

# Psalms 4:4-8

Sunday 12/24/2023

This morning the power (through no fault of our own) is out in the building today. However, one of the great things about this church building is that it was built right after the Civil War. At that time, they didn't have sound systems, so it was built with an architectural design for public speaking. It is really a blessing to preach here because the acoustics are so well designed to allow your voice to go out without any sound system. I appreciate the ability to stand here and preach and know that the people can hear me.

## I. Review

Last week I began to show you the depth of the book of Psalms. We talked about understanding the anatomy of things last week. Looking at all the parts of things to better understand how things work. I told you how in my life that this is the kind of guy I am, always looking for how things work in order to understand it and take it apart. In everything God does there will not only have a pattern to it, but also a structure. The inside of what God is doing and how it really works within that structure. I showed you how the book of Psalms is built around seven authors. Individually each one will give us a different depth of the book of Psalms and a better perspective of it. When you put it all together you will have a complete understanding through these writers of what we should get out of the book of Psalms and then apply it to our own lives.

- |                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| 1.) Asaph         | Deals with Praise and Music  |
| 2.) Solomon       | Deals with Wisdom  |
| 3.) Ethan         | Wisdom Applied (Chief person under Solomon)                        |
| 4.) Moses         | Represents the Friend of God                                       |
| 5.) Sons of Korah | The Inside Understanding of Getting Close to the Heart of Ministry |
| 6.) David         | Our Love for the Word of God.                                      |
| 7.) Mystery Man   | A Picture of You and Me (the church)                               |

These men, their lives and writings will be the key to the wisdom of God in your life and mine.

## II Psalms 4:4-8

Today, we will look once again at Psalms 4:4-8. As we read these four verses you will find some good practical applications and some doctrinal too.

*Psalms 4:4-8 Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah. 5 Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and put your trust in the LORD. 6. [There be] many that say, Who will shew us [any] good? LORD, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us. 7 Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time [that] their corn and their wine increased. 8. I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, LORD, only makest me dwell in safety.*

You know I am not big on Christmas or Easter messages. We all understand the real aspect of Christmas and Christ's birth. And certainly, about Easter and how all that comes into play. I have never been big on preaching anything else other than what the word of God says. But I got

to tell you this is probably as good a Christmas message that you are ever going to get. It goes past all the hoopla that gets thrown into Christianity. If there ever was a real Christmas message, this would be it (Psalms 4:8).

### III. Psalms 4:4

Verse 4 says, *Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah.*

#### A.) Stand in Awe

The Christian life should be a life filled with the miracles and the blessings of God. Us as his children in fellowship with him, and in ministry for him. Seeing God take your life, your family, and your ministry and God doing the impossible with you. The history of Christianity is God taking ordinary men and women and doing supernatural things with them. It's the aspect of God doing the impossible with us. Setting us apart unto himself like we talked about last week. Sustaining you and me in every aspect of life. Through his blessings, enlarging us in every part of your life. Simply making us better continually in our lives.

It will be a lot like the example of Ethan. Ethan getting the wisdom of Solomon and taking that wisdom and understanding and using it in his life and in the lives of others. That is really what our lives should be. Here is what you stand in awe of. It is the aspect of God sustaining us. This is the importance of New Year's. We get so busy with so many things going on. I look at all the things we do throughout the year; Memorial Day picnic, softball, volleyball. Everything we get involved in and everything that we try to do to have fun. Sometimes it gets moving so fast that you can lose track. So, this is what New Year's Eve is all about. A time of reflection, a time of looking back and looking at what God has done with you. It is a measuring stick.

My father in the Lord, Mel Sabaka used to always come down for New Year's and talk about what is going to be different in your life next year than it was this year. He would say, "What is going to change about the direction that you go in life?" We ought to be standing in awe. There ought to be a time, certainly at the end of the year where we look back and we see the sustaining hand of God in our own lives, within our marriages and with our kids. Within our church and within our ministry. It all comes down to the book that God gave us and do we really believe what it says. More importantly, apply what it says. **Because only in the word of God will be found the blessings within that book that will sustain you through everything.**

I always like Dr. Phil (I don't agree with everything he says) because he has some wisdom and insight on things. I kind of stole some things from him that applies when somebody would ask him how he was doing. He would always answer, better than he deserved. That is so true for all of us. You become set apart to the word of God in your life. You become one with it. We saw that in Psalms 119. One hundred and seventy-six verses that will get you there.

