

Take Heart! The Lord Can Do Amazing Things

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[0:00] Many of you have heard of Jerry Bridges. Many of you maybe have even met him. When Jerry was 14 years old, his mother died suddenly.

! He rushed in out of an adjoining room just in time to see her gasp her last breath. Imagine that. He was devastated and he said, My dad was too stricken with grief himself to be any help to me. Worst of all, I did not know how to turn to God in times of trouble.

I was alone in my adversity. That was not the first time adversity struck in my life, and it's certainly not to be the last. He tells that story in the book, *Trusting God, Even When Life Hurts*.

And he begins that book with a question, and it's the same question that we're going to begin the sermon with. Can you trust God? Can you trust God?

[1:03] He writes, The question itself has two possible meanings. Can you trust God? In other words, is he dependable in times of adversity?

But the second meaning is also critical. Can you trust God? Do you have such a relationship with God and such a confidence in him that you believe he is with you in your adversity, even though you do not see any evidence of his presence and his power?

So this morning, we're going to look at Psalm 125. And ask these two questions.

Can you trust God? And can you trust God? Psalm 125 is a song of ascent.

We've been going through the songs of ascent in these afternoon fellowship luncheon times together. And we've seen that these are pilgrim psalms.

[2:07] They're songs sung by pilgrims as they made their way up to Jerusalem three times every year. And so these psalms have a pilgrim motif.

They start far away, far away in some foreign land almost. And by the end, as you make your way through the entire psalms, these songs of ascent, you end up in the temple worshiping God day and night.

It's the story, isn't it, of the Christian life. You start far away. And by the end, we will worship God day and night.

There is actually no night for God is the sun. But so today we're going to come to Psalm 125. Listen as I read the word of God. Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion, which cannot be shaken, but endures forever.

As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the Lord surrounds his people both now and forevermore. The scepter of the wicked will not remain over the land allotted to the righteous.

[3:18] For then the righteous might use their hands to do evil. Do good, O Lord, to those who are good, to those who are upright in heart.

But those who turn to crooked ways, the Lord will banish with the evildoers. Peace be upon Israel. So can you trust God?

That's what the psalm is about. Verse 1. Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion. So can you trust God? Psalm 125 says the answer is yes.

Believers, the answer is yes. You have not put your trust in the Lord in vain. And unbelievers, if you put your trust in the Lord, it will not be in vain.

Because you can trust him because he is immovable. He himself is immovable. Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion, who cannot be shaken, but endures forever.

[4:19] Jerusalem, the city, was built on Mount Zion, the mountain. And so Jerusalem was also called Mount Zion. And so Mount Zion, the mountain, is a rock, is a solid rock that cannot be shaken, that cannot be moved, it cannot be washed away, it can't be pushed aside, it can't be undermined.

There's nothing that a human power can do to shake the rock that Jerusalem sits on. And so Jerusalem itself, the city, is unshakable, immovable.

If you rest on something that is immovable, you yourself become immovable. So if you trust in the Lord, you can't be shaken. Why?

Well, not because you are so strong. The psalm is not a testimony to our strength, for those who trust in the Lord. It's because God holds you. He's an immovable rock underneath you.

He upholds you. He is as strong and as enduring and as dependable as the mountain that Jerusalem rests upon. And so faith drills down past the sands of this world and the false hopes, and it anchors itself to the rock.

[5 : 39] And the Lord is our rock and our Redeemer, isn't he? So he doesn't change. He's forever secure. He's forever sovereign. No one can shake his throne.

Nothing threatens his kingdom. Nothing undermines his authority. There's no chance. There's no need for him to change. We change because circumstances we don't see. You know, circumstances change.

We have to change our minds. We have to change our ideas. We have to change our plans. But the Lord knows the end from the beginning because he decrees it. And so he is secure.

He does not change. He's solid, dependable. And so I don't need to flail about. Believer, you don't need to flail about. There's never a time in your life when you should be desperate, so desperate, if the Lord is your rock.

Now, we can be desperate for the Lord. That's one thing. But just to be desperate, period, is not something that an unbeliever or a believer should be because trusting God gives us that stability.

