

Our Great Defender

Psalm 124 - 125

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The Way Up

Reflect

Outline: Recap

Realize

Points to Ponder

Respond

Questions to draw out understanding.

REFLECT

When times are hard, the worst thing is feeling alone. That's why your support system is essential, and having people who can stand with you and for you helps. The beautiful thing for the follower of Jesus is we have the corner on the market for the best support system ever because God is our Great Defender. When we're down, we can take encouragement in knowing God fights for us! Even if everything feels out of control to us, God is still in control and has better plans for us than we could dream up for ourselves.

[LINK to SMALL GROUP VIDEO MATERIALS](#)

REALIZE

1. The Lord is our great Defender

- **Psalm 124**
- **Leader Notes**
 - For all of us, if we're honest with ourselves, we realize there are tons of moments where we feel like we're in over our heads. We feel vulnerable, and it's actually healthy and good for us to be vulnerable and share vulnerably with others. We love the Psalms because we can relate to the emotions of where the psalmists were at — they say what the rest of us are feeling.
 - In a world where we are constantly vulnerable, there is one truth we have to cling to: the Lord is our great Defender. If you've been walking with the Lord for any length of time, you have a testimony like this already, where you've seen God's faithfulness to you again and again. If you haven't seen this yet, you will.
 - The Psalmist here is telling us God is trustworthy, and we have to choose to trust him. If we don't accept his help, he'll let us defend ourselves. But it goes so much better for us when we surrender to the Lord and let him fight for us. When we choose not to defend ourselves, and we trust God, God works it all out.
 - In our current context, this doesn't mean God just protects us from everything if we choose to be foolish. It doesn't mean we should jump off buildings or not wear seatbelts. It doesn't mean that we won't get Coronavirus if we are choosing to act foolishly. God doesn't want us to check our brains at the door in his name. But because he's our defender, we use the brains and wisdom he's given us. And when we get into a situation that's way behind our wisdom and prudence, we can trust God to defend us.
 - Some of us have experienced things that are horrible, and God didn't save us from those things. We have experienced deep loss and pain. Those are tough questions to wrestle with. But God

has a way of redeeming the most painful things we go through and using them for his glory and our good down the line.

- **Describe a time when you witnessed God's defense and deliverance in your life. And then describe a time where you questioned where God was and what he was doing in the midst of your pain. How can you thank God for his deliverance, and cry out for his intervention in pain as well? What would it look like to choose to trust God to defend you?**

2. Be immovable like a mountain

- **Psalm 125:1-3**
- **Leader Notes**
 - Here the Psalmist looks to Mount Zion to be immovable. Mount Zion is another name for Jerusalem, which is the city where God chose to put his name and share his presence with his people. The only way for us to be unshakable in the midst of a crazy life is to keep our eyes fixed on Jesus.
 - When we look to Jesus, certain things he calls us to do are also immovable. For example, loving everyone (even our enemies) is a fixed thing in the kingdom of God, as is avoiding complaining, trusting God, not sleeping around, being kind to others, giving generously, making peace, forgiving others.
 - When we get our eyes off Jesus, we end up all over the map. If you see a place in your life where you're all over the map or you're struggling to stay solid, bring that before the Lord and ask him to help you trust him with that specifically so you can remain immovable.
- **Where are you finding yourself "all over the map"? How can you turn to Jesus and submit that area of your life to him so that you can be immovable in the things of the Lord?**

3. Find yourself on God's good list

- **Psalm 125:4-5**
- **Leader Notes**
 - Apart from Jesus, all of us are by default on God's "bad list." There's nothing we can do that would secure righteousness. But God gives us his own righteousness in Jesus, so we ultimately end up on the good list by putting our faith and trust in Jesus.
 - After we trust in Jesus, we have to walk with him though. We have to walk out our salvation. If your vulnerabilities, fears and doubts are causing you to be moved around by the winds of life, trust God as your great Defender in all your choices and decisions.
- **If you've never said "yes" to Jesus, do you want to do that today? If you already have a relationship with Jesus, what is the next step you need to take this week to walk out your salvation and live as a disciple of Jesus?**

Optional Follow-up Questions:

- What makes you say that?
- How do you feel about that?
- How would you explain your answer to a non-Christian friend or neighbor?
- Why did God design it to work that way? Why not just do (whatever else) instead?
- What would you say to someone who disagrees with that?
- Why do we really have to do it like that? Why can't we just go (some other route) instead?