, I think, is the recognition I don't deserve God's help. I can't tell you the number of times, especially as a young man, when I would be in a bad way, and the reason I was in a bad way is because I did it my way instead of God's way.

And I knew better because I was raised in the church and it's like God had warned me beforehand, if you do this it's going to hurt. And I said, I don't care, I'm going to do it anyway. And then you suffer the consequences and then you think to yourself, God, I know

that you know that I did it and I knew and I don't want to ask for help because you're ashamed. Because it's almost like you did it on purpose. And that guilt and that shame keeps you from actually asking the Lord to help you.

But David doesn't care. He's shameless. Lord be gracious. I know I blew it. I know I don't deserve it. Lord, would you forgive my sin and would you turn and be gracious to me even though I don't deserve it? And he asked the Lord, despite how he felt. Notice he's raw and honest. Lord, I am alone. I am afflicted. The distresses of my heart increase, which is David's way of saying. I'm about to shipwreck in my faith, Lord. I'm not as strong as you may think I am. I'm about to turn and burn and just fall apart.

If you don't come through for me I just I'm not going to I'm not going to be okay. He's honest about his feelings, which some people don't pray because they let their feelings keep them from praying. They say, well God, I don't want to talk to God right now. He's just making me so mad. And You know, if I if he came in this room right now, I would really let him and it keeps you from praying, and that's nonsense. You should ask despite what you deserve, and you should ask despite how you feel, because God knows and cares, which is what David reminds himself of.

When he says, consider my afflictions and my sufferings, when he says, consider my enemies, he's not saying, Lord, would you please fill yourself in on my situation? David is reminding himself, God, you know my situation. You saw it before I saw it. You know the ins and the outs, you know it better than I do. So consider that. Knowing what you know, help me You have knowledge I don't have, and I need you with your perfect knowledge to help me. And that is demonstrating David's conviction that I can ask the Lord because he cares for me.

He knows what's going on and he cares for me, which is why he will be gracious even though I don't deserve it, and why he's willing to put up with my temper tantrums because I'm a victim of my emotions in this suffering. 1 Peter 5. 5, I think it is. Peter's writing to some suffering Christians, and he tells them, humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God. Cast your cares on the Lord. Why? Because he cares for you. God knows and he cares, which is why you should ask for help.

He's your only hope, but you've got to ask him, despite what you deserve, despite how you feel, because he knows and cares. When you ask him in that way, you will be characterized by what characterizes David, which is a certain kind of spirit or a certain kind of heart. You've got to ask with the right heart. This is best illustrated in the next section, verses six to seven, which is so cool. Again, I'm going to nerd out a little bit. It's its own little chiasm. And you think, if I hear the word chiasm one more time, I'm going to vomit.

Dude, it's so awesome. If I could teach you to spot these, it will revolutionize the way you read the Old Testament. Lord, remember your compassion and your faithful love, for they have existed from antiquity. Do not remember the sins of my youth or my acts of rebellion. In keeping with your faithful love, remember me because of your goodness, Lord. Obviously there's some things repeated in there. You see the word remember repeated three times, but you also see the chiasm, and the chiasm begins with the bookends of God's character. God, remember your compassion, but down here it says remember because of your goodness.

Yahweh, goodness, compassion, remember, remember. It's intentional He's saying, God, you are a God of compassion and goodness. The second pillar is this phrase, faithful love. Remember your compassion and your faithful love. You see it again right down here in keeping with your faithful love. That's the Hebrew word, *Hesed* So God, because you're a good God of compassion, good character, and because you're a God who's revealed yourself in covenant kindness and faithfulness, because you love people even when they don't deserve it. Because those things are true about you, Lord, please forgive me.

Forgive the sins of my youth and my acts of rebellion. So the very centerpiece of the chiasm is right here, David's sins. And it's almost as if David is making this grace sandwich where his sins are absolutely swallowed up by God's character and covenant love. It's so cool. And that is putting David in a position where he can ask the Lord for help, not cowering in fear or not kind of presumptuous and arrogant. God, I deserve this. But with this humility of heart that is absolutely necessary if you want guidance from the Lord.

The Lord will not preach a t he will not teach a proud person. Nobody teaches a proud person. You ever been trying to teach somebody who had an unteachable spirit? Boy, that's infuriating, right? You're wasting your breath. They think they know it all. Well God, I know 95% of my problem. I need you to give me the five percent I don't know. He'll say, no, you know like 0.5%, you silly guy. You're unteachable. If you're unteachable, you'll never get guidance from the Lord. You've got to humble yourself. Well, how do you humble yourself the same way David did?

