

Our Home Team

Psalm 48

We're going to look at Psalm 48. Now, as you'll see, there is a superscript here. We're told this is a song, and that's a specific kind of song. This is just our best way of translating it. We have lots of words that are used for psalms, songs, hymns, Thanksgivings, laments, woes. We have all kinds of songs, and this one is just translated as a song. Uh, but notice it's from the Sons of Korah, which is interesting because the sons of Korah were known to be worship leaders under David. Um, but they're descendants of that gentleman named Cora who led that rebellion against Moses during the wilderness wandering. And so it's just interesting, we don't know much about them other than the fact that they did not let the shame, the painful memory of their ancestors rebellion, uh, keep them held back in ministry, but rather they sought to make a new name for themselves out of that family, being known as worship leaders and those who would write worship songs to the Lord. Indeed, to write the very word of God itself. So as we turn to Psalm forty eight, we read a song, a Psalm of the sons of Korah.

Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God. His holy mountain, beautiful in elevation is the joy of all the earth. Mount Zion in the far north, the city of the great Sea. Within her citadels God has made himself known as a fortress. For behold, the kings assembled. They came together, and as soon as they saw it, they were astounded. They were in panic. They took to flight. Trembling, took hold of them, their anguish as in a woman in labor by the east wind, you shattered the ships of Tarshish as we have heard. So we have seen in the city of the Lord of hosts, in the city of our God, which God will establish forever. Selah. We have thought on your steadfast love, O God, in the midst of your temple, as your name, O God, so your praise reaches to the ends of the earth. Your right hand is filled with righteousness. Let mount Zion be glad. Let the daughters of Judah rejoice because of your judgments. Walk about Zion. Go around her. Number her towers. Consider well her ramparts. Go through her citadels, that you may tell the next generation that this is God, our God, forever and ever. He will guide us forever.

This is the word of the Lord. Please be seated.

Well, there are some cities and places that are so unique. They're so interesting, they're so impressive, maybe in their cultural output or in their architecture and just the nature around them. There are some regions that are so great people just can't help but sing about them. In my previous job, I got to work in Washington, DC at the Reformed Theological Seminary campus there, but I also was in charge of the Reformed Theological Seminary campus in New York, which was located right in the Upper East Side of Manhattan. And so every other week or so, I'd be in New York taking the train up there and walking through those those those streets, those canyons that are man made. And it's just there's something about it. There's something just impressive about it. It kind of blows you away. Just that sheer human project that is the city of New York, all of these people there and at multiple different levels and in industries and culture, just the incredible amount of things that come out of this one place. We shouldn't be surprised that many songs are written about it. And if you've ever been there on New Year's,

which I've had the opportunity to do, I never went all the way down to Times Square. But having been there at New Year's and you just see all the stuff and the ball drops and everybody sings Auld Lang Syne afterwards. And then inevitably you hear that horn section come in and play that medley. And then usually in a crooning voice, you hear the words start spreading the news, right? And everybody knows what comes next, right? Because he wants to sing about it, right? He's like, I'm, I'm leaving today. I'm going to New York. I want to be a part of it. Right? It's such a big deal. I'm going to sing songs about it one time. And our family was going up there. We took all the kids up and we made a whole playlist. And somewhere, you know, around New Jersey. Okay, we started playing just all the songs that have been written about New York City all the way up to the present day. It's incredible. It's really an amazing place. And as a result, people sing songs about it. If only if only the state of Alabama had a song that we could point to, you know, we could we could put it, we could put its title on the signs on the interstate when you're driving in. So we people would know about the song if it just, if only that could happen. They could even include parts about Birmingham and their love of the governor, you know. But alas, it's our loss.

