

GOD OUR CONTINUAL RESORT

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A SERMON
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“Be You my strong habitation, whereunto I may continually resort.”
Psalm 71:3.

DAVID in his younger days had been obliged to hide himself away with his followers in the great caverns and rocks of his native land. In the cave of Adullam, by the rocks of the wild goats, he had dwelt amid the sternest surroundings of nature. No doubt he had climbed aloft upon the mountain's side, and then had penetrated into one cave after another, and treated them as chambers of his house of rock. There he had spent both nights and days, looking from on high upon the plains beneath, often seeing his cruel pursuers passing by in eager hunt for him, while he himself was secure in his rocky fastness.

Nothing leaves a clearer impression upon the memory than a residence amidst such scenes. You might live for an age in such a town as this and forget it all. What is there to remember in this labyrinth of bricks and mortar? But when you get into the clear bracing atmosphere of the hills, when you tread their sublime heights, or descend into their mysterious hollows, you cannot forget it. A day of leaping, like the wild goats, from crag to crag, ended by a night amid the dread seclusion of a mountain den, makes a clear mark on the surface of life which can never be erased; a man will carry such memories with him to his grave. This must have been especially the case with a genius as poetic as that of David. I would not hesitate to place the King of Israel among the first masters of song. If you take the whole company of the poets together you cannot find one who did more for devotional poetry than David. All the altars of God in the world have been set alight by flame from David's lamp. When men worship God in any language they quote one or other of the Psalms. What better expressions can they borrow or invent? With such a soul as his, and an eye, and such a tongue, and such a harp, it was no wonder that, in his riper days, when he had known the soft luxury of palaces, he could not refrain from rehearsing the sublime memories of his earlier and more adventurous days, and drawing inspiration from the wild and sublime scenery among which he had been reared. The man, as full of grace as of genius, as saturated with the Spirit of God as with the spirit of poetry, could not but in his loftiest songs speak of his God in language culled from the cave, “Be You to me a rock of habitation, whereunto I may continually resort,” or as some read it, “Be You to me a rock of repose.” The deep quiet of the enormous recesses in the lone rocks was remembered by the Psalmist, and worked into his prayer. I shall want you to carry the thought of those rocks and those caves with you, because it will form a background for our subject, and help us to illustrate it.

What a gracious heart David must have had, to speak like this of his God! He desired to be upon the most intimate terms with the Lord his God. He wished to dwell not merely *with* God, but *in* God. He cries, “Be You my strong habitation.” Not merely did he long to dwell in the house of the Lord forever, but he would have the Lord to be his house. He would be surrounded by God, and that not as with a dungeon, in which he was forced to be, but as the habitation of his choice, for his pleasure and rest. He would not merely live in God's world, but within God Himself. He would realize the meaning of Moses when he said, “Lord, You have been our dwelling place in all generations.” What a man of God he must have been, despite his infirmities and sins! None but a mind in harmony with God as to the great principles of truth and purity would ever have desired such constant communion with God as that which is implied in the words, “Whereunto I may continually resort.”

The wicked say, “No God,” but David sighed for none but God. The mere pretender would have God on Sabbaths and high days, and in times of trouble, but David would have God all day, and every day. The formalist is satisfied with a word with God in the morning and another at night, when he is either

hurried or sleepy, he forces from himself the tax of a minute or two in prayer, but he that loves the Lord delights to walk with Him evermore, yes, to make his home with God, and to abide in Him. Some would like a Sabbath once in the month, but David would make all his days holiness unto the Lord. Many would like to speak with the Lord from a distance, but David would live and move and have his being in his God. By this the man after God's own heart proved that his own heart was after God. Judge yourselves, therefore, at the very outset, as to what your own condition of heart must be. If you can repeat the words of David from your very soul, bless the grace of God that has taught you to do so, and if you cannot so pray, breathe a silent prayer to heaven saying—Lord, teach me to love You and long for You. I would gladly acquaint myself with You, and be at peace.

