

The Choice We All Face

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Date: 25 April 2010

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[0:00] Take your Bibles and turn in them to Psalm 63. Psalm 63. This is the psalm of David when he was in the desert of Judah.

! Psalm 63. Psalm 63. This is the psalm of David when he was in the desert of Judah. Psalm 63. Psalm 63. O God, You are my God. Earnestly I seek You. My soul thirsts for You. My body longs for You. In a dry and weary land where there is no water. I have seen You in the sanctuary and beheld Your power and Your glory.

Because Your love is better than life, my lips will glorify You. I will praise You as long as I live, and in Your name I will lift up my hands. My soul will be satisfied as with the richest of foods.

With singing lips my mouth will praise You. On my bed I remember You. I think of You through the watches of the night because You are my help. I sing in the shadow of Your wings. My soul clings to You.

Your right hand upholds me. They who seek my life will be destroyed. They will go down to the depths of the earth. They will be given over to the sword and become food for jackals. But the King will rejoice in God. All who swear by God's name will praise Him, while the mouths of liars will be silenced.

[1:30] Amen. Please turn again in your Bibles to Psalm 63 or keep them open there. I want to thank you for your prayers for us as we went to South Carolina and participated in the Arbka General Assembly there. As our brother said, it was a blessed time, an encouraging time, a refreshing time, and was thankful to be able to have my family with me there. And I just want to thank you all for your prayers for us.

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood, and sorry I could not travel both, and be one traveler long I stood and looked down one as far as I could to where it bent in the undergrowth. So begins perhaps one of the best known poems ever written, The Road Not Taken by Robert Frost. Some of you knew it as soon as I said two roads diverged in a yellow wood. And that poem sets before the reader, and I would encourage you to read it. You can find it online. Just search for The Road Not Taken. But it sets before the reader the daily choices that we face. We often come, if not to a literal fork in the road, to two choices that are set before us. And we look at those choices, and we weigh their respective merits, and we make a decision. And many of our choices are made in a split second without time to recite a poem, or to even think about it. The alarm goes off, and we make the decision to either hit the snooze button, or to bound out of bed, bright-eyed, bushy-tailed, and ready for the day. It's a choice that you make when the alarm goes off, without even thinking about it. We have the choice to either walk by our Bible in the morning once we're up, or to take some time to listen to God speak.

We decide whether we'll have a cheerful attitude at work, or school, or if we'll let our sinful heart air its lousy attitude that day. Some choices aren't so spur of the moment we spend time over them. Even if it's just a brief period of time. You didn't get a good night's rest last night, and the kids are crazy this morning. And all of a sudden, you begin thinking, maybe it would be easier to not go to church this morning. And you start to weigh the two options, not going and going, and you hymn and you haw, and you go back and forth, and you think about the consequences of each of those choices, and you make a decision. Or maybe you're a high school senior thinking about going to college, and you narrow it down to two schools, and you consider the pros and the cons of each one, and you make a choice. Well, in Psalm 63, in verse 3, David has already made a choice. And he's praising God because of it. And we want to think about that choice today. A choice that all of us face. What the results of that choice will be. And to ask ourselves, which will you choose, or which have you chosen? But Psalm 63, verse 3 says, because your love is better than life, my lips will glorify you. Because your love is better than life, my lips will glorify, will praise, will commend

you. And the choice that we all face, that we want to think about, that's set before us here, is the one between life and God's love. Now, if we were just to say off the top of your head what the opposite of life would be, what the other choice would be, you would say death. And we would all choose life over death. And it may sound strange this morning to talk about choosing life not being a good thing. But don't misunderstand. We're not comparing it to death. We're comparing it to God's love. And David's stance here is clear. God's love is better than life. And that's a helpful comparison for us. When we think about evaluating various circumstances and situations and making a choice, we should remember always that God's love is better than life. And scriptures are full of such helpful comparisons. To obey is better than sacrifice. One day in God's courts is better than a thousand anywhere else. Wisdom is better than silver and jewels. To be able to control one's spirit is better than to be a mighty man who can take a city. And we can tell by a person's actions, by the way they spend their time and their money, by the things that they speak about, which are more important to them. Sometimes you can tell by their face. You might be able to look around and tell that there's someone here this morning. Don't look around. But you might be able to tell that there's someone here who's not convinced that one day in God's house is better than a thousand anywhere else. You might be able to tell what choice they've made on that score already. If someone looked at your life, which would they find that you're convinced of is better? God's love or life itself?

