

# A Refuge of Lies

By Henry Mahan

**Bible Text:** Isaiah 28:14-20

**Henry T. Mahan Tape Library**

**Zebulon Baptist Church**

6088 Zebulon Highway

Pikeville, KY 41501

Website: <http://www.sovereign-grace.com/13thstbap.htm>

Online Sermons: <http://mahan.sermonaudio.com>

I had a supper engagement last Wednesday evening in Pittsboro, North Carolina. My hostesses were three elderly ladies. One of them was about 85. One was about 80. One was about 75 or 76. They were sisters. They had never been married. They lived together and they had me over for supper.

And we were talking about the church of which they were members. I asked them how long that they had been attending the church. I was holding a meeting in their home church. And they said, “Well, we’ve been there all our lives. Our mother took us to church just a few weeks after we were born and we have been there all our lives.”

“Well,” I said, “Then you know all the pastors that have been pastors of that church, that have preached at that church.”

“Oh, we know them all well. There have been many: 15, 16, 17 pastors.”

I said, “Well, would you let me ask you a question?”

“Yes, sir.”

I said, “Which of those pastors, which pastor could preach better than the rest of them?”

“Oh, we liked them all.”

I said, “I know that. I’m sure that you loved them and appreciated their ministry. But which one of them—there has to be one of them—that could preach the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ better than all of the others that you learned more under his ministry and he could preach the gospel?”

Well, they thought for a moment. Finally one of them said, “I would say brother Thomas.”

And I said, “Why?”

She said, “Well, he was such a nice man. Why he would come to our house, he was just like one of us. He would come in any time of the day and sit down at the table and if we had cornbread and peas that was all right by him. He would just eat anything we had. He would just make himself at home and he was just such a fine man.”

“Well,” I said, “That’s not what I want to know. I’m not interested in the pastor’s personality. I know you liked him and he ate cornbread and peas just like you did or he would come in at any time and make himself at home. But what I want to know is this: I want to know which one of those men preached the gospel of Jesus Christ from the pulpit better than the rest of them.”

And they thought a moment. And finally one of them said, “I would say brother Norris.”

I said, “Why?”

“Well,” she said, “You know, that he pastured here about four years. And, you know, when he preached he was just all over that pulpit. Why he would just walk up and down that pulpit and he would walk down the stairs down to the front of the church and he’d even get up on the bench down front and walk up and down. Oh, he could preach.”

They never did understand what I meant: Which one of those men would lay—as I read to you a moment ago from Isaiah 28—“line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little, there a little,” who would talk about “the rest wherewith you may cause the weary to rest, the hope in which the hopeless can hold, the place of refuge in which the weary can hide.” But they never heard that.

Now, my friends, there are some things that all religious people know. There are some things, to some extent, that all religious people know, that these three sweet, blessed old ladies knew, that all of the preachers know and that all of the congregation knows. There are some things that all men know.

First of all, they know there is a God. They know there is a God. They know that somewhere there is a God.

Now, they have some unusual ideas about God. They call their lodge brothers the most worshipful master. They call God the man upstairs. I never could quite understand that. Men have different ideas about God. They call their lodge brothers the exalted potentate and they call their God superstar. I never could understand that.

But everybody believes there is a God and everyday has a God. And, secondly, everybody knows, to some extent, that sin has entered into this world. They will disagree as to what caused it. They will disagree as to the extent of its influence on them. They will disagree as to what happened in the Garden of Eden. Some people believe Adam died. Some people believe he was slightly wounded. Some people believe that he lost the sight in both eyes. Some believe he lost one eye. Some believe he was rendered lame on

both his feet. Some believe that he was crippled a little bit on one leg and can hobble somehow and God can supply what he lacks.

They disagree as to the extent or influence of sin. But they know that there is a problem. There is a problem between us and God. And that problem is sin. Everybody knows that.

If these dear sweet ladies who knew nothing about the gospel, if I had asked them if they believe in God.

“Oh, we believe in God. There’s a God. Everybody knows that, preacher.”

“Well, do you believe that sin has come into this world?”

“Oh, yes we do. Everybody knows that sin has come into this world. Where it came from and what it does and to what extent it has influenced us and the amount of wrath of almighty God upon it, now we disagree in that point, but we believe in sin.”

And then they believe that death comes to all men and that after death there is a judgment and after judgment there is eternal life either in heaven or hell.

Now, the poet Longfellow wrote:

Life is real—life is earnest—  
And the grave is not its goal:  
Dust thou art, to dust returnest,  
Was not spoken of the soul.

