

Where Does Your Help Come From?

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 05 January 2014

Preacher: Jon Hueni

[0:00] Psalm 121. The Lord watches over you.

The Lord is your shade at your right hand. The sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon by night. The Lord will keep you from all harm.

He will watch over your life. The Lord will watch over your coming and going, both now and forevermore.

Well, there is one and only one self-sufficient being in the universe. It's God, the great I Am.

That means he doesn't need any help, any assistance outside of himself. Indeed, he doesn't need anything from anybody.

[1:18] Acts 17 says, the God who made the world and everything in it is Lord of heaven and earth. And does not live in temples built by hands. And he's not served by human hands as if he needed anything.

Because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else. So he's not the receiver. He's the giver. Life, breath, everything else.

No, he's not the needy one. You and I are the needy ones. And that's the inescapable fact, isn't it? We need help.

We need help. And that's the way God intended it to be. He didn't create us to be self-sufficient. He created us to be God-dependent.

A car has been designed by the automaker to be dependent upon a driver. It was not made to start itself, to drive itself, to stop itself, to fuel itself.

[2:23] For all these things and more, it was made to be dependent upon a driver. And it will never operate correctly without the driver. It was never meant to.

And in the same way, or a similar way, we have been intentionally designed and created by God to need him. He made us that way on purpose.

We can't escape this reality any more than we can escape our own existence. We need him to live. After all, we need life and breath and everything else.

So physically, emotionally, spiritually, mentally, in every way, we need help. So if you're finding it difficult to make it on your own, you weren't meant to.

Mankind needed help before sin entered the world. Sin has only increased our need of help. So the teaching of the Bible is that we have been made for relationship with God.

[3:30] A relationship in which we receive help from him at every turn. And we cannot ignore our need of God and his help without paying a dear price for it.

Karen Carpenter was young, beautiful, a talented singer, popular, and wealthy. And from the outside, it would seem that everything was going for her.

She had life by the tail and needed nothing. But she died tragically at the age of 32 of heart failure brought on by years of anorexia, the habit of starving herself.

She recorded the Beatles song, Help, singing, When I was younger, so much younger than today, I never needed anybody's help in any way.

That's the can-do attitude we're all born with. I don't need anybody's help. I can do it. I can manage. The song goes on, But now these days are gone.

[4:36] I'm not so self-assured. Now I find I've changed my mind and opened up the doors. Help me if you can. I'm feeling down.

So life has a way of exposing the lie of self-sufficiency. And now she's crying for help. You don't have to live long on the earth to find out that you need help.

We're not nearly as strong or as bright as we may think. We're not nearly as secure as we pretend. We need help.

And so one of the most telling things about you is just this. Where do you go for help? We all need help. We all go somewhere for help.

Where is it that you go for help? That's the question put to us by the psalmist here in Psalm 121. I lift up my eyes to the hills.

[5 : 38] Where does my help come from? How you answer that question reveals volumes about you. Notice the psalmist's answer in verse 2.

And it's the answer of all God's people by the grace of God. My help comes from the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth.

The Lord. Who is he? He is the uncreated, eternal, self-sufficient God of Genesis 1-1. Who in the beginning already was and created the heavens and the earth.

And such a description of our help is meant to show us just what a great help our helper is to his people. Think of the wisdom and power he has to help if he created all of this out of nothing.

That's meant to encourage us if he is our help. Nothing is too complicated. Nothing is too hard for him. As the maker of heaven and earth, he is creation's Lord.

[6 : 44] That means it answers to him. So he can use ravens to feed his hungry prophet Elijah. And he did.

And he can use the Red Sea to destroy the enemies of his people Israel. And he can use lightning and hailstones to destroy their enemies in battle.

And he turns the hearts of kings and he closes the mouths of lions. Friends, the possibilities are endless as he uses all creation to help his people.