[6:37] Let's talk about life for a moment. And let's talk about just physical life. The fact that you are here today and breathing. Our psalmist tells us, David tells us, God tells us that it's better to die knowing that God's love rests upon you than to go on living without it. Matthew Henry says it this way, it is better a thousand times to die in God's favor than to live under his wrath. And you just heard a quote from Francis Ridley Havergall. If I'm really going, it's too good to be true. Because to her, God's love was better than life. And so life certainly includes the most basic definition of breath in our lungs. The opposite of being dead. Do you believe that today? That God's love is better than being alive. You see, men will do all sorts of things to preserve their physical life and well-being.

And rightly so in many respects. We are to value life. We are to work to preserve it. We must oppose the unjust taking of it, whether born or unborn. This verse is not a statement about the unimportance of life.

But many people sink their efforts and time and energy in this life into preserving this life. Their physical well-being because they are uncertain of what comes when this life is over. Or they fear what comes when this life is over. And so they don't want it to end. And so they will invest in the very best of doctors and health insurance and medicine and crash safety ratings on their cars to extend their physical life to do whatever it takes to preserve it. And if this life is all there is for you, then that makes sense. You wouldn't do anything to preserve it.

I think David has even more in mind here than just physical life. David shows in his words and in his life that he believes God's love is better than everything this life has to offer. All of its comforts and pleasures and power and popularity. And he says as much in verse 5, my soul will be satisfied as with the richest of foods. With singing lips, my mouth will praise you. It's not that he has the richest of foods and that's what his soul is satisfied with. His soul is satisfied with God's love as though he had the very best of what life has to offer. It's not that he has that rich food and he's satisfied.

[9:12] He doesn't have it. And so this is everything that mankind expends their energy on under the sun. It's the laying up of treasure on earth. It's the small, selfish pursuit of everything that makes me happy. Choosing what will bring me pleasure. It's living for that small kingdom that we heard about in our Sunday school class in the past months. Whatever will make me satisfied when we could be living for so much more. You see, as David writes the psalm, he's living without all of that. He doesn't have all of the pleasures that life has to offer. You see that it's a psalm of David when he was in the desert of Judah. And in the psalm he talks about being king. And so this isn't when Saul's chasing him before he's king. This is when Absalom, his son, has staged a coup and is trying to take over the kingdom.

And David doesn't have a comfortable palace and he doesn't have a comfortable bed and he doesn't have rich food and he doesn't have any power right now. He certainly doesn't have any popularity. He's got a small band of guys around him that are faithful to him. But other than that, the kingdom is running after Absalom. David doesn't have a really good life right now.

He has very little. But that's okay. He has something far better. And so the choice is between God's love and life. And David will take God's love any day over a good life here. But let's talk about why

it's such a better choice to choose God's love.

Let's see what he's talking about when he speaks of that love. Your love, God, is better than life.

The word love isn't just an ordinary garden variety Hebrew word for love. It's chesed.

And you should learn to say that. Chesed. And it's a good word. And I'm probably going to use it.

And I'm going to tell you what it means, but it's a good Hebrew word. Our brother Jason's taught us a little about chavell and futility and meaningless. And we've learned that Hebrew. We're learning another one today if you haven't already. Chesed. It's more than just love. Sometimes the NIV will translate it mercy and sometimes love. The New American Standard, King James, usually give us loving kindness for that word. The ESV translates it steadfast love, which picks up on an element that's not seen simply in the word love necessarily. Steadfast, faithful. And when this word is used about God, it's something that God has for his people. It's used to describe his loving faithfulness to his covenant promises to his people. Covenant love, faithful love, covenant faithfulness. I'm going to call it all sorts of things as we go through this message. But understand that it's more than just love. Here's something of the breadth and significance of this little Hebrew word. Micah 7 in verse 20.

[12:06] You will be true to Jacob and show mercy. That's our word. Show mercy. Chesed to Abraham as you pledged on oath to our fathers in days long ago. You hear that idea of faithfulness and loyalty. Things had been pledged to Abraham long ago and God was true to it. He showed that mercy, that faithfulness that he had promised. Psalm 36 in verse 5 helps us. It puts it in parallel with faithfulness. Your love, that's our word, your love, O Lord, reaches to the heavens. Your faithfulness reaches to the skies. It's God's loving faithfulness. It's used together with the word covenant. God keeps his covenant and his love, his faithfulness to his people. Deuteronomy and the NIV translates that covenant of love. It happens seven different places. God keeps his covenant and love. Know therefore that the Lord your God is God.

