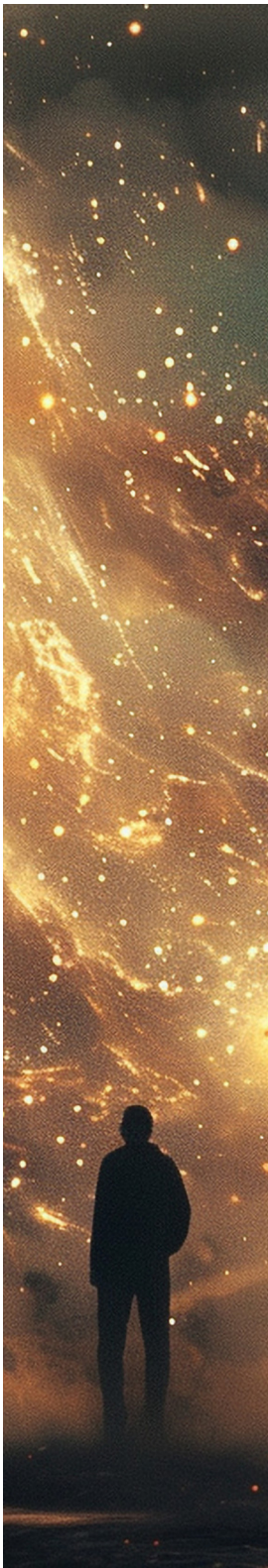


May 2026

THE WINE PRESS

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THE WINE PRESS



Pressing into Truth, Pouring out His Grace

May 2026

Our Unshakable Hope

The headlines have been overwhelming—conflict in the Middle East, political turmoil, and a steady undercurrent of fear and uncertainty that feels difficult to escape.

In this issue of Wine Press, we want to look beyond the chaos and remember that our security is not found in a calmer world, but in our unchanging Savior. The Word doesn't promise that the world will find peace, or that the strife will cease—in fact, we know that “in the world we will have tribulation.”

But we can stand firm, knowing that even as the world around us grows darker, this world is not our home. We are pilgrims here, just passing through, with our eyes fixed on the hope of heaven. This hope steadies us when the ground beneath us is shaking. It gives us courage to face the future and reminds us that this moment, however turbulent, is not the end of the story. So let's lift up our eyes and remember: “The eternal God is our refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.”

The Wine Press is a thoughtfully curated collection of articles from across the web, compiled to inspire, encourage, and deepen your walk with our King and Savior, Jesus Christ. All articles remain the property of their respective authors to whom we joyfully give full credit and our appreciation for sharing their wisdom and experiences with us. May these words uplift your spirit, strengthen your faith, and draw you into ever deeper communion with the God of all grace.

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The World that Wants Peace

By Dr. Martin Lloyd Jones

December 19, 1965

And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.

And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all. (Acts 4:32-33)

The world, and mankind throughout its long history, has been seeking peace, fellowship, brotherhood among men. The world is seeking it now as much as it's ever done. But what is so obvious is that the world can never produce this. If it could, it would have done so.

In this description of the early church you see the very thing that the world has been looking for and cannot find. But this is what you always have when you get true Christian people.

Why Does the World Lack Peace?

Let's ask the first obvious and fundamental question, why is it that the world lacks peace? Why does mankind go on killing itself, dividing itself up, building these terrible armaments?

There's only one answer to that question and it's the answer that you find in this book called the Bible. All men's troubles are due to his wrong relationship with God. .

“There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.” (Isaiah 57:21)

However advanced, however developed, however learned, however wealthy, however important nations may be, they will never know peace while they're in a wrong relationship to God. All men's troubles result from the fact that he's in a state of sin and in a state of rebellion against God.

Man was created by God in such a way that he can only function truly and successfully and happily as long as he obeys God's laws. Man's happiness always depends upon his relationship to God.

Look at a man like David, you see him rejoicing and crying out, “The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want!” But then you read the 51st Psalm, and you find him in a condition of wretchedness, misery and unhappiness: “Create in me a clean heart, oh God, and renew a right spirit within me.” And what makes the difference? It's always David's relationship to God.

When David obeys God, he sings the 23rd Psalm, and when he disobeys and rebels, and is down in the depths he writes Psalm 51.

This is the universal law, man can only find happiness and peace and joy to the extent that he obeys the laws of God.

God is the Lord, God is the master, God is the governor of the universe, and man was made to obey the laws of God, and if he'd done so, the world would have continued to be paradise and full of peace.

But man rebelled against this. Man felt that this was robbing him of something of his greatness. That's the original sin, that's the original fall of man, man claiming for himself the right of government and of judgment and of ordering his own affairs. Man setting himself up as an autonomous being, no longer recognizing the supreme governor and the final law, but every man setting himself up as a governor and as a lawgiver. In other words the world is in its trouble because instead of being God-centered, Man has become self-centered. The moment man became self-centered, he lost his happiness, he lost everything.

And the whole world is divided. Men divide themselves up according to their ability or lack of ability. They divide themselves up according to the color of their skins, they divide themselves up in the amount of money that they possess. And so the world is full of jealousy and of envy, full of malice and spite and bitterness and hatred

So that is why the world is in its present tragic, unhappy state. The politicians, the statesmen, and the philosophers don't begin to see this, because they never start with this fundamental question of man in his relationship to God.

That's why there is no peace, that's why there's no fellowship, that's why there's no unity.

The Need for a New Heart

Poor old H.G. Wells. He believed that you could banish war, and that education would do away with war. He said, "It's only primitive people who fight. Educated people won't fight because

they can think and see what they're doing, and meet at the conference table. Then all will be well and they will all agree to banish war and there will never be another war in the long history of the human race. It's only a question for the mind, they say, it's only a question of applying reason to the problems and the perplexities of mankind. They think that if only all the nations would destroy their armaments, you'd have peace.

But you wouldn't. You can destroy all your armaments, you won't have peace, you won't have peace in homes, in families, you won't have peace between classes.

They never realize that the cause of every kind of warfare, every quarrel, every fight, every lack of peace and fellowship is always due to a wrong heart, not a wrong mind, but a wrong heart. The whole problem with man ultimately is in his heart.

