

Psalms 41:1-13

Sunday 7/19/2026

I. Review

Last week, you will remember we finished Psalms chapter 40. We saw the third installment based on the day—God’s Day in our life—which would be the day of our salvation. I told you there were **three things** that came out of that day: the day God saved you, and then the volume of a book—we looked at that, the Word of God—and then last week we looked at God's hand of preservation in our lives. We looked at how when you take your stand for Christ and you bear His cross, there will be a price to pay. But God, as I have said many, many times, God will always sustain what He ordains. When He has called you to do His work and you faithfully do it, He is going to take care of you.

II. Five Sections of Psalms

Today, we are going to enter into Psalms chapter 41. I do not know if you remember or not, but when we started Psalms—it has been quite a while ago now—I told you that Psalms falls into five logical categories. With Psalms 41, we end the first section. There are five sections that Psalms is broken down into. I am going to give them to you:

1. Psalms 1 through Psalms 41
2. Psalms 42 through Psalms 72
3. Psalms 73 through Psalms 89
4. Psalms 90 through Psalms 106
5. Psalms 107 through Psalms 150

You will want to get those down in your Bible, or at least have those breakdowns there, just so you have all the information you need to have. So, let us finish out our first section of Psalms, and that will be chapter 41. This will close out the first section.

III. Psalms 41:1-13

- 1. Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the LORD will deliver him in time of trouble.*
- 2. The LORD will preserve him, and keep him alive; and he shall be blessed upon the earth: and thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies.*
- 3. The LORD will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing: thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness.*
- 4. I said, LORD, be merciful unto me: heal my soul; for I have sinned against thee.*
- 5. Mine enemies speak evil of me, When shall he die, and his name perish?*
- 6. And if he come to see me, he speaketh vanity: his heart gathereth iniquity to itself; when he goeth abroad, he telleth it.*

7. *All that hate me whisper together against me: against me do they devise my hurt.*
8. *An evil disease, say they, cleaveth fast unto him: and now that he lieth he shall rise up no more.*
9. *Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me.*
10. *But thou, O LORD, be merciful unto me, and raise me up, that I may requite them.*
11. *By this I know that thou favourest me, because mine enemy doth not triumph over me.*
12. *And as for me, thou upholdest me in mine integrity, and settest me before thy face for ever.*
13. *Blessed be the LORD God of Israel from everlasting, and to everlasting. Amen, and Amen.*

You will notice that we have our three types. Not last Thursday night, but the Thursday night before, there was a question on the table of explaining how typology works in the Bible. I walked you through and showed you that, and I laid out for you how to use and understand types in your Bible. When you get over there in the Bible in Hosea 12:10:

*10. I have also spoken by the prophets, and I have multiplied visions, and **used similitudes**, by the ministry of the prophets. Hosea 12:10*

He actually talks about types, but He calls them similitudes—something that is similar that illustrates a truth.

We know that Psalms 41 historically is about the life of David. We know that doctrinally, it is going to be the nation of Israel. One of the keys, if you look at **verse one**, is where He says, "*in the time of trouble*." That is always the Tribulation period context, wherever you are going to find it. Then the third, inspirationally, will be to you and to me.

We have seen over the last few weeks the aspect of faith—faith to be able to trust God through our adversity. Truly, faith in God will be one of the hardest aspects of the Christian life. There are a lot of things that are not necessarily easy in the Christian life. The reason for that is because God is on one level and plane that is much higher than us, and then we are down here on a human plane, trying to understand and figure out God on a supernatural plane.

The only way you can do that, obviously, is through the volume of a book—letting the Word of God be in you. In time, you let the mind of Christ be your mind, and it goes from there. But you are going to find—I do not care what it is—the hardest thing for most of God's people is to simply have faith in God and to simply trust Him in everything in their life.

The reason for that is you cannot see faith. You cannot see trust. We, as I said, are human beings, and we are used to trusting in things that we can see, things that we can comprehend and understand.

➤ Learning to Trust God through Faith

I know for my own self, when I think of trusting God, I think of two things that always illustrate it for me, and I think about them a lot.

The first thing is, in my car, in your car, and on your phone, you have what is known as a GPS system. The GPS system is modern technology of a satellite some six hundred miles up there that, when you turn it on and ask for directions, beams it up, beams it down, puts it all together, and then shows you the course that you should drive. But to me, it is the unseen and unknown guide in my driving experience.

I will be honest: I always question it. I am a human being, and as a human being, I always think I know more about it than she does. I do not know whose voice you have on your GPS, but mine is a woman. As a human being, I have a hard time not being in charge of where I am going. Can I really trust it? I always question it. I think I know a better route. It will take me down through here, and then the lady will come on. When I think I have a shortcut, she will come on and tell me that I am going the wrong way. I just always question somebody I cannot see, somebody six hundred miles away from me telling me that this is how you need to go. I always wind up following it, but that is just me.

I will tell you the second thing: electric dog fences. I am a dog lover. My dogs have a better life than most kids. But I have had dogs that got out, ran away, and got hit by a car. When I take my dogs out, I take them out on a leash. I have one dog, Izzy, that if you let her out in the backyard, you could be out there with her, and you just turn your attention for a second, and she has found a hole in the fence and is out visiting the neighbors.

