

1. We Will Not Fear Anything Because God is Strong and Faithful (vv1-3)
  - a. God is our *refuge* and our *strength* an ever-present *help* in trouble
    - i. Refuge: Place of hiding from threat, a place to hide. This is talk of our weakness, our powerlessness against threats that are far greater than us to which we must fly from, run away, in desperation for rescue and help and protection.
    - ii. Strength: God Himself is our strength of protection, our answer to dangers. It is not that God strengthens us to fight for ourselves. He is our actual refuge, our actual strength, the power that moves and enables and fights for His people. He performs wonders. He performs normals. He alone is our hope.
    - iii. Ever-present: He is always found and never removed. His power is super-sufficient and super-present. He is always near to the fleeing child, for He cannot be shaken. He doesn't hide from His child, but wraps them up in His strength and power. He can always be cried to, appealed to, opening the doors of His sovereign gates to His child's cry.
    - iv. In Trouble: Threat, danger, vexation, confusion, fear
  - b. Therefore: "Upon this foundation", i.e. God's strength, willingness, nearness to protect us, keep us,
  - c. We will not fear
    - i. Even if the most solid foundations of my life, the earth or the mountains, the unchangeable “always theres” were to be shaken and fall away, like the very earth falling away under my feet, I will not fear.
      1. What former foothold is quaking, what loss or danger or anxiety overwhelms my balance and threatens to drop me into the abyss of despair?
      2. Where shall run when terror strikes my soul and the formerly consistent things quake with the unexpected mutability of disaster and tragedy?
    - ii. Though these immutable footholds were cast into the raging constantly changing sea, foaming and rolling and boiling, that which swallows up into darkness, even death, I will not fear.
      1. Sometimes I feel as though the things which I have relied up on and have held my soul up are swallowed up into the heart of the sea.
      2. This language is a disordering of the creative acts of God – from chaos of the deep waters God gathered the lands and heaped them up in firmness – but here we see the opposite
      3. Thus, even if the curse of creation with all its brokenness and alienation, whether from the created order of Nature or from the brokenness of the relational order of Society or Family, God is our refuge
  - d. The primary point of this stanza is this phrase in v2 - "We will not fear no matter the cataclysm"
    - i. Because God is our refuge, and He is God, we will not be afraid even if the very ground beneath us gives way, even if that ground that quakes is a mountain shifted and thrown into the deepest parts of the seas, and even if that deep should surge forth to make the other mountains tremble at their deeps surging upwards.
    - ii. He is the only immutable and unchanging One, always faithful and never falling away and nobody can throw Him into chaos
    - iii. In fact, when He speaks, the mountains melt, for He is the eternal, unchanging, infinite God

2. We Will Not Fear Anything Because God is With Us (4-7)
  - a. Move from a roaring sea which takes life to a streaming river which gives life
    - i. Life and gladness where God gathers a people to Himself and sets them before Him as His own
    - ii. City of God – Holy Tabernacle of the Most High
      1. Juxtaposition of the Most High/Holy Dwelling City and the raging nations and tottering kingdoms
      2. **God’s power and strength are immutable while all other kingdoms quake, shudder, totter, fall, and change**
        - a. What is your “city”?
        - b. What is your “people” to whom you consider your family, your citizenship, and your kingdom?
        - c. Of what people do you identify with, first and foremost, and is this kingdom unshakable, secure?
      3. When the LORD speaks, the earth itself dissolves before His awesome authority and power
      4. It is those in the city of God, drawn into the tabernacle of God by the blood of Jesus Christ alone; those who have been “**transferred from the domain of darkness into the kingdom of His beloved Son in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins**” (Col 1:13-15), are “**citizens of heaven**” (Phil 3:20), and are those for whom “who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works. (Tit 2:14)
  - b. This life-giving River flows the presence of God to His people
    - i. “The LORD of hosts”
      1. Power – YHWH over armies
    - ii. “is with us”
      1. Relational
        - a. God protects His people
        - b. God dwells with His people
        - c. He is the King over a citizenship; a General protecting His city, a fortress from assault
      2. “God of Jacob”
        - a. God covenants with His people – promises them His presence
          - i. The mention of Jacob is emphasizing God’s covenanting grace (Gen 28) of a land and a seed that would receive all the promises
          - ii. That seed is Christ, and that land is the City of God, the people of God gathered to worship Him as those redeemed by the blood of His Son
          - iii. These promises were not given because Jacob was a good man, in fact he was a deceiver, a cheat, a liar, and a coward, but because God is the faithful never-failing God
        - b. He chose His people according to His own will and purpose, for His own delight and joy, that He might make glad this citizenry *with His presence*
    - iii. It is God’s presence with His people that gives them aid, defense, protection, in the time of even cataclysmic upheaval
      1. Every other authority totters and reels, but God remains the same

