

I. Review

The last time we were together we were in Psalms 30, and I told you how that we are in the middle now of Psalms which are called the Psalms of David. These are the Psalms that David wrote. Last week, I showed you how David was looking back and remembering what God had done for him. He talked about how God had lifted him up, how God had not allowed his enemies to have victory over him. He talked about God healing him and then prospering him in his life physically. Lastly, he talked about God keeping him from going to hell. These are five key areas that historically, doctrinally, and inspirationally really lay out the book of Psalms for us in Psalms chapter 30.

If you remember, I broke that Psalm down into seven great truths that all of us can apply to our lives. I stepped out of the historical and the doctrinal and really wanted to lay out our personal application—what God has done for us. Like David, we can look at how God has healed us. That is the day God saved us from a disease-ridden soul out of a disease-ridden world. Weeping may endure for a night, in the times that we live now, but when the Lord comes back, joy cometh in the morning. I talked about how we will not be moved off of what God has given us, and the reason for that is the prosperity—all that God has done for us. We ought to look at that, see that, understand that, and realize that the world could never compare with what God has for us. Then we talked about turning our mourning into joy and girding us with gladness. The real answer, the last thing that he talked about, was why. He says, “To this end, that I may give glory to God and to everybody I meet in life.” That really is the bottom line we talked about last week. The reason why God saved us is for us to do one thing: to give glory to God through our lives. It was a powerful Psalm with a powerful message last week.

But now today, we are going to move into Psalms chapter 31 and look at that one. As you know, we are coming through the book of Psalms. This Psalm also will be a psalm of David. The Psalms of David take on different characteristics as you look at them. They do not necessarily follow a chain of teaching, but they talk about different events in his life. This Psalm will be about David coming to God in his time of trouble.

II. Psalms 31: Historical, Doctrinal, & Inspirational Applications

David's time of trouble for the biggest part of his life was Saul. Saul was the choice of the people, not the choice of God. When Saul became king because the people did not want to do what was right, in time David came to the forefront, and God made it very clear that David was going to be the king. That deeply distressed Saul. Saul then put on a plan to get rid of David once he realized that David was God's man and not himself. So he devised a plan to have David killed. He chased David and hunted David down through much of the Old Testament in Samuel, so that Saul could try to keep the kingdom. This Psalm will be about David being persecuted and hunted by Saul historically. I want you to get that down.

Every book in the Bible, every verse in the Bible, has three applications. It will have a historical application—it actually happened. It will have an inspirational application—something for me and you. But then it will have a prophetic application, which is called the doctrinal application, which shows prophetically something in the future. Doctrinally, the story of David and Saul will be a literal Old Testament story that will prophetically be a picture of the Antichrist who goes up against Christ and the nation of Israel.

When you begin to put your Bible together, which many of you already have, and so many of you are at that point, which we are going to work on this next year, you are going to find in your Bible that there are 18 types of the Antichrist—18 men in the Old Testament whose lives and actions foreshadow what the Antichrist, the coming man of sin, is going to do when he shows up. Saul is one of them. Then you are going to find that there are 21 men who picture the Lord Jesus Christ in the things that they do. David is one of them. Also, sometimes you will have a dual application. David will also be a picture of the nation of Israel. So you see that in this story in the Old Testament, Psalms 31 will be a tribulation psalm, and it will break down around that, and we will kind of move back and forth through it as we put it together for you.

As we look at this Psalm, we will see some incredible principles and promises, inspirationally for me and for you. I want you to get a complete balance in everything that we look at. **This Psalm, Psalms 31, for a New Testament Christian, will show us one of the greatest concepts that you have to have in your relationship with the Lord, and that is the confidence that we should have in the Lord.** Through any trial, God will extend His mercy to us so that in that time of trouble, through our confidence in Him, we will always have the victory like David.

III. Learning the Book

Today, we want to get all the material we can out of this Psalm, and there are some things we need to look at throughout this Psalm that we want to kind of mark, that you can put down as things that will help you as you learn the book. As we move forward in our time in the Bible this year, and I have told you this before, I am going to approach things differently. Most of you now have come to the place where you have a pretty good handle on the Word of God. You really are doing well with that. Like any church, we have new people who have come in, people who are moving through those different spiritual levels.