We saw the example in 2 Samuel 23:10 with Eleazar. One of David's mighty men of valor who had a sword in his hand as he was slaying the enemy (sword being a picture of the word of God). After the battle, his hand clamped around that sword that he could not let it go.

I told you that is a picture of your life and mine and what we should be to have the sustaining power of God in our lives. **Simply becoming one with the word of God.**

*2 Samuel 23:10 He arose, and smote the Philistines until his hand was weary, and his hand clave unto the sword: and the LORD wrought a great victory that day; and the people returned after him only to spoil.*

No matter how tough life will become, and it will have some ruff and rocky roads. But we have a guarantee of never losing all that God has for us. I don't care how bad the world gets. I don't care how upside down everything gets. We have a guarantee that God will never take from us, and no one can take from us what God has given us. If you haven't figured it out yet that is why the devil hates the word of God and doesn't want you to have it. He will come after you and your family and try to take everything from you that God wants you to have.

Last week in Psalms 119 we talked about how to put the word of God to work in our lives. Realizing what God has given us in the word of God. Then after forty or fifty years you begin to look back and see the miracles of God. What he has done. When you look back and see when you were in this situation, or you had this circumstance and there was no way around it. Yet God miraculously came through. Things in your life and my life that you can never explain. It is almost impossible to tell somebody else about it. But they see the change in your life and what God's word has done in your life. **Your life will always do the talking for you.**

#### B.) Stand in Awe, and Sin Not

He says, "**stand in awe, and sin not**". The first thing we should learn from this is the fact it is sin toward God when we fail to have a life that when we look at it, we stand in awe of what God has done. Most of God's people are satisfied to be ordinary. There is really not much difference other than eternal destiny with anybody else in life. They go through their life day after day. Go to work and raise their kids. But there is nothing supernatural about their lives. There is nothing about their life that somebody looks at and sees that it is unexplainable and that draws them to the Lord.

The Romand Catholic church when they made someone a saint, they had to have one bona fide miracle in their life. What a sad state of affairs. Every one of you if you are saved here this morning is a saint to God. Your life ought to be just filled with the miracles of what God has done. It is a sin to accept the miracle of the new birth. This is what he said, "stand in awe, and sin not". It is a sin toward God for us to take the miracle of the new birth (salvation) but never have the miracles of God in our life after salvation.

#### C.) The Infirmary of us Forgetting

The Bible lays out three infirmities that we have as Christians. One of them was in Psalms 77:10, the **infirmary of us forgetting the things that God does for us.**

*Psalms 77:10 And I said, This [is] my infirmity: [but I will remember] the years of the right hand of the most High.*

That is so true. That is why New Year's Eve is so important for you to be here. To see what God has done. The miracle in the lives of these young men. The miracle in the lives of all of us that you can relate to. Stop and look back and see what separates us from the ordinary man or woman. In Malachi 3:16 another great model for us.

The Bible talks about **God having a book of remembrance** that he kept for those who loved him. I think every child of God out to have your book of remembrance of the things that God has done for you. Because it is so easy to forget.

*Malachi 3:16 Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard [it], and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name.*

#### D.) Commune with Your Own Heart Upon Your Bed & Be Still Selah

In verse 4 he says, "*commune with your own heart upon your bed and be still.*"

Then we find the word "*Selah*". **Selah means rest.** He says, "upon your bed". When we sleep at night that is when we really think and become alone with our own thoughts. During the day we can be at work, or doing this, or watching that and it distracts us from what is going on in our life. When you roll into bed, and it is quiet and dark, then we are alone with our thoughts.

Job 33:15 talks about how God uses the time while we sleep at night to seal our instructions of what he wants us to do.