He is the faithful God keeping his covenant of love or his covenant and his love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commands. It's something that God isn't going to let go of. He's not going to love you one day and not the next. His love is faithful. It's sure.

It's consistent. It is merciful. And you remember Psalm 136 where the refrain is repeated in every verse. His love endures forever. That's our word. His chesed, his faithful love endures forever. And that's why it's better than life. This life is like a vapor. It's gone in a moment. Not so God's love. It is forever.

It's enduring. It's lasting. It will not fail you. But let's not leave the word out in the abstract world of defining it in definition. Let's demonstrate it. I want you to see what it means for God's people that he shows them faithful love. Just in this psalm alone, David is confessing God's faithfulness to him, even though he's not on the throne. The throne has been wrenched out of his hands and David is still singing God's faithfulness. And so he's thirsting after God, verse 1, because he knows he'll be faithful. He's seen glimpses of his glory and power in the sanctuary before and so he remembers that, verse 2. And he's confident that God's faithful love is better than life here in verse 3, which is cause for praise.

And he's satisfied so that he doesn't need rich food. And in verse 5, and the faithful God gives him peace at night, even though life is in an uproar around him. Verse 6, and he clings to God who upholds him. Verse 8, he doesn't even need to fear his enemies. Now, if God had not shown his covenant faithfulness this point to David, I don't think we'd see David's confidence in his trial. But this is what God's faithful love has done for David and it should for us. Has God ever abandoned you yet? Has he failed to show his love to you yet?

[15:01] Then right now, in the midst of your trial, maybe you read the heading to this psalm and you go, I'm in the desert. I'm in the desert like David was. My own children have turned against me. I've lost all that I had. I have nothing. And even in that trial, can you come to God and say, your love, your faithfulness, oh God, is better to me than life itself.

That's what it did for David. It should do it for us. Think for a moment with me about everything in Scripture that's explicitly connected with God's loving faithfulness.

With this word, chesed. I could give you a reference for each of these. I got them in my notes. I'm not going to take the time to do that. If you want them, I'd be happy to share them with you. But just listen to a list of what's explicitly tied to God's love.

It's because God is a loving, faithful, covenant-keeping God that we have forgiveness. Without His loving faithfulness, no forgiveness. It's because of that we have entrance into His presence, that we have hope, salvation, redemption, protection, provision, answered prayer, deliverance in general,

deliverance from Sheol and the grave in particular.

Because God is lovingly faithful. Because God is lovingly faithful, we have support and comfort and great wonders are done. Out of God's faithful love, He created the world. Because of His faithfulness, He delivered the people of Israel out of Egypt, the great exodus, and guided them through the wilderness and gave them the promised land.

[16:30] These are all expressions of God's faithful love. See how rich the Word is. And many of these connections are made in prayers. God's faithful love is the ground for asking Him for these things.

Like in Psalm 6 and verse 4, Turn, O Lord, and deliver me. Save me. He's asking for deliverance, for salvation. And what does He base His prayer upon? Because of Your unfailing love.

Because of Your chesed, Your faithfulness, Your mercy. Because of that, because You are this, give me salvation. Give me forgiveness. Give me help. It's because God is this way that we can turn to Him in prayer for salvation in any other need that we have.

Do you ever pray that way? Do you ever bring and make your case before God? Or do you just say, save me, Lord. Deliver me, Lord. And stop there. Or do you go on?

Do you give Him a reason to do that? Lord, here's why. It's because You're faithful. It's because of what You have promised to me that I want You to come and deliver me and save me.

[17:33] Pray that way. That's the way David prays. That's the way the psalmists are laid out for us. And so we should pray that way. Micah 7.18 Who is a God like you?

Who pardons sins and forgives the transgression of the remnant of His inheritance. You do not stay angry forever, but delight to show mercy.

And even, we could better translate it, you do not stay angry forever because you delight to show mercy. And that's our word, mercy.

Loving. Chesed. Because God has this, He forgives us. He shows His mercy. No wonder David can say, and we should join him in saying, that your loving faithfulness is better than life.

And we should pause here for a moment to think about our Savior, Jesus. Because it's in Him that God's love finds its clearest demonstration.