He knew that. And you know that. And all these religious people throughout this country know that there is death and that there is life after death. You believe that. Everybody believes that. There is no doubt about that. Everybody knows they are going to die and everybody believes there is life after death.

Now, here is the main point. And almost everybody has some kind of refuge, some kind of hope. Let me ask you this. Anybody here this morning believe...does anybody believe—and I wish I had the ear of the whole religious community—does anybody believe, is there anybody who believes that he or she is going to hell? Huh? Nobody. Nobody. Everybody has got a hope. Everybody has got a hope. Everybody. Everybody has a hope. Everybody has got a refuge.

That’s what God says here in the Word we read a moment ago. Look at verse 15. God said, “Now you speak to these people and you say this to them,” verse 15, “You have said, ‘We have a covenant with death.’”

Now, we don’t want to die. We don’t want to die. We are not like the apostle Paul just yet. Paul said, “I have a desire to depart and be with Christ.” We don’t have that desire.

We can't say with the apostle Paul, "I am in a straight betwixt the two having a desire to depart." We can't say with Paul, "For me to live is Christ and for me to die is gain. The best thing that could happen to me right now is to die." We can't say that. But we've got a covenant with death. We don't want to die, but we're not afraid to die. We're not afraid to die. We accept it. We know it's a fact. We know it finally must come to all men. And finally it will come to us. We bought our insurance policies. We bought our lots out at the cemetery and we have made out a will and we have told the preacher we'd like him to preach our funeral and we want him to sing the "Sweet By and By." We want them to sing, "Will the Circle be Unbroken?" We've got it all fixed up and we don't want to die. That's the last thing we want to happen. And heaven is our home, but we're not homesick and we've got it all fixed up. We made a covenant with death. We're not afraid to die. We don't want to, now, but we're not afraid of it. We don't.

And with hell are we at an agreement. We have an agreement with hell.

"Sure there's a hell, preacher. I'm not a heathen. I believe there's a heaven. I believe there's a hell."

"Do you believe you are going to hell?"

"No, sir. No, sir. That's never entered my mind. Now, some folks may go to hell. I'm sure that some folks may go to hell, but me? Me? Why that's the farthest thing from my mind. I've got an agreement with hell. I am not going to hell."

Now, we tell other people to go to hell, but we don't plan on going there. We've got an agreement with hell. We don't.

"And when the overflowing scourge shall pass through," that's God's wrath. As you read those later verses in Isaiah 28 you find out that that scourge, that overflowing scourge, that all consuming flood is God's judgment and God's wrath that shall be unleashed upon all men.

And we say, "When it comes around, it's not going to come unto me. I'm all fixed up. I got a hiding place. I've got a storm cellar. I've got a place in which I can hide that the wrath of God and the flood of his judgment is not going to come to me. I'm not afraid of the judgment."

That's what these people say. God said, "You speak to them, Isaiah, and you tell them: I know about their covenant with death and I know about their agreement with hell and I know about their refuge, but their refuge of lies. They are not deceiving me. They are deceiving themselves. They are hiding in a refuge of lies. They are covering themselves with falsehood."

Now, read on down in verse 17. Here is the sad news. God says, "Your refuge is a refuge of lies." God says, "Your hiding place is falsehood." And here is where you are

going to find it out. Verse 17. God says, “Judgment also will I lay to the line and righteousness to the plummet.”

I don’t know a whole lot about a plummet, but I know that when a fellow is laying a wall, a block wall or a stone wall or a brick wall that he uses that line and that plummet, that weight, and he gets that line exactly, exactly straight.

And God almighty says, “I’m going to deal in exact righteousness at the judgment. At the judgment I am going to deal in justice, clear-cut justice. I am going to deal in righteousness with all men, nothing secret that shall not be revealed, nothing hidden that shall not be made open.”

Our thoughts are going to be measured by God’s thoughts, by the perfect line, the straight line, the holy line, the immaculate line of God’s thoughts. And our holiness is going to be measured by God’s holiness. And our righteousness is going to be measured by God’s righteousness.

Oh, the awful, terrible, fearful, perfect righteousness of God almighty. And then he is going to say to that man or woman who came in without a suitable covering, without a holy garb, without a suitable garment, “How did you get in here?”

And they are going to be speechless.

And he is going to call for the angels to bind them hand and foot and cast them into the hell with which they had agreement, and cast them into the judgment of God’s eternal condemnation which they said, “Will never come to us.”