So you have these invisible dog fences. I can't trust them; I cannot see them. I am sitting there thinking to myself, if I had one, how do I know it is on? How do I know it is working right? How do I know that my dog cannot get up a full head of speed and blast through that thing, get zapped, and then keep on going? How do I know that they cannot get stung once or twice and realize that if they run for it, and when they are marked on the ground, they can jump over that thing or maybe go under it?

I have a tough time, and probably you do too, if you are honest. I have a tough time trusting things I cannot see. When it comes to my dog, I would always be worried. Is it on? Does it work every time I let my dog out? If I did that, I would be looking out the window every thirty seconds to make sure the dog was still there.

That is what trusting God is like. It is like, is He really there? He is invisible; I cannot see Him. I know I have a Bible that says that He is there for me, but is He really? That is why so many people never learn to trust God. We as human beings have a tendency to only be able to see things and trust things that we can see and understand. When it comes to God and the Bible, you can't ever figure God out. You have to faith God out. You have to learn to trust Him.

- *Verse 2: The LORD will preserve him, and keep him alive; and he shall be blessed upon the earth: and thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies.*

I think in **verse two**, we see the hand of God's preservation when we are attacked. It kind of goes along with last week.

- *Verse 3: The LORD will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing: thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness.*

He said, in **verse three**: "*The LORD will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing.*" In verse three when I first read that, I could not help but think of the times that I have read Fox's Book of Martyrs, the book we have in our bookstore. Another one in there is called The History of the Waldenses. Over the years in my studies, I have read about the terrible ordeals of torture that God's people went through by the Roman Catholic Church, trying to get them to denounce their salvation, the Word of God, and to walk away from God.

I am here to tell you that in many of the cases where they were being tortured, they actually gave the glory to God, and they never felt the pain. As they burned them at the stake, they actually sang hymns and gave the glory to God. It is hard for us to understand that, but their faith and trust in God took them all the way home to glory. God strengthened them in their time of death, in their bed of languishing.

It is incredible how that actually happened. I mean, I can see it now: some old Waldensian who loved God, loved the Book, and took his stand against Rome. They finally get him, arrest him, and put him through the Inquisition. Now they are going to purge him of his heresy—the Roman Catholic Church—and they lay him on a hotbed of burning coals to get him to renounce Jesus Christ and the Word of God.

You would be amazed at the fortitude that God gives some of His men and women when they have to face that trial. They are expecting him to cry out and beg for mercy: "Oh, stop, stop!" But to their amazement, instead of screaming and begging, all they hear is his singing, praising the Lord. Probably after about three or four minutes, he reaches over to the head guy and says, "Hey pal, could you turn me over? I am done on this side." Incredible!

The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing. But also it is dealing with the child of God who dies in this life of any sickness, who makes—the Bible says *He makes his bed in sickness (verse 3)*. He makes that bed comfortable; He makes that bed a place of rest when he goes out to meet the Lord.

For the Christian—and I know most of God's people do not get this because of the way we live today and the way we are—but for a child of God, it is not just how you live your life, but it is how you die. Romans 14 verse 7 says,

<i>7. For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. Romans 14:7</i>
--

You know what? There is always somebody watching our lives—always. The way you go to meet God will be a witness to the life that you lived with Him and walked with Him.

IV. Psalms 139:1-12 A Christian's Comfort in Understanding Death

I think for the Christian—and I have talked about this before—I think Psalms 139:1-12 will be the greatest place in the Bible for comfort and our understanding of what it means for a child of God to die. I know it is written in the Old Testament, and I know David wrote it, but boy, the inspirational impact is incredible. He says this:

1. *O lord, thou hast searched me, and known me.*
2. *Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off.*
3. *Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways.*
4. *For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether.*
5. *Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me.*
6. *Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it.*
7. *Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?*
8. *If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there.*
9. ***If I take the wings of the morning***, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;
10. *Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.*
11. ***If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me***; even the night shall be light about me.
12. *Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee.*

That is one of the most incredible passages in the Bible. For the child of God, dying in a hospital bed is nothing more than the final victory lap of the fact that you are going home to be with the Lord. You won!

Verse nine says, "*If I take the wings of the morning*" that is the Rapture. Some of us are going to go in the Rapture, probably most of us. That morning is going to break bright and clear, and you are going to hear, "Come up hither," and up we go. We are going to take the wings of the morning. The boys up here sing many times, "I'll Fly Away." That is what it is talking about.

But look at **verse eleven**: "*If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me.*" Not everybody is going to make the Rapture. Some of us here, sitting under the sound of my voice, will go home to be with the Lord and not be taken up in the Rapture. We will die before that happens.

For me, this is a great example because he says that both the darkness and the light—the Rapture and death—are alike. You see, I never thought that the Rapture would be such an exhilarating experience as it will be, but death would be just as exhilarating. But it depends on how we look at it. It depends on what we understand about Psalms 139.

