

Great Conflict - Real Christianity is Constant Struggle

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[0 : 00] We're going to turn this morning to our Bible reading, which you'll find in Psalm number three. We've been looking in the evenings. We spent three weeks on Psalm number one. We looked on Wednesday evening at the prayer meeting at Psalm two.

And we're going to spend a few weeks looking at Psalm number three, a little bit different from our normal pattern. We're slowing right down and taking time just to meditate on the truths that we find in a couple of verses of these Psalms.

Because from time to time, it's good to have a change. It's good to just focus perhaps on one thought that we can meditate on through the week and learn from and be encouraged by.

And here is a Psalm, I think, of great realism and therefore of great encouragement. There's no encouragement in pretending, but there is great encouragement in facing reality head on with the truth of God's word to help us.

So Psalm three then begins this way, a Psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom, his son. Oh Lord, how many are my foes.

[1 : 07] Many are rising against me. Many are saying of my soul, there is no salvation for him in God. But you, O Lord, are a shield about me, my glory, the lifter of my head.

I cried aloud to the Lord and he answered me from his holy hill. I lay down and slept. I woke again. For the Lord sustained me.

I will not be afraid of many thousands of people who have set themselves against me all around. Arise, O Lord, save me, O my God. For you strike all my enemies on the cheek.

You break the teeth of the wicked. Salvation belongs to the Lord. Your blessing be upon your people. Amen.

May God bless these words to us. Lord, would you turn with me to Psalm number three? And we're looking particularly this morning at verses one and two.

[2 : 13] We're going to have three studies in this Psalm. Studies in what we will see is faith and not fantasy. That is real Christianity. And this morning we're going to see very clearly, I hope, that real Christianity involves great conflict.

It means a constant struggle. Now, for many people today, the Christian faith is seen as just a crutch. It's an escapist fantasy that pretends life is other than it really is.

So that you feel better. So that you can find some relief in a difficult world and so on. Karl Marx so famously said of religion in general. But of Christianity, I think, in particular, that it's just the opium of the people.

It's just a drug. Indeed, it's a dangerous drug. And to dull the senses of the proletariat. Or in our day, we have Richard Dawkins, who wrote his famous book, The God Delusion.

The Christian faith is just to be rejected by intelligent thinking people like him. It's just for simpletons. It's for those who really ought to be pitied.

[3 : 27] And to these men and to countless others. No doubt many of the students who will be invited along to events this week. And talks and discussions in these weeks of Christian mission.

To many of these folk, the Christian faith just cuts no ice with the hard-nosed, down-to-earth realist. Christianity is for the gullible. It's for the fool.

It's for the fantasist. Now, unfortunately, we have to immediately say that there can be some justification for those kind of attitudes.

Because within the Christian world, in the professing Christian church, in some places, fantasy does abound. There are some branches of what calls itself Christianity, which offers unbridled health and wealth and prosperity and so on in their gospel.

In fact, the largest church in our country, in the United Kingdom today, is a prosperity gospel church. And they're very popular. Particularly in the black communities in big cities like London, there are very many of them.

[4 : 31] But even in mainstream evangelical churches across the nation today, there is a great deal of what you might call celebration culture. You see that very plainly, for example, just in a lot of the contemporary church music and songs, where all the songs are upbeat.

They're all happy. Sometimes so much so that people can be made to feel guilty if they're actually feeling sad. And not able to be happy and singing these happy songs.

That kind of Christianity is fantasy. That kind of Christianity doesn't cut the mustard with realities of life on earth.

How do you sing unbridled happy songs like that in a church like the one in the Philippines that was bombed and hundreds of people were killed and maimed just last week? How can you sing that kind of song this week when they're meeting together in the midst of their grief?

Or how can you sing unbridled happy songs when your teenage son has just been knifed to death in London? It seems to be happening on a weekly basis in the capital at the moment.

[5 : 35] Very often in the very communities where these prosperity gospel churches seem to thrive. No fantasy faith like that has absolutely nothing to offer in these situations.