I see the need now, where our church is at, coming out of our Bible conference and all the things that God is doing, to expedite some things when it comes to the Bible. This is the idea behind "Bible Bob's Book Club." Us as a church, going through a book of the Bible together, where I can help you break it all down. Then we can use the other Thursday nights during the month, so if there are things that you do not understand, things that you need to have explained, things that we did not have time to get into, we can discuss. My goal is to cover a book a month, and when we are done with it, you will understand that book. With each book, we will look at every phase of it as it lays out and show you how to get the most out of every book of the Bible and, most importantly, give you understanding behind that book. I am going to be doing that with the Psalms, too. In fact, just about everything that I do, chapter by chapter, as we go through it.

IV. Psalms 31:1-14 – Confidence in God’s Saving Strength

So let us read our Psalms chapter 31 here.

Psalms 31:1-14

- 1. In thee, O LORD, do I put my trust; let me never be ashamed: deliver me in thy righteousness.*
- 2. Bow down thine ear to me; deliver me speedily: be thou my strong rock, for an house of defence to save me.*
- 3. For thou [art] my rock and my fortress; therefore for thy name’s sake lead me, and guide me.*
- 4. Pull me out of the net that they have laid privily for me: for thou [art] my strength.*
- 5. Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O LORD God of truth.*
- 6. I have hated them that regard lying vanities: but I trust in the LORD.*
- 7. I will be glad and rejoice in thy mercy: for thou hast considered my trouble; thou hast known my soul in adversities;*
- 8. And hast not shut me up into the hand of the enemy: thou hast set my feet in a large room.*
- 9. Have mercy upon me, O LORD, for I am in trouble: mine eye is consumed with grief, [yea], my soul and my belly.*
- 10. For my life is spent with grief, and my years with sighing: my strength faileth because of mine iniquity, and my bones are consumed.*
- 11. I was a reproach among all mine enemies, but especially among my neighbours, and a fear to mine acquaintance: they that did see me without fled from me.*
- 12. I am forgotten as a dead man out of mind: I am like a broken vessel.*
- 13. For I have heard the slander of many: fear [was] on every side: while they took counsel together against me, they devised to take away my life.*
- 14. But I trusted in thee, O LORD: I said, Thou [art] my God.*

➤ Doctrinally: A Tribulation Psalm

Now, first off, you’ll want to get this into your Bible: how this doctrinally will be the tribulation. I think that is important. Verse 4 says, "Pull me out of the net." I do not know to what depth level you are with the Bible, but in the Old Testament, in places like Jeremiah 16:16, Ezekiel 12:13, and Psalms 25:15, and other places too, this will be a literal net that the Antichrist goes after the nation of Israel with in the last three and a half years of the tribulation period. In fact, last week we talked about how the devil is an imitator of Christ. Here you find that the devil has a dragnet to catch the Jews in the tribulation. But in Matthew 13:47, you are going to find that God also has a dragnet. His dragnet is different. His dragnet is to bring people in to get them saved in the tribulation period, where the devil's dragnet is to catch them and kill them.

You will note verse 4, it says, "the net that they have laid privily." You know, the tribulation is seven years broken down into two sections. That tells me that in the first half of the tribulation, where the Antichrist projects peace and safety and brings everything together that privately, under the surface, he is planning to do what he is doing here and go after the nation of Israel.

Verse 9 says, "Have mercy upon me." It says, "mine eye is consumed with grief, yea, my soul and my belly." That would stand for emotional stress that they are going through. Verse 10 says, "For my life is spent with grief, and my years with sighing." It says, "my strength faileth." Verse 11 says, "I was a reproach among all mine enemies, but especially among my neighbours, and a fear to mine acquaintance: they that did see me without fled from me." In verse 12, it says, "I am forgotten as a dead man out of mind: I am like a broken vessel." And verse 13 says, "For I have heard the slander of many: fear was on every side: while they took counsel together against me, they devised to take away my life."

All this will be the Jew being hunted by the Antichrist in the last three and a half years of the tribulation period. The world now has completely and totally turned against them. This will be laid out overall in many places. But if you want one place where you can see, kind of get the whole picture, it would be Revelation chapter 12 and 13. There you see the devil's hatred for the nation of Israel and for the Lord Jesus Christ. That is why in the Old Testament story with Saul, a type of the Antichrist, and David, a type of Israel or a type of Christ, Saul realized that he was going to lose his kingdom. David, a type of Christ or Israel, was going to get that kingdom. The devil realizes that he is going to lose his crown, and he is going to lose it all at the Second Coming of Christ. So you can see the parallels there.