[18:33] Christ is the fulfillment of all of God's covenant promises to His people to save them, to send a Redeemer. And so Romans 5.8 But God demonstrates His own love for us in this, why we were still sinners.

Christ died for us. Christ is the demonstration of God's love and faithfulness. It's because of Him and what He's so faithfully done for us at the cross that we can enjoy forgiveness and support and strength and deliverance and protection and provision.

He purchased it for us. And we remember that Romans 8.39 says, Nothing will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

If that's not faithful, enduring love, I don't know what is. Nothing can separate you from it. And its clearest demonstration to us is in Christ. And so through Him, the Son of God, God's faithful love means that we have life and much more.

You see, the world chooses life. And they aim for this life and for all it offers. And for a brief period of time, they get it. But we cling to God's love.

[19:42] And we get life in this world. And we get abundant life in this world. And much more than that. It's good for us to enjoy the good things that God offers and gives us in this world. Friends and laughter and good food.

And a warm and soft bed to sleep in at night. And the legitimate pleasures that God has given.

These things are created by Him and they are to be received by us with thanksgiving. The problem comes when that's all our perspective allows us to see.

When we view the things of this world as the be-all and end-all of our existence. No, we have much more than that. When God's love is ours, it means that we have this life.

And in addition to that, all of these things that we've just seen that are connected with His love. So yes, you can enjoy the good things, the legitimate good things this life has to offer.

But then, a super abundance more of forgiveness and welcome into God's presence and deliverance and trouble. God's love is better than just what this world has to offer.

[20:48] And so we have the privilege of living a life of love. And faithfulness and service to the one who has been so faithful and loving to us. Imperfectly, we do that. And now in this world, in one day when we see Him face to face, we'll do it perfectly.

One obvious way that God's love is better than life is eternal life. If this life comes to an end, our life goes on in the presence of God for eternity.

And isn't that the testimony of every martyr who has ever given his life for the Gospel? God's love is better than life. I'm willing to give up my life here because I know there's something better waiting for.

Because I have the love of God. You can take my life, but you can't take away God's love. Amen. And so we have forgiveness of sins and therefore peace.

We have support and comfort as we face the difficulties that are sure to come. God's love doesn't mean you won't face trial in this life. We have the loving Heavenly Father always doing what is best for us.

[21 : 51] The omnipotent God working for us so that we need not fear. Have you tasted of God's faithful love? Do you know what I'm talking about this morning? Or does all of this sound foreign to you and strange?

Odd that there could be something more than the pleasures that this world has to offer? Child of God, you experience it every day. In the forgiveness of sins. And the grace to respond rightly when you're provoked by your co-worker.

You experience it in the manifold blessings that come to you undeserved. We experience God's loving faithfulness in the sunrise each morning. In the sunset each night. It came up this morning, didn't it?

It's an expression of His loving faithfulness. You experience it when you taste the food on your table that God has again provided. It's yours in the safe travel that you enjoyed to worship this morning. Do you see all of these things in many more as expressions of God's unfailing love to you? This is the choice that we all face.

[22 : 59] There's God's love or there's life. We know what David chose. He says, your faithfulness, God, is better than life itself. But let's think now for a few moments about the possible results of this choice.

What will happen if you pursue life and disregard God's love? And what will happen if you pursue God's love? And that is what you want most from Him. When we make a choice, there's always consequences.

Robert Frost, when he approached the road that diverged in the woods, feared that he would never get back to be able to take the other road. The other branch of the past. He says, yet knowing how way leads on to way, I doubted if I should ever come back.

There's consequences when you make a choice. When you hit the snooze button, instead of getting out of bed, you're guaranteeing a more rushed morning, which increases the likelihood that you'll walk right past your Bible and out into the day without the lamp to the feet and the light that you so desperately need to shine upon your path that day.

Your choices have consequences. And that's true here. Should you choose life or the faithful love of God? The results of choosing life, this life, they're not spelled out in this verse or even in the psalm, but we see it throughout the Scriptures.

[24 : 15] Consider just one example from Psalm 73. You can turn there. The psalm of Asaph. At first glance, looking around at the world and people pursuing life, we might be tempted to make that same choice.

Because it looks like things are going pretty well for people that live for this life. And that's what Asaph saw. Look at verses 3-5. Speaking about when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

They have no struggles. Their bodies are healthy and strong. They are free from the burdens common to man. They are not plagued by human ills. Consequences don't look too bad for the people that pursue this life.