Without inventing any mechanical divisions, I would remark that the text naturally suggests three things. The first is that God was to David a *delightful repose*, he was his habitation or home. Secondly, that David found in his God *peaceful security*—"Be You my *strong* habitation." God was his fortress, his castle, his high tower, his rock of defense. And then, thirdly, David had to his God continual access, "Whereunto I may continually resort." Those five words are as a musical box, set to the most charming air, they discourse a quiet harmony to my soul, such as one hears when listening to the brook which warbles as it flows—"Whereunto I may continually resort."

I. Let us dwell on this for a few minutes. David found in his God DELIGHTFUL REPOSE. "Be You my strong habitation." That is, be my house and home. David was one of those who had made the Most High his habitation, and therefore did God continually preserve him. He was one of the favored ones who dwelt in the secret place of the tabernacles of the Most High, abiding under the shadow of the Almighty.

Observe what *wonderful condescension* he had experienced from the Lord! What infinite grace that God should allow His servants to think of Him as their house! My God, You are the glory of heaven, and the angels veil their faces in Your presence, and yet I dare to say, "Be You my habitation." My God, You are terrible in righteousness, You are a consuming fire, all things perish at Your presence when once You are angry, yet You do permit me to dwell in You, and to find in You, not destruction, but eternal life. Brethren, we aspire not merely to be reconciled to God, nor even to draw near unto Him, but to enter into Him, and to hide ourselves beneath Him. It is one of the sublimities of Christian experience to be in God the Father, and in Christ Jesus. Do we understand this? We have never reached the sum of our grace-given privileges till we are more at home with God than with anyone else in the universe. What a wonder that the eternal God is our refuge! What condescension that the infinite Jehovah should be the abode of His saints!

David had realized in his God *peculiar love*. In a man's own home he expects to find love. Pity on the poor wretch who is disappointed therein. When we are abroad in the world, my brethren, we reckon to meet with rough handling, and to receive scant consideration, but within our own doors we enter the sanctuary of love. If we receive and return love anywhere, it is within the walls of our own habitation. That is how David felt towards the Lord his God. Abroad he had many enemies, and faithless friends not a few, but they were all outside of his real life, when he came to his true life in God he breathed an atmosphere of love, he dwelt in one who loved him better than he loved himself. Do you know what this means, dear brother? Is God the center of your repose because in Him is love? Are your affections all set on Him? And do you know that He loves you, and takes a divine delight in you? "He shall rest in His love," do you rest in it? Oh that your heart may be filled to the brim with a sweet consciousness that you are the object of infinite affection! May you say of the Lord Jesus, "Who loved me, and gave Himself for me," and may you hear the Father say, "I have loved you with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn you." He that dwells in love dwells in God, for God is love. Oh blessed experience, to dwell in God as the abode of love!

Moreover, home is the place of *special rest*. At home we are unloaded of the world's huge load., the advocate takes off his gown, and says, "Lie there, Mr. Barrister, and let the father come to the front." The tradesman takes off his apron, the warrior his harness, the bearer his yoke, for he is at home, and if a man may rest anywhere on earth, it must surely be in his own habitation. Is not our God our rest? O beloved, is there indeed beneath the sun any repose for a poor soul except in God? There remains a rest for the people of God, and that rest is God Himself. "Return unto your rest, O my soul; for the Lord has dealt bountifully with you." When we know Jehovah's truth, His faithfulness, His power, His wisdom, His grace, then we rest in Him. When we see Him glorified in the majesty of His love in the person of

the Well-beloved Savior, who has redeemed us from death and hell, then we who have believed do enter into rest. The Lord makes us partakers of His own Sabbath rest. The peace of God which passes all understanding keeps our hearts and minds by Christ Jesus. Beloved, have you not sweet recollections of times when you had been tossed with tempest, and not comforted, but obtained access to God, and so entered into a deep calm? When wearied and bewildered, the presence of the Lord has brought you perfect peace, and you have felt yourself at home. Then have you sung—