Nor in many other situations that we face in life. But friends, that kind of fantasy religion is a million miles from the reality in the pages of the Bible.

The faith that the Bible expresses has nothing to do with that kind of thing at all. And nowhere do you see that more clearly than in the book of Psalms. As somebody has put it, what we have in these Psalms is theology in the raw.

That's what these songs are about. They're teaching us about reality. About the real God. About real life. And about real faith. This is where we find out about real Christianity.

And Psalm 3, as you'll see, has a title. It's the first of the Psalms that has a title like that. Those words in the little capitals at the top. Not the bold text. That's part of, that's just somebody's edition that they've put in in this version of the Bible.

[6 : 50] But the little text there of David when he fled from Absalom his son. That's part of the text of this Psalm. And this first book of the Psalms.

Remember we said there are five sections in the Psalms. Five books of Psalms. Psalms 1 to 41, the first book. They're all titled of David. After Psalm 1 and 2, every one of them is of David. It means they're either by David or they're written about David.

They concern God's anointed king of his people. And they're nearly all laments. More than half of all the Psalms are laments.

Here's the official hymn book of the Old Testament church. The songs to be sung individually by believers or to be sung all together by God's people gathered together. And more than half of them are sad songs, laments.

And by the way, that's not just something to be consigned to the Old Testament life. Don't forget that the Psalms is the most quoted book of the Old Testament in the New Testament by Jesus and all his apostles.

[7 : 54] So we need to take that very seriously, don't we? Why have these kind of songs, this kind of praise, been so largely abandoned in the Christian church? There's not that many of our contemporary worship songs that you can sing after a great calamity or after a terrorist outrage or even just after a bereavement when you're sad or when you've been just faced with a diagnosis of illness, of cancer, something like that.

There are some, but there are not that many. But open the book of Psalms and suddenly you find songs that resonate with your life in all its realities.

No fantasy, no let's pretend, none of that at all. And here in Psalm 3 is a song that I'm sure some of us probably this very morning could sing with some feeling.

It's a real song about real Christian life. No pretense, no hiding from the truth, no fantasy. And yet it is a psalm, as we'll see over the next couple of weeks, a psalm of great hope and encouragement.

Now note this is Psalm 3, not Psalm 1 and 2. We've already said Psalms 1 and 2 are the gateway into the book of Psalms. They set the framework for understanding the whole world that we live in.

[9 : 12] But Psalm 1, remember, we saw very clearly that it's God's word, it's God's instruction that rules and directs the whole of human life. And therefore, if you want true happiness, true fruitfulness, it is fine turning away from the words and wisdom of the world and towards delighting in the word of God.

Blessed is the man whose delight is not in the counsel of the wicked or the way of sinners or the seat of scoffers. It's not in the worldview out there. But rather, it's in the law, it's in the instruction of the Lord.

And Psalm 2, as we saw on Wednesday night at our prayer meeting, tells us that it is God's Son who rules all history and eternity. And that therefore you find refuge for your life in Him and not ever with those who are united against Him.

Verse 12 of Psalm 2, kiss the Son. Blessed are those who find refuge in Him and in Him alone. But neither of these Psalms pretend that there is no present struggle in the life of faith.

In fact, it's absolutely the opposite of that. For the present, what we see for the man of faith is that he is surrounded by the pressures of the world.

[10 : 31] And he is opposed very often by the powers of the world. The world is united against God's Son. And here in Psalm 3, we see immediately that reality on the ground and what it means in the life of a faithful, real believer.

Now, of course, I've said this is a Psalm of David. It's about his experience. And David, of course, is not just an ordinary Christian believer.

He was God's anointed king. He was God's chosen leader of his people Israel. But, of course, David's experience and David's life was bound up with the life of his people.

Because they were the Lord's people. And David, God's anointed king, suffered and was opposed by enemies just because he represented the people of God in a hostile world.

And David's people, the people of Israel, they were opposed just because they belonged to him and were under the rule of God's anointed king on earth. So, of course, we see in David prophetic foreshadowings of the life and the earthly experience of his greater son, great David's greater son, the anointed king, the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ.