Meditate on God's character. God, you are good You are compassionate. And when you meditate on God's character, what'll happen is His holiness is like a light. That exposes your darkness, which is why David says, can forgive my sins. And not just my past, faraway sins. I'm talking about the sins I did yesterday. I'm talking about the sins I'm doing right now. Forgive me. That is what Jesus talks about in the Sermon on the Mount with the Beatitudes. Blessed are the poor in spirit. Blessed are those who mourn, who confess their sins, blessed are the meek, who say, it's about what you want, not about what I want.

That hunger and thirst for righteousness because they don't have it within themselves. That is the pathway to blessing. That is the pathway to receiving guidance from the Lord. And he reaffirms it on the other on the other end of the Psalm in verses fourteen and fifteen. The

secret counsel of the Lord is for those who fear him, and he reveals his covenant to them. My eyes are always on the Lord and he will pull my feet out of the net. He's talking about asking the Lord with the right kind of heart if you want to get his counsel.

This phrase, the secret counsel of the Lord, is an interesting idea. I don't know if you've ever had a friend Hopefully you have. If you've ever had a friend that was not just a he wasn't like a kind of sort of friend. I'm talking like a friend friend, like a real friend. And if you really get a real friend, there comes a point in your relationship with your real friends where they begin to open up about their real issues, and so they begin to share their secrets. Does this ever happen with you?

If not, you probably don't have no friends. But when you really get close to somebody and they begin to share their secrets, you think to yourself, well now we're getting somewhere. Yeah. That's pretty cool. I had no idea. You feel like, oh, I'm special, you know. We have something I don't have with other people. There is an intimacy in our relationship. That is not characterized by the other relationships that I have, and so I get your secrets. Well just like that dynamic takes place in human relationships, there is a similar dynamic that takes place in your relationship with the Lord Where you develop an intimacy with God and a closeness to God that he begins to share his secrets with you.

And it comes when you fear the Lord. This is one of the most misunderstood phrases in the Bible. A lot of people think of fearing the Lord is cowering in the corner because God is going to get me and He's m mad and big and strong. And that's not the fear of the Lord, at least not a biblical understanding of the fear of the Lord. The best quote on this I've heard this week from a British preacher named Stuart Oliphant, I think. He said the fear of the Lord is the cultivated consciousness that God is present in every moment.

The fear of the Lord is the cultivated consciousness that God is present everywhere I go, every word I speak, every thought I think. The picture I get is if you were a good earthly dad. Or you were a good earthly child in the presence of a good earthly dad. When I was growing up, my dad was in the room, I was paying attention to what dad was thinking. Not because I was afraid he was going to crush me or beat me or you know yell at me, but because I respected my dad.

You know, he knows the answer. He knows how to fix this. And I'm like, am I doing it right? Am I doing it the right way? And you're going to learn their little ticks and their little things and their that is the fear of the Lord. When you begin to operate in your daily life like God, you are with me. You're for me. You love me and you want to help me. And so I don't want to do it my way. I want to do it your way. And when you develop that kind of intimacy with the Lord, he begins to sh to whisper.

He begins to share his secrets. This is the way you should go. So recognize he's your only help, hope. Ask him for help with the right kind of heart, a heart marked by humility and fear of the Lord, and He will show you He will show you the way you should go. That's exactly what David says. The Lord is good and upright. Therefore, he shows sinners the way. He leads the humble in what is right, and he teaches them his way. You notice these verbs. He shows the sinners. He leads the humble.

He teaches them his way. And you don't even have to be a perfect person. It's not like you have to prove you're worthy of God's Good design. He shows sinners the way. That's one of the common graces that we all have with the Word of God being put in a book and made available to whoever wants it. We can see God's design. I can see your design for everything, Lord, and I don't even have to be a righteous person to receive it. You're so good and you're so eager. To show me the way that even when I'm one of those kind of people who would probably not even listen to it, you make it as obvious and plain as day as you can.

He shows you the way and he teaches and leads who? The humble again, I think a lot of people misunderstand the nature of who God is. This is why we're doing the series, because a lot of people think of God as this big angry dad up in heaven who's I told you know, I told you so and you didn't listen and look at you now and you better show me you're serious this time. You know, you better prove that you're ready to listen, and that is not the picture of the biblical God.