All my Christian life, I have had men and women who, when they went home to be with the Lord, it was an incredible thing. For me, in this last short part of my lifetime, two of the greatest examples of that would be John Gowans. When John went home to be with the Lord, he was totally prepared, totally understood, had no regrets, and was looking forward to going home to be with the Lord.

The second was Marty. When Marty went home to be with the Lord, Marty actually called me on the phone, knowing he was going to die, and asked me to come over so he could ask me some questions so that he would understand better what was going to happen when he died, stepped out of this body, and met the Lord Jesus Christ. I took Psalms 139 and walked him through it. It is incredible. You see, people can deny how you live, but it is hard for them to deny how you die.

V. Psalms 41:5-7 Our Enemies Stand Against Us

In Psalms 41 **verses five through seven**, we see how your enemies—those who hate the Book, hate God, hate church, and hate you—will take their stand against you. **Verse five** says, "*Mine enemies speak evil of me.*" Actually, when you read that verse, they are praying for David's death: "*When shall he die, and his name perish?*" Sounds radical, doesn't it? But believe me, it will happen.

Mark Twain—we all know him as a great writer who wrote a lot of things—was not someone everybody was pleased with. They attacked him and talked about him. There was even one time—of course, news media back then was more primitive, so it did not get out—but the word was put out by his enemies that he had died, when he had not. One of his famous lines, when he got up after all that took place and spoke to a crowd of people, the first thing he said was, "Ladies and gentlemen, reports of my death have been greatly exaggerated." But it happens.

In **verse six**, he says you will find somebody coming to talk with you. He says they "*speak vanity.*" In other words, they are not being honest in their conversation. They will ask you questions in their conversations, gain information from it, and then they will take it out, talk to other people, and slander you with it.

Look at **verse seven**: "*All that hate me whisper together against me: against me do they devise my hurt.*" That is people plotting for your downfall.

I am a firm believer, and I have told you this for years and years and years: you cannot be effective in your understanding of God and the Bible, especially in the day and age that we live in. You cannot be fully equipped to have a good handle on everything without a good handle on the Bible. But at the same time, you have got to understand and have a good handle on what God has done down through history. You cannot separate the two. Most people do, but you cannot.

I have found in my study of how God has worked, not only in the world, but how He has worked in America, and I would tell you that in my time—in this last time—there is no question in my mind that we are right on the verge of the Rapture of the church and the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. But in my study of church history, I found that in every century—and there are seven periods of church history, you know that—in every century, you know that God moves, and then the devil moves to counter that, to stop what God is doing. I am not kidding you. I could take the time this morning to lay out every century and show you this.

In every century, God has had two or three or four guys that stood up above all the rest, whom God used to preserve and to keep the truth for the masses of men and women who would have been overwhelmed by the apostasy that was being fed to them. These three men whom God used mightily in the twentieth century were to share and to shape New Testament Christianity for America.

➤ How Did We Get the Right Bible?

You see, I understand why I am here this morning. I understand what this church is here for this morning. I understand what is going on around me that put you and me where we are at today. You have got to ask yourself the question: **how did you get the right Bible** when ninety-nine percent of everybody out there does not have it? How did you get it? What is so special about you? Do you think you are any better than the church down the street or over here that does not really have a Bible? Why do you have it? How did you get it? Because we never think of those things, I am going to tell you right now, we do not have an appreciation for it. We get up every morning thinking that this is the way that it has always been. No, it hasn't. The tragedy and the sad thing about Christianity today and God's people is they have no idea of the price that was paid for you to have that King James Bible in your lap this morning, and for you to be in a church that take a stand on the Word of God. You find churches that just do not have a Bible. Their whole services consist of fun and games, of music and dancing girls, and all of that. Why do you have it? Well, I am going to tell you. I think it is a tragedy. These three men, in my humble explanation, are the poster children of Psalms 41, and God's people today never see how God used these men to help preserve what you have today. The absence of understanding history in this format is a terrible thing. I have said it many, many, times, and I will say it many, many, times to come: **the only thing that men never learn from history is that they never learn anything from history**. These three men were hated for their stand, yet they were loved for their stand. That is the way your life is going to be if you are going to take your stand: there will be those who love you for the stand and what God does for you, and there will be those who hate you.

VI. Three Pillars of Twentieth-Century Christianity

I want to briefly walk you through these three guys, but I want you to see the dates that they lived. This is what caught my attention thirty-five years ago. When I started looking at these guys, this is what caught my attention: the dates that they were born and died, and how they overlapped each other to bring us through the twentieth century to where we are today, and why you have what you have.

➤ 1.) Billy Sunday (1862–1935)

Our first man will be Billy Sunday. Billy Sunday lived from 1862 and died in 1935. That is very important. He was America's evangelist. He was the greatest evangelist that America ever witnessed. In forty-six years of his ministry, he preached to over a hundred million people. In his ministry, he took on the denominational bosses of the dead, orthodox churches in America.

Billy was a pro baseball player before he was saved. He played for the Chicago White Stockings; he was a center fielder in 1880. In 1886, he and a bunch of his buddies were coming out of a bar, and he heard some women singing, and he heard a man preaching. He was enthralled with that, went over and listened, and the group that was singing and preaching was out of the Pacific Garden Mission. Billy Sunday trusted Christ as his own personal Savior. God called him to be America's evangelist, and God used him to wake this country from its lethargic deadness to the Word of God.