[11 : 50] But we also, in just the same way, we see a foreshadowing of the life of all the king's people. All those who are bound up with their great anointed king and Lord Jesus Christ.

All the people of God in Christ. So, the great reformer, John Calvin, was absolutely right to remind us that when we read the Psalms of David, David represents not only Christ, but also the church.

And also every true Christian and their earthly experience of the life of faith. As they're being conformed to Christ through their union with him by faith. We belong to him and he belongs to us.

And we share in his experience. Just as David's people shared in David's experience. So, John Calvin says of these Psalms, David mourns over the injuries which he in particular was suffering.

And yet in his own person, he represented Christ and the whole body of the church. He says, David is the example after which the whole church should be conformed.

[13 : 00] And so these Psalms, you see, these are in our Bibles to prepare us for our lives of real faith. For what it means for us to be the king's people following him. These Psalms are for us and they are about us in the Christian church today.

And Psalm 3, you see, then teaches us what it means to live life as a people of the word. But living among people of the world. It teaches us what it means to be living as people of the king.

But living as we do in the territory still of the king's enemies. And that's why the very first thing that is abundantly clear in this Psalm is that there is great conflict for God's people.

And real Christianity means just that. It means a great struggle right to the end. The true believer must live with foes in this fallen world.

And therefore the struggle will be constant and continuous in real Christianity. There are real enemies of God abiding in the world. And so those who side with God will inevitably face those same constant foes.

[14 : 16] We'll face enemies without. And we'll face enemies within. And that the constant assault of both of these will be focused and directed at the very heart of our faith.

Just as it was for David. To destroy our assurance. To destroy our consciousness that there can be salvation for us in God our Savior. Look at verses 1 and 2.

That's exactly what David's experience was here. Notice the agony.

The intensity of that cry. There are many foes. Three times. Many. Many. Many. That's the Hebrew way of heaping it on. And notice how personal the attack is as well.

It's against me. It's against my soul. The very core of my being. You see these many foes that David is facing. They're mocking.

[15 : 23] They're mocking foes aren't they? There's no salvation for him. He's deluded about God. It's fantasy. Who does he think he is? Now what would bring about such a lament?

Such agony in David's cry? Well the answer is it's the agonized cry of somebody whose outward circumstances in life suggest that God has deserted him.

And that conclusion is reinforced by their inner thoughts that tell them that yes real sin and real failure in their life means that surely that the presence of God must have been driven away from them because of what they've done.

And they know that they've only got themselves to blame. That was David's situation in this psalm. That's what we're told in those words at the top. But it's the frequent experience isn't it of many of us today as Christian people as those living the life of faith.

You read the story of the background of all of this in 2 Samuel. It really begins at chapter 11 and goes on for many chapters. Read it later on and see. But let me just summarize the story for you.

[16 : 36] After David's victorious accession to the throne everything began very quickly to go wrong. And his own sin led to terrible consequences in his family life and that led to problems in politics and in the life of the whole nation.

He nearly lost his kingdom. He nearly caused disaster for the whole of God's earthly people. It's a very chilling warning isn't it for any leader of God's people in particular.

What happened? Well you begin to read the story with these words. At the time when kings go out to war we discover David didn't go out to war. David stayed at home at leisure.

And we read about David up on his roof looking over and seeing his neighbor's wife out on her roof bathing. Presumably naked. And David was a real man.

He was not an asexual being. He was not a feeble man. Of course he was turned on and excited at the sight of a beautiful woman. It was an alluring thing to see her there on the roof.

[17 : 46] I'll never forget some years ago when I was in India. We were at one of the Bible ashrams. And in the early evening all the roofs are flat roofs there. And we went out onto the top of the roof. And we were looking around at the surrounding houses.

And just right across there was this very beautiful Indian woman with long dark hair right down to her waist. And she was standing on the roof in front of a mirror brushing her hair. And I was quite mesmerized by the sight.

It was a very beautiful sight. And I found myself looking at her and staring at her and watching her brush her hair. She was fully clothed I hasten to add. But I immediately thought of this story.