Looks pretty good, actually. They live it up. And they enjoy. All life has to offer. Legitimate and illegitimate. Not a bad way to live. But don't forget that this isn't where Asaph stops, and neither should we.

Skip down to verses 16-19. When I tried to understand all this, it was oppressive to me. Till I entered the sanctuary of God.

[25 : 21] Then I understood their final destiny. These people that have pursued life. Their final destiny. Surely you placed them on slippery ground. You cast them down to ruin. How suddenly are they destroyed?

Completely swept away by terrors. As a dream, when one awakes, so when you arise, O Lord, you will despise them as fantasies. Look at verse 27.

Those who are far from you will perish. You destroy all who are unfaithful to you. In reality, this is what happens to those who choose life over God's love.

Things seem okay, but they're actually pursuing temporary life here and embracing eternal death.

For all of eternity. If you choose to pursue all that this life has to offer, if that's the path that you're on right now at this moment, maybe you're a young person, maybe you're an old person, maybe you're somewhere in between, it doesn't really matter.

If you're choosing to pursue this life and everything that it has to offer instead of God's love, you are on a path to destruction. You're rejecting God and His grace, and you may have a few moments of pleasure here, but they will be just that.

[26:39] They will be few, and they will be momentary. Because when you die, you can't take any of this world with you, and so all of the popularity that you've worked so hard to accumulate for yourself, your nice retirement account, your house, all of that stays here when you die.

And you'll go to an eternity of suffering and torment reserved for those who have rejected God. As the psalmist says here, terrors will sweep you away. It's vivid language, isn't it? It doesn't just say you're going to die.

It says terrors will sweep you away. It won't be a calm, a peaceful death. It will be an anguished one, a tormented one. One where if your conscience, as you're dying, knowing that your life is drawing to an end, you'll be tormented by terrors sweeping you to an eternity apart from Christ.

That's the result of choosing this life and not the love of God. But listen to the alternative and run to Christ and beg God to show you His love.

Should you choose the love of God, you'll get all of the things that we've just said are connected in the Scriptures with God's covenant, love, and faithfulness. Salvation will be yours. The forgiveness of your sins, support and trouble, hope, deliverance, protection, provision, answered prayer, entrance into God's presence, eternal life, all of these through Christ.

[28:04] But it will produce a different kind of fruit as well. If we've experienced this love of God, we'll not live for the life this world offers. It won't hold the attraction that it once did.

We'll live for the God who has shown us such love. We'll be eager to, as David puts it, praise Him with our lips. My lips will praise you. That'll be your response, your reaction, should you choose God's love.

And beg Him to show it to you. And if you ask, He will. All who come to Him, none will be cast away. You ask Him to show you that love, and He will. And as He does, your lips will praise Him.

Will glorify Him. It's not really the typical word for either glorify or praise. It can be used in both of those senses. It also has the meaning of commend. Like in Psalm 145.4, one generation will commend, will praise, will glorify your works to another.

They will tell of your mighty acts. And I believe that praising God, like we've gathered to do here today, will also involve commending Him to others. Telling of what He has done for us.

[29:09] Of course, we talk about what we love. We talk about what we care about. It's natural for us to speak about what is in our hearts. And as you read through the Psalms, you'll find that David's exclamation here, my lips will praise you, will glorify you, isn't just a promise that's made in the heat of the trial.

Lord, get me out of the trial and I'll praise you. No, when the trials subside, we see David is still praising God. He's still telling people in the sanctuary of what God has done for him.

The pattern of David's life was one of praise to God in good times and bad. And that comes from a heart that's experienced something of the fullness of God's love and faithfulness.

And so what is most often on your lips? What are your lips reflecting that's in your heart? The choice that you've made?

God's love or this life? It'll be pretty clear by the things that you say. If you're pursuing God's love, then you'll love to praise Him. You'll love to talk about it. But if you're pursuing this world, that's what you'll talk about.

[30:11] You'll talk about your life and your house and your car and the game this weekend. There's nothing wrong with any of those things. Or even talking about them. But what's most important to you?

What are you most delight to speak of? Is the praise of God on your lips. If God's love is precious to you, you'll praise Him. You'll talk about His love.

You'll tell others how that faithful love has been shown to you. You'll seek them out to see how God's love has been shown to them. And you'll see people who are sinking their time and effort and money and energy into this life with reckless abandon because that's all they think there is.

And you'll have pity on them. And your heart will run out to them. And you won't let them just go on unimpeded. You'll step into their path and lovingly and gently and kindly tell them that there's something better.