He is the maker of heaven and earth and his creation's Lord. This is your helper. And then we're told in this psalm that your helper watches over you by day and by night.

By day. Every day. All day. Every night. All night. He never slumbers or sleeps in his watch care over Israel.

[7 : 45] He never needs to take a break to rest. Such a helper fits my needs because I'm always in need of help. And verse 8 closes this psalm with this wonderful promise.

The Lord will watch over your coming and going. When you go out and leave your home in the morning. And when you return to it in the evening and everything in between.

He will watch over you. Both now and forevermore. That pretty well covers it, doesn't it? Never be a time when his protection will be relaxed.

What a helper. Day and night. Coming and going. Now and forevermore. That's where my help comes from, the psalmist says.

He says in Psalm 46.1, God is our refuge and strength and ever-present help in trouble.

Ever-present help in trouble. Is trouble near?

[8 : 51] God is nearer. Is it a comfort to know that help is on the way? You've had an accident and you call 911 and there's comfort to know help is on the way?

What is it to know that help is ever-present? That help is already there whenever any trouble arrives. An ever-present help in trouble.

So Psalm 146 says, Happy. Happy is he who has the God of Jacob for his help. Whose hope is in the Lord is God, the maker of heaven and earth, the sea and everything in them, the Lord who remains faithful forever.

Is the maker of heaven and earth your help? You're a happy man. You're a blessed woman. You're in a happy state, boy or girl, to have the maker of heaven and earth your help.

Is the God of Jacob your help? You say, why should that make me happy? I realize what a help it is to have the maker of heaven and earth, but why the question, or why does it say, happy is he who has the God of Jacob for his help?

[10 : 07] Well, let's remember Jacob. There he is, a young man walking all alone, away from his home, going on a journey through a howling wilderness.

500-mile trip to a place he's never been before, Padam Aram. He's going to find a wife from his uncle's family.

The wilderness is dangerous enough, and his brother, besides, wants to kill him. And he lays down for the night, exhausted after the first night of walking. He's still within the confines of Palestine.

He has the ground for a bed and a rock for a pillow. And with many uncertainties and fears going through his mind, he dreams.

And the Lord appears to him that night in a dream, making amazing promises. You're going to return to this homeland. And all peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your descendants.

[11:10] And I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. Genesis 28. Well, God was with him and did protect him, did bless him.

That was God helping him. All those years working for Laban, his uncle, and the wife that he received. Twenty years later, he's returning home with great wealth, and he comes to the Jordan and says, I had my, the only thing I had was my staff when I crossed this Jordan, but now I have become two groups.

And he's afraid again, now afraid that Esau, whom he ran away from 20 years earlier, was going to attack him and his family.

But he hangs on to God's promise in the midst of his fears. God's promise to bless him, to watch over him, to give him descendants like the sand of the sea.

And so the meeting with Esau goes well. That was God helping him. And during the time, he blesses him with 12 sons.

[12:16] And during the time of famine in the land, God helps him through his son, Joseph, whom he sends ahead into Egypt. And then Jacob himself moves to Egypt where he was provided for.

That was God helping him. And then Jacob died and went to heaven. That was God helping him. The God of Jacob is the faithful God who fulfills his promises, who watches over and bless Jacob as his helper.

Is this God, the same God of Jacob, your God? Can you say he's the God of John?

He's the God of Scott. He's the God of Deb. Can you put your name behind that? The God of Jacob is your helper.

The same one who helped him still lives and is ever the same to be your helper. Your helper. And if he is, you're a happy man, woman, boy, or girl.

[13:21] Well, let's ask David this question. Where does your help come from? We've seen his answer here in Psalm 121. But who is in trouble more than David was? He's a good one to ask, where does your help come from?

He needed help an awful lot. As a teenager, he was keeping his father's sheep and there would come a lion or a bear to take away one of the sheep. And he was charged to protect them.

He needed some help at that moment. Later, as a teenager, he's fighting a Goliath, a giant. A trained man of war.