I know that kids in school today do not get any history. You get the sprinkles on the donut, but you never get the donut. When you look at America and America's growth process, you will find that America goes through six stages. These six stages are vital to understanding why we are where we are at today:

- 1.) The Agricultural Age (1800s)
- 2.) The Industrial Age (1900)
- 3.) The Atomic Age (1945)
- 4.) The Space Age (1960s)
- 5.) The Technological Age (1980s)
- 6.) The Information Age (Present)

Old Billy Sunday was up against the Industrial Age. The Industrial Age was a time when America had forgotten God. The churches and the religions had walked away from God. By 1888, the King James Bible was on its way out with the Southern Baptist Convention. The United Council of Churches, the big denominational bosses, were all moving churches away from God.

The whole country had come to the place where they were trusting in their ability in the Industrial Age more than they were God. You all know the story of the sinking of the Titanic in 1912. It hit an iceberg in the middle of the night and sank in two or three hours. Over eighteen hundred lives were lost. You know what they said about the Titanic? They said it was the ship

that God Himself could not sink. That shows you where the mindset was. God proved them wrong on that evening, by the way.

But this is what Billy faced. He would go into a town and he would set up a revival meeting—unlike any revival meetings before him, and certainly not today—and he would preach every night for weeks. In Philadelphia, he preached every night for eight weeks. Over two million people came to hear him preach. In 1910, right down south in Joplin, Missouri, there was a historic revival: fifty days, every single night. He preached a common message to a common man from a common Bible that brought this nation back to God.

He preached against the apostasy of the National Baptist Convention. He preached against the apostasy of the National Council of Churches, all in complete, total apostasy. He single-handedly, through his preaching, brought about the Eighteenth Amendment, which brought in Prohibition, because he preached against alcohol.

The only thing that men never learn from history is they do not learn anything from history. Do you know any Baptist churches in this city today that tell their people that it is okay for them to drink alcohol, that it is okay for you to socially drink? I have seen texts that some of you have shown me where groups were out in a restaurant having a Bible study, and they took pictures stacking up their shot glasses, and somebody said, "Praise the Lord, I do not have to preach today because I have had too much to drink." Was Billy Sunday wrong? No. You see, when you—listen to me, listen to me—when you do not learn the lessons of history, you are damned and doomed to repeat the mistakes of history.

Billy Sunday was hated. He was hated by the world. He was obviously hated by the liquor heads of the companies. He was hated by the tobacco industries. He would literally go into a town, and after eight weeks of preaching every night, every whorehouse, saloon, and bar was closed. Try that today!

In 1927, a drunk of a writer by the name of Sinclair Lewis wrote a book called *Elmer Gantry*. In the 1950s, they made a movie of it, and Burt Lancaster played the part. Elmer Gantry was about a fornicating, drunk evangelist who was responsible for ripping off people, having illicit relationships, and being a drunk. It was all aimed at Billy Sunday.

When he died on November 6, 1935—you want to remember this date—his body laid in state in Madison Square Garden. Over two million people passed by his casket. A New York Times reporter who covered the funeral of Billy Sunday stood by, and he later said, "I stood there for ten hours, and as person after person after person filed by, I heard them say, 'I would be in hell tonight if it was not for this man's preaching.'" He preached the King James 1611 every day of his life. He stood on the volume of a book, and he was hated for it.

➤ 2.) J. Frank Norris (1877–1952)

Our second man is J. Frank Norris. Watch the dates: he was born in 1877, and he died in 1952. You see, he fills the gap after Billy Sunday. J. Frank Norris was called the "Texas Tornado." He

would be our second man in the twentieth century whom God would use. Sunday was born in 1862 and died in 1935; Norris was born in 1877 and died in 1952. He covers the gap.

Frank was born and baptized in Dixon's Mills, Alabama. He attended and graduated from the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. That is the Southern Baptist Convention's big-stick Bible college. He was called to pastor the First Baptist Church in Fort Worth, Texas. Immediately, he took on the sins of the city and the sins of the men who were in leadership in his own church. They tried to fire him; but he fired them.

One of his sermons that he preached on a Sunday morning was that he was going to name the ten top devils in Fort Worth, Texas, and he did. One time, he preached on Hell every night for one solid week. He attacked the Catholics, the Communists, socialism, and liberalism, and he took on the entire Southern Baptist Convention, which by this time had gone into complete apostasy. They were the big-stick Baptist church in America. They now taught that the Bible was fables. You could not believe the story of Adam and Eve—that was a fable. Noah's Ark did not happen. They were in absolute, complete apostasy.

That is where every child of God—you today under the sound of my voice—that is where we were headed if God had not used these men. He preached and rejected the Bible colleges of his day for their rejection and denial of the King James Bible. Out of his church, he started his own Bible seminary. He talked about the fact that there would be no Greek, no Hebrew, only the English Bible of the AV 1611. He started with sixteen students, which over the years to follow grew to hundreds.