But they never knew the holiness by which they would be measured. They had no idea of the righteousness with which they would be examined nor the thoughts and purity.

And then there is going to be the strangest prayer meeting that was ever held. And then there is going to be the strangest prayer meeting that has ever been conducted, not the saved, but the unsaved are going to start praying. And not to God, but they are going to cry to the rocks and the mountains and they are going to pray, not for life, but for death. They are going to pray for the death with which they had the covenant. And they are going to pray not to see God’s glory, but that his face might be hid from their sight.

“Oh, hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne.”

But that prayer won’t be answered. God says, “Your covenant,” look at verse 18, “I’m going to lay judgment to the line. It is going to be a straight line.”

It’s not going to be your little line of judgment that lets you veer a little here and deal a little there.

“Well, I don’t think this is too bad and I don’t think that’s too bad and I don’t think God would mind this too much, you know, and I think it would be all right.”

God says, “I’m going to lay it to the line, the straight line. I’m going to lay it to the line.” And he said, “Righteousness to the plummet, so exact.”

Yes, God is exact and holy as God is holy and righteous as God is righteous.

How good does a man have to be to get by in the judgment? As good as God.

How holy does a man have to be to get by at the judgment? As holy as God.

How righteous does a man have to be to get by at the judgment? As righteous as God. That’s how righteous. That’s how perfect.

If you are going to stand on your feet they had better be perfect feet. If you are going to lift your hands in a plea to God for mercy at the judgment, it better be hands that have never been stained with sin. If you are going to lift your voice to God almighty and plead your own works it better be a voice that has never spoken in anything except holiness because God is going to measure it by the line, by the plummet of God.

And then he says, “You can’t stand. Your covenant with death is going to be disannulled and your agreement with hell will not stand. And then the overflowing scourge is coming through and will sweep you away. You’ve got no place to hide.”

You say, “Preacher, do men today have a false refuge?”

Yes, they do. There is about four or five false refuges that I’d like to point out to you right now in which men and women, boys and girls are hiding.

First of all the average religious person has a wrong idea of sin. A man said to me several months ago, he said, “I used to walk into the church and I would look around at the people and I would say to myself, ‘I’m as good as these people are.’ Why I’m as good as these people who say they are Christians. I’m even better than some of them.”

You know, you’re right. I expect you are right. I expect you could find somebody here this morning, maybe several people, not quite as good as you are, not quite as good as you are. But if you lift your eyes a little higher you will find somebody a whole lot holier than you are. And he is the one you have got to do business with.

You look up here at me and say, “Well, I’ve known you for years. You ain’t everything that you claim to be.”

You’re right. But he’s everything he claimed to be. And you’re not going to deal with me at the judgment. I’m not the one that’s going to be sitting on that throne. You better be glad I’m not.

Yeah, and that fellow sitting next to you in church, you say you are better than he is. You're right, but he is not going to judge you. God is. And this man said, "I used to go in church and I'd like look around. I'd say, 'Why, I'm as good as these people. I'm better than some.'"

And he said, later, he found out what an evil heart he had. He said, "I was comparing myself to other people while God was measuring my thoughts and my words and my deeds by his holy law."

Now, then, I look at the holy law of God. I don't look at the people around me and talk about how good I am. I don't look at the people around me and talk about how much better I am than them. He said, "Now, I look as in a mirror at the holy law of God and I cry out with the Leper, 'Unclean! Unclean! Oh, unclean! Unclean!'"

Have you ever seen yourself a sinner? Have you ever gone like the publican to the temple and cried, "Oh, God, be merciful to me the sinner? I'm not responsible for the way other people are and the way other people act and the way other people live. But I'm responsible to you for the way I think and the way I act and the way I live. And, oh God, I've sinned against heaven and in thy sight. Be merciful to me. Let thy blood be propitiation for me on the mercy seat."

Have you been there?

A man can never be found until he is lost. A man will never be clothed until he is naked. A man will never be raised until he is slain. And a man will never be exalted until he is humbled. And a man will never find Christ the Savior of sinners until he cries with Paul, "I am the chief of sinners, oh, wretched man that I am."

Have you seen your heritage one with him who tried to dethrone God? Have you seen your heritage one with those who stood in front of Pilate and said, "Give us Barabbas and crucify Jesus?" Can you hear your voice in that multitude? Have you seen your lust, your malice, your idolatry, your covetousness, your evil heart? Has it ever been opened? Has the cesspool of iniquity that lives in your breast ever been cut open by the Holy Spirit and your eyes seen—by the searchlight of God's holy law—all the wretched, wicked, vile creature that live there? Have you? Have you?