So we turn to Psalm forty eight. This is a Psalm about your hometown. Okay? This is a song about your real hometown. This is a song that is glorying and rejoicing in the place you're from the place you can't help but think about. Even when you're in faraway places all around the world, you've got this longing to get back home. And when you hear this song, it reminds you of that far country and makes you want to go there. You see, Psalm forty eight is a song celebrating Zion. Zion, of course, originally referred to as a particular hill in Jerusalem. It's in this little valley area of the cephalon, which is known as the. It's the high places around Israel, and it's the place where the Temple Mount was established. But it comes to represent not just the temple where God resides, but also the city itself. And then really, over time, as we'll see a little bit later, Zion becomes sort of abstracted away from the city of Jerusalem itself, and starts to mean the place where God is and where his deliverance will come from. So the prophets and the Psalmists will even say during the exile, when no one lives in Zion, when no one lives in Jerusalem, they'll say, the Lord reigns in Zion. They go, well, where's that? Well, that's where the Lord is. And that's where his glory, that's where his deliverance flows out of. John Calvin said of this psalm, he says, when we look at Zion in this psalm, it is depicted as a mirror that is reflecting, okay, a mirror in which God gives a more clear and vivid representation of his character as Zion becomes this mirror that reflects the glory, the wisdom, the righteousness, and the goodness of God as it flows out and fills the earth. This is a common thing that we will talk about a little bit later. But notice Psalm forty eight is celebrating Zion. Particularly. We want to talk about it, how it's celebrating the glory of Zion, then the greatness of Zion. And then lastly, the Good News or the Gospel of Zion, Zion's glory, Zion's greatness, and Zion's good News. So let's start with Zion's glory. This is in verse one, verses one through three talk about the glory of Zion. Notice how it begins. Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God. Notice right away in celebrating the city. The psalmist, the son of Korah, directs his attention already past the city. The glory of Zion, the beauty of Zion, its wonderment is actually not founded in its architecture. It's not in the kind of beautiful, beautiful, natural setting in which it sounds like like Denver. You know, when you look at the mountains and behind it kind of frames the city. That's not what makes Zion glorious. What

makes Zion glorious is the God who dwells there. you see, the God who dwells in Zion is the beauty of Zion. We can even go so far. The King of Glory, right? Remember back to when we were reading Psalm twenty four, the King of Glory, who comes into the city? Who is the Lord of hosts, right? He's the God of Zion. He's the one who gives Zion its glory and its beauty. Notice what he says in verse three within her citadel. So you go into the citadels and you might think, well, this is what makes Zion beautiful. Look at the. And powerful and glorious. Why? Because it has these great citadels. But he goes, you go into the citadels and what do you find within her citadels? God has made himself known as its fortress. Okay, it's kind of interesting, right? It's an interesting way to say it. But basically saying this, you walk in and you go through the city wall and as you see the impregnability of the city wall, as you pass through, you actually realize it's not the city wall that is impregnable. It is actually the God who is inside the city. When you get in there, you realize, oh, this is the real fortress of the city of Zion. This is the real source of its glory. Because all of the glory, all of the goodness, all of the wisdom of Zion, is founded upon the God who resides in it. Okay. So is this just something? It's just an artistic turn of phrase that this psalmist wants to highlight, that God is in the city and therefore the city is glorious? No. As you know, going back throughout all of the Bible. Starting in Genesis, but really ending in revelation. This is the one theme that is both in Genesis one and in the very end of revelation. Okay. And it's the theme of this where will God reside? Because where God resides, that's where life is. That's where holiness is. That's where creation reaches its perfect fulfillment. Like everything we were supposed to be reaches its fulfillment where God resides. So it begins in Genesis one with God creating a place where he will reside, right? The earth, a garden, a place where he is with his people in the sanctuary. You could say, Where is Zion before the fall? The whole garden is Zion. Okay? But then because of the fall, it raises the question, where is the garden now? Where is the sanctuary? Where is the place where God resides with his people, giving it power and glory and goodness and wisdom and all of those things? Where is that? Well, is it in the tabernacle? Okay, later? Is it in the temple? Is it in Jerusalem? What happens after Jerusalem falls in the Ark of the covenant is disappeared, and the and the temple is razed to the ground. Where is Zion now? Well, in the gospel, that question finds an answer. That gospel is let's go with John. Let's start with John and how see how John answers that question. John says in John one one, he goes back to Genesis to that creation story. Right. And what does he say? NRK. And that's Greek. That's just a Greek translation of the Hebrew bereshit in the beginning. Okay, in in the beginning was the word. Okay. He's summarizing. I think if we just read that, you would say, this is a good Jewish summary of Genesis one, right? Because in the beginning, what does God do? He speaks creation into existence. Okay? His word speaks creation into existence. In the beginning he says, let there be light, and he separates the waters and separates the land. And then he puts the lights in the sky, and he puts things in the seas and the waters, and then he puts things into the land, right? And he's doing it all with his mouth. He's just saying it because God's Word is power. And John is just kind of unpacking that for us for first of all, he hasn't said anything shocking yet. In the beginning was the word. That's a good summary. It's a midrash on Genesis one. But then notice what he says. And the word was with God, and we might go, yeah, that sounds that still sounds good. And he says, and the word was God. So the word that God is speaking is his power, and it is God. It is him doing work in the world. We actually see this in

Genesis one because we already get multiple persons in the Trinity, in Genesis one, because you have God speaking creation into existence. But what's also there? The spirit of the Lord is also there, hovering over the surface of the deep. You're already getting the multiple persons of the Godhead right there in Genesis one. It's right in front of you. So what John is saying is this is that the Word of God is God. The Word of God is there, and He is God at work in creation. But then John says this. And the word became flesh and dwelt amongst us. Now a Jewish interpreter of the Old Testament would have recognized. Yes.