*“Let cares like a wild deluge come,
And storms of sorrow fall,
My soul has safely reached her home,
Her God, her heaven, her All.”*

We have not yet read all the meaning that couches beneath this sweet word “habitation,” or home. Our habitation is the place of *joyful freedom*, and hearty naturalness. One is not stiff and starched at home. You are not guarded there as to what you say or do, for you are not exposed to criticism and misrepresentation. Some of us cannot open our mouths without seeing a reporter’s pencil twinkling across his prepared paper. Our steps are dogged by those who take notes and print them. We live under the microscope. We can hardly think without being published, with this addition, that what we do *not* think is often imputed to us. Do not wonder if we walk somewhat under constraint. But at home a man feels, “Well, these dear children, and the dear wife of my love, and these kind friends—I am not afraid of them, they will not misjudge me.” Did you ever feel that with relation to God? Are you yourself when alone with Him? Are you at ease in His presence? Those fine, stately prayers we sometimes hear, majestic and cold, we find no fault with them except that there is nothing in them to suit rapt devotion, or to express the spirit of adoption. Do you pray after a more living, loving fashion? God’s children dare to be familiar with Him. God so knows our hearts that it is of no use to be reserved before Him, therefore let us unlock our hearts and talk with Him as a man talks with his friend. Are there not a thousand things you could not tell to any but your God? Have you not griefs, yes sins, which it were wrong to reveal to any but to Him? O our God, we have not to study our language while with You! Our soul speaks to You without words; her thoughts and emotions rise to You in their pure spirit, without the encumbering embodiment of speech. Our heart leans against Your heart, and You know what we mean, even as You have made us to know what You mean, for “the secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him, and He will show them His covenant.”

Religious people sometimes start back from the prayers of a true saint, and say, “He is too familiar.” Of course a child is too familiar for the imitation of a stranger, but have you ever blamed a child for climbing his father’s knee? And yet you would not think of copying him. Boy, do you know what you are doing? You are playing with a learned judge, before whom prisoners tremble, and courts are hushed. Even wise counselors speak to him as, “My lord.” That urchin does not say, “My lord.” Look! He is plucking him by the beard, he is kissing his cheek. What presumption! No! He is the judge’s child; he who is judge to others is “father” to him. So the saints of God say, “Our Father which art in heaven,” ever reverentially, but yet with sweet familiarity. They are at home with Him. Beloved, may you know what that means by the teachings of the Spirit of sonship, for only He can teach us the blessed freedom of being at home with God.

A man’s habitation is also the place of his *intimate knowledge*. David knew the Lord even as he knew the caves in which he had sheltered. David could have served as guide to the great hollows of Adullam, and these, in their vastness and sublimity, may be likened to the mysteries of God. There is a weird charm to my mind about caves, I like to visit all that are in my way. One is pleased to pass from one subterranean room to another, and mark the secrets which are revealed by the glare of the torches. Here there is a spring of water, there a grand stalactite, here is an ascending staircase leading to another hollow, and there you must go down by a ladder to a greater depth. This is a fair allegory of the way in which the Spirit of God leads us into all truth. In God, even in Christ Jesus, are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and within these hiding places we find our habitations. David was so much at home with God that he entered by earnest trust into one attribute after another, and delighted in them all. He knew the Lord. He could say, “My meditation of Him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the Lord.” He loved to dwell in the rocky strongholds of eternal love, unchanging grace, almighty wisdom, unspotted holiness, unerring purpose, and infinite power. O brethren, seek to have the same clear knowledge of the Lord as David had, till you can say that you are at home with God, who is your habitation.