He trained the great preachers who came out of him in the 1950s, the 1960s, and the 1970s in America. He trained the next two or three generations of Baptist churches that came from him. When we talk about fundamentalism, I know it has a sour name today. That is because you do not understand what it originally meant. He was the father of fundamentalism. Fundamentalism is the fundamentals of the Bible that we should hold to. Today, it is in a mess. Not back then, but who knows that? Who cares? Why are God's people today so satisfied just to go through life like that? We are just a little rat in the maze trying to find the cheese at the end of the rainbow.

My home church is Canton Baptist Temple in Canton, Ohio, started in 1947 by a young man named Harold Henniger. Harold Henniger came to Canton and started a church right across the street from where my home was. My mom and dad were saved in that church; I was saved and baptized in that church. Harold Henniger was one of the men whom J. Frank Norris trained and sent out. J. Frank Norris is the great-grandfather of this church. He turned out guys like John Rawlings, A. V. Henderson, Bob Gray, and Wendell Zimmerman.

We are pastoring and helping a pastor at Victory Baptist over there in Kansas. That pastor was won to Christ by a pastor named Ronnie Cannon in Lima, Ohio, who put together the Lima Baptist Temple. Ronnie Cannon was the associate, when I was just a kid, to Harold Henniger, and he is one of J. Frank Norris's boys. They were everywhere. I was saved in 1956 and baptized in that church. My roots go back to J. Frank Norris. The men in my life who prepared me for ministry, who gave me what I have today to give to you, got it from him. He was the great-grandfather of Old Paths Baptist Church. He was hated—hated to this day. But I want to tell you

something: when God needed a nuclear-powered sledgehammer to break the apostasy of that time period, He found it in old J. Frank Norris. He was fearless. He went into a town to preach one time, checked into the hotel, and the sheriff came up and said, "Mr. Norris, you need to get out of town right now. There is a crowd of fifty people down here with a rope, and they want to hang you." You know what he did? He put down his luggage, walked down to that crowd, got on the back of a pickup truck, and preached to them. That is where his revival started, right there. Try that today! He was incredible, fearless.

He preached on a big liquor politician in Dallas who was a fornicator and a drunk. He hated J. Frank Norris; he lied about J. Frank Norris. J. Frank Norris preached about him and the ten devils. One night, the politician stepped out on his wife, drunk with a girl. Whatever happened, I do not know, but he ran into another tractor-trailer, a semi, and bodies were strewn all over the place—I mean, decapitated, just an absolute mess. Old J. Frank Norris went down to the wreck, scooped up part of the guy's brains, put them in a jar, put them on the pulpit, and preached on Sunday morning: "The wages of sin is death." Try that! Incredible.

This is your roots. Why are God's people such cowards today? Why can you see that, understand a little bit of that, and not have some steel in your backbone?

He had a guy one time call him up on the phone and say, "You blankety-blank preacher, I am going to come over there and shoot you, kill you, and send you to Hell." Old J. Frank said, "I will be here until four o'clock." The guy broke into the church, kicked down the door of his office, and had a gun. J. Frank outdrew him and shot him right there in his office. From that, he got called the "Pistol-Packing Preacher." Norris, like Sunday, held the line against apostasy through the twentieth century up until 1952, the middle of the twentieth century. I was born right in the middle of it, in 1950. That is the only good thing about the time I was born.

➤ 3.) Peter S. Ruckman (1921–2016)

Our third man—watch the dates—is Peter S. Ruckman, born in 1921 and died in 2016. God had His final man in the twenty-first century. Sunday in 1935, Norris in 1952, and now God's junkyard dog, Dr. Ruckman, in 2016.

Dr. Ruckman came from a military family. His father was I believe he was a general—and his grandfather was in the Civil War. He served in the Army in World War II in the Pacific as a second lieutenant. He was saved on March 14, 1949, in a radio studio where he was a DJ, by a Baptist preacher by the name of Hugh Pyle. He immediately went to Bob Jones University, became friends with the old man, Bob Jones Sr., and he graduated from Bob Jones University with a PhD. But he saw the apostasy of these colleges and how they, too, denied the Word of God. I have heard him talk about them all his life. Like Sunday and Norris, he attacked those who attacked the Bible—those who through higher education would destroy a young man's faith in the perfect Word of God.

I first met him in 1972, right after I got right. Immediately once I got right with God, we were having our church camp. Our church camp was called Camp CHOF. Everybody thinks that is an Indian name; it was not. Our church hosted the Christian Hall of Fame—C-H-O-F, CHOF. I

went, having just got right with the Lord, and it was senior high week. That is when the seniors came, which was the big week. I had just gotten out of the Army. They wanted me to build an obstacle course. I did not know anything about preaching, I could not do anything, but I went out there and, boy, I will tell you what, God opened my eyes the first night I heard him preach.

As I grew in the Lord, he and I preached together many times in Bible conferences. Down in Pensacola, they have what they call the Baptist Bible Blowout. Some of you guys have been down there before. That was not originally theirs. The Bible Baptist Blowout began in Rochester, New York, back in the seventies. George Grace was the pastor then, and he would bring us up to that church—a bunch of pastors. Ruckman and I would be there, and a bunch of us would go up and preach. He had this big banner that they put on top of the church: "Bible Baptist Blowout." That is where it started.