In Psalm 119, the word does seem to act like a person, so it's being personified there. It says the word protects me. The word speaks to me, the word encourages me. The word comes alongside and defends me. So there is an intuition there that the word is the person of God. And yet now John is saying, and the word became flesh. So where is God dwelling with us now? Actually, the language that John uses is this. The word became flesh and tabernacled with us. So where is the sanctuary of God now while Jesus is on earth? It's Jesus himself. Jesus is coming in, and because he is the God out of whom Zion finds its glory, he is establishing glory wherever he walks. Where is Zion? It's when you're in the presence of Jesus in the Gospels. Jesus actually tells his disciples that. He says, if you tear down this temple talking about himself, right? He's walking along. I imagine he's walking alongside this beautiful Herodian temple. I imagine him kind of rubbing his fingers on the bricks as he walks. And he says, if you destroy this temple, I'll rebuild it in three days. And John says, This is John two. John says, we didn't know he was talking about himself. We didn't understand that yet. But what's he saying by saying that? He's saying these bricks as well, adorned and as beautiful as they are. This isn't the temple. Where's the temple? I'm the temple. I'm where the Lord resides on earth, says Jesus. The question remains even after the Gospels, where is the temple now that Jesus is in the right, at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, where he reigns eternally. Where is Zion now? Well, it's true Zion is in the heavenlies. As we just read in Hebrews chapter twelve. We don't come to an earthly Jerusalem anymore. We go to a heavenly Jerusalem. And yet also Zion's citizens and the spirit of the King of Zion dwells here on earth, in the church, you individually and you corporately together. When you come together, you are making up Zion and is your glory in yourselves. No, that's not where the glory is. We dress up real nice here at Briarwood when we come to church. But that's not our glory. It's not our clothes, it's not our cars. It's not our jobs or our businesses. Where's our glory? Our glory is in the God who resides there. Our glory is in Jesus Christ Himself, the word made flesh. You see, Zion's glory comes from its Lord. And the church needs to remember this. We become beautiful in holiness, worship and mercy and faithfulness and truth and love. When we remember where our glory comes from. And it comes from Jesus Christ. So that's Zion's glory. It's worth marveling at. It's worth looking at and rejoicing in. But it's not just beautiful. It's not just glorious. It's actually powerful. And so I want to talk about Zion's greatness. Notice there's a shift that happens there in verse four. He shifts over now to this other scene. He's just kind of meditating on the glory of Zion, and he switches to this scene where you have these kings assembling. And this does sound very much like Psalm two, that that song preached to us earlier in the summer. Right? And we talked about the nations rage. But what? God stands in the heavens. He sits in the heavens and laughs in derision. Here again we have the kings gathering together. For behold, the kings assembled. They came together as soon as they saw Zion. That's what the. It is. As