Jesus: The Prince of Peace

James wrote, "The fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace." James 3:18

Peter is saying that if a man sows righteousness, he will have peace, it's the fruit of righteousness. But the tragedy of the statesmen and the world apart from Christ is that they're always trying to sow peace and they're never producing it.

Here is the great central message of the whole of the Bible from beginning to end. Why is man not at peace? The answer is because he's not righteous. He can be very clever, very learned, very wise. He can advance in scientific knowledge, he can do so many things that the modern world is doing, but there's no peace.

Peace is always the result of righteousness. The root that produces peace is righteousness and truth and

justice and purity. But the world has forgotten God. And that is why all the world's attempts at peace must inevitably fail.

But there is a peace that is possible. Christ alone can give peace. He alone produces fellowship and brotherhood and all the things that the world is longing for, but longing in vain. Jesus came into the world in order to give us this peace. He is the Prince of Peace and He is also the King of righteousness.

“Righteousness and peace have kissed each other, they've met together.” (Psalm 85:10)

They have met together in this one blessed person, Jesus of Nazareth, who was born in the stable in Bethlehem. “Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace. Hail the Son of righteousness.”

The whole purpose of the incarnation of the Son of God was to bring in this reign of peace. He taught men to love one another as no one else has ever done, but he didn't stop at teaching. And we must never forget this, his teaching alone will never produce peace.

How does Jesus make peace? By His death and by His resurrection, it's the only way. Teaching alone can't do it. Man's own nature, man's relationship to God is wrong and that is why there is no peace.

There is no hope for peace until man is reconciled and restored to God, and there's only one way for it, and it was taken when the Son of God went to the cross on Calvary's hill. He makes peace by the blood of His cross.

Jesus Gives us a New Heart

Jesus not only procures the pardon of my sin and clears my guilt, He gives me a new life and a new nature. He gives me a new heart.

“This is the condemnation that light is come into the world, but men love darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil.”

The world prefers to be drinking and indulging in sex rather than studying this, the world doesn't want this kind of life, it really despises Jesus of Nazareth and the way in which He lived, the world wants what it's doing in the world today and it laughs at and ridicules Jesus.

What man needs is a new heart. A heart that loves the light and hates the darkness, instead of loving the darkness and hating the light. And until mankind has a new heart, it will never have peace.

But in Christ Jesus, there's a new heart possible. Jesus came down and took on human nature in order that He might found a new humanity. He knew that we need to be renewed, he knew that we need new hearts, new natures, new lives, new everything. He took on human nature in order that joining it to the divine we can be born again.

The gospel doesn't stop at forgiveness of sins, there's a new birth. As Jesus was born in Bethlehem, you and I can be born again, born of the spirit, born of God, born as the children of God, become partakers of the divine nature.

Man needs to have a nature out of which will grow the fruit of the spirit. Love and joy and peace and long suffering, able to bear with others.

And the moment the first Christians were all filled with the spirit, this is what happened. “The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul.” They hadn't always been like that, they've been quarreling, they've been envying, they belong to different nations, and they were like all the rest of us by nature.

But they're welded into one, and there is



this amazing understanding and this generosity and help and love and all giving for others and sacrifice, here is peace, here is fellowship, here is brotherhood.

Why? Because these are new people. They're born again. They're filled with the Spirit. They've got new natures and new hearts.

This Life is a Pilgrimage

When we are born again, we come to see that this life is but a journey, it's but a pilgrimage. We are all but strangers and pilgrims, travelers and journeymen.

As Jesus came into the world from Glory, passed through it and went back to the Glory, so we all are sent into this world by God, not to stay here, we are meant for a glorious heritage.

We are traveling the same journey together. Christians are people who say together in unison, "Here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come."

We look at this world as simply a place of transition. This is only temporary, this is only passing. We're all one, and we're all making for the same eternal home, we're all looking forward to the same glorious inheritance. We see that

this is not only a passing world, but also an evil world.

The world of which you can always say, "Change and decay in all around I see."

We are slipping out of this world and it is passing away. The world and its kingdoms and its glory is all passing, it's all vanishing.

And so, it is inevitable, the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul. Neither said any of them that all the things which he possessed was his own, but they had all things common and all the rest.

You see they know who Jesus is, they know why He came, they see the meaning of His death and resurrection. They know that He's seated there and waiting for them and preparing a place for them.

They belong to the same God, the same father, the same Savior, and they're making for the same country. And they're going to be joined in the same great inheritance.

Watch the full sermon here:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=27_N1Itu-kw

Confident in Hope

By Tim Keller

Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. My Father's house has many rooms... I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am." — John 14:1–3

John 14 begins with, "Do not let your heart be troubled," and ends with, "Do not let your heart be troubled or afraid." Why is Jesus saying this? Because trouble comes. In John 16:33 Jesus says, "In this world you will have trouble." Because you are going to have trouble all the time, He wants to give you something so that your heart is not troubled, something that will give you confidence and strength so the troubles of life does not overthrow you.

In these first three verses he gives us one thing without which you cannot face life in an untroubled way: he says, "I go to prepare a place for you."

Home

Consider the power of the idea of home. Why is homelessness so uniquely psychologically devastating? I am not talking about the hunger or the bad health that come with homelessness. Homelessness itself is devastating.

Paul Tournier, a Swiss counselor and doctor, wrote a book called *A Place for*

You. He said that children who do not have a good sense or memory of ever having had a home where they were completely safe and completely loved, develop an inability to attach, a restlessness that goes with them throughout life.

There is nothing on earth that actually satisfies the desire for home. Home is not just a house. Home is a place where everything fits, where things suit you, where you are accepted, where you belong, where you come as you are, always. Where you do not have to put on a face or adopt a role. It is a place of deep rest, of deep well-being and peace. It is harbor. It is home.

Jesus knows that the men he is talking to are apostles. The word apostle means "sent." Sent out. He knows every one of them is going to wander, just ahead of danger, and eventually all but one will die a horrible death—thrown to wild animals, sawn in half. Except John, the author of this gospel, who died in exile away from home. What is Jesus going to do that will enable them to go into that kind of life untroubled?