2. His power exceeds all powers, for He is the only unchanging, uncreated, unsubsistent One
  3. And He covenants to a people!! Whoa!!
    - a. She will not be moved!
    - b. God brings help in morning light
      - i. We may be in battle, even take some losses
      - ii. But God will rescue His people at dawn
      - iii. We live in the night, awaiting still the dawn of the eternal age at the return of the King to make all things new
      - iv. Yet we hope because of His first coming, the gift of His Holy Spirit, the transformation of new birth and the down payment of our inheritance in Him
3. Come and See; Be Still and Know That He is God (8-11)
- a. No weapon that is raised **against God's people will prosper**
    - i. From the smallest to the largest, increasing in threat and strength, God wins
    - ii. No cosmic power (vv1-3), no social authority (vv4-7), and now no particular threat (vv8-11) will be able to stand before the God who brings peace by His sovereign might
    - iii. He *breaks, shatters, and burns* them – utterly destroys the threats against His people
  - b. Drawing Near (Coming close) to the LORD is the power to Be Still
    - i. Hebrew parallelism – “Come and See” is related to “Be still and Know”
    - ii. It is as we draw near to the Lord, to see His works and to know Him and His power and His goodness towards His children according to His sovereign grace, that we are stilled
      1. “Hush!” – The “be still” is almost like that of a sovereign Father calming the frightened heart of a child
      2. As we grow in our knowledge of God, not merely of facts, but of His character drawn upon our hearts, etched into the stony floors of the foundations of our trusts, we will rest and not fear
  - c. Seeing His works is the means to knowing Him so that we are still and without fear
    - i. We see His most glorious work at the cross of Christ Jesus, His sovereign Son sent to save sinners by sacrifice
    - ii. Immanuel – “God is with us”, which is why Jesus was named Jesus (Matt 1:20-23)
4. "The Holy Sovereign GOD WITH US" - Immanuel - Incarnation/Death/Resurrection
- a. What greater threat has ever shadowed your soul as the threat of sin, cosmic rebellion against God, not merely performed by our hands, but flowing forth from seeming endless fountain of darkness within our very souls?
  - b. What earth quaking is like that reality? What woe upon us can compare to the Holy One's sight of our mutiny which runs to the core of our heart? What hope is there for enemies of God?
  - c. There is JESUS! The hope for sinners and the greatest gift of grace in all Creation!
    - i. He is our refuge and our strength, our solid foundation for all provision no matter the mutability and ever-changing world around us or within us
    - ii. He is God with us, ever-present and always faithful to His covenant of grace, never fleeing and always pursuing us for our good

- iii. He is our champion who has defeated our foes and burned the chariots of the enemy by triumphing over them by the cross – even death itself cannot bear His sight, thus we will not fear
- d. Come! – you come at His invitation. He wants you to know Him.
- e. See! –you behold His holiness, His authority, His love, His mercy, His goodness, all expressed through the works that He has worked within history, particularly in the Son whom He sent!
  - i. As you see Jesus for who He is, you will exchange the yolk of your weary and heavy-laden souls, filled with anxiety, and take up His light yoke of rest
- f. Be still! – He is your Sabbath – the end of your works and your striving, your fears and your failures, your righteousness and your wisdom – for by Him, and to Him, and through Him are all things
  - i. 1 Cor 1:22-31 – God chose the foolish, ignoble, incapable – you – and made Jesus our wisdom from God, our righteousness, our holiness, and our purchaser of redemption, so that none of us can boast of any of these things, and only He is exalted!
- g. Know that I am God!
  - i. He will be exalted because of His sovereign power and gracious binding of Himself to His people
  - ii. He will be exalted because of His holy compassion and sovereign grace of the cross of Jesus Christ, where God bound Himself to sinners who close to Him by faith, so that He might be their refuge by dwelling with them forever and ever
  - iii. It is His power and His presence for us and with us that gives our hearts the encouragement to be fearless – We will not fear *whatever* happens, for our God is sovereign and He is with us for our good – He even gave His only Son that we might receive eternal life

Friends, if you have opened yourself up to the wrath of God, giving yourself to the enemy’s lies, pursuing your own sovereignty and the evil desires of your heart, and are looking for how to answer your conscience’s pleas for help, please hear the words of our brother, Jonathan Edwards (*On Knowing Christ*), as he preaches the glorious finished work of Jesus to us:

“O be persuaded to hide yourself in Christ Jesus! What greater assurance of safety can you desire? He has undertaken to defend and save you, if you will come to him: he looks upon it as his work; he engaged in it before the world was, and he has given his faithful promise which he will not break; and if you will but make your flight there, his life shall be for yours; he will answer for you, you shall have nothing to do but rest quietly in him; you may stand still and see what the Lord will do for you. If there be any thing to suffer, the suffering is Christ’s, you will have nothing to suffer; if there be any thing to be done, the doing of it is Christ’s, you will have nothing to do but to stand still and behold it.”

Brothers and sisters who have come to Christ Jesus for your salvation, I don’t **know what loss threatens your joy** this morning, what fear has assaulted your heart to plant its flag upon the hill of your greatest gladness, but I know the feeling of the earth reeling, that terror of my world being flung into the heart of the deep, dark sea of doom. And I hear from the Spirit through the lips of this Psalmist the secret to courage, the power to hope for the dawn’s light out of such darkness. Fly to Christ your Redeemer! Fly to the One who had all honor and power and dominion before Him in the presence of His Father and laid it aside for you. He delights in you! He loves you! He has drawn near, so near as to swallow your deserved death. Will He hold anything back? The Father sent Him by His grace, so do not fear, O beloved child. Listen to the Father’s “hush, my child” and **see that nobody and nothing can pull you from the eternal embrace of the arms** which created all that exists and rescued you from sin’s horror by the loving self-sacrifice of Immanuel, our Lord, Jesus.