

Psalm 25

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Preacher: Barry Davies

[0 : 00] Psalm 25. And we're going to read that psalm.

Psalm 25. This is a psalm of David, and it's really a prayer.

To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul. In you I trust, O my God. Do not let me be put to shame, nor let my enemies triumph over me.

No one whose hope is in you will ever be put to shame, but they will be put to shame who are treacherous without excuse. Show me your ways, O Lord, teach me your paths.

Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Saviour, and my hope is in you all day long. Remember, O Lord, your great mercy and love, for they are from of old.

[1 : 07] Remember not the sins of my youth and my rebellious ways. According to your love remember me, for you are good, O Lord. Good and upright is the Lord.

Therefore he instructs sinners in his ways. He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way. All the ways of the Lord are loving and faithful for those who keep the demands of his covenant.

For the sake of your name, O Lord, forgive my iniquity, though it is great. Who then is the man that fears the Lord? He will instruct him in the way chosen for him.

He will spend his days in prosperity, and his descendants will inherit the land. The Lord confides in those who fear him. He makes his covenant known to them.

My eyes are ever on the Lord, for only he will release my feet from the snare. Turn to me and be gracious to me, for I am lonely and afflicted.

[2 : 08] The troubles of my heart have multiplied. Free me from my anguish. Look upon my affliction and my distress, and take away all my sins.

See how my enemies have increased, and how fiercely they hate me. Guard my life and rescue me. Let me not be put to shame, for I take refuge in you.

May integrity and uprightness protect me, because my hope is in you. Redeem Israel, O God, from all their troubles. Amen.

We're going to take up that theme that's raised in, or part of the theme that's raised in that psalm, in our next hymn. It's 807 in your hymn books. This is actually based on part of that psalm, and this reminds us of a number of things.

First and foremost, the fact that we need to be taught the way of the Lord. Teach me your way, O Lord. Teach me your way. So sing together, 807.

[3 : 11] Teach me your way.

Teach me your way. Teach me your way. Teach me your way. Teach me your way. O gracious, Lord, teach me your way.

Help me to walk the right, though I make last my sight. Be healed, heavenly light.

Teach me your way. When dawn's and fears arise, teach me your way.

When storms all spread the skies, teach me your way. Shine through the cloud, the flame, through sorrow, torment, pain, they plan my perfect way.

[4 : 32] Teach me your way. All as my life shall dust, teach me your way.

Where am I lost, be lost, teach me your way. Until the race is done, until the land is done, until the crown is won, teach me your way.

I want to give a welcome to all who are worshipping this evening here in this building, and especially to visitors who are with us.

Do stay behind afterwards. We always have a cup of tea and fellowship after our services. Thank you very much, Barry. Thank you to Barry Davis for preaching this evening.

On Wednesday is our midweek meeting, 7.30, Bible study and the prayer meeting, and we're continuing our Christmas series, Old Testament prophecies fulfilled.

[6 : 00] And then Friday, 2.30, is the last of the care home services at S-Core, and so do join us there for that service. And then Saturday is carol singing in Baxtergate, meet at church, 10.30, then we'll pray and go to Baxtergate.

Sunday, 10.45, a usual morning service, and then in the afternoon will be the carol service at 4 o'clock, followed by tea.

And then, as mentioned this morning, on Tuesday, the 22nd of December, Skinner Street shops are opening late till 7 o'clock, so we thought we'd open the church foyer and have mince pies and coffee, 5.30 to 6.30, and sing out into the street and invite the neighbours in, well, the passers-by in. Christmas Day service, of course, 11 o'clock, and as mentioned this morning, well, today is the last day, the last Sunday for the Christmas postbox. I suppose you could come in during the week and put letters in, but post Christmas cards in, but next Sunday they will be distributed.

And I didn't give it out this morning, but I think it was given out last Sunday that Middleton Chapel, Rhyde Evangelical Church, are going to be holding a service of Thanksgiving, 2nd of January, 2016, 2.30pm, and so there's plenty of details there, and they wanted to know how many are going to come, so I'm sure we'll be telling Willie before how many we think will be coming from our church.

[7 : 34] So do have a look at that, and of course we can pray for Middleton Chapel. Thank you. Thank you. We're now to the time of intercessory prayer.