➤ The Key to Our Deliverance and Our Protection: Our Confidence in Him

I have said this many times that we too, you and I, as New Testament Christians, if you do what is right with the Lord, if you take your stand for the Bible, you too will bear the persecution of the world. In both cases here, the Jews prophetically and us inspirationally, God is surely going to deliver us. That is the main concept that he is getting through here. But within the passage today, we are going to find the key to our deliverance and our protection. That simply comes back to the key word today: our confidence in Him.

Most of God's people at some point in their life have a tough time trusting the Lord. Young Christians or Christians who are worldly, have to manipulate everything themselves because they just cannot trust in the Lord and have confidence in Him. I want to say to you today, the problem has never been or never will be my confidence level in the Lord. The problem is going to be His confidence level in me. That is where it comes down to.

There are many places in the Bible that talk about God delivering us when we go through some tough times and our own personal tribulation. I like the book of Joshua. We will have a good time when we get into that book several months from now. The book of Joshua is when they go into the land. They have ended their 40-year journey, and now they cross over Jordan and they go into the land. What the devil has waiting for them over there is an incredible race of men, nations, and people, and giants that were put there for 400 years. The devil, while they are down in Egypt, is fortifying that promised land to keep them out. **When Joshua goes over and looks**

at that, he comes back, God meets with Joshua, and He tells Joshua to tell the people, "Look, the key here that is going to give you success is two words: confidence in Me and courage to believe that I can deliver you."

So in the first chapter of Joshua, He gives them basically a three-point outline. He tells the nation of Israel that **if they want to have success and have God's deliverance**, they have to:

1. Believe what the Word of God said.
2. Obey it.
3. Learn to rest in the book.

The rest of the believer in the midst of everything that is going on in the world today simply comes down to our confidence in the Lord. Isaiah 54:17 tells us that no weapon will ever be formed that will stand against you if you are God's child. The book of Psalms itself is a book that people will go to for comfort when life turns against them. Psalm after psalm after psalm is a picture of God delivering David or somebody through the trials that they are in. I told you when we started Psalms that every emotion that we will ever experience in life can be found in Psalms and throughout the whole Bible as God deals with His people Israel, and then we can see how it applies to us. We see it in our own lives in New Testament Christianity. God's saving strength, and that is the key, and that comes down to our confidence level in Him.

V. Six Areas of God's Protection and God's Saving Strength

In our text today, you will find six areas that David talks about, and God tells him that in these six things, you will find the protection and God's saving strength. Again, the key word today, and I want to keep this before you today, the key word today is the word confidence.

That confidence will start in verse 2 of our text. Look what he says: "Bow down thine ear to me." **My confidence in the Lord is that when I go through something, I can call on Him, and He will hear me.** He will bow down His ear to me. That is where my confidence in Him starts. No matter what I go through, He is going to hear my cry.

*1 John 5:14-15. And this is the **confidence** that we have in him, that, ***if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us:****

15. And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.

There is the confidence level, the confidence for you and me in facing the adversaries of this world. That confidence starts with you understanding that when you go through a tough time and you cry out unto Him, He is going to hear you. It does not mean He will always answer it in the time frame that you want it in. It does not always mean He will answer it how you want it. That is not the issue. The issue is, I have confidence that He heard me, and I can trust in Him to get it through there, and that is the key. When I have confidence in God, then I can truly trust Him, and there will be no trust without confidence. When I trust in the fact that in any situation He hears

me, that when I call, I can rest in that, and I can take courage in that, and it is true in everything in life.

In ministry, you are going to find people who you can have tremendous confidence in. They are going to do the job. Then you will find people who you absolutely can have no confidence in. They are not going to do the job.

➤ Two Kinds of Security with God

With God, when we talk about God protecting us, God's security and our confidence in that security, you are going to find that there are two kinds of security with God.

- **The first kind of security is eternal security.** That is the day that you got saved, and that is called the security OF the believer. The day you got saved, you now have the eternal security that God is going to get you home to heaven no matter what.
- **Then you are going to have a security in your daily life after you are saved.** That is the security FOR the believer. Totally different. Security of the believer is the day I got saved and I trusted Christ as my own personal Savior. Now, on a daily basis, I have the security that is for the believer, God taking care of me.