If you have you won't be talking about a covenant with death. You won't be talking about an agreement with hell. You won't be boasting that the judgment won't come nigh you. You'll be crying, "Oh, God, deliver me."

I'll tell you another false refuge in which people are hiding is the wrong idea of the mercy and love of God.

Now, brethren, I tell you: I preach the love of God. I preach it. I believe it with all my heart, believe me. Honestly, if it weren't for the love of God you and I would all be in hell right now.

The love of God, how rich how pure!  
How measureless and strong!  
It shall forevermore endure—  
The saints' and angels' song.

God so loved this wicked world that he gave his Son to die for our sins. "Greater love hath no man than this that he laid down his life for his friends."

If this world has heard nothing but the love of God, they haven't heard about the wrath of God. You boys and girls are taught from the time you are two years old to sing,

Jesus loves me, this I know  
For the Bible tells me so.

Does Jesus love you? Come on, now. Think a minute.

"Why, brother Mahan, God loves everybody."

Does he, now? Does he?

What about this verse of Scripture in John chapter three, verse 36. John 3:36: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath, the wrath of God abideth on him."

Is that in your Bible? Do you have John 3:36 in your Bible? Have I got an unusual Bible up here that just goes further than yours?

It says here the what? The wrath of God.

Turn to Psalms chapter five. Let me show you another verse over here in Psalms the fifth chapter. I believe it's verse five, Psalms five, verse five. Listen to it. "The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity."

Look at Psalm seven, verse 11: "God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day."

Do I have the right to stand and tell wicked men and women that God loves them when the Bible says God's angry with them? Do I have the right to tell the workers of iniquity that God loves them when the Bible says that God hates the workers of iniquity? Do I have a right to stand before men who do not believe in Christ, who never have received Christ as their Lord and Savior, who have never bowed to his scepter, who have never



received his rule and tell them God loves them when the Bible says they are under the wrath of God?

That would be like Noah sticking a bumper sticker on the back of the ark: "Smile, God loves you."

Every time I see one of those signs I think about old Noah and that ark. Here I am sailing through this ungodly world in this automobile and men and women are taking God's name in vain. They are ignoring his blessed house of worship. They care nothing for his blessed precious Word. They care nothing that his Son died on the cross for their sin. They care nothing for his holy law. They care not for any of those things. And here I am riding down the road with a sign: "Smile, God loves you."

That fellow hanging to the last limb on the last tree before the waters swept him off watched Noah's ark go by. And there was that sign: "God loves you."

I bet he said, "That's a funny kind of love. That's a funny kind of love."

I'll tell you where God's love is. Turn to Romans eight and Romans eight, verse 38. Turn over there with me, now. Watch it. Romans eight, verse 38. It says here, "I am persuaded. I am persuaded that neither death nor life nor angels nor principalities nor powers nor things present nor things to come nor height nor depth nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God," watch it now. Read it with me. Everybody out loud. Come on, now. "The love of God." Read it. "Which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." That's where she is, my friend. The love of God is in Christ. It's in Christ. It's deeper than hell. It's higher than heaven. It's broader than infinity. It's further than the infinite space that reaches out yonder in the unfathomed trails of eternity, the love of God. But it is in Christ. That's where it is. And out of Christ is judgment and wrath and hell.

There is mercy. Turn to Romans eight, verse one. Now look at it. Yes, there is mercy. Romans eight says, "There is therefore now no condemnation, no judgment, no fear," watch it, "to them who are in Christ." There is no judgment to them who are in Christ. There is no hell to them who are in Christ.

But outside of Christ, my friend, there is condemnation and judgment and wrath.

Turn to Romans five, verse one. Listen to this. Romans five, verse one: "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God." Where is it? It is, "through our Lord Jesus Christ."

You don't have any peace with God if you are out of Christ. God is angry with you. God's angry with you. If you are out of Christ today you have got no peace. You have got no rest. You have got no deliverance. You have got no hope. God is angry. The frown of heaven is upon you.

I'll tell you something else. There is another false refuge in which people hide. They've got a wrong conception of sin. They have got a wrong conception of the mercy of God.

The mercy of God is in that cross like it was in that ark. The mercy of God is in that cross like it was in that brazen serpent. The mercy of God is in that cross like it was in the blood of the lamb, the passover lamb in Egypt. Outside of the blood there was wrath and death. And outside of the cross of Christ there is wrath and death.