soon as they saw Zion they were astounded. And that doesn't mean they went. Wow! That doesn't mean that. That means they went. Ha! They screamed. They were in panic. They took flight. The kings organized themselves against Zion. They come together in military power and human confidence and bravado. And yet their campaign ends before it begins. They only have to see it. Notice he describes a little bit more trembling took hold of them, their anguish as if women in labor by the east wind. You, Lord, shattered them. You shattered the ships of Tarshish. It's a powerful image. And what it's trying to show to us is this the Lord God of Zion is completely dominant over the battlefield. Okay. I don't I don't know what's going to happen between Spain and Argentina this afternoon. All right. But I suspect neither are going to be completely dominant. Now, one may play better than the other, but it's hard to imagine the kind of dominance that this Psalter that the psalmist is talking about here. Okay. Notice what he says. They show up and they just see Zion and they fall into trembling, panic and fear. He says, like, like a woman in labor. Okay. There's not a lot of pride and arrogance in the labor and delivery room, is there? Okay. He's saying when they when they see Zion, they're going to be trying to figure out, how do I survive this? Okay. When you think about sports, okay, if you want to, if Argentina and Spain aren't a good example, I'm talking about something more like Muhammad Ali. Okay. Did you ever see Muhammad Ali fight? Have you ever seen the old videos? Or maybe you saw the movie about him? And it's true. He was unbelievable. In his heyday, he would come out and he would make a song sort of talking about and taunting his opponent and telling even then, even before the match, what round they would go down in. Okay. There's even examples of him going over to the press box and doing this to the cameramen saying, get your cameras ready. I'm going to knock him out now. Right? He's showing complete dominance. That's what the Lord is doing here. That's what the east wind against the ships of Tarshish are. Okay. In the ancient world, we have only a handful of people who went on ships. Okay? The ship's oceangoing. Being a maritime people was not a major thing. We had one group who was really fascinating. They're called the Sea Peoples around the late second millennium BC. They emerged on the scene. We don't know where they came from, and they didn't write a lot of history. So what you have happen is the ancient Near East, particularly around the Levant region, just goes dark. And about a hundred years later, as history gets back online, everyone's talking about these people who are called the Sea Peoples. They were kind of like, you know, Semitic Vikings. Okay, we don't know much about them though. But we also have others like the Phoenicians and the Etruscans. We have these others that we know about who would go around in the Mediterranean on ships, and they would often come from towns with names like Tarshish and Carthage. And both of these towns are different variations, probably on the same word, which means new town. Okay. So typically you would call it's like there's a lot of new towns around the east coast of the United States to when you would go in and plant a town, right? You'd call it Newtown. Okay. And so. Tarshish. Carthage. That's why you have a bunch of those around the Mediterranean. These are the new towns that these sailors are coming from. And notice, if you're coming against Israel in battle and you're coming from the Mediterranean, you're coming from here. Let me do it for you. You're coming from the west to the east, right? But notice when they come and all arrayed in their great fleets and armadas, and as they arrive on the shores of Israel, before they even get to the shore, what does the Lord do? He goes, ooh! And they blow away. The east wind shows

up throughout Scripture. It's always a picture of judgment. It's the wind that would blow in if they're coming. If the ships are coming from the west, the east wind is blowing off of what? The desert. And so it's a hot wind. And that's why it's often used in the Bible to symbolize God's judgment. It's kind of like the Santa Ana winds. If you've ever been to California and you've experienced the Santa Ana winds, you know that sometimes the wind blows off of Death Valley and comes into the coastal region. And if you're in the coastal region, it's usually cool because the Pacific is cool. It's actually very similar to what it is like in Israel too. And even it sounds like what it's like in the Garden of Eden, because in the cool of the day, that's in the afternoon when the breeze is blowing in off the ocean, it's nice and cool. It feels like somebody turned on the air conditioning. And even though it's sunny and hot, you can work outside and not sweat. But sometimes that air turns around and you get a movement off of the desert. I remember a friend who was living down near San Diego, and he was talking about working on his house, and he was on a ladder painting the side of his house. And he said, suddenly I realized the skin on my right side was burning. And I turned around and it was like someone had turned on a blast heater and was just blowing it on me and on my house. And then I realized you couldn't get away from it. It was everywhere because it was blowing in off the desert, down into the land. And the same thing is happening here. You've got this armada of ships coming from the west, and the Lord goes and they blow away. You see, it's utter dominance. Zion's greatness comes from the dominance. Or if you want to use our theological word, the sovereignty of the Lord. And there's a consolation in this as well as a conviction to us. Here's the consolation, by the way. The gospel always has consolation and conviction. Here's the consolation. If God is sovereign over all of the enemies, then you have nothing to fear. If God is your friend, then no one can really be your enemy because he dominates. You have nothing to fear. There's nothing in this life. There's no disease. There is no state of affairs. There's no substance addiction. There's no broken relationship. There's no political power, military power, cultural power, financial power. There is nothing that can overwhelm the Lord. They will all dissipate before him. They might shout and assemble and gather together. They might rage because the nations do rage, but the Lord is completely dominant. And if he's your friend and Jesus says, if you're in him by faith, then you're his friend and he's your friend. If you're his friend and you have nothing to fear, that's the consolation. Here's the conviction don't live like he's not sovereign. Don't live like the polytheist does, with the kind of practical polytheism that says, I believe that God is God's wonderful, he's powerful and he's strong. But there's a lot of other powerful and strong kings out there, too. There's a lot of other gods out there who can vie for authority. There's a lot of other cities that I have to fear, because Zion might not win the day on this given time or this given moment, or on this given topic. Okay. Don't live like a practical polytheist. If you are a citizen of Zion. That leads to the divided life. And the Lord hates the divided life. He wants us to be whole, wholly devoted, heart and soul and strength toward the love of the Lord. He's saying, don't be divided up, but recognize that I, the Lord your God, am sovereign. That's how Paul can say this. It doesn't matter what you do. Your relationships with your family, your politics, your business, the way you talk to your neighbors, the way you interact in church and in church politics, no matter what you're doing. What? Whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. That's first Corinthians chapter ten, verse thirty one. You see, all of it is for the Lord. How do you love your children? You love them unto the love of the Lord. How do