It is like that in Romans 5:1 (and Philippians 4:7) where we talk about the peace WITH God and the peace OF God. The peace with God is the day you trusted Christ as your own Savior. But after that, in your daily life, you have the peace of God. Same concept. Most of God's people will understand the first security pretty much, but they do not understand the second. The second is that the confidence we have in Him will get us through.

➤ The First Three will be Principles of God's Security for Us as Believers

Now there are six things that I want to go through here with you today, and I am going to break them down in three and three. The first three will be principles of God's security for us as believers. Now look at verse 2 and 3.

1.) An House of Defence to Save Me

The first thing he says here in Psalms 31:2, and the first thing that I want to talk about, is, "An house of defence to save me." Doctrinally, obviously, the house here will be the whole house of Israel, and that is what he is talking about, God defending the nation of Israel.

Inspirationally, it will represent three key things for you and for me and God defending us in them.

*1 Corinthians 6:19 What? know ye not that **your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost** [which] is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?*

- The first one would be your body which is the house of God's Temple (I Corinthians 6:19).
- The second one would be your physical home where you live and raise your family.
- The third one would be the house of God, our church.

So when he says "an house of defence to save me," for you and for me, it is talking about three things: your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, God's house; you have a physical home that you live in; and then, of course, we have the house of God.

Now let us look at some things here. In your physical home, wherever you live, you need to defend your home against a home invasion. I just pray and worry and think about Nancy Guthrie out there in Arizona. One of the craziest things of her being abducted out of her home. Here it is, over two weeks now. Not a clue. Nobody knows what has happened. Nobody can find any answers. That is truly a home invasion, and here again, the things that were in place to protect that home were not hooked up, and they had to go through the elaborate plan to try to get all the information they could.

Most of you in your home, I would hope anyhow, have some sort of security system. You have those Ring cameras on your doorbell. You may be in church today, but if somebody comes to your door, it alerts your phone. Barb's alerts her watch and says there is somebody at the front door. Then you can flip up your phone, and you actually see the guy there, and you can talk to him. Some people have it on their front door and their back door. I watch my neighbor's cat come through my yard two or three times every night. Some of you have cameras in your home. Some of you have little babies, and they are in their nursery. You have a camera in there to watch your baby. That is smart. Some of you have alarm systems. You have that little sign you stick in your yard, "My home is protected by this or that security system." You have motion lights that when somebody walks through, the little light comes on. Everybody has some kind of security, or you should have. For some of you, your security system is your nine-millimeter on your bed stand by your bed at night. That is a good thing. Missouri has a great stand-your-ground law, you know, and I am saying you can defend your home, and you have a defense system to save you from home invasion.

But you know the real attack today on the home, in most cases, will not come from somebody trying to break in, but rather what we have brought into our home willingly. Years ago, there was a sermon Dr. Ruckman preached, (he preached it, everybody was preaching it), and it was called "a thief in the living room," and it was based on the thief in the living room being the television. Back then, everybody was watching television, too much, all the time, and it had taken everything away from people in their Bibles. Now, you know, today, we have not only TV, but we have cell phones. If some of you kids would spend as much time in your Bible as you do on your cell phone, you would beat Martin Luther and all the great patriarchs when it comes to doing something for the Lord and learning your Bible. So you have cell phones, you have video games, you have computers, you have a thousand things to steal your time with God and to steal your kid from the family.

For most of us parents, the worst fear and dread in our life is to have our child kidnapped. I know when our kids were little, we taught them stranger danger. We taught them what to do if somebody came up to them, wanted to show them their puppy, give them a lollipop, whatever the case may be, because I am telling you, the worst fear of parents is having your child abducted. Yet parents all the time will allow the things in their home to kidnap their kids, which will do just

as much irreparable damage as somebody stealing their child, and they do it willingly. The attack today is on the family.

This year, with everything else I am planning to do, it has been 15-16 years now, and things have changed, people have changed, come and gone. I am going to take some time, and I am going to teach the child training material again with added material to it that we have learned and gleaned over the years. I think it is going to be very important. There are so many new families with young kids. Do not think for a moment that the devil is going to forget your family. We cannot get so involved in reaching the world that we lose the families, and a house of defense needs to be to save them, and I will train you, but it is up to you to train your children.

Remember now, in the Old Testament, when the devil wanted to attack God's house, the nation of Israel, and he wanted to destroy them, you know what he did? He divided the nation. He had the ten northern tribes and the two southern tribes, Israel and Judah, and they actually went to war together and killed each other. The devil knew that the greatest attack on God's house, whether it is Israel, your body, or your family, will be to divide and conquer. Divide your family and then conquer them. It is just that simple: a house of defense to save you.