He says: even if you had a wonderful home with a big fire and a window looking at the mountains or the sea, that would never satisfy your longings. But this will. "I am going to prepare that place for you right now." He does not

say, “If you live a good enough life, maybe I will let you come to my home.” He says, “I am going to prepare your place right now. If you are a disciple of mine, you have got that place. The place you have been longing for all your life. It is there. It is reserved. It is guaranteed. I have got it ready for you.” When you get there, you will say what the character at the end of the Narnia Chronicles said: “I have come home at last. I belong here. This is the country I was looking for all my life, though I never knew it.”

Jesus is getting these men ready for terrible suffering; the rest of their lives are going to be terrible. He says, “I am going to give you something that will enable you to face life untroubled.” The knowledge that there really is a place for you, and Jesus has it in His keeping.

Heaven

Where is this place? It is heaven. Jesus says, “My Father’s house has many rooms in it, and I am preparing a place for you there.” The Father’s house exists now. Where is it? It is with the Father, our Heavenly Father, and it exists now. He says, “I am going to it now.” So he is not just talking about something in the future, though we get to it in the future. It exists right now—that is heaven.

We learn two things about it. One, it is the Father’s house. Two, it is a place of love. Because He does not just say, “I want you to go to heaven and I will be traveling, but every so often I will see you there.” He says, “that you also may be with Me where I am.” What makes it heaven is that you may be with Him.

Jesus is saying, “I do not just want you to be untroubled at the prospect of My death. I want you to be untroubled at the prospect of your death.” That is one of the great things he gives to his disciples—the ability to not be afraid of death. The minute you believe in him,

your place is ready. It is guaranteed. It is in heaven. Which means: when you die, the worst thing that can happen to you on this earth is actually the best thing. The darkest thing—that you get killed or you die—is actually the most brilliant thing.

This is why the great Chicago preacher Dwight Moody, when he was dying, said: “Pretty soon you are going to read in the newspapers that Dwight Moody is dead. Don’t believe it. I will be more alive than I have ever been.” When you die, you do not leave the light and go into the darkness. You leave this relatively dark world and go into the real world of light and love. The poet George Herbert wrote that death used to be an executioner, but the gospel makes him just a gardener. What does a gardener do? He takes seeds, plants them, and they become flowers. All death can do to a Christian is make you infinitely greater than you are now.

A Christian does not have to face death with dread. Jesus says, “Let not your heart be troubled.” Because when you go through that dark door of death, you come into a world of love.

Jonathan Edwards preached a sermon called “Heaven Is a World of Love.” He says, think about what makes any place great—it is love. Stop thinking about thrones and harps. Maybe there are thrones and harps and streets paved with gold; that is not what makes a home a home. There are plenty of castles in the world with thrones and harps. It does not make them home. What makes a home a home is love.

Christians uniquely believe in a triune God, a God who in one person, in one God, has had three persons from all eternity knowing and loving each other. Edwards writes that the three persons of the Godhead “are united in infinitely dear and incomprehensible mutual love. There is then an eternal mutual holy energy between the Father and the Son,



a pure holy act whereby the deity becomes nothing but an infinite and unchangeable act of love.” They pour love into one another in degrees of unimaginable joy and power, making God a fountain of love.

So what makes heaven a home? The Bible does not say heaven is a stadium where God addresses us, or even an auditorium where you hear God preach. Heaven is a home where you get God’s embrace. Edwards goes on: “In heaven this fountain of love is set open without any obstacle to hinder access to it. So it overflows in streams and rivers of love and delight, enough for all to drink at and to swim in, yea, so as to overflow the world, as it were, with a deluge of love.” Our joy and glory will multiply exponentially forever, with inconceivable ardor of heart. Heaven is a world of love. “I want you to be with me where I am,” Jesus says—not, “I want you to go to this great place with great

views and a throne and gold and harps,” but, “I want you to be with me.”

The older you get, the more you are going to see people go down. Loved ones, family members, people your age. Not so much in your twenties, more in your thirties, more in your forties, more in your fifties, and on and on. Have you got this in your heart? Or are you troubled?

Hell

Yes, there is a home, and yes, it is in heaven—but the road to it is through hell. Not for you, though. Because Jesus says twice, “I go to prepare a place for you.” It is so easy to read this and forget the context: this is the night before he is about to die. He is not saying, “I am just going to pop over to heaven and get your bed ready.” When he says, “I go,” what does he mean? He is going to the cross. He is going to die for you. That is why he does not say, “If you live a good

enough life, maybe I will let you come stay with me in my place.” He says, “I am going to secure a place for you.”

Why does Jesus have to die to do that? Adam and Eve. What was their punishment? They turned away from God and said, “We want to be our own saviors, our own lords, our own masters.” What was the greatest punishment? Homelessness. They were cast out of their home.

You may say that was terrible. Yes, but it was also perfectly just. In fact, it was even natural—because the wages of sin is loneliness. Do you not know that about yourself? The more selfish you are, the more proud you are, the more sinful you are, the more alienated you are from other people. The more you sin, the more it tends to push you away from people and push people away from you. The natural and right punishment for sin is homelessness, is loneliness.

Jesus took that punishment. Jesus said, “Foxes have holes, birds have nests, the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.” He was a wanderer. When Jesus died, He was crucified outside the gate, outside his home. Was He embraced by the Father? No. He cried, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” He took the exile we deserve, the homelessness we deserve, so that we could get a home, so that we could be brought in.

Of course we still die, but we know that Jesus bore the real weight of death, the real separation. Now death only means reunion, not separation.

Donald Gray Barnhouse, a preacher at Tenth Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, on his way to his wife’s funeral with his children, was trying to talk to them—they were not very old yet—about death and the Christian view of it. At one point he looked over (he was driving) and said to his son, “We

just passed through the shadow of that truck next to us. Would you rather be hit by the shadow of the truck, or by the truck?” His son said, “I would rather be hit by the shadow.” Barnhouse said, “Well, Jesus Christ was really hit by the truck. He really experienced what death is—the homelessness, the exile. And now, when we die, when your mom died, she only experienced the shadow of the truck, because she is with God and with everyone else.”