And I thought you know. If that woman wasn't fully clothed. I'd be doing exactly the same as David. It was very alluring. A very erotic scene I'm sure.

A lovely scene except that this wasn't David's wife was it? She was the wife of another man. And David was just tempted by all the same things that we are tempted by today.

[18 : 47] The beauty of sex. Yes. But removed from its beautiful place. Its right place in marriage. Becomes a very dangerous thing. In fact a very ugly thing.

We all do it today. In our computers. Our iPads. Or in films. In hotel rooms that we shouldn't be watching. All that sort of thing. But here's David. He has a live show right in front of him. And because he was a powerful man.

He was in very great danger wasn't he? Greater danger. Because he could get what he wanted. And he thought that he could do that with no consequences. That's exactly what the celebrities think today isn't it?

The powerful businessmen. They're all in the news now. They're all being exposed through the Me Too movement. But that's exactly what happens isn't it? Great power brings great danger.

Especially in that sort of realm. And so David. Who was the most powerful man in the whole land. He just took what he wanted. Another man's wife. And he committed adultery with her.

[19 : 45] And then of course. They faced exactly the same crisis. That so many couples in those circumstances have faced. All through history. I'm pregnant. And if you read the story.

You'll see that that led even to worse sin. In fact it led to murder. It still does often lead to murder. Doesn't it? In our society today. The murder of the baby in the womb.

Of course. We're helped by all sorts of other language. Euphemisms. We don't talk about murder or abortion. We talk about terminations.

We talk about removing products of conception. And we're helped by Mary Stopes. And all the clinics. And all the rest of it. But for David. It was a much more drastically obvious murder.

Of an innocent husband. Uriah. Read the story. It's one of deceit. Of treachery. A horrible story. And then David ends up taking Bathsheba. As his own wife.

[20 : 44] But God confronts David. Through his prophet Nathan. Do you remember? And God punishes David. In fact in the end. The child dies. And God later warns David.

And he says this. David the consequences of this. Are going to be grim. They're going to be real. And they won't go away. Violence he says. Won't depart.

From your household. And what you have done. Is going to rebound. On your own head. And God says to him. Your wives. Your wives too. Are going to be taken. By somebody else.

And you're going to be humiliated. And that's what happened. God forgave David's sin. Make no mistake about that. But. The mess. That that sin left behind.

That couldn't be cleared up. Because life isn't like that. Is it? You can't turn back the clock. You can't undo. The things that have already. Been done. And that is a very real warning to us.

[21 : 41] Especially to the men in mind. Isn't it? Where a little bit of what we think. Is really rather innocent. Can lead. To a very bad place. Don't be naive. David.

We're told in the scriptures. Was a man after God's own heart. He was. But his glands. Were just as powerful. As yours and mine. And we've got to be careful.

And. Especially. If you are in a position of. Of power. Or authority. In a. In a workplace. In an office. Or in a church. For that matter. Because all the world around us.

Says. What you want. You should take. And there won't be consequences. That's the delusion. That's the fantasy. Don't be deluded.

The reality is. Things will unravel. Just like they did for David. And his story makes terribly grim reading. The sexual dysfunction.

[22 : 41] Multiplies within his own family. As it so often tends to do still today. It's. It's just the reality. Isn't it? So often. Those who are. Who are. Who are abused sexually. Find that they're abused by those who have themselves.

Been previously abused sexually. Sexual dysfunction. Permeates. And cascades down the generations. And in David's case here. What happened? Well it led to incest within his family.

To rape. Within his family. And then to murder. So if you think the Bible is naive. If you think the Bible is out of date. And bears no relation to reality.

Friends. Open your Bibles. And start reading. And open your newspaper. And start reading. So then. Eventually. Absalom. David's own son. Conspires against him.

And leads a rebellion. A coup d'etat. And he hires mercenaries. To oust David. As head of state. And to install himself. As the new leader.

[23 : 38] It sounds like some sort of outlandish plot. In House of Cards. But that's exactly what happened. And so. As the title of our psalm says. David fled. From Absalom. His own son.