There's lots of things going on in the world at the moment. Let's bring some of them before the Lord now. Let's pray together. Lord, as we look out on this world, we see so many ways in which people continue to reject you and to, in fact, run away from you, thinking that man and his achievements will surpass everything that is said in your word, and yet we know that that is not the case, rather the opposite, that as the world turns away from you, then it just creates for itself even greater problems.

Lord, some of those problems are caused by what can be called natural disasters, as we've heard about in the Northwest recently with the floods.

And Lord, then people need to deal with those situations. And Lord, we pray that you'll continue to help them for those who have been washed out of their homes and lost many of their possessions at this time of the year.

Lord, be all that they need and support them in that. But Lord, other things are created by men themselves. We have these wars in Syria, in other places in the Middle East that seem so far away, yet they impinge on us here in so many ways.

[9 : 20] And Lord, as we look on these things and we see governments and leaders trying to find solutions, Lord, we sometimes find it difficult to see how a solution can be found.

And yet we know that ultimately you are in control of all these things, and therefore we put these things into your hands. And we ask, Lord, that we'll continue to pray about them.

Lord, that when some resolution is made, that we hope will be soon, Lord, people will be able to look on this and realise that you were the focal point of it, not governments, not leaders, but Lord, your will.

And we pray that this might be done, that your people would not only be protected, but that the message they have to give to others might then grow more powerful as people see your mighty hand at work.

And Lord, we think too of our own government and the moves they're making to clamp down on even things like Sunday schools and other situations, working with young people, which seem so heavy-handed and so geared to be even-handed that in fact it penalises Christians because of that.

[10 : 44] Lord, we pray that all these things will come to nothing, that your name will continue to be lifted up, and that, Lord, the gospel won't be prevented from being spoken about and talked about because it's your word.

And Lord, in all of these situations where we seem so helpless as individuals, we pray that those who belong to you and those who have a voice in the church worldwide might raise their voices up to sound out what the Christian gospel says on these issues and how we should approach these things.

And in particular, Lord, what seems impossible to us might come into effect, that there may be leaders within this world who are raised up, who are Bible-believing men and women, those who

trust in you as their saviour, those who will have an agenda which is based on your word rather than in their own thoughts or the thoughts of a vociferous minority.

Lord, in all these things, we just bring them before you now, we place them before you, knowing that you can and that you will answer our prayers if that is what is part of your will.

And Lord, in the meantime, help us to continue to pray that these situations will be dealt with in a way that is even-handed and one that is calculated to retain the protections that are needed but without the threat to the freedom of speech of those who are Christians.

[12:28] And so, Lord, we pray all these things that the name of your name and the name of your Son might be glorified in this world. Amen.

Amen. I'm going to suggest that we sing 827 as our next hymn because we're going to have problems on the last hymn as well.

And I want to leave the final hymn as 830. So, 827, if that's all right. O Thou Who Camest From Above A great hymn by Charles Wesley 827 O Thou Who Camest O Thou Who Camest From Above The pure celestial The pure celestial Fountain In heart In the love Of sacred love Around the altar Of my heart The nearly soda And while

O thou The With defiled Thou You Christ From These Lord Hoag With Let it In love ANC Shit Whale My pleasure But In the love The I hade To And Trepp With Em Emmanuel His songs return In humble prayer And love and grace Jesus confer My heart's desire To work and speak And think fully Still let me guard The holy fire And still surround

Thy gift in me Ready for all Thy perfect will Thy acts of faith And love repeat Till death thine air Thine mercy seal And make the sacrifice Of thee Perhaps you could turn to that psalm that we looked at earlier, Psalm 25.

[15:51] I'm just going to keep in that psalm and look at things that are raised by it. It's no coincidence that in praying about all the concerns of this world and in singing, in fact, that last hymn that we just sang, that within there we have, if you like, the background to this particular psalm.

It's a psalm of David. And as we can see from some of the verses there, it was a time where David was feeling under attack. He talks about his enemies.

In verse 2 he says that, Do not let me be put to shame nor let my enemies triumph over me. And then he returns to the theme at the end because, again, he mentioned these people who are enemies and that he's got his troubles being multiplied and he's in anguish.