Home also has about it the thought of *tender care*. Where are we, so lovingly watched over as at home? Where else are there such soft pillows for our aching heads, such gentle words for our wounded spirits? "Take me home," says the sick child. I had the great sorrow yesterday of speaking to a dear brother whom I had hoped would be spared for great usefulness in a distant land, but he had just received from the doctor's examination the solemn information that he was hopelessly diseased. We proposed that he should go to the seaside, but I saw which way his heart went. He thought of his wife and his habitation, and he said, "Let me go home. If I must die, let it be in my own house." He spoke as I should have done in like case. At home one might not have all the skill of the hospital at command, but one would be sure of a certain priceless tenderness which no nurse can rival. Lord, You have been my dwelling place, I will die in Your arms. When I am sick and weary there is none like You, my God! When my heart breaks none can bind it up but You, my God! I turn to You, when in my mortal sickness, like Hezekiah, I turn my face to the wall—"Into Your hands I commit my spirit." Yes, my unrest is all over when I get to You. The ship is in harbor. The bird is in its nest. My heart has found the bosom on which it loves to recline. I have all things, my Lord, when I have You. You say, "As one whom his mother comforts, so will I comfort you."

There is much more in this first part of the verse than I can possibly set before you. I have only opened the windows, and I now invite you to look out upon the landscape so full of beauty.

II. Secondly, David had realized in God PEACEFUL SECURITY. "Be You my strong habitation"—"My rock of habitation." Now, the child of God when he enters into the Lord by faith feels himself perfectly safe; safe, first, from all risk of the Lord's changing or failing. God Himself is strong, His love is immutable, His power is unailing. This is the solid ground of our security. When the winds are out in all their fury those of us whose habitations stand on the top of a hill know the value of stability. There are periods in the rage of the storm when our habitation shakes like a ship which trembles from stem to stern, and though this is very exciting, it does not create a sense of peaceful security. When once we enter into God, we do not shake or know fear. Rise winds, roar waves, blow tempests, howl hurricanes, there is no shaking our sure abode in God. David in the rock had often defied the storm, for he felt that though the earth should be removed, and the mountains cast into the midst of the sea, he would not fear. Such is the confidence of every child of God. God changes not, God's arm is not shortened; God is not vanquished; no purpose of God shall be defeated; no decree of His shall fail. Rocks may dissolve, but the eternal God changes not, and His people in Him shall have a sure abode.

But David also felt great safety from his enemies. When he climbed the rock, and crept into his cavern, he knew that his enemies could not follow him. Had Saul come with all Israel at his back, David's band could have kept armies at bay. He must often have felt like the eagle when it has flashed upward to its nest on the craggy rock, and from there looks down upon the hunters. He is almost out of sight, but he can see all the movements of the foe. However long the range of the rifle, the noble bird knows no fear, for he is beyond range. I think I see him sitting there quietly eying the enemy, of whom he knows no dread. Thus a child of God may defy the great adversary. "Let us sing," said Luther, "the forty-sixth Psalm, and defy the devil." The devil's restless nature is fretted by the serenity of the firm believer in God, and let him be fretted. His utmost rage is insufficient to hurt a single hair of the head of a believer. No adversary can carry by storm our impregnable stronghold. Tyre stood a siege of thirteen years, but our fortress has been beleaguered throughout the ages and never captured. Security itself is our portion for time and for eternity, when we trust in the Lord. I love to think of the child of God as getting into God, and resting secure beyond the evil designs of the malicious hand, the crafty mind, and the slanderous tongue. No stone will be left unturned to do us ill, and yet no stone of our rocky habitation shall be dislodged. "No weapon that is formed against you shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against you in judgment you shall condemn." The trials of life shall not harm us, the bereavements of death shall not cause us to despair, sickness shall help on our sanctification; poverty shall increase our wealth of experience. When God blesses, nothing curses. If God is for us, who can be against us? Under the shadow of the Almighty we are out of harm's way. In God we dwell on high, and our place of defense is the munitions of rocks. What would be a crushing disaster to us apart from God now turns to a benediction with God to overrule it. O child of God, trust in God, for He is worthy of all confidence. In Him you are secure in every sense. He that keeps you does neither slumber nor sleep, who, then, can do you ill? You are secure from the penalty of sin, for Christ has put it away from you, bearing the chastisement of your peace. Hidden beneath His atonement, you are secure from the wrath of God, your transgression is for-