I'm telling you the truth. Here is one preacher that is not looking for a bigger church. I've got all I can handle. This is all I want to be responsible for at the judgment. Here is one preacher who is not looking for a bigger salary. Here is one preacher that is not looking for friends. I've got plenty of friends. I like the ones I've got. Do you want to be my friend? That's wonderful. If you want to go to hell that's your business. But I'm going to tell you the truth: The love of God is in Christ and the peace of God is in Christ and the mercy of God is in Christ. And outside of Christ there is nothing but wrath and judgment and hell.

And if you are out of Christ this morning I don't care how educated you are and how moral you are, I care not how long you have been a church member. If you are not in Christ God's angry with you, bud. You are under the wrath of God. God doesn't love you. His love is in Christ. There ain't nothing about you to love.

Somebody says, "Well, he loves the sinner and hates his sin."

How can you separate the sinner and his sin? You are sin. You are a sinner because you are sin. You were born in sin and shapen in sin. "In the flesh dwelleth no good thing." You can't separate yourself and your sins. That's what you are is sin. Your mind is enmity against God.

Now, look at the third thing. I'll tell you another refuge in which people are hiding: a profession of salvation that does not produce the fruits of the Spirit and the works of faith and love.

Now, listen to me. I want to say four things here. It's a false refuge that gives a man a hope for heaven who is unholy in his life. That's a false refuge. It's a false refuge that lets a man love God and hate his fellow man. That's a false refuge. It's a false refuge that grants forgiveness to me while I refuse to forgive somebody else. That's a phony as a three dollar bill.

It's a false refuge that gives mercy to me while I give no mercy to anybody else. That's phony. You can't separate faith and conduct. Works can't save, but nobody has ever been saved without them. Prayer can't save, but no man has ever been saved who didn't pray. Giving can't save, but a selfish man is going to hell. Morality won't save, but an immoral man doesn't know God.

Now you figure that out, but that is so. That is so. A profession of salvation that does not produce in me the fruits of the Spirit and works of love and faith is a false refuge and I'll find it out at the judgment.

I may sit around and say I'm in agreement with hell. And I may sit around talk about the covenant I have with death. And I may talk about how I'm going to fare in the judgment, but I'm not going to fare at all because I'm hiding in a false refuge.

Have you ever tried to sleep on a bed that was too short? It isn't too comfortable is it?

Have you ever tried on a coat...you go to bed at night and it's not too cool, but the thermometer drops during the night and you are a long legged fellow, you know, and the cover's too narrow and the bed's too short and you pull that cover up and get your shoulders warm and your feet freeze. And you push that cover down and get your feet wrapped up in it and your chest gets cold, you know. It's just too narrow and too short. And that's what these religious experiences are.

He says in verse 20, "Your bed is too short." You're not comfortable. You can't find comfort except in Christ. All of the works and baptism and church membership and professions of faith and all these things won't give a man ease and rest and peace and comfort and warmth because the bed is too short and the cover is too narrow.

And I'm not telling you anything you don't know. The fourth false refuge is this. Now listen to me: An old experience that stays old.

You know, it's great to hear men and women tell how they were convicted of sin and how they came to a knowledge of Christ and how the gospel was preached to them and they trusted Christ and leaned upon Christ. But, my friends, to go back to that old experience to prove that I know the Lord is folly of the worst sort. Repentance is not an isolated act. It's a state of being. I have repented. I am repenting. I shall repent.

Faith is not an isolated act that happened behind the barn 25 years ago and is now forgotten. Faith is something I have believed. I am believing. I shall believe.

I don't have to go back one day to prove the Lord is my hope. He is my hope now. I don't have to go back one day or one week or one year to prove the Lord is my redeemer. He is my redeemer right now. The cross is my refuge and the blood is my covering and the sacrifice is my atonement now, right now. And if we have to go back yonder 25 years ago and lean on an old experience and lean on an old feeling and lean on an old perception and lean on an old decision is like a man pulling out a birth certificate to try to prove he's living. That's foolish.

I worry about people that have to go back to prove they are saved.

You know, I have married...I have performed marriage a lot of times, young couples come to me want to be married. And they walk down the aisle together and they stand here in front of me. And if I were to say to that young boy, "Do you love this girl?"

Why he'd say, "Yes, of course I do."