*Job 33:15 In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed;*

That is a great study in itself. But there are so many of God's people who toss and turn all night long. They worry all night. At 12 a.m. they are awake, at 1 a.m. they are awake, or 3 or 4 a.m. they are awake. It is not because they have insomnia, it is because they are worried about things. Anxiety! And the night drags on longer and longer than going through the night and staying awake.

The verse says that we should commune with our own heart. The child of God that lays there when they can't sleep and think of all the times God has come through for you. There will be times in all of our lives when things bother us. No one is made of iron. No one can devoid themselves of the things that are happening in our lives. It is what we do with them that counts. You just got to lay there and think of all the other times that he has come through for you. Pull out your book of remembrance and look at all the different times that he came through for you. Let whatever is troubling you be absolved in the remembrance of when he sustained us. That is the key.

If there is something that we have done wrong, make it right with him. If not, then just give it to him. Selah is the word, rest in the Lord. Roll over and pull up the covers and say, Lord it is all yours. It can't fix it or change it. I didn't do anything to cause it, but you have always come through for me and I got to get some sleep, so you handle it. **Why waste time counting sheep when you can talk to the shepherd. It's just that simple!**

When I talked about courage a couple of weeks ago out of Joshua 1, there are three aspects in the word of God that define courage.

- Courage to believe what God said.
- Courage to obey what God said.
- Courage to rest in what God said.

I am not saying that I don't worry about things, I am human just like anybody else, but a long time ago I figured out my job and God's job. I figured my job was to do the ministry and teach people the bible, God's job was to take care of any opposition that got in my way. I let God do his and I just focus on mine. That is why the Bible says commune with your own heart upon your bed.

#### IV. Psalms 4:5

Verse 5 says *Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and put your trust in the LORD.*

##### A.) Sacrifices of Righteousness

That is an interesting phrase, the sacrifices of righteousness. In the Bible a sacrifice will be defined for us in 2 Samuel 24:24.

*2 Samuel 24:24 And the king said unto Araunah, Nay; but I will surely buy [it] of thee at a price: neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the LORD my God of that which doth cost me nothing. So David bought the threshingfloor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver.*

Most Christians today don't understand sacrifice. They don't understand what it really takes in a Christian's life to sacrifice. Because most of God's people give when it is convenient. We give God what is left over or what we don't want. We keep most of it for ourselves. Real sacrifice is defined in 2 Samuel 24 when David wanted to buy this threshing floor from this guy. So, David tells this guy I want to buy this threshing floor.

The threshing floor that he wants to buy in time is going to be where the temple is built under Solomon. On the exact same spot. It's a threshing floor because you know that is indicative of the second coming of Christ. Today if you would go to Jerusalem, you would find the Dome of Rock on that spot which is under Muslim control. That Dome of the Rock is built on the exact same spot that this threshing floor was, and the temple in the Old Testament. And it will be the temple in the millennium also.

So, David goes to this guy and says I want to buy this threshing floor because I want to make a sacrifice to the Lord. David is King and the man says, well you are the king allow me to give it to you. David says no, I want to buy it. The guy says I appreciate that, but I want you to have it as a gift. David says, you don't understand, I can't accept it as a gift. Because this is where I am going to build an altar and make a sacrifice to God.

## B.) A Sacrifice Must Cost Us Something

This is **the definition; a sacrifice has to cost me something. That is the Bible's definition.** A sacrifice has to cost us something. Any sacrifice will cost me something because Christ dying on the cross, his sacrifice, cost him something. The Bible says that Christ is the righteousness of God. We are talking about the offer of sacrifice of righteousness. We get that righteousness when we get saved 2 Corinthians 5:21.

*2 Corinthians 5:21 For he hath made him [to be] sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.*

When he talked about offering the sacrifice of righteousness, he is talking about our sacrifice being connected directly to Christ.

