

# “The Refuge of Love”

*Expressions #2 • Psalm 91*

## INTRODUCTION

As we study the Psalms in this summer sermon series we will discover a broad spectrum of emotions expressed. In Psalm 91, the Psalmist declares his trust in God and His promises. Although many of the threats: (snares, arrows and pestilence), may be foreign to us, we certainly can relate to his desperation, fear and need for refuge. God offers us the same loving commitment and protection no matter what the specific challenges we face. And we can draw the same comfort from Him through this Psalm.

### ***Ice Breaker (Optional):***

If you were to summarize your current situation in terms of a weather forecast, would it be sunny, cloudy, stormy or ...?

## Study Questions (45 MIN)

### **His Refuge**

#### **Q1. Read Psalm 91:1-2; Psalm 62:6-7**

The Psalmist begins by stating that, if we dwell or remain in God's presence, we will find rest. The circumstances that surround us can draw us away from that place of rest. What action does the Psalmist take in verse 2 that draws him back into the presence of God? Our trust in God can be increased as we recognize just who it is we trust in. What are the various titles by which God is named in these first two verses of Psalm 91? What titles of God fill you with the assurance of God's refuge (see Psalm 62 for example)? What are some specific instances that cause you to seek God for refuge?

### **His Protection**

#### **Q2. Read Psalm 91:4-8; 2 Corinthians 1:4**

Psalm 91:4-8 continues the theme of God's protection. If David is the author of this psalm, as most believe, he certainly had experienced first-hand, the protection of God in dire circumstances. Which of these has caused you anxiety in the past; a sense of dread (terror), physical threats (arrows), illness or disease (pestilence) or financial ruin (destruction)? How was God your protection in those circumstances? Is there someone in your group who needs to hear how God protected you in order to receive hope and comfort in their current situation?

### **His Invitation**

#### **Q3. Read Psalm 91:9-13; Matthew 4:5-7; John 16:33;**

As we consider this passage of the Psalm we find a great promise, but we need to examine it along side the whole counsel of God, rather than in isolation. In Matthew 4:5-7, Satan uses this scripture to tempt Jesus in the desert but leaves out a key portion (Ps 91:11b). Jesus takes his response from Dt 6:16 “...you shall not put the Lord your God to the test” which refers to one of the Lord's prohibitions in order for Israel to prosper in the Promised Land (Dt 6:1). In this sense, ‘testing the Lord’ would be a purposeful act of disobedience that tests or presumes God's mercy and grace. What then does this tell us about how we are to count on God's promise to ‘guard you in all your ways’? How does John 16:33 describe how we find peace amidst tribulation?

### **His Commitment**

#### **Q4. Read Psalm 91:14-16; Romans 8:28; John 17:3; Romans 10:13; 1 John 3:16**

This Psalm concludes by listing actions God takes in response to ours. What actions and responses do you find in verses 14 and 15, and how do they parallel the promises of Romans 8:28, John 17:3, and Romans 10:13? How would you describe the role that love plays in this passage (Ps 91:14, 1 Jh 3:16)?

## Wrap-Up

There will be times in all of our lives that we need a place of refuge. God offers us just that. By His very nature, revealed in His names and titles, we see that God is more than able to keep us safe. But, to enjoy that protection we are invited to remain in His presence, remembering His faithfulness to protect us in the past and trusting Him with our future. God's commitment to us is grounded in His love for us and ours for Him. When we love, acknowledge and call on Him, He responds with abundance and keeps us safely in His care.

### **Memory Verse**

*Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty.*  
*Psalm 91:1 NIV*

## Prayer (20 MIN)

*Ask your group to pray for you regarding one area where you can apply this study in your life: \_\_\_\_\_*  
*Pray for your group members' needs: \_\_\_\_\_*

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*Challenge: Do a search in the Psalms for all of the verses that refer to God as a refuge and let God use them to speak to you personally.*

Psalm 91:1-2 NIV - 1 Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty. 2 I will say of the LORD, "He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust."

Psalm 62:6-7 ESV - 6 He only is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall not be shaken. 7 On God rests my salvation and my glory; my mighty rock, my refuge is God.

Psalm 91:4-8 ESV - 4 He will cover you with his pinions, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness is a shield and buckler. 5 You will not fear the terror of the night, nor the arrow that flies by day, 6 nor the pestilence that stalks in darkness, nor the destruction that wastes at noonday. 7 A thousand may fall at your side, ten thousand at your right hand, but it will not come near you. 8 You will only look with your eyes and see the recompense of the wicked.

2 Corinthians 1:4 ESV - 4 who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.

Psalm 91:9-13 ESV - 9 Because you have made the LORD your dwelling place-- the Most High, who is my refuge-- 10 no evil shall be allowed to befall you, no plague come near your tent. 11 For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways. 12 On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone. 13 You will tread on the lion and the adder; the young lion and the serpent you will trample underfoot.

Rea Matthew 4:5-7 in your Bible

John 16:33 ESV - 33 I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world."

Psalm 91:14-16 ESV - 14 "Because he holds fast to me in love, I will deliver him; I will protect him, because he knows my name. 15 When he calls to me, I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will

rescue him and honor him. 16 With long life I will satisfy him and show him my salvation."

Romans 8:28 ESV - 28 And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.

John 17:3 ESV - 3 And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.

Romans 10:13 ESV - 13 For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

1John 3:16a NIV 16a This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us.

**Prayers Con't:**