The biblical God is eager He's eager to show you his way. He does not want you to be confused about his will for your life any more than a good earthly dad would want you to be confused about his will for your life. He delights in shedding the light for his children. He is the shepherd who leads us and guides us and teaches us if we're humble and we have a teachable spirit and recognize his wisdom for what it is. He shows sinners the way. He says it again on the other side.

Verse 12, who is this person who fears the Lord? He will show him. God will show the person who fears the Lord the way he should choose. Notice it's not just about knowledge, it's about action. When you choose God's way according to God's design, God will give you the fruit. He will give a good life. And your descendants will inherit the land. And this good life doesn't just mean you'll be a good ethical boy or girl. It means you'll have a good life you'll be blessed. You may not be as rich as Jeff Bezos or almost said Bill Clinton.

Who's the other rich Bill? Bill Gates. But who would want to be that rich, honestly? You may not be as rich as those those guys, but you'll have a good life. This is not a health and wealth prosperity type of promise, but it is, I think, God's way of saying, listen, I am God, I created everything according to a certain standard. To operate according to a certain design. So when you will adopt that design, the thing will work like it's supposed to work. And I'll bless you. And you're going to experience my presence.

You're going to experience my peace. The land, remember last week it's a throwback to Eden. You and your descendants are going to be blessed with my presence and peace. And I will guide you every step of the way if you'll just do it the way. I'm asking you to do if you'll just come to me on my terms. So how do we do it? We ask with a recognition He's our hope, asking for help with a humble heart. How does God do it? He leads the humble. He leads those who fear the Lord.

Why does God do it is the central focus of the Psalm. Remember, I said it was a chiasm, so the very main point is at the very center. The very center of Psalm 25 is verses 10 and 11. All of the Lord's ways show faithful love and truth to those who keep his covenant and decrees. We read this and it just goes right over our heads, but I'm telling you, if you were David or any other Old Testament reader and you read the words faithful, love, and truth, your mind would have immediately gone to what I call the John 3.

16 of the Old Testament John 3. 16 is the verse that everybody knows, even if they don't really love Jesus in our culture. But I God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, whosoever believes in him will not perish but have everlasting life. So you know roll me a blunt. It's that kind of knowledge. That kind of knowledge would have been applied to another verse in the Old Testament for Old Testament saints, and that that verse was Exodus 34. Because in Exodus 34, God reveals his covenant name to Moses.

Remember, the covenant name was the big big deal because it was Yahweh, the am the I am who I am, the great I am, and he sheds light on to Moses, because I am Yahweh, there are certain things you need to know about me. Namely, I'm the Lord, the Lord, the Lord is compassionate, gracious, slow to anger, abounding in faithful love and truth. See the two words? Faithful love and truth. It's the central characteristics of my nature, which is crazy when you think about it because those are two polar opposites.

God's Hesed, his faithful love, is his commitment, his merciful commitment to seek the good of another person even when they don't deserve it. God is that mom who loves their children even though they are serving a life sentence in prison for being a despicable human being somehow Still a face a mom can love. That kind of always and forever, never giving up, abounding, compassionate love, that is God's tested love. He is marked by that kind of love for you. But he's also a god of truth. It's the Hebrew word emet.

I remember it because Emmitt Smith is the greatest running back in the whole world. True. Amen. God's truth is his it's his reliability. God's truth is his righteousness, God's truth is his, it's this and not that. God's truth is his black and white, it is or it isn't, and I'm always faithful, I'm always right, I'm always true. That's why I'm dependable. And that's great. We need a God of truth. We need someone who can be dependable no matter what. The problem is, is we're not. And we lie and we're deceptive and we steal and we deviate from the truth all the time.

And so that truth about God means he cannot tolerate us. He cannot countenance our presence because we have deviated from his design. And so how can God be both merciful and truthful? How can he be a God of wrath and grace at the same time? That's the paradox of Exodus thirty four and that's why everybody thought about it all the time. And that's what the sacrificial system was about and the old covenant and that's what the Mosaic Law was about and that's what so many of the Psalms I dare you go back and read the Psalms and look how many time it says faithful, love and truth.

Is a lot. Thousands of times God is faithful, love and truth, faithful love and truth, faithful love and truth. And there is even in the Psalms this anticipation. Because God is a God of truth, I need to confess my sin. That's why David says in verse 11, God, forgive my iniquity, for it is immense. If you look at the go back to Exodus 34, when God reveals his character, he says, because I'm a God of faithful love, I forgive iniquity, rebellion, sin, but because I'm a God of truth, I'm not going to leave the guilty unpunished.