And he must have felt exactly as is spoken of in this hymn that we last sang of Charles Wesley. Talking about going to the Lord, he says that in going to the source of all that is good for us, he says, In humble prayer and fervent praise.

And this psalm is really a prayer to the Lord. And it begins by this outpouring of, if you like, praise to God and telling God that he's the one whom David is following.

[17:32] To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul. In you I trust. O my God, do not let me be put to shame nor let my enemies triumph over me.

No one whose hope is in you will ever be put to shame. But they will be put to shame with treacherous without excuse. I just wanted to draw two things out of that first bit of introduction. Because following that, there are various prayers made and pleas made by the psalmist that I want to focus on. But you'll notice a couple of things. This prayer that is offered up by David in the situation that he was in, and that if we look around the world we could argue that although we're not kings as David was, that nevertheless there are things there which are so heinous to us, and make us so helpless in thinking that we can do anything about them, that we have to cry out to God. And this isn't just saying a prayer. It's lifting up his soul. And as I thought about that, and I'll leave the question with you, and we'll perhaps come back to it at the end.

What does it mean to lift up your soul to God in prayer? You know, you could make an argument that anybody can pray, anybody can open their mouth and make their lips say things, but what does it mean to lift up your very soul before God?

[19:06] We can only imagine the desperation, the despair that was in David's soul as he brought these requests to God.

It was so imminent, it was so terrible, the situation he was in, that his whole being, his whole soul was going to cry out to God.

And as he makes this proclamation of God, and the fact that it was his God, he also points out, not for the first time and the last as we will see, that his hope is solely in God.

He says in verse 3, This is his hope. This, if you think about it, is his only hope in the situation that he's found himself in.

And this fervent prayer that then comes out of David and builds to a conclusion is one that we can therefore understand, that feeling of utter hopelessness, not being able to do anything, and looking around for any way out, any solution, and realizing that the only way that he can get out of this situation is to claim the promises of God, to pour out his heart and soul to God, knowing that the only hope he has is in God himself.

[20 : 48] So this cry for help that he made was urgent. And, of course, we can all recognize this. I'm sure I've talked about this before.

But, nevertheless, it's the most appropriate illustration I can think of. Because when you have mums in a home and they've got babies upstairs, then you have different cries, I understand, I'm told.

All crying sounds the same most of the time to me. But, sometimes, the mum will say, when they hear the baby crying, oh, they're just crying for a bit of attention.

They'll settle down in a few minutes. And, of course, they often do. Then, sometimes, there'll be a cry which means, I want some more food.

You've not given me enough to eat. I'm still hungry. And that cry, too, can be recognized and the food can be provided. Sometimes, the cry comes and the mum says, oh, it'll just be a nappy.

[21 : 54] We'll leave it a while now. Go and change the nappy and then you'll settle down again. But, sometimes, there's a cry which comes where mum immediately rushes upstairs knowing that there's something seriously wrong because it's a cry of pain.

It's a cry of real, you know, I'm not just making a complaint here, but I'm really desperate for some help. And ladies seem to be able to distinguish between all of those things.

And here, this cry is one of those latter types. This is David crying out to God in absolute helplessness.

He's in tremendous pain. As he says, he's in anguish because of the situation he's in. Now, here's a question for you. If that happens with a parent when their child cries, can you imagine the mum just sitting there and just letting the baby cry?

The answer is obviously no. They will go immediately and answer that particular cry for help. And it seems inconceivable when we look at this passage in this psalm that if David is pouring out his soul in anguish with no other solution but to cry out to God, the only one who he can hope in, then we must assume that the Lord will answer his prayer just as that mother would answer the cry of a baby because this was so urgent.

[23 : 41] And the background to this particular prayer that comes out of David is three areas of understanding that needed to take place beforehand.

I'm just going to briefly take you through them this evening and then come out with the points that he makes when he comes out with this prayer. First of all, he needed to understand himself and what he understood is that he was a sinful person.

He says, as we saw in one of the verses that we said in verse 7, remember not the sins of my youth and my rebellious ways.

Then later on, in verse 11, he says, forgive my iniquity, though it is great, as he's crying out to the Lord. And later on he says, take away all my sins in a repeat of that plea for forgiveness.

And not only that, but he's also lonely. He says later on in verse 16, turn to me and be gracious to me for I am lonely and afflicted.