In Psalms 51:17 you see what the sacrifice of God is again. He says "*The sacrifices of God [are] a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise*". So a real sacrifice to God of righteousness will start with us coming to the end of self. We will have no motive in what we do or what we are giving. We come with a broken heart because the word of God has broken us. We come with a contrite spirit because we want God's spirit to prevail for the things of God. That is a servant attitude. It is coming to God with a broken spirit and a contrite heart. Getting God's heart for people, and for ministry by completely putting your trust in the Lord. The Bible says when your treasure in life is the word of God and your treasure in life of everything that you have you realize the sacrifice that was paid. The cost that was paid. Not only for our salvation but for the very word of God that God gave us to get us through.

Matthew 6:21 says, "*For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.*" **When your treasure in life is the word of God, then you will always make the sacrifice of righteousness, but it will cost you something.** If you are going to decide that you are going to serve God with your life like the Bible says in Romans 12 you are going to become a living sacrifice. It's going to have to be a sacrifice of righteousness. It is going to have to be you understanding the sacrifices God made for you. And with a broken heart and a contrite spirit you come into that servant attitude with nothing more than those two things, a broken heart and a contrite spirit. And it is going to cost you something.

What happens to most of God's people is that they never understand the cost of Christ dying on the cross for them first. They get salvation in such an easy way today, without really understanding the sacrifice behind it. They get saved and never see that there was a day when Jesus himself had to count the cost that he was going to die on the cross. **After you and I get saved you understand that cost, you understand that sacrifice of righteousness and then you are willing to pay it yourself.**

Most of God's people who go to church today are decent, good people. They have been saved, but they will never do one meaningful thing for the Lord. And it is because they won't count the cost. It is just that simple!

## V Psalms 4:6

Verse 6 says *[There be] many that say, Who will shew us [any] good? LORD, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.*

Doctrinally this will be the Jew in the tribulation period, and everybody is against them, and the “light of thy countenance” will be Christ coming for them at the second coming.

Inspirationally it is you and me with our calling of God and the people who will be against you and your stand. We have talked about this over the last couple of weeks.

### A.) Who Will Show us any Good? God Will!

You will remember as Bible believers that you are the remnant of God. And many will speak against you. The question is “**who will show us any good?**”. **The answer to that is, God will!** You must know this, any good in life will never come from man or the world. Any good in life only comes from God’s countenance, the Lord Jesus Christ. But when we talk about good or goodness, we are talking about Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the goodness of God. When somebody says, “my goodness”. They are basically saying my Jesus. Because goodness is Jesus Christ. He is the goodness of God. **The good in our lives only comes from God and he shines on you through the light of the word of God and through the blessings of God.** No matter how dark it becomes. Stay focused on what we are saying today in Psalms 4, no matter what comes your way. I don’t care if it is something stupid you did. You can always make that right. You may have the consequences of what you did not go away, but God’s word and his light will help you through that. Because **God’s number one aspect is restoration.** He wants you to be reconciled to him before you are saved. After you are saved, and you sin, he wants you to be reconciled back to him in fellowship. That is the number one concept of God. Where Jesus Christ is the goodness of God, and though there be many that say who will show us any good, the Lord will always lift up the light of thy countenance upon us. Any good that God gives you, in time will become quite clear. You will see the goodness of God in your ministry flourishing, and Christian lives being changed. **But the people who are against you won’t change.** You will see it in your family, by the way God deals with your family in ministry. He brings them along and now they are side by side with you in ministry. The blessings of God in your life, in your family, and ministry and the emptiness in theirs. That is when you begin to see when the question is asked “**who will show us any good?**”, **the answer will be God.** Don’t expect it from man, don’t expect it from your friends. If they get it then fine, but at the end of the day, don’t fall into the trap that you think that is better than what God has for you.

### B.) LORD, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.

A great quarterback was asked one time. How he seemed to never let anything bother him when he played. He said my secret to this is I never read what any of the sports writers say about me. Whether it is good or bad. I just focus on my game plan and play the game. I thought to myself, me too! That is exactly the way I look at life as a Christian. I don’t listen to the good things or the bad things, I just focus on my game plan. Because that is all that is important. **The light of God in your life, his countenance, will take away any dark clouds** or shadows of darkness

that people try to put in your world. You stay focused. The Bible says in John 1:5 *And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.* It is like when you go into your kitchen at two or three o'clock in the morning. You turn on the lights and what happens? All the cockroaches head for the darkness. They head for the dark spots because light will always make darkness disappear.