2.) *My Rock*

Then the second thing he says in Psalms 31:3, "my rock." Now the rock here will be found in Deuteronomy chapter 32 as it pertains to the nation of Israel; God being Israel's rock, and that nation should be built on that Rock. Yet you will find in Deuteronomy 32:31 that there are two different rocks, one of them God's and one of them not. This Rock will be the foundation that the nation of Israel was to be built on, and they in time built on the wrong rock, did they not? Then they had no defense for the house, the house of Israel.

Now, inspirationally for you and for me, switching back and forth here, this Rock will be Jesus Christ.

*1 Corinthians 10:4. And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and **that Rock was Christ.***

As we see in this great study found in Matthew 7:24, we have the story of the wise man and the foolish man. The wise man built his house on a rock, while the foolish man built his house on the sand. When the storms of life came, the house on the sand was destroyed, but the house on the rock stood firm. **Now the only true defense for our house, whether it be your body, your own home, or the church, will be building it on a rock, and that rock is Bible doctrine.** All three of them—your body, your family, and the church—will stand the storms when they come.

3.) *My Fortress*

Then the third thing David says in Psalms 31:3 is, "my fortress"; a fortified city. Now the child of God not only needs to defend his home from attack on the inside, but also the attack that will come from the outside, and for this, you will need a fortress. Here again, the examples in the Old Testament, the cities in the Old Testament, had walls around them that made them a fortified city. Those walls were 60 to 80 feet high and 40-50 feet thick, and they were the protection for the

city that made that city a fortified city. Attacking them and breaching the walls was almost impossible. They would ring the wall with archers and hot burning oil and pour it down. There was no way that you could breach the walls. The only way was to wait them out, starve them out, shut down the city so that nothing came in, nothing came out, and in time, they would surrender.

Most people do not see this, but when Nebuchadnezzar came down to attack Jerusalem, we always talk about 606 BC, and that is the time they put it, but it was 606 BC to 586 BC. It was almost 20 years before he finally got into Jerusalem. You know why? He could not breach the walls. You know what he had to do? He went down three times. The final time for two and a half years. He made a ring around the city. Nothing came in, nothing came out. They starved to death, and finally, they surrendered. There is a great lesson in that, and what the devil will do in your house when it is not a fortress. He will sit back and starve you out. He will get you out of the Bible, he will get you out of church, he will get you out of ministry, he will get you out of doctrine and teaching, and he will starve you out, and sooner or later, you and your family will surrender. Happens all the time; it happens all the time.

➤ Based on These that Build his Confidence, David Asks God Three Things

Then, based on the first three that build my confidence—the defense of my house, my rock, and my fortress—that confidence in David's life historically, Israel doctrinally, and me inspirationally, we now see David, based on those three things and the confidence he has, he asks God three things. **When you get the confidence of God that you believe what He says, that He hears you, and you build your house upon the rock, turn it into a fortress, then you too, like David, can ask God these three things.**

4.) *Lead Me*

Look at the first thing in Psalms 31:3. He says, "lead me." Now, the leading of God in our lives is where it actually all starts and, unfortunately, where it all ends. I meet people all the time that start out allowing God to lead them, but at some point in their life, they walk away from that leading.

*Proverbs 3:5-6. **Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.***

*6. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and **he shall direct thy paths.***

We have a song in our hymnal that we sing from time to time, "Where He leads me, I will follow." We talked Thursday night about some great things about the eight manifestations of Christ and took it out of Proverbs chapter 8 and talked about the beginning of his way, and all of that stuff, and I gave you a great verse in **Genesis 24:27, "I being in the way, the LORD led."** **When you get in God's way, the way He is going, He will lead you.** You know, again, this is the beauty of the Bible. The Bible never just tells you something without giving you examples to illustrate what He does. It is one of the great things about the Bible. A lot of God's people read the Bible, they get the Bible, but they never get the illustrations that really help illuminate everything.