[24 : 55] Let's just think about this for a minute. Because this was David who was the king. This was David who, when they were talking about his exploits in battle, said, Saul's killed his thousands, but David's killed his tens of thousands.

This is someone who's been lorded throughout the whole country. This was someone who, you remember, when he was chosen, had lots of brothers. He had a big family. Why on earth would he be lonely?

Lonely. Well, could I argue that this wasn't the loneliness of the sort of friendship that we have with one another? This was something which was much, much deeper.

This was soul loneliness. This was, you know, God's so far away from me loneliness. This was something of a completely different magnitude.

attitude. And therefore, he's going to cry out to God. But it's not just that he understands himself, but he also understands God.

[26 : 05] Let me just pick out one of many things as we go through because as you start to look into this, you find there's more and more that you could draw out.

But I haven't got time this evening to do that. But just to point out some of these things. First of all, I'm going through these more or less in order. As he begins to pray, he shows his understanding of the Lord and his authority.

First of all, he realises that God is the only one who can deal with his soul. He's got soldiers who might be able to defeat armies. He's got family who might care for him.

He's no doubt got other people who would befriend him. But he knows that it's only the Lord who can deal with his soul. That's why he said, to you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.

It's the only place that he could go. He also understands that God is the one who is truth. Verse 5 says, guide me in your truth and teach me for you are God my saviour.

[27 : 16] And that's the next thing he understands that God is his saviour. Says, you are my God and saviour. He knows that God is loving and merciful because he says that later on in verse 6, remember O Lord your great mercy and love for they are from of old.

He realises that God is good because he says in verse 7 and 8, remember not the sins of my youth and my rebellious ways.

According to your love remember me for you are good O Lord. Good and upright is the law. He also understands that God is a guide.

Verse 9 talking about God he guides the humble in what is right. He understands that this God is also faithful.

Verse 10 all the ways of the Lord are loving and faithful and he also understands that God reveals himself to us and we'll come to that in more detail a little bit later on.

[28 : 29] So he's reeling off all of these things about God and basically these are all bound up in his prayer he's looking to God and he's restating to the Lord himself all the things that God is and just reminding himself and reminding God that he understands that God is all of these things because ultimately when he comes to make his request he knows that it's only because of these things these attributes of God that he can get an answer to his prayers and his needs.

So he understands himself he understands he's a sinful person he understands that he's lonely this soul loneliness that I just spoke about but he also understands God he knows God's attributes he knows God's love his patience his goodness his guiding hand his faithfulness and all of those things things and he also knows finally that the Lord is a covenant God he says God keeps his covenants he said he makes his covenants known to them this is in verse 14 the Lord confides in those who fear him he makes his covenant known to them this isn't just a general promise to all the people of Israel it's not something that everybody as it were can take note of this is a specific covenant that's made with those who fear him this is very specific to the individual and these are things that David understands but more than anything and we've already said this right at the beginning he understands that he's got some urgent needs and this is where he brings in the aspects of prayer for these needs these urgent needs that he has and I think when we look at what he asked for what he pleads for we'll see that really what he's doing is he's asking the Lord to help him lead a sanctified Christian life which is productive in terms of his walk from this time on let's look at these in the order that he deals with them what are these needs well his first need he says in verse four show me your ways oh Lord teach me your paths without the Lord he realises he doesn't know which way to turn he doesn't know which way to go how to deal with any of these situations that face him it's not that the fact that he can make a decision and do one thing and be sure that it would be right he can only rely on the

Lord to show him the way that he must go to put him on the right path and we know there are many examples that we see in the New Testament where the Bible talks about people who have to go through the narrow door they don't go on the broad way but they go on the narrow way because people going on the broad way will not get to the right place and will actually slip into sinfulness even more so he realises that one of his needs is to be going in the right way and therefore he asks the Lord to show him that way and to teach him the path that he needs to go down in order to do that but he realises that he also needs a friend you remember that he said he was lonely and he says a bit later on in this particular psalm verse 16 turn to me and be gracious to me for I am lonely and afflicted he needs a friend but not a friend as in this world but this is something which is more if we had more time