There's something better than everything that they're sinking their teeth into in this world. It's not found in all the pleasures that the world has to offer. If you love God, you'll want to tell other people that they can love Him too.

[31 : 19] And that God will love them. And that it's far better than what they're pursuing. You'll be so concerned for their eternal well-being that you'll commend God to them. Speak of His love that's better than the life they're pursuing.

You'll come into God's house and you'll sing His praise. It should be practically leaping from your lips. Unable to be restrained. You come into this place, I trust, eager and glad to praise God because His love is better than life.

And you've tasted that love afresh in the past week. You've seen it in new ways. Ways that you didn't even know that God's love could be shown. And that should drive you into the sanctuary to sing His praise with your lips.

And so when we get our hymnals out, you're just singing from the overhead. You're just about to burst. You can't wait for the music to start so that you can sing His praise. Or, if God's love hasn't really gripped you, you come in and you go, standing on the promises of God, and you're not captivated by it because you're pursuing something else.

Something else has captivated you. But if you're captivated with the love of God, then you'll delight to come and from your lips will come the praise of God. A joy. A delight.

[32 : 41] And when you're kept away from the sanctuary, from the place of God meeting with His people, because you're sick, you're hurting, you're suffering, for some reason you're not able to be here, still like David, you'll be able to remember the times that you have been here.

He looks back and he says, I've seen you in the sanctuary and beheld you power and glory. I remember when I was able to go to the house of God. I can't today. But I remember when I've been there. And still, wherever you are, your lips will praise God.

And so our words and our deeds should praise our faithful and loving God. Your love, O God, is better than life. Therefore, my lips will glorify you. God's goodness to us should always draw a response of praise from us.

So, which will you choose? which are you choosing? There's two ways set before you today, God's love or this life.

And many people today are choosing this life. They are pursuing it. They are giving everything they have to make sure they enjoy this life and that this life lasts as long as possible.

[33 : 55] They don't really care about God's love. They've heard of it. But it doesn't sound all that grand to them. It's not concrete. It's not real enough. It's not visible enough for them.

And they'd rather have the visible pleasures that this world offers. So, not caring about God's love, they pursue this life. And if that is you today, choosing this life, let me tell you that that's it.

That's it. You're pursuing this life. You might get a little piece of it and that's it. Congratulations. You've got what you were aiming for.

But you're also going to get something that you weren't aiming for. And that's the eternity that we talked about a moment ago, the consequence of choosing this life over God and His love.

You're going to get eternal death. This life, you won't be able to take it with you. And so you'll enjoy this pleasure and then it will come to an end and there will be no more pleasure. Only pain and torment and agony and suffering.

[35 : 03] And you're probably tasting some of that even now if you're honest with yourself. But I want to tell you today that it's not too late. Even if all you have ever done for your entire life is pursue the pleasures that this world has to offer, it is not too late.

You are not too far gone. The love of God that we've seen today, I hope you've seen that there's no limits on it. There's no way you can stop it. And so, you can still come to Christ and put your hope

and trust in Him and experience this love of God that we've talked about.

Which will you choose today? Many are making the wrong choice. Many people today even professing Christians. Many of you here today, I today, profess to know Christ.

What about us? What do our actions and our words and our money and our time spent show about us? Many professing Christians are pursuing their own happiness and well-being whatever the cost. We like too much the pleasures the world offers. We like power. We like being appreciated. We like money and what it can buy. And so many are making every decision based primarily on what will make them most happy and comfortable.

[36 : 20] We live like God and His faithful love isn't doing quite enough for us and so we need to pursue just a little bit more of this little kingdom that we're living for.

Such people think that they're living the good life, the high life, but it's actually a very small world they've created for themselves, that little kingdom. Does that describe you today? You're professing Christ but when you look at your life you're living too much for yourself.

A self-centered, a self-satisfying life. Asking yourself when you face decisions not what does God want but what do I want? What will make me happy instead of what will commend God to the people around me?

What will make His praise glorious? How will my decision either show forth His praise or not do that? Don't miss the significance of David's statement.

The faithfulness and love of God is better than anything else. So let's lift up our eyes from our limited horizon and see that there's true life awaiting all who hope and trust in the Lord.

[37 : 20] That can be yours today. So are you living that way? Do you treasure God's love? You know if you die in God's love eternal life awaits.