➤ God's Leading as a Pillar of a Cloud by Day and a Pillar of Fire by Night

David says, "Lord, lead me." You will see this typified back in the Old Testament in the book of Exodus chapter 13 when they come out of Egypt, which is the type of the world. He leads them, if you remember your story, by a pillar of a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. Now you read that, and you think, "Hmm, wonder what that is all about. I mean, that is a nice thing. He is leading them, a pillar of fire at night and a cloud by day." Most people never make the connection from that story to your personal life and God leading you. **The cloud by day, that is the leading of God in your life when you can see what is going on around you, and you understand a little bit what God is doing.** Obviously, that cloud in the Bible will deal with the Second Coming of Christ, so you can see how it all kind of ties together. There will be times in your life where He will lead you through the daylight. You have an understanding of what you are doing, pretty much where you are going, what God wants you to do, but you are being led, following that cloud. **But then there are going to be times in your life when you do not understand the leading. There will be times in your life when there is darkness in your life.** The confidence you have in God at that time will be that even in the darkness, while you realize His leading in the cloud by day, you also realize that the pillar of fire will be His leading through the darkness of the night. And you follow it. God's leading is incredible. It is incredible.

You will want to see this. We move over to the book of Joshua. When Joshua starts their line of march, and they are starting to move, this is in Joshua chapter 3, they take the ark of the covenant. The ark of the covenant is a type of Jesus Christ. They are going to follow the ark of the covenant. They put the ark of the covenant out front of the line of march, and everybody follows the ark. It goes left; you go left. It goes right; you go right. But the thing I want you to see in Joshua chapter 3 is that ark is set at a distance of 2,000 cubits from the line of march. Everything in that Bible is important. You know what that is a picture of? That is a picture of the New Testament church. Church history is 2,000 years, and during that 2,000-year line of march, we follow the ark, the Lord Jesus Christ. That is some Bible you have. Incredible.

Now you will want to see this. Do not miss this. The fire in the cloud was to lead them. Okay. But when God wanted to guide them, He gave them a man, Moses, who is also a type of Christ.

5.) Guide Me

The next thing we see, number two in Psalms 31:3, after he says, "lead me," then he says, "Lord, guide me." Now I know most people do not think about this on the level that they need to think about it, but you know, **there is a difference between leading and guiding.** Most people probably never see the difference. This will be one of the key aspects to your Christian life, its prosperity, its success, based on your confidence in Him. You see, when you follow the leading of the Holy Spirit of God, the Word of God, you simply apply what the Word of God says to your life, the principles to your life, you know, and you work at being a disciple. We have discipleship one, two, and three programs here as well as programs for little kids and for teenagers. We have all that covered, but that shows you the leading. The word disciple comes from the word discipline. When you become a disciple of Christ, you now have disciplined yourself to His leading, His way of life. That is called discipleship.

➤ Guiding is Different than Leading

Guidance will be something different. **Guidance will be our direction in life to show us the way.** God wants us to follow His leading, but as we follow that leading, then He will guide us and show us, as we follow His leading, all the things in life that will lead to our understanding of what is going on around us. Our directives in life to show us the way. You know, not only do God's people need the leading of God in their life, but they need the guidance of God in their life.

You know, down at Cape Canaveral or Kennedy Space Center, whatever they decide to call it today, they have rockets and missiles that they send up into the solar system. They have a plan. They want to get somewhere, but to get to that place, every rocket and missile must have a guidance system. It is unbelievable. You watch those things in the Gulf War where some guy up 40,000 feet is looking at a house down there, in the crosshairs, and somebody in a ship someplace shot off a cruise missile that has a guidance system in it that is locked into those coordinates. You are watching that house, and all of a sudden, boom, it is gone. **Every child of God needs to have a guidance system to keep you on target.** That God guides you through His leading. Our Christian life, we need guidance. Everything in your life that you and I are going to try to accomplish, you can say, "I am following Christ." That is great. But He needs to guide you in every aspect of that Christian life.

➤ Guidance in Selecting a Spouse

We have talked about it, and we have laid it out. When you look for a spouse, and most of you who are married, you know what I am talking about. Those of you who are looking to get married, want to get married, or are going to get married should consider this when you look for a spouse. Most people do not understand that probably, other than the decision of your salvation determining where you go, heaven or hell, who you marry determines not heaven or hell, (it does seem that way sometimes after you get married, but that is not the case), but it will determine the judgment seat of Christ. You get hooked up with the wrong person. You get the physical attraction over the spiritual attraction, and I guarantee you, it will be the second greatest decision in your life that could end your life as far as what God wants you to do. And you need guidance in it. I do not mean just guidance from the world, but as you come back to the Bible, Genesis chapter 24, you have 19 key principles that, if you are looking for a husband or you are looking for a wife, you follow that guidance of those 19 principles. It is very clear, very detailed, in one of the old stories of the Bible as they try to find a bride for Isaac. You have Eliezer, a type of the Holy Spirit of God, who wants to find a bride for Isaac. Through that story, you will find 19 principles that you look for if you ever want to find a spouse.