In need of help to fight him. A dozen years, he's running from King Saul and his troops who are seeking his life constantly. In need of help. And all the battles he fought against the Philistines and the enemies of Israel.

It wasn't from the palace sending messages out to the troops. It was right in the thick of battle with them. And during his son Absalom's rebellion, David is reduced to running for his life again.

[14:25] And constantly in need of help. And we might ask him, David, how is it that you're still alive? Where does your help come from? Knock on wood, I've just had some pretty good luck in life.

No, he doesn't say that, does he? Lots of practice with his slingshot. My trusty bow. My trusty sword. No, I do not trust in my sword.

Friends in high places like Jonathan, the son of the king. No, none of this. Rather, my help comes from the Lord. You've been my helper, O God, my Savior.

Psalm 27, 9. And oh, what a gracious helper our God is. Because we find him helping people in the Bible that didn't deserve his help.

You remember the times of the judges when the people of God would sin against God. And God would raise up enemy nations to chasten them.

[15:30] Well, that's the way it was happening. Israel's unfaithfulness. And God would chasten them by the nations. But whenever Israel cried out to the Lord for help, he raised up a Savior, a Deliverer, and set them free.

And we see that cycle over and over. It wasn't that God forgot about their unfaithfulness. No, he knew their unfaithfulness. And yet, every time they called upon him for help, he answered them. What a gracious Savior he is to his people. So Israel was running after other gods, the Baals and the Astaroths. Samuel is now the judge, their leader, that God raised up.

And he called them to repent and to serve the Lord alone. And so they gathered at Mizpah to confess their sin and offer sacrifices to the Lord. Well, the Philistines saw the whole nation gathering at Mizpah and thought, they're gathering to come to war against us.

So we'll strike them first. So the Philistines came into the land to attack them at Mizpah. Israel was terrified and pleaded with Samuel to not stop crying to the Lord that he would rescue them.

[16:48] And he did pray. And while he was sacrificing burnt offerings, the Philistines drew near to engage Israel in battle. But that day, we read, the Lord thundered with loud thunder against the Philistines and threw them into such a panic that they were routed before the Israelites who rushed out and slaughtered them.

The God of all creation makes some noise in the heavens that terrified the enemy and set them running and gave Israel a great victory. He was their helper.

Who were they? They were those that had wandered from God and were going after their idols. And only now we're coming and confessing. And God showed grace to them. He's a gracious helper to all who call upon him in their need.

So Samuel says, this is noteworthy. What has happened here today must be remembered. And so he took a stone and he set it up between Mizpah and Shen.

And he named it Ebenezer, which means stone of help. Stone of help. Saying, thus far has the Lord helped us.

[17:57] And so it stood there as a reminder to the next generations. As children would be walking by that stone, they would ask their parents, what does that stone mean?

It said to one and all, we've made it this far because of one thing. The Lord's help. Thus far, the Lord has helped us.

You know, the Apostle Paul does that same sort of thing in Acts 26. It's toward the end of his life and he's standing trial before King Agrippa. And this Paul had been persecuted.

He had been stoned and left for dead. He'd survived many attacks on his life. And as he's telling this to King Agrippa, he says, but I have had God's help to this very day.

And so I stand here to testify to small and great alike. That's his Ebenezer, his stone of help. And he raised it by a way of testimony before King Agrippa.

[19:03] Thus far, the Lord has helped me. I've had God's help to this very day. So here we are today, the first Sunday of the new year.

Something of another milestone along the way in our journey to heaven. And as we look back over the past year, we have reason to say with Paul. I've had God's help to this very day.

To say with Samuel, thus far has the Lord helped us. I trust that our very presence in worship today, our presence in singing his praises and standing here, sitting here before the Lord.

That this very service is a monument of praise to the help that we have received this past year from our God. Is that why you're here? Are you here to say my God has been faithful in being my helper? Day and night. Every day, all day. My going out, my coming in. Now and what he's been for me, he will be for me forevermore.