The Watchtower

When Jesus says, “Do not let your heart be troubled,” in some ways what he is giving us is a watchtower. A watchtower was where you put people to see the lay of the land. Imagine you are up in the watchtower and there is a battle going on in the city below. From down in the city, it looks really bad. But from the watchtower, you see reinforcements coming, and you realize: we are going to win. Jesus is saying, you need to get up in that watchtower and realize: it is going to be fine.

Have you got that tower? Do you know what it is like to get up there? Remember that Jesus says what makes heaven Heaven is, “I will be there.” And even now, to a great degree, He is saying, “Have fellowship with Me. Know My love. I am your shelter from the stormy blast and your eternal home.” The more you know Him, the more you get up in that tower and realize everything is going to be all right. Do not let your heart be troubled.

Full Sermon:
<https://podcast.gospelinlife.com/e/confident-in-hope/>

What it Means to Walk with God

By Rick Warren

Noah was a righteous man, the only blameless person living on earth at the time, and he walked in close fellowship with God.” Genesis 6:9 (NLT)

There’s only one way to get the kind of courage it took for Noah to keep going after receiving such a big dream from God: He had to stay close to God.

Hebrews 11:7 says, “Faith led Noah to listen when God warned him about the things that he could not see” (GW).

Noah heard God speak. Do you ever wonder why you don’t hear God speak? You hear God by getting near to God. You can’t hear God when you’re far away. You’ve got to get near to God.

That means you spend time with God every day—reading and studying the Bible, talking to him in prayer, being quiet, and just listening to God.

The Bible says that Noah “walked faithfully with God” (Genesis 6:9 NIV). Another translation of this verse says that Noah “walked in close fellowship with God” (NLT). When you walk with someone, that means you are near to them.

Walking with someone implies several other things. First, it implies affiliation. In other words, you’re not ashamed to be with them. You’re not worried about

telling people you follow Jesus.

Second, the Bible tells us in Amos 3:3 that two people cannot walk together unless they agree. When you walk with God, you agree to go where He wants to go and do what He wants you to do. You are obedient to his will.

Third, walking with God means you are in alignment. If you’re walking with God, you’ll be out of step with the world. You’ll do things differently than other people because God’s way is countercultural.

Walking with God is affiliation, agreement, and alignment with His Word and His will. Noah walked with God, and he wasn’t afraid of disapproval or rejection or criticism or even a worldwide flood. He knew that when you’re walking with God, you’re near to God, and there is nothing to fear.

<https://www.pastorrick.com/current-teaching/devotional/what-it-means-to-walk-with-god-2026>

The Everlasting Arms

By Charles Spurgeon

“Underneath are the everlasting arms.”
— Deuteronomy 33:27

This short passage is found in the midst of a mass of gold, sentences containing the richest treasures of truth. All this spiritual wealth is the heritage of the people of God, — not only of his typical people to whom those words were spoken, but to his real people, the true seed of Abraham, those who are the believing children of the father of all believers. If you are trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ, you may take these precious words home to yourself, and you may live upon them; you may eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and rejoice in all the refreshment that they bring to your spirit.

In these verses notice how near God is said to be to His people. He is described as being above us, arching us over with his divine power: “There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky.” Faith can hear the tramp of the celestial cavalry above our heads. We who trust in the Lord are always safe, for the angels of God are looking down upon us from the battlements of heaven, ready to show themselves strong on our behalf as soon as their presence is needed by us.

Then, our text tells us of God beneath us. As He is above us in the heavens, so underneath us are the everlasting arms.

The next sentence shows us God before us: “and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee;” and the remaining verses of the chapter represent Him as being all around us, so that we are encompassed with God; not only with His presence, with which He fills heaven, and earth, and all deep places, but with the glorious presence of His mighty love. He is above, beneath, before, and all around us; He never forsakes us, for in Him we live, and move, and have our being. Let us rejoice, therefore, in our Lord’s nearness.

Attacks from Underneath

“Underneath” is the point of mysterious assault. We look for the attacks of the powers of darkness from underneath. There are many of God’s children who are often sorely vexed by Satan, yet they do not know that it is the devil who is troubling them. They blame themselves for thoughts that are none of their own, but which come up from the infernal pit, like smoke and sparks from that dread lower world. Satan not only works through the world, and through the flesh, but he has modes of personal attack, fiery darts, false accusations and foul insinuations, which come only from him. By all these he assails Christians, and brings us to a stand, so that sometimes we know not what to do. Then comes in this gracious assurance: “Underneath are the everlasting arms.”

Against this terrible foe, whose darts are so painful and deadly, God has been pleased to set a shield; and he puts underneath us His everlasting arms! You may be tempted by Satan, but it shall only be in a measure; God will not let him put forth all his diabolical strength. Underneath you, in thy worst attacks from Satan, shall be the everlasting arms of the Lord himself.

The Place of Daily Pilgrimage

Note a second meaning of this word “underneath” is the place of our daily pilgrimage. To the Israelites, “underneath” was the burning sand of the terrible wilderness; sometimes, “underneath” were the fiery serpents, and all manner of evil things, so that their march towards Canaan was a continual trial to them. “But,” saith God to his people, “though you see nothing underneath but ever-burning sands, let faith see underneath the everlasting arms.” Some of you go forth to your daily labors, and you find the place of your service to be a real wilderness, full of trial and everything that is unpleasant to you. Yet look again, with eyes touched with heaven’s eye-salve, and instead of seeing the grinding toil, and the daily trial, you will begin to see that God is in it all, and “underneath are the everlasting arms.” I think, therefore, that our text applies not only to the point of mysterious assault, but to the place of daily pilgrimage and toil.

The Perilous Descent

Do you not think that this word “underneath” also relates to the place of perilous descent? There are times in a man’s life when he has to come down. It is not a very easy matter to go down the hill safely. Some persons have proved that it is difficult to grow old gracefully; but to the Christian it ought not to be impossible or unusual to grow old graciously. Still, there are difficulties

about that coming down the hill of life, — coming down in a very material sense, perhaps; coming down as to your mental powers, being conscious of losing your former influence over your fellows; coming down in general repute, through no fault of your own, but through circumstances of which you are not the master.

All this is very trying to human nature. You know that, on the way to heaven, there are many Hill Difficulties; and brave spirits rather enjoy climbing to the top of them. We like a craggy path, hard and rough, where we can keep on looking upward all the way even if we have to scramble on our hands and knees.