Then when you finally get married, you need guidance. You see, you can go along so long in life until you get married. When you get married, your life changes. No longer can you just go do whatever you want to do with the guys. You cannot go do whatever you want to do with the girls. Now you are dependent on each other. Your world changes. Now both of you have responsibilities, and not meeting those responsibilities will destroy everything as far as your marriage is concerned. And you know what you need? You need guidance. The greatest place to start is Ephesians chapter 5. You find there that he gives one or two verses to the ladies which

they need to do. But then he gives five or six verses to the guys. You know why? Because it falls on the guy. Guidance.

➤ Guidance with your Children

Now, do you want to know when your life really changes? When you have kids. Kids are the greatest thing in the world, the greatest blessing. There is nothing like it. It is wonderful. It is the greatest thing that happens. It is God's design. It is wonderful. It is great. But your life is no longer your own. And you know what you need with those little kids? You need guidance. This will be our books on the principles of child training that I am going to bring you through again with a lot of added things to it. Because life really changes now. This will be the book of Proverbs. As you grow and through God's guidance, your children need God's guidance.

➤ Guidance in the Ministry

In ministry, when you start to work with people, you need guidance. We have brought you through the people ministry. We have brought you through the patterns of human nature. Those are all guidance things that show you along the way that when you look through the leading of God at some particular area, God says, "Let me show you how this works." That is guidance.

A young pastor, and I see them all the time. I talk with them. When they start a church, they certainly need guidance. You know, as you become a pastor, you will find yourself in different scenarios trying to pastor a church. I mean, there will be some cases where you start one from scratch. You just go out someplace and start knocking on doors, start a church in your home, invite people, win people to Christ, and you build a church from there. There will be times when you will take over another man's work. Maybe he is going to retire, and he wants you to come in, and he wants you to take over until he is ready to go and then slip you in there. There are some cases where the pastor is gone. He died, he left, whatever, and the church does not have a pastor. They will call some guy, and he will go in. You have in the Baptist Bible Fellowship what I call musical churches. Remember how you used to play musical chairs where you would walk around, and pretty soon there were no chairs left, and two people fought over there? That is what it is. The pastors go around in a circle, and when the music stops, then everybody tries to get a church. That does not work very well either. But all of them need guidance.

I know guys look at it and say, "Well, I am just going to go pastor a church. I am just going to go in and start teaching the Bible, doing this or that." No, every one of these scenarios demand—I will use the word demand—a different guidance. They are all different scenarios. You can't paint them all with one brush. This is why churches fail. You must be able to look at whatever you are going to do and make the initial assessment. Then you must, after the assessment, look at the concept of acceptance. And then you must look after that at the concept of the people that you have, the availability. And then the last thing you must look at, determining these four things, is accountability. Those four things need to be defined before you ever do anything. You know what that is? Guidance. God is showing you that they are not all the same. Each one has its own special brand of problems, and you cannot fix number two with the issues from number one. Guidance.

6.) *Pull Me Out of the Net*

Then the last thing he says in Psalms 31:4 is, "pull me out of the net." Now I have already told you and laid out for you, the net is a literal net, entrapment in the tribulation for the nation of Israel. But inspirationally, it will be the things the world and the devil will put before us to snare us. Most of God's people are good people, but the problem is that they simply stumble through life, tripping on and falling into these pitfalls that are out there before them. The key to staying out of this net will simply be putting the first two things we talked about in your life: to follow His leading in life and then allow Him to teach you through that leading as He guides you through the light of the Word of God.

*Psalms 119:105. **Thy word [is] a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.***

God shows you. He lights up the darkness, and you will see the pitfalls before you step into them. He will give you perception. He will give you perspective. He will give you wisdom. He will give you understanding.