[20:13] The reason I'm here this morning and not in some hell hole of sin is because God has been my help. That's why temptations have not swallowed me alive and left me in bondage to some sin this morning.

When the bait of sin started to look good to me and I was about to bite, God showed me the hook. God made a way of escape in one way or another.

When my feet were slipping, he held me by my right hand and he brought me to my senses. He rescued me from enemies too strong for me. And when I did slip and fall, he was there to pick me up and to renew faith and repentance in me.

So that I am still here among God's people today confessing God is my God. The reason the trials of this past year.

And we've had plenty of trials. The reason they have not destroyed my faith or driven me to despair is because the Lord has been my helper.

[21:19] He was my helper. So that you're even able to say it was good for me to be afflicted. So that I might learn your decrees.

Before I was afflicted, I went astray. But now I obey your word. You're far more precious to me now, having gone through those afflictions. The reason I'm not in some ditch of heresy, believing blasphemous things about God.

The reason I've not given up the race. The reason I'm still on the narrow road that leads to heaven. And not a casualty to the world and the flesh and the devil. Is because I've had God's help to this very day.

So we can say with David, unless the Lord had given me help, I would have soon dwelt in the silence of death. I was pushed back and about to fall. But the Lord helped me.

If the Lord had not been on our side when men attacked us, when their anger flared against us, they would have swallowed us alive. The flood would have engulfed us. The torrents would have swept over us.

[22 : 26] The raging waters would have swept us away. What would have happened this past year had God not been our help? If he had withdrawn his help halfway through the year.

July 1 left you to see how you get on the rest of the year together. The Lord had napped or fallen asleep for a day. What a spiritual mess we would be in.

So let's bless God today for being our help this past year. But we can't stay here, can we?

Time doesn't stop for any man. It just marches on. We're already well into a new year, aren't we?

This is the fifth day of a new year. We've got to move on.

And we're moving on into an unknown future. We're into the new year already. One thing is certain.

That in this coming year, you're going to need help many, many times again.

[23 : 28] I wonder if you've noticed how God intentionally puts you in places where you need help. Where you feel, I'm in over my head here. I'm overwhelmed. I don't know what to do in this situation.

I don't have the resources to fulfill all the responsibilities, to fulfill my duties, to know how to act in such a situation. What to say.

God intentionally brings us into such conditions. And it's all part of his schooling to teach us of our need for his help.

To teach us not to rely on ourselves, but to seek and find our help in him. Interpret your troubles this year that way. Oh, this is one of those trials where God is showing me I need him.

That's no small lesson to learn. I found I needed that lesson again this past week. But God puts me in places where I don't know what to say.

[24 : 37] I don't know how to act. I don't know where strength will come from. In order to teach me, John, you need me. You need me. And you need to lean on me.

And so it's the same old lesson. Learning to lean on Jesus. And I dare say you'll have that lesson put before you in this coming year.

More than once. Incertainties of jobs and finances and health and relationships and children's lives. Aging parents.

It all can create worry and fears in our hearts. But God's promised help is meant to squelch our fears. It's meant to put them away.

To enable us to meet the new year with bright confidence. Not fear, but confidence. Why? Because God's our helper. So Isaiah 41.10.

[25 : 33] Do not fear, for I am with you. Do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you. I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

Hear that promise. Cling to it in the coming year. Those who wage war against you will be as nothing at all. For I am the Lord your God, who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, Do not fear.

I will help you. So he takes our hand like a father takes his child's hand. He says, Don't be afraid. I'm here. And I'm here to help you.

So do not be afraid, O worm Jacob, O little Israel. Do you ever feel as small as a worm? Don't be afraid, little worm.

For I myself will help you, declares the Lord your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel. Hebrews 13.6. So we say with confidence. Confidence.