There is something pleasant in going up in that fashion; but it is when going down into the Valley of Humiliation that we are apt to slip. We do not like going down; and, as many horses fall at the bottom of the hill, so I believe that many people trip at the end of a trial when they think it is nearly over, and they have no need to look so carefully to their feet.

Well now, dear friends, if any of you are going down the hill, I think the text comes in very sweetly: “Underneath are the everlasting arms.” You cannot go so low but that God’s arms of love are lower still. You get older and feebler; your ears are failing, your eyes are growing dim; but “underneath are the everlasting arms.” By-and-by, unless the Lord speedily returns, you will have to die, and you will come down very low then; but still it will be true “underneath are the everlasting arms.”

Your Cornerstone

We think we are reposing in Christ; but are we really doing so? We have a measure of joy and peace; does it come really through believing in Jesus, or is it a delusion of the flesh? We have come

forward so far in the heavenly way; but are we really going towards heaven, or is it all a mistake?"

It is a good thing, occasionally to look underneath. Examine your foundations, see what your corner-stones are, for if you should be building on the sand, then, in the time of storm, your fine building will be all swept away. It is a grand thing if we can find this text to be true: "Underneath are the everlasting arms."

I dig through my experience, and "underneath are the everlasting arms." I question my joys, I examine myself about my sorrows; but do I come down on the purposes of God, the immutable faithfulness of the Most High, the eternal verities revealed in Scripture; do I come down upon the everlasting arms? If so, I am resting where the whole universe may rest; I am resting on a faithful God, and I need not be afraid. Happy shall you be if, diving to the very depths, you can say, "Yes, underneath are the everlasting arms."

Perhaps some of us are in sore perplexity; we cannot understand the Lord's providential dealings with us. He does not always tell us the reason for his actions; we might not understand it if He did, but we may rest assured that He is working out purposes of infinite love. He ceases not to care for us even when things appear to be at their very worst. I am not so old as some, but I am old enough to have gone through fire, and through water, and I am here to testify that I have not been burned by the one, nor drowned by the other.

Cannot many of you say the same? In your sorest trials, and in your hottest furnaces, has He not been specially present with you? What His Word assures you is gloriously true: "Underneath are the everlasting arms." Go deeper down and you shall come on this solid foundation, that God is

working out for you infinite and eternal blessedness by these light afflictions which are but for a moment.

The everlasting arms are there; and that means, first of all, that God himself is close to us, guaranteeing the eternal safety of all those who trust in him. This is our joy and comfort, that God is with us. What strength it gives to faith to believe that God is present! Underneath is God himself!

The divine power of the Eternal Godhead is always at work for you! The arms of God are busy on your behalf. Whatever changes there may be in this world, and in the great universe of which it forms a part, there shall be no change in the infinite resolve of God to bless his people, and preserve them even to the end. Be of good comfort, and say to yourself, "At the bottom of everything that happens to me, there is the immutable purpose of God, and God himself working it out."

Having trusted God in the person of His dear Son, having laid the whole weight of your eternal interests upon him whom God hath revealed to be your Saviour, you may leave them there in perfect safety, without a moment's care or anxiety. God's everlasting arms must carry out God's eternal purposes. Not one of His promises can fall to the ground, for "God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?" It is God himself who undertakes to bear thee up, and bear thee through; therefore, rest thou assured that He will do it.

<https://www.spurgeon.org/resource-library/sermons/the-everlasting-arms/#flipbook/>

Trusting God for His Unfailing Strength

By Ernie Godshall

Psalm 46 is designed to strengthen our confidence in our God as the absolute Ruler of all of history. It's written for a time when everything is upside down, the future is uncertain, evil is exalted, good is scoffed at, lies are spewed out, enemies hate truth, even the government is lying to us. We need this Psalm for our times when there is so much uncertainty in the world.

This was one of Martin Luther's favorite Psalms from which he wrote the great Reformation hymn, A Mighty Fortress Is Our God. Spurgeon quoted Luther as saying, "We sing this Psalm to the praise of God, because God is with us, and powerfully and miraculously preserves and defends His church and His Word, against all fanatical spirits, against the gates of hell, against the implacable hatred of the devil, and against all the assaults of the world, the flesh, and sin."

Luther was fearless before God's enemies. They warned him not to go to Worms to stand before the Pope and the Emperor. They urged him to remember what they did to Hus. He said he'd go to Worms even if there were as many devils as tiles on the housetops. His God was the mighty fortress we're looking at in Psalm 46.

I have a few Worst-Case Scenario books. How to escape from a giant octopus –

peel the suckers from your body. How to survive an elephant stampede – climb a tree or lay down. Elephants tend not to step on human bodies. How to escape an angry gorilla – don't look him in the eyes. This Psalm is God's Worst-Case-Scenario Psalm for His people. It tells us how to face trouble with absolute fearlessness, even when our entire world is coming apart and we have every reason to be filled with fear and dread.

Whether nature is going berserk, or you're concerned about the possibility of entering World War III, this Psalm says God's people can face worst-case scenarios fearlessly like David's mighty men did when faced with ridiculous odds. So let's learn from Psalm 46 to treasure God for His unfailing strength.

Our Protection

Therefore will not we fear because of God's protection, power and presence.

Psalms 46:1-3, God is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change And though the mountains slip into the heart of the sea; Though its waters roar and foam, Though the mountains quake at its swelling pride. Selah.

Here's the reason we don't have to fear

even when all of creation is going back to chaos: “God is our refuge and strength” God is exceedingly present to help us in tight places in the nick of time, just when we desperately need Him. Notice this is a statement of fact. God IS our refuge and strength. And the best of all, God is OUR refuge and strength.

“OUR” refers to His children, those who placed their faith in Jesus Christ. Just as He was the God of Abraham, Job, Daniel, those three Hebrews facing Nebuchadnezzar’s fire, John the Baptist, Paul, and Luther, Calvin, John Knox, and all those Reformers, and Adoniram Judson, Jim Elliot, and all of God’s people in this hostile world, He is our Refuge and Strength.