Is that your comfort and your hope? Do you guard what comes out of your lips that demonstrates what's in your heart? Do you pray with a psalm of Psalm 141 in verse 3 said, Guard over my mouth, O Lord.

Keep watch over the doors, the door of my lips. Our lips are to be used for praising God. Is that what yours are being used for?

Remember, when we treasure the faithful love of God as we should, then we'll use our lips aright. And I know that you know that in theory.

That you would sit here today and absolutely say, God's love is better than life. You wouldn't deny that. But let me ask you, where the rubber meets the road, will you remember that?

[38 : 21] Will you demonstrate that you believe it? When things get difficult, when life gets hard, will you be eager to choose God's love over this life when everyone around you is pursuing this life with reckless abandon and seemingly having a great time doing it, will you still, in here, we're all together, you're here, it's easy.

God's love is better than life. Amen. We go out there and all of a sudden we're not surrounded by Christians anymore. We're surrounded by people who love this life. In that moment, will you still be able to say and mean and live like God's love is better than life?

Will you choose His love when others are mocking you for doing so? Not just living a different life before you, but making fun of yours and the choices that you have made. Will then you cling to the truth that God's love is better than life?

Will your lips praise God when your children disobey, when they are sick, or when they have special needs? Will your lips praise God when you are sick? Will your lips praise God when there isn't enough money, when there isn't enough work or no work?

Will you remember that God shows His sure faithfulness to His children when you're facing your deepest trials that make you wonder if perhaps God has forgotten about you? In those moments, will you affirm with your lips and by praising God with your life that His love is better than life to you?

[39 : 53] Will you still believe in those moments, the dark ones, the difficult ones, that God is faithful? Don't let go. Don't give it all up, the love of God.

Don't give it up until lay up treasure on earth. Moths are going to eat it. Rust is going to destroy it and you'll have nothing to show for it. Go on laying up treasure in heaven even when it becomes more difficult than you could have imagined put yourself in David's shoes.

To have his own son turn against him and to want to kill him. To take away everything that he had. When it gets that hard, cling to the love of God.

And what a blessing, people of God, that when life gets that way that we're not empty handed, that we don't have anywhere to turn, we've got to look to ourselves and we're left wondering. The beauty of what David says here, what God says to us for our encouragement today, is that we have somewhere to turn.

That we have the love of God that's not going to fail us in those situations. And so don't give up. Don't despair. Be encouraged today. The love of God is better than life. And if you're tasting of that love today, then praise God for it.

[41:02] God's love should be better to us than anything that we have. Our house, our car, our favorite TV show, our retirement account, our food, our favorite pastime, our hobby.

Is God's love better to you than those things? Would your answer be the same today if you were sitting here without those things? If they were all taken away from you, would you still praise God for His faithful love as David does here?

Robert Frost concludes his poem this way. I shall be telling this with a sigh somewhere ages and ages hence.

Two roads diverged in a wood and I, I took the one less traveled by. And that has made all the difference. Sadly, the road of clinging to the faithful love of God is less traveled.

than the road of pursuing everything that this life has to offer. Whatever your choice at this point will make all the difference. Will the faithful covenant love of God draw praise from your lips?

[42:15] Or will you pursue life and actually only find death? The fact is that God's love is better than life. Will you receive it as such?

Choose wisely. Let's pray. Amen. Our Father, we confess this morning that we do not love you as we ought. Thank you for showing us such great love.

For showing us that love in Christ and for everything that that means for us, your children. We pray that we would cling to that love even in the difficult times.

Suffering and hurt and pain and loss. we pray that we wouldn't lose sight of your love and your faithfulness and your mercy that you have showered down on us.

We pray that we would cling to it. That we would know ever increasing measures of it. May we not be blinded to it by the pleasures that this world offers that Satan would deceive us with and seek to turn us astray.

[43:19] And for any who are here and are following Satan's deceptive temptations and are on the path that leads to certain death, we pray that you would stop them in their tracks and that you would open their eyes to the glory of your love for us.

We thank you for your love. Give us hearts that would confess with David and mean it and show it by the things that we say and the way that we live that your love, O God, is better than life.

Therefore, our lips will praise you. We will glorify you. We will commend you to those around us. Make it so. Comfort any here who are in the midst of those dark trials.

Would you come and show them your love afresh and may they be encouraged and strengthened by a glimpse of the truth of your loving faithfulness. So bless us, we pray, and do it for Jesus' sake as we pray in His name.

Amen.