given, your sin is covered; thus the sting is taken from every evil. You are secure against final overthrow by your own natural and constitutional weaknesses, for the Lord will cleanse your blood which He has not cleansed, He will purge you thoroughly, and cleanse you from all your idols, and write His law upon your inward parts, so that you shall not depart from Him. You are secure against all the trials and troubles of providence, since these shall work together for your good. The griefs and pangs of death you need not fear, since God is with you, and will raise you from the grave. The terrors of eternity are not for you, joys immeasurable are your portion. Once safe in God, what is there to fear? "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect"? Who shall "separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord?"

A blessed sense of perfect security ought to be enjoyed by every believing man and woman. You ought to be as serene as the glorified, since around you there is a wall of fire, and God is with you as a glory and a defense. The enemies may gather together, but they only gather to be scattered. Those that love God and are the called according to His purpose are beloved of the Lord, and He will interpose His eternal power and Godhead between them and evil. When God is our friend the whole universe is under bond to keep the peace towards us. The beasts of the field are at peace with us, and the stones of the field are in league with us, the stars are our lights, the heavens are our curtains, angels are our servitors, the elements are our providers, time is our rehearsal, and eternity is our anthem of joy. Wherefore, be glad and rejoice in God, and say with the Psalmist, "Be You my strong habitation."

III. We have now reached our last point, upon which we may be somewhat lengthier than upon the others. David's God was to him a place of CONTINUAL RESORT, "Whereunto I may continually resort." I was talking the other day with a man of God who has very much service and great care upon him, and as we communed the one with the other he said to me—"That expression of the Psalmist is very sweet to me, 'Whereunto I may continually resort.' It rises frequently before my thoughts." Indeed, I did not wonder, for it is an exceedingly choice expression. Happy are we that the gate of communion with God is never locked! In our pastoral cares, in our business trials, in our family afflictions, in our personal conflicts, there is this saving proviso that we may always flee unto God for succor. "Whereunto I may continually resort," said David while the veil was yet untorn; may we not say the same with emphasis today, now that we have access to the holiest by the blood of Jesus?

There is joy in this thing in itself. Is it not a great bliss to have the *entree* of Jehovah's palace day and night? Is it not heaven below to have access without ceasing to Father, Son, and Holy Spirit? How blessed to enter the golden gate unchallenged, and remain unrebuked in the pavilion of the King of Kings! O believer, you may come when you will to the throne of grace and never fear a repulse. You may come not only into the King's palace, but what is infinitely more, into the King Himself, for He is your habitation, whereunto you may continually resort. The Persian kings forbade anyone to come near them, and if any ventured into the king's court, and the monarch did not stretch out the silver scepter, the guards cut them down at once. Yet there were certain favored courtiers who, by special privilege, had the right to approach the king at all times, guard or no guard. These were the noblest in the king's dominions. Such honor has all the saints. No cherub with flaming sword guards the way of approach to God against any child of the great Father. You have a privilege that is much greater than any dignity belonging to the mightiest monarchs of earth—the privilege of perpetual communion with God, at whatsoever hour you will. It ought to make your heart leap for joy to think of it. Come in the dewy morning, come at dusky night, come in the midnight's dreariest hour, the Lord is ever ready to receive you, and you may speak freely with Him. This is His word, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and you shall find." "Delight yourself also in the Lord, and He shall give you the desires of your heart." Continual access to the God of all grace is a perpetual fountain of joy.