Without a doubt, he was the most hated man, preacher, and teacher in the last half of the twentieth century. You Google his name and you will find eighty pages of hatred directed toward him. The Bible colleges hated him. They would find out where he was preaching, find out what hotel he was staying in, and send a hooker up to his room to try to get him to fall. God's people! I have seen other Christians take a picture and Photoshop his head on a man in a bar with two gals sitting on his lap and saying it is Ruckman. He was attacked and lied about by every angle of Christianity. They wrote books about him. They called him a cult leader. Anybody who followed and believed what he believed they were called "Ruckmanites." But that is okay because those who followed Norris, they called "Norrisites."

You can still go online or get from the bookstore down there debates with men who thought they were smart enough to debate him. Are you kidding me? He debated the Catholic guy, Carl Keating, one time, and he put that guy under the fence in thirty seconds or less. It was incredible.

As far as I am concerned, he was the greatest mind on the English Bible in the twentieth century. God needed exactly what he had at the time he lived, just like He needed what Norris had, just like He needed what Billy Sunday had, so you can have what you have! His sin—the great "cult," the great sin of his life—was telling common people that they had a Bible they could trust and believe in, that it was perfect and without error.

My father in the Lord, Mel Sabaka, was one of his long-time, lifelong friends. He would come to camp, and Mel had a little cabin there that he stayed in when camp was going on. At nighttime, he and Pete would sit out there and talk about everything that was going on. Me and a couple of the other guys wanted to hear everything that Ruckman had to say, so we snuck around the back, laid in the grass, and listened to every word of their conversation.

God used those three men to keep the Book for you and me. Most of God's people have no clue, and I think it is an absolute, terrible thing. These guys paid the price. They fought in the church militant, they fought the good fight, and they paid the price.

VII. Threefold Application of Psalms 41

Now, for you and for me, getting all this together, we have three applications here.

➤ 1.) Historical Content

Historically, this is David. People hated David so much they could not see how God could ever use him. You see, blind hatred does exactly that: it blinds you. They forgot the time that he showed mercy to the poor, like in 2 Samuel 9, how he took care of the needy. They just figured that as a sinner, as sorry as he was in 2 Samuel 11, he had some issues in his life, so how could God ever use him? But God fooled them. They hated him, but God said, "He is a man after My own heart," and gave the church of Philadelphia the key of David in Revelation 3.

In spite of all of his enemies, you are going to see how this verse builds it. In spite of all those who hated him, God said every king of the nation of Israel and Judah—every one of them—God would compare them to one king: David. He was the greatest king Israel ever had.

You see, there are people out there who, when you and I sin, will hold that against you for the rest of your life. They are so far out of touch with God's mercy and God's grace. Oh, they will take God's mercy and God's grace for God to forgive them, but they will never extend that mercy and grace to anybody else. I have seen over the years where people would make a mistake and God would deal with them, and yet twenty or thirty years later, people still pray for their hurt. They hate them, just like they hated David. But God keeps blessing them. Grace and mercy—God gave it to us, but we will not give it to others.

➤ 2.) Doctrinal Content

Look at **verse nine**, "*Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me.*" Historically, this is David in particular, Absalom, and Ahithophel—men whom he thought were his friends and turned on him

Doctrinally, obviously, it is the nation of Israel, with family and friends turning on them in the Tribulation period. This is Matthew 26:14-16. Note the reference to the nation of Israel in **verse thirteen**: "God of Israel." This is Romans 9 and Romans 11.

➤ 3.) Inspirational Content

Inspirationally, it will be you and me. Last week I told you and gave you, based on verse nine this week, how people you gave the Bible to—people whom you thought were your friends, whom you trusted—turn on you. He says there: "*which did eat of my bread.*" It was not eating of their bread, but your bread. You took your Bible and gave it to them, and now the Bible says, just like David and Israel, they lift up their heel against you.

Now, here is a little Bible test: why did He use the word "heel"? Think about it. We will talk about it maybe Thursday night. See what you find as the connection. Why he chose to use the word "heel."

All of this comes into focus with Zechariah 13:6 where somebody asks Christ, “how did you get those wounds in your hands and feet?” The answer Christ will give them will be the same answer that you give sometimes. Wounded in the house of my friends.

*6. And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which **I was wounded in the house of my friends.** Zechariah 13:6*

Yet God was merciful to David. He will be merciful to you, and He will raise you up. He requited them, it says. That word means that He sets you up over them, like He did David. **Verse eleven** says God will favor you over them.

Here again, the example is David, the greatest king they have ever had. Your enemies will now never, never triumph over you. God sets you before His face as a man after His own heart. Remember, God will be good to you when people are not.

5. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. Isaiah 53:5

He took the stripes on His back so that in this life, He could have your back.

VIII. Five Promises for the Believer

As you read and apply this Psalm—a Psalm of trusting God, faith in Him, and His hand of protection prevailing in your life—you will see five things that He does for you:

1.) He will deliver a man who considers and takes care of the poor (verse 1).