you love your wife? How do you love your husband unto the love of the Lord? How do you pay your taxes unto the love of the Lord? And if you say, well, how can I do that? Start thinking about it. Start imagining it. Act. What is it like if I served in this community, or in that community, or in this way or that way? Unto the glory of the Lord. Okay, let me think about who the Lord is. Let me think about his character. Let me think about Christ's character. Okay? How do I live unto him in this place? It takes imagination. It takes meditation. It takes prayer. I'll tell you what. It also takes a lot of help from our friends and our family and those around us who know us well. Ask the people in your church. Ask the people in your small group or your Sunday school. How can I do? How do I be a doctor unto the love and glory of the Lord? How do I be a mom unto the love and the glory of the Lord? How do I be a police officer unto the love and the glory of the Lord? How do I do that? These are great conversations to have. There's a big work theology movement about twenty years ago in the church. It's still going on today. I've always thought work theology one point oh needs to give way now to work theology two point oh, where you actually start looking at individual operations and vocations and asking the question, okay, how do you do this as a Christian? Okay. How do I do politics as a Christian? It's got to be different. How do I do it as unto the glory of the Lord. That's the conviction. You cannot live as a practical polytheist and be a citizen in the city of Zion. Because if you're in Zion, you know that there's no polytheism. There's only one God who reigns. Look what he says in verse eight, as we have heard, so we have seen in the city of the Lord of hosts, in the city of our God, which God will establish forever. People had heard the stories. This is kind of what he's depicting. People heard stories about Zion, but now that they're in Zion, they see Zion. They say, that's it. That's the glory. Okay, now there's a truth. This is two ways in which this is applied in our lives. One of them is this, many of you heard. You've heard the gospel. You've heard about Zion. You've heard about King Jesus. And then you come into the church and you now see, because you believe, you understand, you've been repented, you've repented, you're now being sanctified, you're seeing sins conquered, you're seeing relationships healed. You're saying, I heard about his glory. Now I'm seeing it in my own life. And that is true. I think that's in part what he's talking about here. And yet I think he's also talking about something that is redemptive, historical. And this is this sense we are all longing to really be in Zion, right? We're in Zion, but we're longing for Zion. This is the truth. This is that kind of already. Not yet. That is true. Throughout Scripture, you are saved. But we're longing to be fully saved from Satan, sin, and death. I am holy, I'm longing to be made holy, right? I experienced the glory of God. I'm longing to experience the glory of God. You are in Zion, right? As Paul says, you've come to the heavenly Jerusalem and so you are hearing about it. How? Through this, right? You're hearing about it. But one day you will see it in an unmitigated, immediate way. And there will be a time when we'll say, oh, this whole time we've been hearing, but now I'm seeing. It was faith. It was the eyes of faith before. But one day it will just be my eyes that see. That's what the author of Hebrews says. What is. What is faith? But believing in the thing I haven't yet fully seen. I'm longing for the day. And there will come a time where you will go, oh, now I understand fully what I was hearing because now I'm seeing it. And that, of course, leads to our last point. The good news. This is the good news about the truth about Zion. The good news of the city of Zion is that it should be celebrated by its citizens and proclaimed around the world. Look at verse nine. We have thought on your steadfast love, O God, in the midst of your temple, as your