A refuge is where you run when the storm or trouble heads your way. Strength is what you and I need in our weakness. Jesus assured us, “My grace is sufficient for you, because my strength is made perfect in your weakness.” Like Paul and all of God’s people, we don’t have the strength in ourselves to live fearlessly in this world. God is our refuge, place of protection, our strength, and our power to face whatever comes our way. We can stand like David before Goliath or any of his enemies.

Present Help in Trouble

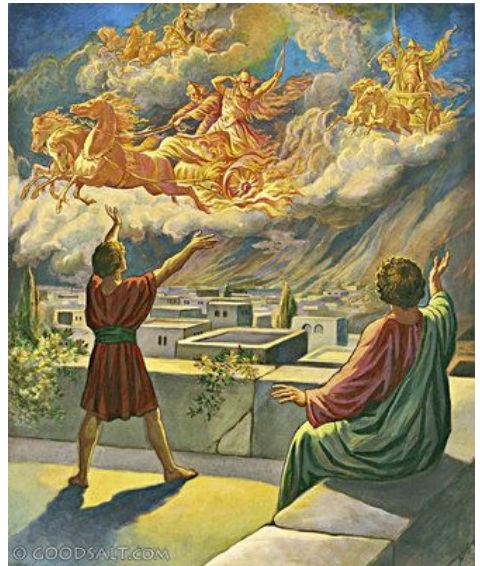
And if refuge and strength isn’t enough, our God is a very present help in trouble. God is right here, right now, always exceedingly available to give you help, and to bring you aid in trouble. Hebrews 4:16 assures us, “Come boldly to the throne of grace, that you might obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need” – just when you need it, in the nick of time. He was right there when Elijah called fire down from heaven. God is exceedingly right here to help you and me right now. He is always present, effectually present, sympathetically present, gracious, and mercifully present, our altogether present God to help in our

time of need.

We should look at everything that’s happening in this world, near or far, through the lens of “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.” God doesn’t say you won’t face trouble or distress, but He’ll be with you in the trouble, even in the worst-case scenarios. Albert Barnes wrote, “When everything sacred, true, and valuable seems to be in danger.” Whether it’s disease, death, disaster, distress, depression or discouragement, God is our refuge – run to Him by faith. God is our strength – ask Him to strengthen you. God is present to help you.”

We Will Not Fear

Look what is happening in these verses. All creation is in upheaval. The earth, mountains, the oceans, everything is coming apart, everything seems to be in chaos and confusion. This chaos can be from earth’s physical disorder to the political or social disorder. Like Christ said, there will be earthquakes and wars and rumors of war. The swelling pride of the mountains may be figurative of the



arrogance of mighty and evil rulers, people who think they are God, of which we have plenty today.

This is the point of Psalm 46. If God is with you and for you, what reason do you have to be afraid. One elderly woman who remained calm during an earthquake was asked, "Are you not afraid?" "No," she replied, "I rejoice to know that I have a God who can shake the world."

We Have All We Need

Therefore, we will not fear...because God makes sure we have all we need.

Psalms 46:4-7, There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, The holy dwelling places of the Most High. God is in the midst of her, she will not be moved; God will help her when morning dawns. The nations made an uproar, the kingdoms tottered; He raised His voice, the earth melted. The LORD of hosts is with us; The God of Jacob is our stronghold.

God's city is where God's people are. This river brings joy to the hearts of God's people. And He makes sure we have exactly what we need when we need it. God isn't promising He will shield us from all bad things, all distress, but when it comes you can be sure God has an invisible pipeline of grace flowing from the throne of grace right into your heart.

There were three young men whose world was crashing all around them. The most powerful dictator in the world was forcing everyone to bow down and worship this ridiculous image of himself. Knowing God was supplying them all the grace they needed and that God Himself was with them, they stood before this human potentate and declared, "We're not bowing down. Our God is able to deliver us, but even if He doesn't, we're not bowing down!" And they didn't. And their God delivered them. God's help came at just the right time, "when morning dawns."

Over and over the Bible keeps telling God's people, "I am with you!" Isaiah 41:10, "Fear not, for I am with you." Psalm 23:4, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for You are with me." "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age," (Matthew 28:20).

God is Sovereign

Therefore, we will not fear...because God is Sovereign over all human evil and rebellion.

Psalms 46:8-11, Come, behold the works of the LORD, Who has wrought desolations in the earth. He makes wars to cease to the end of the earth; He breaks the bow and cuts the spear in two; He burns the chariots with fire. "Cease striving and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the



nations, I will be exalted in the earth.” The LORD of hosts is with us; The God of Jacob is our stronghold.

We are invited to come and take a good look at the works of the Lord. Behold how He delivered Israel out of Egypt and drowned all of Pharaoh’s armies, how He smashed Jericho’s walls, sent fire in answer to Elijah’s prayer, and whacked those 185,000 Assyrians. Behold how He made atonement for us through His Son’s substitutionary death, and then raised Him from the dead! God will finally bring all His enemies to a quick end, making wars to cease, smashing all instruments of war, preparing the earth for His Son’s rule. Spurgeon said, “Whenever we read history it should be with this verse sounding in our ears.”

“Cease striving” in the King James is translated, “Be still and know that I am God.” We like to apply this to ourselves, and we certainly should.

But most commentators believe God is addressing His enemies. Cease striving, hold your peace, drop your weapons, quit your arrogant mouthing off. Stop attacking and blaming God. Cease striving and know who God really is. Think about the One with whom you are dealing. Listen to God. God is sovereign and will bring an end to all human evil. God’s going to bring devastating judgment on this earth. This planet has been an arena of one war after another, ever since Cain murdered Abel. Now God says, “Drop your weapons. Recognize with whom you are dealing and against whom you are fighting.”

We can apply this spiritually. That’s exactly what the Spirit of God does when He effectually and irresistibly calls sinners to Himself. “Drop your depraved weapons of self-righteousness, pride, self-love, and willful rebellion by which you have resisted me and know, I will be exalted among the nations and in all the earth!” Every knee will bow! That is glorious! Jesus will bring this about.

Isaiah 9:6-7, “The government shall rest upon His shoulders, and His name shall be called wonderful counselor, the mighty God, everlasting father, the prince of peace!”