With a bedraggled band of supporters. And the people. The people of Israel cried out. The hearts of the men of Israel. Have gone after Absalom. So things are pretty grim.

If you read chapter 15. You'll see people are cursing David. They're throwing rocks at him. They're spitting at him. God's anointed king. The leader of God's people on earth. The one that God had said to him.

Personally. Your descendants will reign on this throne. And through your progeny. All of my plans and purposes for the whole world. Are going to be fulfilled. And here he is now.

Rejected. By everyone. Ousted. Mocked. And spat upon. And apparently. And this is the worst of it.

[24 : 39] Rejected. Not just by his people. But by God himself. Facing real enemies. Great conflict. Very real enemies. Without. Absalom. His own son.

Think of the pain of that. The soldiers. All the priests. All the prophets. The whole world. As it were. And the whole church.

Saying to him. There's no salvation for you. There's no God. Anywhere near you. Any longer. From all those enemies.

Without. But. Even worse. I believe. For the enemies within. Because David knew. His own heart. And he knew. That their accusations. Were true.

Because he was a sinner. He had. Through what he had done. Brought disaster. On his whole household. And he knew. If he looked inside. If he looked to his own heart.

[25 : 32] For any assurance. There could be no assurance. At all. Of his acceptance. With God. Indeed. There was the exact opposite. Because he knew. That he deserved. To be absolutely.

Deserted by God. Forever. And so the famous. Curses of. Of Shimei. Really must have. Cut home.

You man of blood. You worthless man. He taunted David. See. Your evil. Is on you. For you. Are a man of blood. And David.

Knew that was absolutely true. And so he said. Let him curse. Maybe God. Has sent him. To do just that. So no wonder.

David is in despair. When he's. Opening. The words of this psalm. That's David's story. Surrounded by many.

[26 : 26] Many foes. In the pit. Of despondency. And of course. Yes. David is. A unique figure. Of history. And. He was uniquely. God's.

Anointed king. Over God's people. None of us here. In this room. Is that. And yet. In another way. David. Is also. Just like us. Because he was a man.

Chosen solely. By God's grace. For. For great purposes. In God's kingdom. Of glory. David was not chosen. For his own merits. He too. He too. Was a sinner.

Adopted. As God's son. And he had enemies. Precisely. Because. He represented. God. In the world. For all of his faults. He had faults.

Of course he did. Great ones. Deep ones. But. He was a man. Who stood for God. And a man. Who spoke for God. In the eyes of the world. Just as every. Christian believer. Does today.

[27 : 19] With all our faults. Because as Psalm 2 says. The whole world. Is united against. God's anointed. And against his people. The world is united.

Against. All of those. Who are united. To God's king. To the Lord Jesus Christ. Because we too. Are those who have been. Adopted. Into his family.

As the New Testament. Tells us. We. We too. Have been made kings. To reign. With God. Forever. Just like David. We too. We too. And that is why.

We also. Will. Like David. Face great conflict. In our lives of faith. We will face. Constant foes. Without. Because the world.

Hates Christ. And hates his people. And. We too. Will face. Constant foes. Within. We too. Will face. The same kind of. Bitter. Struggles.

[28 : 16] Because. Just like David. We too. Are sinful people. Aren't we? And we know. Do it. And we know. That we've been forgiven. By God. For our sins. And yet.

At the same time. We spend so much. Of our life. Living with the consequences. Living with the mess. Of our sins. In our own lives. And. In our families. Everywhere. And that makes us.

Terribly vulnerable. Doesn't it? Because. This kind of assault. On our faith. On our. Assurance. On our confidence. Of our salvation. Really.

Really gets to us. And hurts us. And shakes us. Isn't that real life? Great conflict. Constant struggle. Real enemies.

Real enemies. Without. Our whole. Public opinion. In. In our society. Today. Mocks us. Just like that. Doesn't it? There's no salvation. In the God delusion. That's just.

[29 : 15] Old fashioned. Ridiculous nonsense. God doesn't exist. God is dead. Look at. Look at the church. All around you. Look at all the empty buildings. Look at all the churches. Closing down. Look at all the. Why on earth. Don't you give up.