Doctrinally, this will be our taking care of the nation of Israel. That is our job in Romans 9 and Romans 11. For you and for me, it is taking care of those who need the Lord. You see, "needy" in the Bible does not always mean, "I do not have a good car, I do not have nice clothes, I do not have any food." It can mean that. But the real need on this planet is the Lord Jesus Christ. It is not just food, but the Word of God. They are poor in spirit.

2.) He will preserve this man and keep him alive (verse 2).

This is God's hand of protection in this life—God's hand on you, your family, your ministry, and your church. God gives you a full life by which, at the end, you will receive a full reward.

3.) He will bless him and not deliver him to his enemies (verse 2).

Like David, Moses, Joshua, Martin Luther, Jonathan Edwards, George Whitefield, and like Billy Sunday, J. Frank Norris, Peter S. Ruckman, and you and me: what God ordains, He sustains. Greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world, and no weapon formed against you shall prosper. God will bless you and never deliver you to your enemies.

4.) He will take care of him when he is sick on his bed of affliction (verse 3).

He will help him endure what he goes through. God will give you promises in this life, but God also gives you promises in death—the grace of a life, seeing His dying grace at the end of your life. It is God's final promotion for the soldier who fought the good fight, promoted to glory.

5.) God will show you His favor and raise you up in spite of your enemies (verses 10-11).

They will never triumph over you. Ruckman used to say—and I have heard him say this so many times—he would say, "You know, every time somebody attacks me, or somebody does something against me, God just gives me another ministry." That is how he looked at it. That is God's hand of preservation in your life. If God be for you, who can be against you?

Oh, and I have seen it play out over the years. They will attack you, they will attack your work, and they will attack your ministry. I have seen it with these guys. Your ministry will flourish, and theirs will shrink up and die. God establishes your family, your sons, your daughters, your sons-in-law, daughters-in-law, your grandkids, and your great-grandkids in the ministry of your family.

But in their world—and I have a hard time even wrapping my head around this—we see pastors whose own kids commit suicide. What are you doing? There is a pastor who runs the biggest neo-denominational church, running probably ten thousand people. His boy killed himself. Nobody cared—I mean, they cared that he killed himself, but nobody stopped and said, "How are you going to pastor me and my family when your own boy took his life because you were not being the right kind of father?"

I know pastors, deacons, and church leaders whose sons are homosexuals or whose daughters are lesbians. I can understand that in normal life, but for a pastor, I do not get it. I see them—pastors' kids, their sons and their daughters—and they are out in the world. They post pictures of themselves at a ballgame drinking a beer, or pictures of them at a party with booze everywhere around. I know I am probably getting a lot of people ticked off at what I am saying. I think that is a good thing!

I have seen people, Christians—I know of them, and I believe they are saved—whose children are out in the world, doing nothing of what God wants them to do. They are not. But they will claim to be spiritual, and then their daughter gets pregnant, or the son gets somebody pregnant out of wedlock, and that stupid, ridiculous parent will put on Facebook, "Oh, I am so glad to be a grandparent!" Add the phrase, to be honest, "to a bastard child." See, I can see by your faces you are not happy with that. So let me say it again: bastard child. And they are okay with it! They celebrate: "Oh, they are out in the world, they are not married, they fornicated, and now they are going to have a baby, and I am going to be a grandpa." You are out of your mind. You have lost all reality.

Without the Bible, you have lost the seven things that you lose when you lose the Word of God. You are a ship adrift on the sea of life—no mooring, no anchor, no reality. Your life and your family is such an absolute mess. God help us!

Back in the 1940s, the Chicago Times printed a big, full page. Chicago was in apostasy; the country was in apostasy. They put on that page the shadow of a big man, and then in big letters: "Chicago needs another D. L. Moody"—who was another great man who held this country together.

Ruckman is gone. Norris is gone. Sunday is long gone. Now there is nobody. Do you know why? Maybe let us see how smart you are. Do you know why there is nobody now? Because it is over. It is done.

You say, "Well, your church is still winning people to Christ." All this church is doing, as all the other churches that believe the Book, is gleaning some grapes off of a disease-ridden vine. Everybody is fine with that. But if I did not know this was the end times—I would know it because of the apathy of God's people: they know nothing about their roots, they know nothing about their history, and worse yet, will accept the status quo of Christianity.

There will be no more great revivals. There will be no more megachurches that reach the world with the Word of God. We are in deep Laodicea, defined completely in the book of Colossians. Our job is to harvest the last fruit off a disease-ridden vineyard. In Matthew chapter 20—I gave it to you a couple of weeks ago—we are the eleventh-hour workers, and He is coming at midnight. It is thirty seconds to midnight, the victim of the seven things that you lose.

So we can see how this Psalm was designed to be for our admonition, our edification, and our encouragement—how God has used men in the century that we were all born in, for you to keep what you have, so the apostasy which has swept over Christianity will not sweep you into it.

IX. Historical Stands of Courage

I am a student of history. History is filled with men who, for love of country, made the last stand for what they held dear and believed in, which was freedom.