The King of Babylon, reminded us of God’s sovereign rule and authority after he spent a few years eating grass like an ox. Daniel 4:35, “All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, But He does according to His will in the host of heaven And among the inhabitants of earth; And no one can ward off His hand Or say to Him, ‘What have You done?’”

This Psalm ends with a powerful conclusion in verse 11. These words are worthy of repetition since it contains some of the greatest truth in all the Bible for you and me as God’s people. We can count on the truth that the Lord of all the armies of heaven is with us through all our trials, dangers, difficulties, and troubles.

Who is with us? The Lord of all those legions of heaven. Who is our stronghold? Our stronghold is the same sovereign God who reaffirmed His great promises to Jacob of a land, a seed, and a promise. If such a God is with us and One so exalted is our stronghold, what do we have to fear? Or, as Paul said in Romans 8:32, “If God be for us, who can be against us?”

If you are a born-again Christ-loving child of God, you have the greatest reason in the world not to fear. The Lord of the armies of heaven is with you and the God of Jacob is your high fortress. In the worst-case scenario in this world, gorilla, elephants, or any human trouble or distress, you are totally and completely safe in Christ forever! God is our refuge and strength, abundantly available to help in the worst-case scenario!

<https://www.youtube.com/live/Mq15MPBPaq8?si=N8gZhs6F-YysYChD>

Run to the Roar

By Mark Batterson

On September 11, 2001, four airplanes were hijacked by terrorists bent on evil. Two of those planes crashed into the Twin Towers in New York City, one crashed into a field in Stony Creek Township, Pennsylvania, and one crashed not far from here into the west side of the Pentagon.

The natural instinct for those in the building was to get out. But on that day, there were heroes who didn't run out — they ran into those buildings to help those who needed it.

One of them was Lieutenant Colonel Ted Anderson, who attends our Capitol Hill campus. One account captures his story this way:

Anderson acted like a man possessed. As others ran for their lives, he sprinted from his office toward the point of impact, spreading his jacket over shards of glass on a window sill. Anderson had a non-commissioned officer named Chris Brayman boost him into the collapsing building. Together they carried out two women, one of them unconscious and the other badly burned. Over the next hour, as the rest of the world looked on in shock, Ted Anderson returned to the blaze over and over again. At one point, he and Brayman were low-crawling through the inferno, screaming to be heard above the roar.

Arlington County firefighters finally restrained Lieutenant Colonel Ted Anderson. They would not let him go back into the building — which probably saved his life, because just a few minutes later, it collapsed.

David's Mighty Men

If you want to understand David's mighty men in 2 Samuel 23, then you need to understand what drives a man like Lieutenant Colonel Ted Anderson back into the Pentagon — to run toward danger, to run to the roar.

These weren't men who ran away from what they were afraid of. They were boot-camp trained and battle-tested. Their stories are some of the most epic and heroic in all of Scripture.

Joab faced 800-to-one odds, but he would not back down. Eleazar fought until his hand froze to the sword — one of my favorite verses in the Bible. And Shammah, when the rest of the army retreated, took his stand in a field of lentils.

And then there was Benaiah. That's where we pick up the story in 2 Samuel 23:20:

There was also Benaiah, son of Jehoiada, a valiant warrior from Kabzeel. He did many heroic deeds, which included killing two champions of Moab. Another



time, on a snowy day, he chased a lion down into a pit and killed it. Once, armed only with a club, he killed a great Egyptian warrior who was armed with a spear. Benaiah wrenched the spear from the Egyptian's hand and killed him with it. Deeds like these made Benaiah as famous as the three mightiest warriors. He was more honored than the other members of the Thirty, though he was not one of the Three. And David made him captain of his bodyguard.

Lion Chasers Run to the Roar

One of the great challenges we face in reading a story like this is that we know how it ends. So we lose the element of surprise, the element of danger, the element of risk.

We know Benaiah walks out of the pit, and if we aren't careful, we assume it. But come on — is this not one of the craziest acts of courage you've ever heard of?

Here's what I know for sure: when the image of a man-eating beast travels

through the optic nerve into the visual cortex, the brain sends one message to the body — run. Run away as fast and as far as you possibly can.

But lion chasers aren't wired that way. They don't run away from what they're afraid of. They run to the roar.

Fight or Flight

We don't know where Benaiah was going. We don't know exactly what he was doing when his path crossed with the lion. All we know is his gut reaction — and it's gutsy.

Listen, lions weigh 500 pounds, run 35 miles an hour, and have these things called claws. If you find yourself in a pit with a lion on a snowy day, you have a problem — probably the last problem you'll ever have. This is how the game ends for you.

But you've got to admit: "I killed a lion in a pit on a snowy day" looks really good on your résumé if you're applying for a bodyguard position with the King

of Israel.

So Benaiah lands the job, and 40 years later he becomes commander-in-chief of Israel's army under King Solomon — the second most powerful person in the entire kingdom.

But it all traces back to this fight-or-flight moment.

Are you going to take flight, or are you going to fight for your dream? Are you going to run away from what you're afraid of, or are you going to run to the roar? Are you going to let fear dictate your decisions, or are you going to live by faith and chase the lion?

Not much has changed in 3,000 years.

500-Pound Dreams

Let me tell you something about 500-pound lions. By definition, a God-sized dream will always be beyond your ability, beyond your logic, and beyond your resources. Why? So that when God does it, you can't take credit for it. If God doesn't do it, it cannot be done. That's how God gets the glory.

So what is the craziest dream you could go after? If your dream doesn't scare you, it's too small. If you are big enough for your dream, your dream is not big enough for God.

Faith Is Forgetting Our Fears

You can run from what you're afraid of, but you'll spend your whole life running. At some point, you can't let fear dictate your decisions.

Psychologists tell us we're born with only two fears — the fear of falling and the fear of loud noises. That means all other fears are learned. Which means all other fears can be unlearned. Faith is the process of forgetting our fears.

First John 4:18 says perfect love drives out all fear. When we get a deeper

understanding of God's love for us, it begins to set us free. Love isn't just some sentimental emotion — love is fearless. Because you know God loves you, it sets you free from all other fears.

The Cure for the Fear of Failure

I've struggled with the fear of failure. When I was 22, we tried to plant a church in seminary, and it failed. I won't lie — that was embarrassing.