## VI Psalms 4:7

In verse 7 he says, *Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time [that] their corn and their wine increased.*

This is a very simple, yet profound verse. **It simply conveys to us that only the blessings of God can and will put gladness in your heart.** I have never seen a time in Christianity when God's people, for the most part are so miserable. So many problems in life, so many heart aches. It is all because they have allowed everything in this world to defeat them. Yet they have a book that you can go into Dollar General and buy for \$1 that will solve every problem you got.

### A.) Things are Temporary

What you are seeing here is all the increase of what you have in this world (represented by the corn and the wine). Like a nice home, a new car, your job or your 401K. There is nothing wrong with having nice things. **All these things no matter how good they are folks, are temporary.** They are not going to last forever. There are things that need to be added to our life that we think will make us happy. We are all the same. You get depressed, you feel better when you go out and buy something. It's okay. When you get a new car, you are ecstatic about it. **But you need to understand that none of these things will sustain you, on your bed at night.** You say, Bob, I really like my house. I say, I am glad, but I wonder what you will think about it when you have to put a new roof on it. You say I got a really nice house right up to the point when you get your tax assessment, and they raised the value fifty percent. Can you sleep good at night?

A guy says I got a new car and I love it, right up to the point that someone side swipes you. You say my 401K is really doing good and then the stock market hits the bottom and he just lost forty thousand dollars. There are people back in the 1920's that amassed millions of dollars and were really happy until 1929 when the stock market crashed, and the depression came in. Overnight they lost everything they had.

### B.) Fame is Fleeting

Fame. Fame is fleeting. When the Roman generals would have a great battle and ride into the city in triumph, all the people would turn out to see him. A guy would stand behind him in the chariot holding a royal leaf over his head and while the crowd is screaming and yelling, the guy is whispering in his ear "all glory is fleeting". Because it is.

Back in the fifties and sixties there were movie stars that everybody thought were the greatest. Today, the younger generation could not even name them.



And the ones we have today if the Lord doesn't come, fifty years from now, no one will remember them. Why? Because **fame is not where it is at.**

### C.) The Gladness of God

But these are the things that we think make us glad. But **the gladness of God based on the blessings of God, based on the word of God (Psalms 119), nobody can take that from you.**

The world is in a mess. In time if the Lord does not come, we are going to see it get tremendously worse. I don't know what it all holds for us, but it certainly does not look good. Everything in this world fundamentally is against everything that you believe. And the circle is shrinking that pretty soon, the bull's eye will be on you and me.

I heard Trump say something the other day. He said "this whole system is not just about me. They are not just after me. They are after you, and I am standing in the way of them getting to you". There is a lot of truth in that. The real problem is coming our way if what you believe in your heart if you are a Bible believer today. I don't say that to make you afraid. Perfect love casteth out fear (1 John 4:18). Greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world (1 John 4:4). I say that because **the sustaining power of the word of God can get us through anything.** Nobody can take that from you.

Psalms 45:7 says *Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.*

The oil of gladness will be the holy spirit in your life that brings the blessings in. The gladness of life will come from God. His goodness in our lives. We saw this in the early church, in Acts chapter two. He shows us a formula for a healthy church no matter what dispensation you are in.

Acts 2:46 "And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with **gladness and singleness of heart,**"

**Gladness comes from our singleness of heart focused on the right things.** So they had a oneness and unity. They break bread with each other. They took care of each other, loved each other, had fellowship with each other. Then they had gladness, but their gladness came through their singleness of heart through the oil of gladness. All this comes from standing in awe of the greatest book the world has ever seen.