But 25 years later or 26 years later if, by the grace of God, they live together through those years and I say to that boy, "Do you love this girl you have been married to 25, 26, 27 years?"

"I sure do, preacher."

"Do you love her more now than you did then?"

"Oh, I didn't love her at all then. I thought I did. I didn't even know what it is. But we lived together 20 some odd years. We've wept together. We've laughed together. We've prayed together. We have worshipped together. We have rejoiced together. We raised our children together. I love her now more than I ever loved her in my life."

And that's the way it is with Christ if you are saved, if you know him. You go back that 25, 26, 30 years way back yonder and say, "I'm saved because back yonder I fell in love with Jesus."

Boy, then you didn't love him then. You do now, don't you? You didn't know anything about sin then. You didn't know anything about rebellion then. You didn't know anything about evil then. Boy, you do now, don't you? You do now.

But that's what worries me about people that have to go back to prove they're saved. If you haven't grown in grace and in the knowledge of Christ you're not living. Anything that lives grows.

Let me give you another false refuge quickly. In Acts chapter 24, verse 25. Listen. Paul stood before a man called Felix and he talked to him about righteousness, Christ's righteousness and his lack of it. He talked to him about temperance. He talked to him about judgment to come. And Felix trembled. And he answered and he said, "Paul, you go your way. I believe what you said. I sure do. You've rung my bell. But now I don't have time today to deal with these matters. Tomorrow I'm going to do something about it. Yeah, Paul, you were right. You were right about that righteousness. We don't have any by nature. We don't have any by birth. We don't have any by deed. We need a righteousness that God will accept. We need a holiness with which God will be pleased. We need a covering. I agree with you. Paul, you are right about that sin deal. You are right. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. You are right about that. You are right about that atonement. You are right about that sacrifice. You are right about judgment to come and I don't have a mediator and I don't have a hope and I don't have a redeemer. But I don't have time right now to deal with it. So tomorrow, next week, next year I'm going to settle this matter."

And that's the worst false refuge that there is today. It's tomorrow because, my friend, tomorrow you will be dead and tomorrow you are going to stand at the judgment and tomorrow you are going to hear God say, "Depart from me." And then tomorrow you will be in hell.

"Today is the day of salvation." That's what this Bible says. "Now is the accepted time." Right now. Do you believe that?

Felix never did send for Paul. This was his day right here. This was the day God spoke to him. This was the day God warned him. This was the day God stripped him. This was the day God sent his messenger. This was the day God almighty delivered the ultimatum. This is the day. And Felix said, "Tomorrow." And God said, "No. Today."

Tomorrow is not today. Today.

I want to give you one other thing from Isaiah 28 and then I'll let you go. Isaiah 28 and verse 16. God said, "Behold, I lay in Zion, I lay in Zion." This is the foundation that God laid. It will stand. I didn't lay it, the preacher, the Baptist Church. God laid it. It will stand against death and hell and deliver in the judgment. This is the hiding place that will cover you in the time of storm. God said, "I lay in Zion, the Church, for a foundation a stone." Christ is the stone. He is strong and durable. God laid this stone in his everlasting covenant and purpose. This is the cornerstone. This is the Savior. This is the Redeemer. This is the stone that we build upon for eternity. "I lay a stone," God said. And we don't...he said, "It's a tried stone." Tried by the Old Testament saints who put their trust in him, tried by principalities and powers and rulers of the darkness, tried by Satan, tried by sin in all points, tried by the father who committed to him all the elect, tried. He has been tried in all points and yet he never fails.

And God says he is a precious cornerstone. He is precious to the Father who loves him and delights in him. He is precious to the angels who behold his glory and delight in his victory. He is precious to every believer who finds in him our hope and our life and our deliverance and our redemption and our wisdom and our sanctification.

Without Christ I'm as sure for hell as the devil is. Without Christ I'm under the wrath of God like the demons of darkness. Without Christ I have no hope. He is precious, more precious than life on this earth.

And then God says, "He is a sure foundation." He will never give way. "He is a sure foundation and he that believeth on him shall not be ashamed."

You got a refuge? Who is it?

"You mean, preacher, what is it?"

No, who is it? You've got a hiding place? Who is it?

“You mean what is it?”

No, I mean who is it. Paul said, “I know whom I have believed and I am persuaded he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.”

“Ok, preacher. You’re right. And I’m going to do something about it.”

When?

“Tomorrow.”

That’s what I thought. That’s what I thought.

Let’s turn and sing one verse of scripture, one verse of a song.