But it was one of the best things that happened to us. I discovered, first, that unless the Lord builds the house, the laborers labor in vain. And second, that the cure for the fear of failure isn't success — it's failing in small enough doses that you become immune to it.

I needed to fall down and discover that God still loved me, God was still there, God still had a plan for my life — that He would pick me up, dust me off, and let us try again in Washington, DC. For some of us, a little failure is the best thing for us.

Someone once asked me, "What dream would you chase if you knew you couldn't fail?" I appreciate the question. But I think there's a better one: What dream would you still chase if you knew you would fail — because if you didn't, you couldn't live with yourself?

This isn't about winning or losing, success or failure. It's about obedience. It's about whether you have the courage to step out in faith and chase it when God draws that line in front of you.

Is Your Life Worth Telling a Story About?

When Solomon was a little boy, like any father, David would tell him bedtime stories. I bet most of those bedtime stories were about his mighty men and their heroic deeds. I bet more than once Solomon said, "Daddy, can you tell me the lion-chasing story again?"

Fast-forward 40 years. Solomon becomes king of Israel. Who does he choose as commander-in-chief? His father's bodyguard, a man named Benaiah.

Why did he choose Benaiah? I think he chose Benaiah because of those bedtime stories. I think he chose Benaiah because Benaiah lived in a way that was worth telling stories about.

God wants to write His story through your life — history, with a hyphen: His-story. Your life is a subplot in His redemption story. That story has to be amazing. You have to chase the lion.

When we don't have the courage to chase the 500-pound lion God has placed in our lives, we rob God of the glory He deserves. When the Bible says we have all sinned and fall short of the glory of God, I don't think that's just a sin issue. I think it's our small dreams. I think it's our small dreams that fall short of God, who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine.

The Study: Regrets of Action vs. Inaction

I don't want this to sound too morbid, but you're going to die. Sooner or later, one way or another, you're going to die. When you're on your deathbed, I think your biggest regrets will be the lions you didn't chase.

Twenty years ago, social psychologists Tom Gilovich and Vicki Medvec conducted a fascinating study. They studied regret, distinguishing between two kinds:

Regrets of action are things you did but wish you hadn't. Regrets of inaction are things you didn't do but wish you had.

What's fascinating is that in the short term, we tend to regret actions more than inactions — 53% to 47%, basically a tie. But in the long run, we regret

inactions over actions by 84% to 16%.

In other words, when we look back at the end of our lives, what we'll regret most are the opportunities we missed.

Neal Roese put it this way: When we look back at our lives, we're most haunted by the things we didn't do — the romantic opportunities, the untried career changes, the unexplored friendships, the neglected ones.

The Manifesto

Quit living as though the purpose of life is to arrive safely at death.

Run toward the roar.

Set God-sized goals.

Pursue God-given passions.

Chase a dream that is destined to fail without divine intervention.

Stop pointing out problems and become part of the solution.

Stop repeating the past. Start creating the future.

Face your fears. Fight for your dreams.

Grab opportunity by the mane and don't let go.

Live like today is the first day and last day of your life.

Burn sinful bridges. Blaze new trails.

Live for the applause of nail-scarred hands.

Don't let what's wrong with you keep you from worshiping what's right with God.

Dare to fail. Dare to be different.

Quit procrastinating. Quit retreating.

Quit running away.

Chase the lion.

Read the full article here:

https://youtu.be/CJ_HLqFcoVvk?si=jxI5Jnmq-B_usB0a

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Books

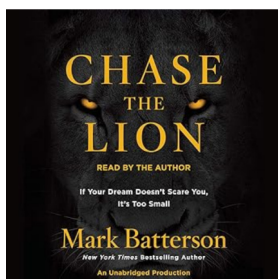
Morning & Evening By Charles Spurgeon

Over one hundred years later, Spurgeon's classic devotions continue to encourage Christians with the message of God's love. Each meditation is founded on a single verse of Scripture, inspiring and exhorting readers to rely upon God's care and to respond with deeper service and trust.



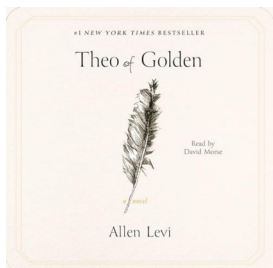
Imagine Heaven By John Burke

Burke shows how the common experiences shared by thousands of near-death survivors--including doctors, college professors, bank presidents, people of all ages and cultures, and even blind people--point to the exhilarating picture of Heaven promised in the Bible.



Chase the Lion By Mark Batterson

This book is a wake-up call to stop living as if the purpose of life was to simply arrive safely at death. Our dreams should scare us. They should be so big that without God they would be impossible to achieve. Mark Batterson invites lion chasers everywhere to chase dreams so impossible that victory demands we face our fears, defy the odds, and hold tight to God.



Fiction:

Theo of Golden By Allen Levi

A story of giving and receiving, of seeing and being seen, Theo of Golden is an unforgettable novel about the power of generosity, the importance of connection, and the quiet miracles that happen when we choose kindness and wonder.

I am Yours

Song by Pip Williams / Peter Hutchins

Who am I, that the Lord of all the earth would care to know my name?
Would care to feel my hurt?
Who am I, that the bright and morning star would choose to light the way
For my ever wandering heart?
Not because of who I am - But because of what you've done.
Not because of what I've done - But because of who you are.

I am a flower quickly fading, here today and gone tomorrow
A wave tossed in the ocean, a vapor in the wind.
Still you hear me when I'm calling.
Lord, you catch me when I'm falling
And you've told me who I am.
I am yours, I am yours

Who am I, that the eyes that see my sin would look on me with love
And watch me rise again?
Who am I, that the voice that calmed the sea would call out through the rain
And calm the storm in me?
Not because of who I am - But because of what you've done.
Not because of what I've done - But because of who you are.

I am a flower quickly fading here today and gone tomorrow
A wave tossed in the ocean, a vapor in the wind.
Still you hear me when I'm calling.
Lord, you catch me when I'm falling
And you've told me who I am.
I am yours

Whom shall I fear?
Whom shall I fear?
Cause I am yours
I am yours