A man said one time, if you took all the literature that had been written by man you could fill the space of about two hundred and fifty square miles and stack everything on it and it would go out past the orbit of the moon. That would be the accumulation of everything that man has written in the last six thousand years. Then the man said, but you could take one book, the word of God and you could judge everything written in those books by one book. That is a book to stand in awe of. The same power and majesty that God used in Psalms 33:6 *By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.* The same power that strung out the stars and galaxies and planets, the same power that created the earth from nothing is the same power that he has put inside of you today, if you are saved. And yet you have not tapped into it. **That book is worth standing in awe.**

## VII Psalms 4:8

In Verse 8 *I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, LORD, only makest me dwell in safety.*

Doctrinally you will see that this is the Jew in the tribulation period. He is running from the antichrist after the abomination of desolations as he runs into the wilderness. He is fleeing as the antichrist is in pursuit. Yet he is asking God to sustain them as they flee from the antichrist.

Inspirationally for you and me this will be the perfect peace from Isaiah 26:3 *Thou wilt keep [him] in perfect peace, [whose] mind [is] stayed [on thee]: because he trusteth in thee.* **The key here is where your mind is stayed.** *Let this mind be in you which is also in Christ Jesus* (Philippians 2:5) It goes back to the book, the word of God. He goes back in standing in awe of the word of God that he has given you, that will sustain every facet of your life, your family, your kids. Everything in your world. Philippians 4:7 *And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*

### A.) God Wants his Children to Dwell in Peace & Safety

I know we are human, and as humans we are frail. I understand that we all have our down time. I am not criticizing anything or anybody, because we are all in the same boat when it comes to our flesh. But I am telling you **God wants his children to dwell in peace and safety.** In a world where there is no peace. In a world where there is no safety. In a world where you can go to a football game and wear the wrong jersey, and someone will kill you. In a world where someone pulls up to a stop light and they are on their phone and the light turns green. If you honk your horn, they will get out and shoot you. This world is nuts! This world is totally against any morality that ever was in this world. There is no safety in government or in the United Nations. There is no safety in anything the world tells you. **There will be no peace.**

### B.) Faith is Looking Behind

We think of faith, and I have heard this all the time that faith is just to step out trust God. Like going up to the end of the Grand Canyon and stepping off and somehow, we think he is going to put a parachute on your back. That is so far from what the Bible really says faith is. Faith is not blindly looking ahead and crossing your fingers and just trusting that God he is going to bring you through. Faith is not something you get into blindly. You may have a course in life that is uncertain or a course in life where you are not sure which way to go. But you don't just step out and blindly leap out into whatever. Faith is not blindly looking ahead. **Faith is looking behind and seeing in every aspect of your life God has been there. He has got you through, sustained you and took care of you.** If he has taken care of you for the last 30-40 years of your life, he will take care of you tomorrow. That is faith! Faith isn't looking ahead; **faith is looking behind and seeing that he has always been there.**

I had a guy years ago that went into the ministry. He was a good kid, and he did well in the ministry. Everyone feels a little scared when they go into the ministry for the first time. About three weeks before he was to head out, he came into my office and was a total wreck.

The fear of the unknown had come into his life. He was leaving his friends, leaving the city and his church. He was leaving his comfort zone. Now he was going a long way away to get into a cold, hard dark world. He relapsed for a moment. It was totally understandable. He said, Bob I am scared. I am afraid I am not going to be able to do the job. I am really afraid I am going to mess this up. I said I have known you now for 10-14 years. I have watched God, give you, his salvation. I watched as God began to reveal his word to you. I watched as God has done everything in your life and has had your back in everything you tried to do. You are right where God wants you to be given where you have come from. The bottom line is this, don't worry about the unknown or being afraid. Because God has gotten you through the last fourteen years. **The same God that has gotten you to this point, is the same God that will take care of you tomorrow. This is where the perfect peace, and your mind needs to be stayed on him. It only comes from a book that you stand in awe of and look back and see the miracles.**

### C.) Remembering the Little & Big Blessings of God

I remember one-time years ago, I was going to preach at Jim Lake's church up in Vermont. I was flying from here to Chicago where I had a layover. I got in at four o'clock and had to preach at Jim's at six o'clock that night. So, I get into Chicago and walk up to my next flight and find out that the flight is overbooked. The lady says I am sorry Mr. Alexander, we don't have a seat for you. If we have some cancellations or something happens, I will try to get you on this flight. If we can't get you on this one, we can book you on another flight tonight at nine. I said to her that will not do me any good because I am supposed to preach at six o'clock tonight. She said I understand, but there is nothing I can do right now.