Yesterday, we came over to get the chairs, and to the guys who helped me: thank you. As I went home, I went to the little graveyard right here at the end of Walnut. I do that probably three or four times a year, because that is where our church started. There is a big stone monument there. You have got to go up and see it sometime. It talks about how, around 1802, a husband and wife came up from Kentucky, and they were deeded a couple hundred acres for a farm. This church was on that acreage. He was a Baptist preacher. There was no church here then, but he was a Baptist preacher. His name was William Harris. His wife's name was Rhonda.

I think of the great stand of George Washington at Valley Forge, when they were so overwhelmed by the British—a little ragtag army—and what they did there at Valley Forge. You have seen the picture of George Washington on his knees in the cold snow praying for God's deliverance, and God delivered them.

The Harris lady, her dad was the first man killed in the Revolutionary War. He died when he was about forty years old, and he is buried up there, along with her one-year-old infant son who died. All of the Harris families are buried up there. This church was on the land that God gave them long before this building ever stood here.

I do not know how you come to church, but if you come down this side street over here, that street is Walnut. You drive on it to come to church. I never drive down that street without thinking of what it must have looked like back in the 1820s. You know why it is called Walnut? Because Mrs. Harris planted walnut trees all along that road—the ones you drive by every day coming to church—and they called it Walnut. This church was built right after the Civil War.

I think of men who made their stand, like George Washington. If we had lost that war, we would not have this church.

I think of 1836, the Alamo in San Antonio, Texas: 220 Texans up against 10,000 of the Mexican army of Santa Anna. They held out for as long as they could, to the last man. Every one of them was massacred, but they bought time for Sam Houston to put an army together that in time defeated Santa Anna. That was in 1836.

I think of 1876, George Armstrong Custer out in the Dakotas at the Little Bighorn: 200 of his troopers up against 5,000 Indians. They call it Custer's Last Stand. For you, you think it is an ice cream place.

I think of July 1, 1863. Oh, the men who, because of their intestinal fortitude, their courage for what they believed in; took their stand! The Battle of Gettysburg, Little Round Top, July 1, 1863. Colonel Chamberlain was told to hold the left flank, and if he did not hold the left flank, the Confederates would sweep up, break the whole Union line, and win the battle. So, he was left all alone with the 20th Maine Regiment to hold that left flank.

The Confederates came and came and he held the line. He had no reserves and no support. They were down to no ammunition. When they made the last final charge, you know what Colonel Chamberlain did because of his sense of duty? He shouted over the battlefield, "Fix bayonets!" And they swept down off that hill, defeated the Confederates, and won the battle that day. He later became the governor of Maine, a born-again Christian, and received the Medal of Honor for the valor of his action that day.

Nothing stirs my heart more than men who are willing to lay it on the line when they know they have no chance.

I think of Wake Island, 1941. I showed you the movie for Memorial Day, one of the greatest documentaries that you ever saw. When the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, the next day they attacked Wake Island—just that little atoll out there halfway to Midway. The Marines held it for eight, nine, or ten days, but finally they were overwhelmed. But they stayed and fought to the last man, to the last bullet. Many of them became captives on that island until the end of the war. The Japanese held them as captives, and when the Japanese knew they were going to lose the war, they marched every one of those men down to the end of that atoll and massacred them.

I think of 1944 to 1945, the Battle of the Bulge, the 101st Airborne in the defense of Bastogne. I think of Bataan, 1942, when the Japanese invaded the Philippines. They kept retreating, and finally, they were on the little peninsula of Bataan. They were taken captive—sixty thousand troops, starving and sick, marched in the heat of the sun sixty miles to a Japanese prisoner of war camp. When they fell out, they got bayoneted. I have seen pictures of men with dysentery so bad they were carrying their own intestines.

How about 1950 to 1951 in Korea, the Chosin Reservoir, the United States Marine Corps surrounded? Men who would not give up. The commander of the Marine division at the Chosin Reservoir said, "We are going to pull back." Somebody said, "Well, what do you mean, sir, we are going to pull back? Are you going to retreat?" His words were, "Retreat, hell! We are just attacking in another direction!" And he did!

Twenty dollars a month; that is what they were paid in World War II, the average soldier. He laid down his life and held out to the very end for twenty dollars a month and an idea of preserving freedom. You have all the riches of glory in Christ Jesus, and you have the mission of it eternally, taking the Word of God to the world for your Commander-in-Chief. What a guy would do for eighteen or twenty dollars a month, God's people will not do for all the riches in glory. Men who held the line, fought to the last man for what? Twenty bucks a month. They never quit and never surrendered until there was no other choice. They did it for a human idea of freedom and democracy.

X. Summary

Our warfare, our battle, is the church militant. We pay the price; in Romans 12, we become a living sacrifice for the heavenly calling. We are told to hold the fort:

*Hold the fort, for I am coming,
Jesus signals still;
Wave the answer back to heaven,
By Thy grace we will.*

You better find out where you came from. You better find out why you are here this morning. You better figure it out. You better figure out why God had you born when He had you born. You better figure out why you are wasting your time while the battle rages around you. The price you pay will be the price that Sunday paid, Norris paid, Ruckman paid, and we will pay.