There is a great comfort in it as an outlook; "Whereunto I may continually resort." Throughout all future time I may draw near unto God. The day may come when I shall be sorely sick, and be compelled to stay in my bed, and then I may resort unto God. I shall not be able to go up to the house of the Lord, but still I may resort to God, who is more than house and home. No form of disease shall shut me out from my heavenly Father. I may lie on my bed and sleep, and when I awake I shall still be with Him. Old age steals on quickly, and perhaps my feet will not be able to bear me to the place of the assembly, but even then I may resort to God. When my ears shall grow dull of hearing, and I shall not enjoy the preaching of the word, even then I shall hear the still small voice of the Spirit in my heart. When I am so far gone with age that my lone bed will become the best place for me, I shall still enjoy His presence and

sing His praise. O brother, fear not the future, for the Lord says, “I will never leave you, nor forsake you.”

“Should fate command you to the utmost verge of the green earth, rivers unknown to song,” yet may you continually resort to God. If you should be a castaway upon the salt sea, the Lord sits upon the floods, and you shall resort to Him there. If you were like Alexander Selkirk, out of humanity’s reach, yet you would not be out of reach of Divinity. Oh no, even in the dreariest solitude you may continually resort to Him, whose company is better than that of all mankind. In death and in eternity this is the perpetual privilege of every believer in Christ; he may still draw near unto God.

Now, this continual resorting to God is not only a joy in itself and in its outlook, but *it is a joy which answers so many blessed purposes*. I wish you would read this seventy-first Psalm quietly at home in the light of my text, and then you will see that David found in coming to God everything that he needed.

First, he found an escape from present ills—“Deliver me in Your righteousness, and cause me to escape.” As the cony does not fight its foe, but hides itself in the rock, so you in your time of trouble need not go forth to conflict, but may resort continually to your God. Stop up the rabbit’s burrow, and you might soon take him; keep a believer from his God, and you would soon destroy him, but so long as he can reach his hiding place no enemy can wreak vengeance on him.

David also looked upon God as the place of his prayer, for he says, “Incline Your ear unto me, and save me.” We may always pray, and when our prayer is too weak to rise to heaven, we may expect the Lord to bow His ear to hear our groans. Prayer is never out of season; it is a tree which yields its fruit every day. Whenever a trouble drives you to your knees, the Lord waits to be gracious. There are certain hours during which it is difficult to send a telegram to a friend, but we can at all times speak with God by the telephone of prayer. No grief is too little, no trial too heavy, no hour too early, and no moment too late for prayer; “Whereunto I may continually resort.” The mercy seat abides in its place, the veil remains torn, and whoever has faith in God may come to the throne of grace whensoever he pleases.

David, by resorting to the Lord received upholding. “By You have I been held up from the womb...I am as a wonder unto many, but you are my strong refuge.” He had kept his footing in slippery places by keeping close to God. He had surprised his enemies by the way in which he avoided their snares. When he was tempted, he overcame the temptation by resorting to God. When he did not resort to God he fell, as others have done.

David also resorted to God for strength. “Cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength fails.” He looked beyond himself to the unfailing power of the Almighty, and expected to be strengthened when infirmities crept over him. Do you want more power for service, more patience for suffering? Resort to God. They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. Go to the Strong for strength. By prayer and faith gird yourself with omnipotence. When you need renewing, run to Him who sustains all things. Go and draw water from the well of strength. Let down your bucket, drain it dry, and let it down again, for to this fountain you may “continually resort.” If you lack strength, you are not straitened in Him; you are straitened in your own heart. Believe in God, and be strong according to your faith.

See how David went to God continually in holy praise. Every hour is canonical for a man who is ready to praise God. “Let my mouth,” he says, “be filled with Your praise, and with Your honor all the day.” We may sing unto the Lord even when the voice is cracked and the lungs have failed; we need never be afraid that He will reject our praises on account of age or infirmity. We may sing to Him in any place, from the cellar to the attic. We may sing at our work, and sing in our rest, yes, sing aloud upon our beds.