I would have had a bit of question answer session now but just think of it if someone is categorised as your friend what would that mean to you it wouldn't just be an acquaintance somebody that you met fairly infrequently you knew them you knew the name but that was the limit of it that wouldn't be a friend it wouldn't be someone who you went out with on occasion you did things together there might be a friendliness there but they wouldn't necessarily be a true friend how would you categorise a true friend surely it would be someone to whom you could go with all your concerns and all your worries and when you spoke to them they would not only be sympathetic but they truthfully respond to whatever your question was and they give you the best advice they could and they wouldn't desert you when you were in trouble this is a sort of friend that the psalmist is looking for and despite the fact that he was a king despite the fact he had a great family he clearly hasn't found this friend yet and he's looking to this friend as being the lord himself turn to me and be gracious to me for

[34 : 34] I am lonely and afflicted some of you have heard my testimony before but one of the aspects of it that I vividly remember was often at a particular period in my life in my late teens I would be lying at home in my bedroom in the dark and despite the fact that I had loving parents downstairs and I had lots of friends at school and through various other things that I was doing there were times when I felt absolutely totally alone in the sense that there was nobody who understood two things about me one they didn't understand what I was about because like everybody else I would hide what I was really thinking from anybody because that was too private and even more so they didn't know how sinful I was because

I hid that from everybody even my family a lot of the time I wouldn't have called it sin because I wasn't a Christian and I believe that at some point in everybody's life they reached that position where they realized despite the fact that they're surrounded by loved ones from a spiritual point of view from a communion with the Lord point of view they feel completely alone and I'm sure that this was the situation that David was in when he asked for the Lord to be gracious to him to turn to him so he needed he seems to be forgiven he needed a friend and that verse also tells us that he needs a savior because later on he goes on to say in verse 20 guard my life and rescue me he doesn't want a friend just someone who he can talk to who can understand him who he can commune with but he wants this person to save him to rescue him and of course this speaks of the savior who was to come the only one who could rescue him but in the situation that he's in with all of these things that he's asking for and these pleas that he puts into his prayer above all things one thing that all of us need at times like this is hope and he speaks of that here doesn't he because when he begins this particular psalm in verse three he acknowledges himself that no one whose hope is in you this is the

Lord will ever be put to shame he knows that this is why he's coming to the Lord because this is a sure hope this is a hope that can be relied upon and in verse five he says something similar and my hope is in you all day long and then again in verse 21 may integrity and uprightness protect me because my hope is in you so this hope that he has comes from two things it's knowing the attributes of God it's knowing his own sinfulness but more than all of those things this covenant that God makes with those who would trust him is so sure it's so secure that it's got a perfect hope it's a living hope it's one that can carry him through every situation of course all of these being with the Lord it's interesting that when he asks for these various things doesn't come through in every single case but certainly in at least two of them we see how his mind is thinking verse seven when he asks remember not the sins of my youth and my rebellious ways he doesn't say as Peter was saying this morning because I deserve it I'm the good guy you anointed me king over Israel I've won all these battles but look at the situation I mean now surely I deserve to have these things taken away from me but he doesn't say that he says remember not according to your love remember me in other words he's appealing to God simply saying just out of your love forget the sins of my youth not because I deserve it but because it's your love and your love is above all of these things and when he talks about the forgiveness of his own sins again in verse 11 look what he says he doesn't say forgive my sins though they're great he says for the sake of your name

Lord forgive my iniquity though it is great in other words it doesn't matter what David thinks it's really for the sake of God's name when people look on in the world what is the thing that they always accuse Christians of being arrogant how can you believe that you have your sins forgiven how can you believe that one day you will be in heaven that's arrogant you know why can't we be in heaven why can't we have all these privileges as well but this explains why doesn't it because it's not for the

individual this is for the sake of God's name and when people look on and they see lives changed by the gospel by the fact that Jesus has accepted a person into the kingdom and has been willing to have the blood that was shed on the cross stand for that person's sin then that is to the glory of [41 : 21] God it's for the sake of God's name because people then see that only God can save and that can only come through the shed blood of Christ but there's a very important verse here which sort of brings all of these aspects together and that's verse 14 in the NIV it says the Lord confides in those who fear him he makes his covenant known to them now if you look in other versions you'll find something slightly different if you look in the ESV it says the friendship of the Lord is for those who fear him if you look up in some alternative versions they can substitute friendship for secret counsel so it sounds like this the secret counsel of the Lord is for those who fear him and finally the new