On all that rubbish. You're an intelligent person. Why do you think. Your faith is unique. All these religions. They're all the same. All the same. And all the same delusion. That's what our world is.

Constantly. Shouting at us. On the airwaves. Or in some parts. Of our world today. As we were. As we were praying. There are very real. And present physical foes. Aren't there? Threatening life.

Just like. In David's day. In Pakistan. In Afghanistan. In Iraq. In Nigeria. And all sorts of places. Today. Where we have. Loved ones.

That we know. Brothers and sisters. In Christ. Where Christians. Are facing violence. Christians are being raped. Christians are being murdered. Because they're Christians. Think of that bomb. Just last Sunday. Where is your God.

[30 : 10] To save you. In that church of yours. That was bombed to bits. Last week. Where is your God. To save you. Or even. Closer to home.

Just like David. In our own families. Many here. Will face scorn. Derision. For your Christian faith. Won't you. From. Parents perhaps.

If you're a young person. Who's become a Christian. Recently. At university. Or whatever. Or maybe you're. You're older. And your children are grown up. And you've come to faith. Later on in life. And your children think you're mad.

And deluded. And they mock. If not to your face. You know they're. Thinking that. And seeing it behind your back. And you see friends.

The Bible books. No fantasy. At all. It is absolutely realistic. The life. Of real faith. Will be. A life. Of constant foes. Right.

[31 : 04] Till the very end. What was the word. Of encouragement. And of fortification. That the apostles. Gave. To the newly planted churches. In the acts of the apostles. When they went back.

To strengthen them. And to teach them. And to teach them. The way of faith. What did they say. Through many tribulations. We must enter. The kingdom of God. That was the apostolic message. Was that what they wanted to hear.

Do you think. It's what they needed to hear. And of course. The new testament tells us. Things will clearly become worse. And worse. There will be terrible times.

Says Paul. To Timothy. Even in the professing church. In these last days. And leaders. Therefore. He says. Must endure. Suffering. Indeed. All believers.

All. Says Paul. Who want to live a godly life. Will be persecuted. The real Christian life. Involves great conflict. There will be constant foes. Without.

[31 : 59] Out. And often. Much worse. There will be constant foes within. Because just like David. We. Also.

Look in on ourselves. And we. Know. That it's true. Isn't it. That we've made mistakes. And that we're sinful. And that we've fallen. Again and again. And that we've made a mess.

And for many of us today. It will be just like David. It will be sexual sin. Won't it. In the past. That's left a legacy of mess. In our lives. Or maybe it'll be that far too recently.

In our lives. That shames us. Or a host of other things. Some of us here still struggle greatly. With addictions of various kinds.

And we know that we fall. And make mistakes. Some of us struggle with terrible anger. Sometimes it's just that we know. We've abdicated our responsibilities.

[32 : 54] In our life. In our family perhaps. With our children or whatever. And the mess that has come about. In relationships. In our family. In our marriages. Among our children. The mess is our fault. And when you're a Christian.

You have to be honest before God. It's a terrible thing. Isn't it? To face up to what we know is true about ourselves. And we know there's guilt. And it can lead us constantly into despair.

And our great enemy. As we sang about. Tempts us to despair. And tells us. In case we forget. Of the guilt within. And says to us.

See. How can there be any salvation for you. In God. Look at the mess. How could there be. You're deluded. It. I'm at all surprised.

If many of us sitting here this morning. Woke up and felt exactly that this morning. There's almost certain to be. Isn't there? Because we face that constant foe.

[33 : 55] Deep within. We face the foe of our own sins. Stirred up. And brought to our light. And our attention. By our great enemy. By the adversary. Who Peter says is waiting to devour us.

By stalking us. By the accuser. Who loves to point to what he knows is true. And we know is true. And says that's right. It's true what they're saying.

It's true what your own heart is saying. There can be no salvation for you in God. And that's when we cry out. Isn't it? In agony. Like the psalmist. Oh Lord.