And I'm going to judge you. That's why David says in Psalm 25, 11, God, forgive my iniquity for your name's sake. For your name's sake, because you revealed yourself as the God of faithful love and truth, and you said you'd forgive iniquity and not clear the guilty, I know I'm guilty, so please forgive me. I know I don't deserve your guidance. I know I don't deserve a relationship with you. I know that my mess is my own making. For your name's sake, please forgive my iniquity before for it is immense.

How does God do that? He says later in Psalm 85, 10. Faithful love and truth will someday join together. Righteousness and peace will someday embrace. They will kiss is what some translations say. And all of that is forecasting the way that God satisfies his truth and demonstrates his compassion by sending his son into the world to live a life of love and obedience for us so that on the cross he who knew no sin became sin for us, so that we might become the righteousness of God. That righteousness has now been revealed in Jesus Christ, so that He is the atoning sacrifice for sin.

He is the ransom paid. He is the way that God says, I am God of truth. I'm a just God. I'm a holy God. I will no means clear the guilty. You're guilty. But I'm going to show you compassion by putting your guilt on him. And who's the him? The son I love. The son who didn't deserve it. The sinless, spotless Lamb of God who loved you so much he laid down his life for your behalf. So that you could be reconciled and redeemed. That's what David is longing for in Psalm 25.

And you notice I said that when you have a big, big problem, you don't need a map, you need a guide. That's why Jesus was necessary because we don't just need a map. We don't just need God to help me do better. I'll try harder. You'll always fail. You need a relationship with a guide. Who can show you the way and when you fail and you will fail, he can say, you know what? All of my ways are about faithful love and truth. I'm a God of mercy and truth. You

need my truth so that I can get you out of this mess, but you need my mercy because you're weak and you're sinful, and I love you enough that I've made a way to be both of those things through Jesus Christ.

God's guidance, just like God's forgiveness, are available by grace through faith in his provision at the cross. And that's what we celebrate in the Lord's Supper. So as we enter into this time, I want to encourage you, if you're not a Christian, to let today be that day where you recognize, God, my sins have separated me from you. That's why I'm in this disaster. I don't need an answer. I need a savior. Would you please save me through my faith in Jesus Christ? And if you've never made that decision, I'm going to give you a little prayer that you can pray to do that.

The prayer is not magic. It's just a way to articulate faith in Jesus. And when you call on the name of the Lord, you will be saved. Why? Because when you see He's your only hope. And you ask for help with the right kind of heart, God will save you. Just like God will guide you for the problem that you're in. If you would say I am a person that's received Jesus Christ as my Lord and my Savior, but I need guidance in life because I'm in a bad pickle, the answer is the same, literally the same.

Recognize God as your only hope. Ask Him for help with a humble heart. Realizing His guidance isn't just a band-aid, but His guidance is orienting your life afresh and anew around His character and around His kingdom and His. Glory as you may let your heart become melted by his great love for you demonstrated at the cross of Jesus Christ. So as we take the bread and as we drink from the cup and we remind ourselves of the new covenant in the blood of Jesus Christ. The covenant that solves all of the tensions of the old, the law and the prophets, that you would allow the Lord to awaken in you a fresh spirit of surrender and humility and faith and obedience for where God's wanting to take you next.

Father in heaven, we thank you for this time and your word. We thank you for Jesus. We thank you that you are a God of faithful love and truth. Without your love, we would be destroyed. Without your truth, we would be lost. We thank you that you've demonstrated both through the cross of Jesus Christ. And now as we take the Lord's Supper and we celebrate that person and that work, we pray you'd give us eyes to see, ears to hear. That can hear what the Holy Spirit is trying to say to us, and a heart that is humble and joyfully obedient to put into practice what you call us to do.

If you're here this morning and you're not a Christian and you want to receive Jesus as your personal Lord and Savior, would you pray Lord I admit that I'm a sinner I know that my brokenness is my fault because I rejected your design and I repent of my sins. I don't want to do it my way anymore Lord I want to do it your way. And I believe that because you love me, you sent your son into the world to die on the cross, to pay for my sins. And three days later you raised him from the dead.

Proving my sins are the price has been paid, and that eternal life can be mine if I would just believe. So Lord, I repent and I believe. I believe in Jesus. Receive him into my heart, make him my Lord and my Savior, would you guide me from this point forward in the path that you have for me? Lord, as we respond now in this time of response and through the Lord's Supper, we pray that your kingdom would come and your will would be done. And we prayed in Jesus' name, Amen