King James says the secret of the Lord is with those who fear him and that's the same in the authorised version as well the world in its wisdom in its worldly wisdom says everyone needs a friend at least one that might be true in the world and I'm sure if you have a friend that can take the edge off most things if you know that you got someone that you can go to but this particular friend that has been spoken about in this psalm by David isn't just a friend this is the creator of the world this is the God who ultimately would become his savior in the form of Jesus Christ dying on the cross this is not only the creator of the world not only his savior but the holy spirit who was to come and to be the one who would teach him about all the things that he's asking for here show me your ways oh lord how does

God do that he does it through his holy spirit how does he guide people through their lives it's through the holy spirit how is it that people know that the lord has turned to them that he is gracious to them because they see the work of the holy spirit and how can they know that they're being guarded in their lives and that they're going to be rescued because the holy spirit is there to instruct us on all that we need in order to go forward in this life sometimes it may well be that people have a friend who's of some influence in the world and people can be quite surprised that people have relationships with you know dukes earls kings queens movie stars whatever it would be and they're just ordinary people but here is the vast gulf between the world which is impressed by those things and the spiritual life where these things aren't impressive at all because all of these worldly kings all of these worldly important people however much they are your friend they can't do what this particular friend can do because this friend as it says confides in those who fear him or as these words gave us the friendship of the lord is for those who fear him they say the true value of a friend or one of the signs of a friend is that you can tell them things that you wouldn't tell anybody else and know that it's safe with them would you agree with that if you can talk to somebody and know that it won't go anywhere else and that nothing will be spoken of and it will be just between you and them and here as

David is talking about this he says the lord confides in those who fear him the lord is their friend we can tell the lord the things which are on our mind the deepest thing the deepest things that we fear and the lord will not only answer but he says he will make his covenant known to them he will make it absolutely clear to those who trust him that whatever the outward situation might be that they are safe they're safe as it says in other words in the loving arms of Christ because they have the lord as a friend I nearly thought but decided against it singing what a friend we have in Jesus but that hymn is saying exactly the same thing you know if you could pick anybody in the world to be your friend who would it be well

I don't think there's anybody in this world I pick because that would end when this world ends when we die this is a friend that you need because this is an eternal friend one who's established a covenant with his friend that will last forever that will go into eternity it's amazing isn't it to think that that if we can call it friendship that is established in this world when we've trusted in Christ and we've accepted the fact that he shed his blood on the cross for our sin and that all we can do is to go to him as David is here and pleading with him that he forgives us for our sinfulness and he's willing to do that that when that happened that was for all eternity that friendship that kinship that sense of being part of

[48 : 03] God's family a brother or a sister in Christ is for eternity that is absolutely staggering isn't it that God himself in the form of his son would come to us in that way and respond to our needs and of course only Jesus satisfies the criteria for this true friend that all of us need now to just bring these things to a conclusion I just want you to think about some questions certainly questions which

occurred to me as I prepared this particular sermon sometimes these things come out so starkly and so clearly in a particular section of the word that you think well

I wonder whether I've ever read that before or if I did I'm sure it didn't strike me that way yet it comes through with freshness and here are the questions that I've got written down and these are really things for us to consider in our own lives so yes we can follow through the logic of what we've just been talking about we can see that David was pouring out his soul to the Lord he was really in fervent prayer about these things why because he was in danger there was an imminence about it he felt alone he felt threatened and he was crying out to God in pain because there was no other to whom he could cry and then he throws out his heart and requests all of these things all of which are going to happen not because David pleaded for them but because of God's goodness and because of the fact that God wanted his name to be glorified through these responses to this prayer of David's and these were the questions that I came up with based on this particular psalm do we know and understand as David did the extent of our sin before God and the urgency of our need and I think that's as true for those who are Christians as for those who aren't whichever category you're in tonight to understand those things the extent of our sin the enormity of it before God and the urgency of the need you get the sense in this psalm that David was sort of hidden in a room praying to God and he wasn't willing to even leave the palace before he had his prayers answered because it was so imminent that these things were going to happen and do we realise the urgency of our need and if we have realised it and we have received the promises through Christ of salvation through our trust in him it's still urgent isn't it we still have that constant need in this world to be reminded from time to time of how much we simply have to rely on the Lord and the fact that it's urgent because the threat is always imminent as the person who was writing a commentary on this said you know it talks about these enemies and sometimes David asks for them to be got rid of in not very pleasant ways and certainly in other Psalms he does but you're never going to get rid of every enemy even if we were perfectly placid and managed to appease our enemies there wouldn't be any shortage of supply of enemies who would be there because the Bible tells us that this life is a battle and it's not waged against forces in this world but it says it's against those powers in the heavenly places the second question I've got is do we fully understand the greatness of God's attributes and love for us well I'm sure we would all reading these say yes we understand that that's great but do we meditate on it do we think about the awesome magnitude of