You know what I did? As I walked down there, I saw there was a really neat hotdog stand and I stopped and got me a hotdog. I didn't call Jim. I didn't get all upset at her. I just went down and got me a hotdog. These were big hotdogs! I mean these were man size hotdogs!! I got me two! I remember it like it was yesterday. I had about an hour before that flight left, so I sat down there and ate my hotdog. I said to the Lord, you know there is nothing I can do about this. If you want me to be at Jim's at six, that is your deal. I got it in my heart to go preach, that is my job. The airlines messed us all up, that is your job. I am going to enjoy this hotdog. By the way, thank you Lord, because this hotdog stand had sauerkraut. And there is nothing better than sauerkraut, mustard and ketchup on a hotdog. That is a blessing!!

So, I am walking down there, and I say to the Lord. Lord, you know there are about nine people ahead of me. I will do whatever you want me to do. So, I sat back down, and the lady came over the speaker and said Mr. Alexander will you come to desk please. I get there thinking she is going to book me on another flight. I get up there and she says two people have cancelled and I heard what you said about going to preach. You got a seat on this flight! I should have had four hotdogs. Praise the Lord! It is the little things like that! I will never forget what God did for me. You know why? Because there have been other times when I have been stuck places and God brings that back to my remembrance.

He will sustain you. He will take care of you. He didn't bring any of you this far in life to drop you off now. He will be there tomorrow just like he will be here today. If you are here today, or

somebody listening to me, and you are just trying to get it put together, God bless you. You are right where God wants you to be, and we are the church to help you do that. We just don't want to build a future for you (though we do), but a history for you. So, you can look at the future through the history of what God has done for you.

At Christmas we are all about gifts. Tonight, and tomorrow, you will all be excited to hang out with family and all the things that go along with it. You know what Christmas time really is? It's an illusion. Luke 2:14 says *Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men*. There is none of that here today. There will be no peace on earth, till you give glory to God in the highest. It is an illusion. In the Christian world we think the greatest gift is Christ and salvation to the world and that is true. But it doesn't stop there! In fact, that is where it starts. Because at Christmas the second greatest gift to man through salvation will be the peace and **the rest that God gives us as believers**. The world can never give us this. All the money in the world can't buy it. Friends can't help you get it. It alludes most of God's people. It is so much like God's people to accept the first gift of salvation but refuse the second one of the peace of God and the rest of God that he wants to give us.

## VIII. Summary

We are about to start a new year. I ask you this question. **What will be different this next year with us, than it was this last year?**

The Christian life is one of progression. It is one of levels, moving up and allowing God to do things for us. Sometimes we just get stagnant. We took the miracle of the new birth, but we never take the miracles of what he wants to do in our own lives. A lot of times it is because you don't know how to get them. That is why this church is so important. It will help you understand the cost that he paid for your salvation so that you can better understand the cost for you to serve him. It will finally bring to your life what is missing in most of God's people. Twenty or thirty years they have been saved, but they look at their life and there is nothing to stand in awe of.

**The miracles of God! Those are the things you can begin to build in your life.** What will be different this year than last year? Most certainly there is no peace in this world. **Peace comes from the word of God, the blessings of God and each of us deciding I am going to be different next year.** I am going to get in this church and get what I need from Bob. I am going to get people to help me. I am going to move in a direction that by this time next year maybe I can preach or get up and give a testimony. Maybe next year you will be able to tell others next year that are where you are at right now, what God has done for you. That will make a difference in their life because you allowed the word of God to make a difference in your life. Maybe next year you will be able to stand up before this congregation and everyone on YouTube going around the world and tell them how you stand in awe of what God has done in your life. **The gladness that only comes through the principals of the blessings of God. The sustaining of everything we are in a world that is totally against us. Who will speak good of us? God will!** His hand will be on your life and no one in this world will ever hurt you or stop you. I am not saying it won't get dark or bleak or black sometimes. That's okay. **The light of his countenance makes the darkness flee!**