[26 : 35] The Lord is my helper. I will not be afraid. What can man do to me? Where do you get confidence for the new year? You get it from your helper.

And we can say with confidence as we head into a new year, The Lord is my helper. I will not fear. Sennacherib, the king of Assyria, invaded Judah and laid siege to the fortified cities, thinking he was going to conquer them for himself.

And O Hezekiah, king of Judah, looked the situation over with the eyes of faith. And he says, With him is only the arm of flesh, but with us is the Lord our God to help us and to fight our battles. And the people gained confidence from what Hezekiah, the king of Judah, said. A lot of people are heading into a new year with misplaced confidence.

They're trusting in the economy to recover. They're trusting in their job to provide. They're trusting in themselves, their wits. If I do this, then this will happen. All misplaced trust.

[27:47] But here is no misplaced trust. With us is the Lord our God to help us. And because it was such a sure help, the people gained confidence from it.

Would you go home confident this morning that you will find God's help? Look, Psalm 63 has David running from Saul into the desert of Judah.

Saul seeking his life. And David is singing. That's unusual, isn't it? What will cause a man to sing for joy when he's surrounded by troubles and dangers that are seeking his life?

Well, he tells us in verse 7, Psalm 63, 7. Because you are my help, I sing in the shadow of your wing. Because you are my help, I sing in the shadow of your wings.

Why wouldn't we sing? It's safe under here. I'm under his wing. And nothing can touch me, but must first come through him, my help.

[28:51] And as long as he is my help, I am safe under his wing. And I can sing. So will you meet the new year with a song of confidence that this God is my help?

Nothing can touch me without first getting through him. So let the unknown tomorrow bring with it what it may. It will bring nothing too hard for my helper. It can bring nothing but what my helper will work for my good.

It cannot separate me from his love and care. It cannot frustrate his promise or purposes for me.

Happy indeed is the man or woman, boy or girl, who can say that God is my help.

So we're privileged, aren't we? We're very privileged to be able to face the new year with confidence in our helper. But there's a real mystery here.

With such perfect help and hand to bless, you would think we would just seek his help every day and rejoice in it and be confident in it.

[29:59] That the one that made everything is my help. Oh, Lord, I meet you this day again asking for your help today. But it's not always that way, is it? The people who have God as their help are sometimes the ones who don't seek his help.

They leave his help unsought and instead seek help elsewhere. And that's very insane, isn't it?

There is an insanity to our sin. It just doesn't make sense.

The only thing that makes sense is looking to the Lord for our help. But there is that part of us, the flesh, that would rather lean on our own understanding than to trust in our helper.

That would rather roll up our sleeves and just grit your teeth and dive in. Relying on your own mind and your own strength to accomplish the task at hand.

There's something that doesn't like to acknowledge, I am poor and needy and ever so in need of your help. And it's our pride.

[31:04] Pride must die to seek God's help. So we seek help from other helpers, even ourselves.

Men seek help from the stars, from demons, from money, from creatures rather than the creator.

Looking for help in all the wrong places.

And Isaiah addressed that problem in Judah. You remember the mighty army of Assyria was on the move, threatening Judah. And rather than turning to God for help, they ran down to Egypt.

Egypt, whose help is utterly useless. Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help, who rely on horses, who trust in the multitude of their chariots and in the great strength of their horsemen, but do not look to the Holy One of Israel or seek help from the Lord.

They seek help here and here, but not there in Him. But the Egyptians are men and not God. And their horses are flesh and not spirit.

[32:08] So when the Lord stretches out His hand, he who helps will stumble. He who is helped will fall. Both will perish together.

And that's exactly what happened. The king of Assyria did come in judgment. And he led away the Egyptian captive, stripped and barefoot. And here's Isaiah's words.

See what has happened to those we relied on. Those we fled to for help and deliverance from the king of Assyria. How then can we escape? In other words, if the helper cannot even help himself, how can he ever help us?