Many. Many. Many. Are my foes. They mock me. And I fear that it's all true. And there's some Christians who fear.

That they. Have committed an unpardonable sin. That their life now must be beyond all forgiveness. Beyond all hope. But friends.

[34 : 52] Listen. How does this psalm begin? Look at the first two words. Oh Lord. He cries out. It's a personal name. Oh Jehovah.

Yahweh. It's the cry to the personal covenant God. By name. That's not a cry of an unbeliever. Who does not know God.

It's a cry of a real believer. Who does know her God. And therefore instinctively. In his deepest and darkest distress. Cries out his name. Just like a little child. In deep distress. Instinctively shouts. Mom. Dad. God. It's a mark. Of a real believer. Who does. Know his God.

Just as it's the mark. Of a real believer. That he faces. Great conflict. Constantly. Real enemies. Constant foes. Without. And.

[35 : 47] Within. It's the cry. Not of the abandoned. But of the real believer. I never tire. Of telling people.

That. The first description. In our Bibles. Of a real believer. Is way. Way back. In Genesis 3. 15. You remember. The real believer. Is the one.

In whom. God. Has placed. Enmity. Against the evil one. And all his crew. The true believer. Is the one. God. Has placed.

Into. The struggle. With enemies. You need to understand that. It's so important. The reason that you cry out.

Many are my foes. The reason that you are. In a constant battle. Is not. Primarily. Because of your sin within. Although you have plenty. Of sin within. To make you cry out.

[36 : 40] No. But it is primarily. Because God's seed. Is in your heart. It's God's work. In you. Uniting you.

To his son. That's taking you out. Of the camp. Of the enemy. And into God's family. And that's why. You have struggle. Enemies without. And that's why.

You have struggles within. God. Has made you. A struggler. Against sin. And against evil. And against the evil one. And that struggle.

Is the evidence. Not that you're lost. But that you truly. Belong to God. That you belong. In the family. Of real faith. Look at those words.

In verse two. Many are saying. Of my soul. There's no salvation. For him. In God. God. Where was that. Mocking of enemies.

[37 : 36] Most. Vividly. And clearly. Seen. For God's. Anointed king. You know the answer. Don't you. Find it in the end.

Of all the gospels. At the cross. At Calvary. Where they mocked him. Where many. Mocked. Him. Jesus Christ. God's true king. The one.

In whom. There was no sin. Saying. God won't deliver him. He's not the son of God. How could he be under a curse. Like this. That he who had no sin.

Was. There. Under the curse. For us. So that we. Would belong to him forever. And the mark of the real.

Believer. In Jesus Christ. You see is. Is that just because. You are his. You will. Be. In great conflict. Right till the end.

[38 : 34] Facing constant foes. Enemies without. And enemies within. His enemies. Will be. Our enemies. Until our life's end. That's real.

Christianity. There's more. There's so much more. In this psalm. We're going to see it. Over the next couple of weeks. Beginning with that. Great. But God. In verse three. But for this week.

I just want us to take this. One. Single. Simple truth. And meditate on it. That the real Christian life. Is the life that knows.

The scars of battle. All through life. With God's king. Foes without. And foes within. And friends. That is not. Failure.

That is real faith. Faith. So be encouraged. If verses one and two. Are your prayer at the moment. Listen to Jesus. Listen to him. Blessed are you.

[39 : 32] When others. Revile you. And persecute you. And utter all kinds of evil. Against you. Falsely. On my account. Whether that comes from. Without. Or that voice within. Rejoice.

And be glad. Says Jesus. For great. Is your reward. In heaven. It's the real Christian. Who faces. Great conflict.

And continual foes. Not the fake Christian. And not the failed Christian. Well let's pray together.

Almighty God. Who see us. That we have no power. Of ourselves. To help ourselves. Keep us. Keep us. Both outwardly.

In our bodies. And inwardly. In our souls. That we may be defended. From all adversities. Which may happen. To the body. And from all evil thoughts.

[40 : 33] Which may assault. And hurt. Our souls. And we pray this. Through Jesus Christ. Our Lord. Amen. And another.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.