When we have done singing, and wish for matter for instructive conversation, we shall find abundance of it in the Lord. “My mouth shall show forth Your righteousness and Your salvation all the day; for I know not the numbers thereof.” We shall always find fresh matter in the Lord. No fear, you preachers, of running dry, if the Lord is your subject. Who can exhaust the Infinite? Who can come to a standstill for lack of themes when the Triune God is the object of his continual meditation? O you servants of the Lord, fill your seed baskets from this granary, whereunto you may continually resort.

David also continually resorted to God for quickening. Notice how he puts it in the twentieth verse, “You, who have showed me great and sore troubles, shall quicken me again, and shall bring me up again from the depths of the earth.” Have any of you got down there? Do you want to rise out of them? Those depths of the earth are not pretty places, but we stumble into them sometimes by careless walking;

would you rise from them into newness of life? Then resort to God, and He will bring you up from the lowest depths. He will raise you from death to life, more fitted for holy service than ever.

The fact is, whatever you want you have only to go to God for it, and whenever you want it, you may go. Whatever your condition, you may still resort to the Lord. If you cannot come as a saint, you may come as a sinner; if you cannot come boldly, you may come trembling. When you feel most unfit to resort to God, you may still go to Him, for He is your fitness and your physician. When you feel that you dare not go, you may still go to Him, "Whereunto I may continually resort."

There is a blessed positiveness about my text. "I may continually resort." I may, I am sure I may. Just now in the courts of law it is the Long Vacation, nothing can be done in Chancery this month, for the poor lawyers must rest, but there is no Long Vacation in the courts of King's Bench above. You may plead your suit and urge your case with God every day in the year. The Lord allows, permits, invites, and commands you to plead with Him. "Call upon Me in the day of trouble: I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me."

I may continually resort to God, that is to say, He prompts me so to do; His Spirit helps my infirmities, He teaches me how to pray. Is not this sweet? What more can you desire? You know the way, for Christ is the way; that way is always accessible, for Christ is ever with us unto the end of the world. Come, tried believer, ring the night bell, and call up the great Physician. You have only to call upon Him, and He will be with you in an instant, yes, before you call He will answer you. Why, then, do you resort to man so often, and to God so seldom? Why drink so far down the stream, where it is muddy and polluted, when the pure fountainhead may be reached by you? Men will grow weary of you, but you cannot weary God. You may come to the Lord even though conscious of sin and backsliding. You may come to Him though your soul is sick and faint. He will restore you while you are yet coming. Before you are aware, He can fill you with love divine. You have but to turn the helm towards the harbor of His love, and the wind will turn too, and you shall be happy in the Lord. Come, then, at once to God in Christ Jesus just as you are. In all your backsliding and coldness of heart come to Him for renewal. The Lord has not grown indifferent, nor has He shut His door against petitioners.

You may continually resort to God, for He is never like Baal, on a journey, or asleep; He waits to be gracious, He listens for His people's cry. You may continually resort to Him with confidence that you shall not seek His face in vain, for the Lord is never unable to help His people. Whatever the form of their trial He is prompt to come to their rescue. One of old exclaimed, "The Lord was ready to save me." All the day long, and all the night long, and all the year long, in every case, and in every place, the Lord sits at receipt of supplication, and holds Himself in readiness to commune with His people.