[6 : 47] I don't need to flail about because God is my rock. James talks about the doubter. You remember what he says. He who doubts is like a wave of the sea.

Blown and tossed by the wind. He's a double-minded man, going this way and that. Unstable in all he does. Yes, but stayed upon Jehovah, hearts are fully blessed, finding in him the promised peace and rest.

Peace and rest. So what kind of person are you? Tossed back and forth, flailing about, always thrashing around, trying to patch up the holes of your shaky boat?

Or is your life solid? Solid. The waves crash into you, but you aren't moved. You're staying the course because you are a pillar anchored to the granite rock of the Lord.

And he is immovable, and so he makes you strong. You're not a piece of styrofoam tossing back and forth on the sea. Whoever trusts in the Lord cannot be shaken.

[7 : 58] So can you trust God? Yes, because he himself is immovable, and he is able to make us to stand. So believer, can you trust God? The second answer is yes, because he is around you.

He surrounds you. As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the Lord surrounds his people both now and forevermore. Geographically, the mountains surround the city of Jerusalem.

And the mountains protected the city against capture. And they protected the city against the desert winds. And so, brothers and sisters, that's who God is for you.

That's nothing new, but it's something that you need to hear again. That is who God is for you.

Genesis 15, we saw this last week. God said to Abraham, Abraham, do not be afraid.

I am your shield. I stand between you and whatever would try to hurt you. The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him. We saw that verse last week, too.

[9 : 05] Every single Christian has a personal bodyguard. And it's the Lord himself. He encamps around his people. Zechariah 2.5, God speaks to Jerusalem.

And he says, I myself will be a wall of fire around it. That's a good wall, isn't it? A wall of fire around it.

And I will be its glory within. And so the Lord is a wall of fire around you. As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the Lord surrounds you. Can you trust God? God, we're in all sorts of circumstances. You're a mixed crowd and you're facing different things and different problems and different degrees of problems. And the question is, can you trust God? And the answer is yes, because he's around you.

He's watching you. He's always there. He protects you day and night. Every difficulty, every hard thing, big or small, it must come through him before it can come to you.

[10 : 06] And he says, I will work all things together for the good of those who love me and are called according to my purpose. So can you can you trust God? Yes.

He promises that not a hair of your head will perish. Not a hair of your head will perish. It might hurt. Things might hurt you and they do hurt. But not a hair of your head will perish. Not the least bit of you will suffer everlasting harm because I surround you.

So don't be afraid for next week. Don't be afraid for tomorrow. Don't be afraid for what's going to be 15 years from now for me and my family. The Lord is around around you.

He will cover you with his feathers. He will cover you with his feathers. Under his wings, you will find refuge. His faithfulness will be your shield and rampart.

[11:07] You will not fear the terror of night or the arrow that flies by day, nor the pestilence that stalks in the darkness, nor the plague that destroys at midday. A thousand may fall at your side.

A thousand may fall at your side. Ten thousand at your right hand. But it will not come near you. Why is that promise true? Because the Lord surrounds us.

So God is immovable under you. God is around you. And then finally, God is is for you. That's the rest of Psalm 125. Can you trust God? The answer is yes, because he means to do you good.

If a person is wishy-washy and sometimes they mean to do you harm, you could never trust them. But God delights in the well-being of his servants. He loves you and he delights to do you good.

And so he is for you. And so you can trust him. And he shows that by not letting you be tempted beyond what you can bear. That's a mercy from God.

[12:08] He understands you. Look at verse three. The scepter of the wicked will not remain over the righteous. Why does God have the wicked and their rule on a timeline? And he's going to have a day where he says this far and no further, this long and no longer, because they might turn their hands to do evil.

The temptation, the power, the oppression might be so much that we could not we could not handle it. And so God knows you. He knows your weakness.

God doesn't lay traps for your feet to watch you fall. He understands that you have a difficult time walking. He understands the power that you face.

And he knows that under extreme pressure, we can break. We like to think that we can stand under anything. We like to think that we're Peter before the trial comes.