And so to have sought help in man is to be disappointed at last. It's to lean upon a broken reed. It won't hold any of your weight.

It will pierce you in the end. So where does your help come from? Where do you go in time of need? But not just in time of need.

[33:09] But also in good times. Easy times. You know there are dangers in easy times to lean upon ourselves and think we don't need help. It's not often when things are going smoothly that we somehow are caught up in the lie that I really don't need God.

But I'm going along quite well. I know how to do this job. I know how to handle this. No, we need him. Every day.

I need thee. Oh, I need thee. Every hour I need thee. Oh, bless me now, my Savior. I come to thee. Asa was king of Judah and he did what was good and right in the eyes of the Lord God.

When an enemy nation of Cushites marched out against Judah with a vast army, Asa did not seek help from other nations, but from the Lord. He called on the Lord as God and said, Lord, there's no one like you to help the powerless against the mighty.

Help us, O Lord our God, for we rely on you and in your name we've come against this vast army. O Lord, you are our God. Do not let man prevail against you.

[34:24] And the Lord did help them and struck down the enemy. And we're almost ready to say this is how we need to live. We need to live like Asa lived.

Crying to God to help us in our time of need. But we just continue reading a couple chapters later and we see that in the 39th year of his reign, Asa was afflicted with a disease in his feet.

And though the disease was severe, even in his illness, he did not seek help from the Lord, but only from the physicians. And two years later, he died. So when it was a vast army sweeping into the land that had them outnumbered and outmanned and powered, he sought the Lord with all of his heart.

There's no one like you, God, to help us again, to help the helpless. Help us. But when it was an illness in his feet, he did not seek the Lord, but just called the doctors.

And we say, how foolish of Asa. He should have known by now where his help comes from. But we pause for a moment.

[35:34] We have to confess that we, too, struggle with this Asa syndrome. And we call on the Lord for help in our great needs. And then some Thursday morning, a problem arises with the kids.

And we don't call on the Lord. We call our husband or our wife and we complain about the problem. But we don't call on the Lord. Some problem at work. We need him every hour.

And the help we got yesterday, it's like the manna. We need to gather help again today. It doesn't mean that because God helped me yesterday, I don't need to seek him today for help.

I need the every hour. Let's wake up each day praising God for his help and asking for it. Ask him for those things that you do every day.

Some of them you've done so long that you just don't even need to think about them. Ask God's help. Remember our brother? Some of you men remember meeting in the other room with Pastor Gordon Hawkins as he preached from Psalm 146 about happy are they who have the God of Jacob for our help.

[36:46] And he says, men, Jesus Christ can do your job better than you can. He told us about that jet fighter pilot that he had in his congregation. He told that man, Jesus can fly that plane better than you can.

Ask for his help. May we be daily found asking for the Lord's help in our jobs, in big things and small, to seek his help.

Be like Daniel. Three times a day he was on his knees before his Lord, giving thanks and asking God for help. You wonder why Daniel was able to stand true in the midst of crumbling nations, serving for the Babylonians, the Persians, the Medians.

He's still there and he's still serving God. He's not turned. Three times a day he's asking God for help as well as praising him. We have a place to go in our troubles.

The Lord Jesus is now enthroned in heaven. He's been here. He's been tried in every way just as we are. So he's able to sympathize with us in our need. Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

[38:02] So, he says, let us approach the throne of grace with confidence. There's that word again. Why confidence? So that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of

need.

There's help for you in Jesus Christ. He sits on a throne that rules the universe. And from that throne, he dispenses grace to help us in our time of need.

You can read through all four Gospels and you will never find a time when someone came to Jesus asking for help and he turned them away. But what you'll find is some poor lady had a problem with her child and she came to Jesus and she just said, help Jesus.

And this man with his blindness and this woman and they came and they said, help. And never were they turned away.

He delights to have you come to him seeking help. What more could we want than such a helper who delights to help us?