Listen to a parable—a certain young man traded, and in all things he prospered for a while. In all his dealings he was wise and prudent, and none were able to overreach him. The cause of his wisdom was that he had a father, a man of singular knowledge, of great experience, of large wealth, and great influence. His son never entered upon a transaction without consulting his father. Whenever he felt himself at all in difficulty, he hastened to ask counsel of his father. Whenever he needed money to meet a sudden demand, he drew upon his father. Their love to each other was more and more manifest as the one trusted and the other helped. Does anybody wonder that the young man grew rich? But after a while the son grew cold towards his father, and seldom advised with him. There was no quarrel, but the young man was growing independent of his father, and preferred to act upon his own judgement. He failed to ask and to receive substantial help, which would have been freely given, and he fell into great losses, which might readily have been avoided. The young man became weak as others, he was the prey of deceivers, he spent labor and thought and substance upon matters which ended in failure; he grew poorer and poorer, till he trembled on the verge of bankruptcy. Do you wonder? Do you pity him? Do you see in him your own portrait? If so, change it all, and say of your heavenly Father, He is my friend and counselor, and to Him I do continually resort. This will be your wisdom, your strength, your happiness, and your spiritual wealth.

Multiply your approaches to God. Let them become incessant, constant, and continual. No man ever resorted to God to excess. It might be possible to spend too much time in the posture of devotion, but you can be in the spirit of prayer and praise all day long and yet never run to extravagance. "Pray without ceasing" is the command of our infallible Lord. Towards men there is a limit of resort, but to God there is none. By your continual coming you will not weary the Lord, through your persistence, you will prevail with Him. I had a dear friend whose company I esteemed, but all of a sudden he did not come to

see me. He stayed away, and as I knew he had not ceased to love me, I wondered why. At last I found that the good brother had taken it into his head that he might outrun his welcome, he had read those words of Solomon, “withdraw your foot from your neighbor’s house; lest he be weary of you, and so hate you.” I admired my friend’s prudence, but I labored hard to make him see that Solomon knew nothing of *me*, and that I was more wearied when he stayed away than when he came. I hope he made *me* an exception to a very sensible rule. But never get that thought into your head concerning your God. Will you weary my God also? You may weary Him by restraining prayer, but never by abounding in supplication. Abide with your God, and cry to Him day and night, and let this be the music of your whole life, “whereunto I may continually resort.”

Our immediate practical conclusion is this: If we may continually resort to God, let us go to Him at once. Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving and prayer even now. Here are several thousands of us who profess to have come here to worship, let us all draw near unto God this morning. Let each one hasten to his footstool for himself individually. Forget the vast congregation, forget everything but that which is holy and spiritual, and come unto your God, who at this moment calls you to His footstool. “Alas, I have been so worldly all the week!” This is to be confessed and repented of, but it must not keep you from God now. “But I feel dull and dead.” I know it, and the Lord knows it too, but yet you may approach Him. You remember what our Lord Jesus said of the Laodicean church—that He would spew it out of His mouth, but what does He say afterwards? “Behold, I stand at the door and knock.” He says to the same church, “If any man opens the door, I will enter in”—enter into the same church which had so disgusted Him—“and will sup with Him”—sup with that church of which just now He was so sick. Come, then, you lukewarm ones, and in coming to Jesus you will cease to be disgusting to Him. Come, you whose spiritual state would make Jesus Himself sick. He stands at your door and knocks. Open to Him, and He will enter in, and He will have no distaste of you, but He will delight in you. You have returned from your health resorts, now come to a still healthier resort. Come, see how graciously Jesus can restore your souls, and make you full of His life and joy. He will forget your sins, and instead of His being sick of you, He will make you glad in Him, until you shall cry out with the spouse, “Stay me with flagons; comfort me with apples; for I am sick of love.” Blessed love-sickness!

If you never have come to Jesus before, come, you chief of sinners, *now*: Come, you that have but little spiritual feeling; come just as you are, since Jesus from this platform says, “Come unto Me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” “The Spirit and the bride say, Come.” “Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” That God, who is the house of His people, sets wide His doors, and writes over them in letters of light, “Whosoever will, let him come.” Jesus comes to the door, He beckons to you, and persuades you to enter, saying, “Him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out.” The Lord enable you to come, for His dear mercy’s sake. Amen.

**PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—PSALM 71.
HYMNS FROM “OUR OWN HYMN BOOK”—71 (SONG 1), 91 (SONG 2), 627.**

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