The Vietnam War was a war unlike any war that America had ever been in during her time. It was a war that was completely a guerrilla warfare from top to bottom. Booby traps were the order of the day. The Viet Cong had tripwires. They had little mines called "bouncing betties" that when you stepped on it, it blew up into the air about waist high and exploded, killing everybody within a radius. They had punji sticks. They took bamboo stakes, sharpened them like razors, dug a hole, stuck them down in the hole, covered them with their own feces or waste to ensure an instant infection, then covered them over so that you could not see them. You would be bopping down the trail. You step on that thing. That punji stake went right through your boot, and right through your foot. It was incredible some of the things they did. They would come across the trails where they would have something, maybe this high, with bamboo spikes on it. You would be walking down the trail, then hit the tripwire. That thing would swing out and catch you and pin you up against the tree. Incredible stuff.

For a while, America really didn't know how to deal with it. If a patrol went out on a trail, on a mission, you never came back on that same trail. It was guaranteed to be booby-trapped on your way back. The key was that there was a pattern to what they did. When we, in time, learned the pattern, we learned how to avoid them. But even with that, I guarantee you had some goofy private, old Johnny what's-his-name that would be bopping down the trail, would not pay attention to anybody, and bang, he would get nailed.

➤ The Leading of The Holy Spirit will Show you the Traps and the Patterns

It's the same way with the net, the traps, and the snares that the devil throws down for you. Through the leading of the Holy Spirit of God and the guidance of the Word of God, He will show you not only the traps, but He will show you the patterns, so you don't have to get caught in them. But just like Vietnam, you have that Christian guy or gal out there, Susie what's-her-name. And she does her thing, her life, the way she wants it, bang, she falls into the trap. But if you have the leading and you have the guidance, God will pull you out of the net.

When you build a stronghold, most people do not realize this, you are going to build one of two strongholds in your life. **Your life is going to be a stronghold for God, or your life is going to be a stronghold for the devil, and you get to choose.** The choice starts with the confidence you have in Him; it starts with the fact that you follow His leading and then allow Him to guide you through that leading.

VI. Thou Hast Set My Feet in a Large Room

Then he says in Psalms 31:8, and I want you to get this in your Bible, "thou hast set my feet in a large room." You will get a lot of questions about this when you are teaching the Bible, and it is actually pretty simple. Historically, the large room is the king's palace. David is going to become the king, and the large room that he is going to set his feet in will be the palace. The doctrinal application will be at the end of the tribulation period. The Jew is raptured up to the throne of God, and he stands in the large room in the presence of God. You will find this in 2 Samuel 22:20.

2 Samuel 22:20. He brought me forth also into a large place: he delivered me, because he delighted in me.

Now the inspirational application will be me right now. The Bible says that I am seated in heavenly places in Ephesians 2:6.

Ephesians 2:6. And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:

You see, I may be in this world physically, but I am in the presence and the mind of God, and today as I stand here and preach to you and you sit here and listen to me, if you are saved, spiritually speaking, we are seated in heavenly places in that large room. That is where we are at, the throne room.

VII. Summary

So now you can see how this Psalm will be such a benefit and a blessing to all of us. Starting out with building our confidence level with the things of God, then understanding that through that confidence, we are going to find His saving strength. Then building a house that can be defended, whether it is your body or your physical home, and then you build that on top of the Rock of Ages. In time, as you grow, you learn not only to protect your home from the inside, but you turn it into a fortified city on the outside that nothing can penetrate it. It's the protection about you, your family, in your own home, and this church. You turn it into a fortress. It is either going to be a stronghold for God or a stronghold for the devil. It is our choice.

Then the victory of the Christian life, after you build those three areas in your life, God is going to lead you in life. He is going to lead you on the right path, the old path. As He leads you, He is going to put His arm around you. As you walk down, follow His leading. He is going to show you things on the left, show you things on the right, show you things behind you, show you things in front of you, and He is going to guide you. He is going to give you wisdom and

understanding. You are going to see life differently than maybe you do right now. I know I do. You are going to see things through His eyes because through the leading, you get the guiding. Now, through the leading and the guiding, He keeps you out of the net. Never again will you be trapped, nor do you need to be trapped. Never again should there be anything in your life that you stumble over. Now the Word of God will illuminate your path and show you every punji stake, every snare, every tripwire, every bouncing betty, so that you will never get snared and caught in the thing.

That is the beauty of the Word of God. That is the beauty of looking in Psalms at David's life and his struggles against Saul, him crying out to God and asking for things that give him deliverance. But we find ourselves in the same situation many times. Now we learn the process of building that confidence in Him that we too can ask these things of God, knowing that He heareth us.