And we say, no matter who, what these guys do, I'll be with you. And then a little girl comes, a little girl, and says, weren't you with him? And down Peter goes.

[13:18] God knows that about us. And so he says, I will cut short the rule of the wicked. They won't rule forever. God is for you. He's for you in judgment.

Lurking behind this psalm all along is the idea of judgment. And dear brothers and sisters, because of Jesus Christ, that coming judgment is good news.

It's good news for you. The judgment day is our day of deliverance. And so we are immovable, this verse says, but there is coming an earthquake where God will banish the wicked.

Hebrews 12, 26. Once more, I will shake not only the earth, but also the heavens. And the words once more indicate the removing of what can be shaken. That is created things so that what cannot be shaken may remain.

So a great earthquake is coming. The book of Revelation four times says a catastrophic, a severe earthquake will hit this entire world.

[14:28] I don't know if that's to be taken literally, but it's the judgment of God. We even sang it. What happened when Jesus died? Under the judgment of God, the earth shook.

And there is coming a great earthquake that will shake everything. It will take everything and shake it. And so only that which is immovable will remain.

And on that day, the wrath and the glory of Jesus will be so great that his enemies will be banished from before him.

And on that great day, that great earthquake, only what is unshakable will remain. And what is unshakable? Verse one, those who trust in the Lord.

And so, brothers and sisters, this is amazing. On the day of God's wrath, because of the grace of the Lord Jesus, we will stand. That's amazing.

[15:31] We will stand. And so we will lift up our heads and we will see our Redeemer and we will be filled with joy as we become like him. And the wicked will be gone, banished with the evildoers.

And so in the day of judgment, God will be for you. He will save you from all of your enemies, your sin, death, Satan, this world.

Everything shakable will be shaken right out of this world, put into hell. And this earth will become the home of the righteous. So can you trust God? Yes.

He's a rock immovable. And that makes you strong. He surrounds his people like the mountains surround Jerusalem. And he is for you and he will give you peace. Peace now and peace forever and ever.

And now the second question. Can you trust God? Young and old, you have seen trouble. You've seen trouble.

[16:35] And young or old, you're going to see more. As the sparks fly upward, that's what Job says. Man is born to trouble as surely as the sparks fly upward.

Trouble is your lot. It's your destiny. It's what God has planned for this world and for you. And so the question is, can you trust God in that trouble?

Do you have that kind of relationship with him? Where you know he's for you. Where you know that he will uphold you and surround you and protect you.

Do you know what it is to rest your head on his shoulder? Rest your cares in his hands. Is the name of the Lord your strong tower? That you run into.

And you're saved. You'll never be able to have that kind of relationship. Until your sins are dealt with. Your sins separate you from God.

[17:31] You can't have that kind of relationship with your sins between you and him. God is a righteous judge. And he's angry with the wicked every day.

And so that anger must be dealt with. Those sins must be dealt with. And you'll never be able to trust him.

To do you good. Until you've made peace with him through Jesus Christ. Until you've come to God through him. Jesus died to make peace between God and man.

And we come to enjoy that peace as we come to give and give ourselves to Christ. We turn away from our sins. We turn away from our disobedience.

And we give ourselves to Jesus. And then he makes peace between us personally and himself. And then we will know what it is to be able to trust in the Lord.

[18:31] And to not be shaken. Let's pray. Amen. Heavenly Father. Your word is for our good.

Your word. You know what we need to hear. So Holy Spirit. I pray that you would take these things and apply them to us. Give us faith to believe them.

To rest in who you are. Oh Lord God Almighty. Thank you that you are our refuge. And our strength. That we have no reason to fear. For you are with us.

And not a hair of our head. Our heads will be lost and damaged. We will be completely protected even though we die. Because Jesus.

The righteous has lived and died. And has been raised from the dead. And he lives for us. And he is able to save us completely. So I pray that we would trust in the Lord.

[19:31] And in his mighty arm. And his salvation. And may that solid rock. Be the path that we walk on.

This week. Day in and day out. Morning and afternoon and evening. To trust in the Lord. Who is our rock and our redeemer.

We pray these things in Jesus name. Amen.