God's love for us you know I can't put myself in the position I'm not a scientist or not a good enough scientist to know these things perhaps David could help me out here but then again maybe not but if you're looking at the sort of level that you sometimes are at subatomic particles and things like that just imagine for the moment just think about the population of the world to God the population of the world must be almost like those subatomic particles imagining you know having an imaginary pair of tweezers where you could pick out one atomic particle from some solid mass which contained billions and billions of particles and say I really love that one I'm going to put that one in a special box and put it on the shelf in my house because I love it

[53 : 53] I wouldn't know where to start they'd all look exactly the same to me but God in his mercy has chosen every single one of us why because he chose to because he loved us and the enormity of that is something which is staggering and this is the one that I really had to ask myself we were talking some of us recently about prayer because we have a day of prayer coming up and we're thinking about the Wednesday night meetings and the way that we pray and sometimes we pray of course in church and obviously we pray at home and ask myself this question do we really understand what it means to pray fervently like David did here hopefully we do but I suspect that a lot of the time we don't and I think here's a lesson that God is giving us through this psalm of David that David as he says was able to pray with all of his soul

I don't know what it would be like if all of us prayed with all of our soul all at the same meeting what would happen I don't know and I come back to the question I asked at the start having taken all these things into account seeing David's position seeing the prayer he made seeing all of the attributes of God the fact that the Lord loved him befriended him as it were drew him out from the world and not just drew him out but became his friend his brother joint heir with Christ is it conceivable that when David cried out from the position that he was in in this fervent prayer that was focused on God and all his attributes and reminding

God of the promises that as the Bible says we're always yea and amen in Jesus is it conceivable that God would not answer that prayer I have to say I came to the conclusion that God would answer that prayer it might not have been in the way that David expected it might not always be in the way that we expect but God would hear and he would answer that prayer and I've just summarized it in one sentence that I've written down at the end in my notes only when we know ourselves know God and know our urgent need will we truly be able to plead with God in prayer let's trust that the Lord will do for us what he obviously did for David in answering this prayer that the Lord will show us his ways and the paths that we must take that the Lord will forgive us for not only the sins of our youth but for all of the sins that we committed that he will turn to us and be gracious to us because we are needy people and that he will guard our lives and rescue us through the salvation that he offers in Christ amen well our last hymn is 830 in the hymn book this effectively was the prayer in different words I think that David was saying in that psalm this is what he was actually asking for wasn't it take my life and let it be consecrated

Lord to thee take my moments and my days let them flow in ceaseless praise and so it goes on I'll just read the last two verses take my will and make it thine it shall be no longer mine take my heart it is thine own it shall be thy royal throne take my love my lord I pour at thy feet its treasure store take myself and I will be ever only all for thee take my life and let it be come sing praise and all to thee take thy moments and thy haste let them flow in ceaseless praise take thy hands and let them move at the impulse of thy love take thy feet and let them be swift and beautiful for thee take my voice and let me sing always

[60 : 12] Huh throw them soon in Tet my hand■■■ and my gold What am I to die with hope?

Take my intellect and use Every block as one shall choose Take my will and make it thine It shall be no longer mine Take my heart, it is my own It shall be my royal throne Take my love, my Lord, my poor As I think this treasure store

Take myself and I will be Evermore may come for me Lord, may we be always all for thee O the depth of the riches Of the wisdom and knowledge of God How unsearchable his judgments And his paths beyond tracing out Who has known the mind of the Lord Or who has been his counselor Who has ever given to God That God should repay him For from him and through him And to him are all things To him be the glory forever Amen