[39:11] Let him be the first one you run to in your time of need. The moment any worry arises in your mind, the moment you start to feel your stomach tightening up, run.

Run to him in the face of any need of any size. Right then, look to Jesus for help. You know, Satan wants to keep us away from Jesus. So he'll have you just looking at the problem or looking inside or looking over here.

He doesn't want you looking to Jesus. Get to Jesus. Jesus. That's where our helper is. He is our helper. And that's where our help comes from. How gracious he will be when you cry for help.

As soon as he hears, he will answer you. Isaiah 30, 19. What a gracious helper. As soon as he hears those words. Help. He will answer you.

Help is only a prayer away. Happy is he who has the God of Jacob for his help. If you're lost this morning, Jesus is not your helper.

[40:19] It's just the plain facts of the matter. You're still leaning on yourself. You're not leaning on Jesus. Jesus. And you know what we see in this world is that men and women, boys and girls, may help themselves through the troubles in this life.

It is amazing the resilience of fallen human nature. To hit what we think ought to be bottom. And yet to find within themselves strength to scrape themselves up and to go on another day.

We say, surely now they'll look to the Lord for help. But no, no. There is still this resilience to look to self. To look to another. But not to look to God.

And yes, there is this strength that people are able to get through life without trusting in Christ for help. But there is a day coming.

When you will find the help of man is worthless. Psalm 60. A trial so severe that no arm of the flesh will be of any assistance whatsoever.

[41:30] The Lord puts the question this way in Isaiah 10. What will you do on the day of reckoning? When disaster comes from afar, to whom will you run for help?

You see his question? You're making it somehow on your own. But what are you going to do on the day of reckoning? Where will you find help when I come to judge?

When he comes to punish sin. When death drags you to the judgment seat of Christ. All of your self-help religion will do you no good then. All of your friends can do nothing for you.

Your wealth is worthless in the day of wrath. The only thing that can help you then is the Lord Jesus Christ. But if you haven't sought him and found him as a helper today, here and now, he will not be your helper then.

He answers to the call of anyone now. But if you come to the day of judgment, it will be too late to call for help.

[42:36] And so seek the Lord while he may be found. You see, the kind of help you need was hanging on a cross outside Jerusalem. It's the help of the Son of God dying in the place of sinners, taking the punishment and enduring the wrath of God that sinners deserve.

And then rising from the dead, triumphant over sin and death and hell and right. And now is mighty to save all who come unto God through him. He's a great helper.

No other help will do. None but Jesus can do helpless sinners good. But he can. And he does. And there's a whole chorus of them here this morning to sing his praises.

Call on him now and know the blessedness, the happiness of his saving help. And of facing every day, the rest of your life, with the Lord as your helper.

And facing the day of death with the Lord as your helper. Facing the day of judgment. On the hand. On the arm of Jesus. What a Savior.

[43 : 46] Let's pray. Who are we, O Lord, that we should have you as our helper? We who had turned our backs against you and gone our own way, happy to be without you, happy to live without you.

How gracious you have been to us to seek and to save us when we were wandering sheep. Thank you for the greatest help at Calvary.

In dying for us and suffering the punishment we deserved. Thank you for all the ways that you have helped us in this past year. we gather as your people, as a body of Christ, and we remember all the prayer requests of this year, all the broken hearts, the temptations, the trials, the tests, the needs, and how we spread them before you.

And we confess in your presence that you have been our help. We thank you for the way you have sustained the life that you've given, the life of faith, the life of repentance in our hearts, so that we're still found in the way.

We thank you that you stand ready to help us each day of this coming year. But Lord, we are so needy that we need you to help us to seek your help.

[45 : 08] So please remind us often that you made us as dependent creatures who were not created to operate on our own, but were made to know you and to experience your help.

And so we give you our thanks. We would raise our Ebenezer and declare together as a congregation that by your help we've come this far. And on your help we will be confident for the coming year.

We pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.