name, O God, so your praise reaches the ends of the earth. God is good. He's glorious and he is all powerful and all mighty. Therefore, the city is good. The city is glorious. Remember what Calvin said. It's a mirror reflecting his glory. The city is all powerful. When people see the city, they turn away because they're afraid if they're coming to oppose it. But it's all because of the king who is there and because of his glory. There's this kind of centrifugal force. As soon as it's like you kind of imagine it, as soon as you see the glory, you start to feel yourself being pulled out to the world to tell the world about the glory. Notice what he says here. He says, look at your steadfast love of God. That word, of course, is the word that refers to God's covenant faithfulness. That's how he is steadfast. He's faithful to the covenants that he has bound himself to with his people. It is true that when we go into covenant relationship with God, if he established the covenant. Notice we never establish the covenants. I've got no power to get God to come into a covenant. God establishes the covenant. He binds himself to us. He gives us his name, as we've been seeing in the book of Deuteronomy. And we can respond by calling on his name, and he will answer because he's steadfast according to the covenant that he gave us in the first place. So when Christ goes to the cross, God is binding us and binding himself to this covenant that if you profess his name and you believe in your heart, God will save you. He will always save you. You can tell this to anybody if you profess with your mouth and believe with your heart, God will save you, and he's bound himself by blood to this commitment. As a matter of fact, this is J.I. Packer's whole point about the sovereignty of God in our evangelism. Some people say, how can you evangelize if God is sovereign? Because isn't God just going to do it anyways? Why does it matter what you say? And James Packer says, as a matter of fact, the opposite question is more important. If you don't believe in the sovereignty of God, then why are you confident in any way that your evangelism is going to be effective? If God isn't all powerful, if he's not directing the course of all human history, then maybe he's wrong. Like maybe the gospel isn't going to save. Or maybe he'll change his mind, decide he's not interested in the gospel anymore. Or maybe he doesn't have the power to actually forgive everyone because he's not all powerful. Or maybe someday some opposing God will conquer him, or he'll just die, right? That Nietzsche will have been right. That God has died because Europe killed him. Okay, if he's not sovereign, then you've got no confidence that evangelism will even work. But if he is sovereign, then all of a sudden you have great reason to go out and to proclaim his glory, because you can say honestly and confidently that if you believe in Jesus Christ, you will be saved. You see, we go out and we tell the world about Jesus. We tell the Lord about the King in Zion, about the God in Zion and his glory and his power, because he is sovereign. We reflect on the beauty of Zion and tell others about it because it's worthwhile. It's good for them. They need to hear it because they live in a world where there's no city that that you can find hope in. There's no city where there's glory. Every city can fall. And you're going to tell them there's a city that might not fall. And guess what? You want to be a part of it, right? So start spreading the news. Look what he says here. Walk about Zion. Go around her. Number her towers. Consider well, her ramparts go through her citadels, whereas what do her citadels show you? That God is the fortress, so that you may tell the next generation. He's saying, uh, uh, you know, apprise yourself of the things of Zion. Get to know the citizens, see the victories that God has been accomplishing all around you become apprised of his glory and his power in the world that, that, that his country, his, his sacred

country might even expand over the face of the earth to places like Birmingham. Do this, though not so that you can draw a bunch of energy into Zion, so that you can go out and you can tell the world, even tell the next generation that they will be trained and understand what Zion is. That description of walking about the ramparts is a direct citation of the Book of Gilgamesh. Gilgamesh is the Star Wars. It's the hamlet of the ancient world. Everyone would have known about it. And the whole book ends with Gilgamesh, the King walking about his capital city and describing his glory. And he's doing something like what Nebuchadnezzar does to later write about Babylon. He's looking at the city and he's saying, I did this. Notice that's not what we say. If we are citizens of Zion, we walk about the city and we say, God did this. We're not drawing attention to ourselves. We're not drawing attention to what we've done. We're drawing attention to what God has done. So let me close with this. As we now go to the Lord's table, which is indeed the city feast. Let's close with this. We want to close with the words of the psalmist. What is the good news? The gospel message of Zion. This is God, our God, forever and ever. He will guide us and lead us forever. That's the good news. Jesus is Lord forever and ever. Come to him and he will guide you and lead you forever. So here's what I want to pray for us as we call out to the Lord that this, this, this gospel message would be true in our lives. I want to pray this, first of all, that the Lord would give us eyes to see the glory of Zion, that we would not fall into the trap of walking into Briarwood and thinking that it's these walls and this red carpet and this pulpit that is the glory of Zion. We want to see. We want to have eyes to perceive the glory of Zion. That is Jesus Christ our Lord. We want to have eyes so that we can see the beauty of Christ in His kingdom, and that they would be more compelling to you. That would be more compelling to us than the fading glories of this world. That's my first prayer request. My second one is this. That the Lord would give us a heart. A heart that places all of our trust in Zion's King, that we would throw off this practical polytheism of God, plus all this other stuff, Jesus plus other things, and that we would lay hold to the reality that it is really just unto him. It's all just unto him. And that that would drive our hearts and our relationships, our friendships, our marriages, our small groups, our discipleship groups, our evangelistic relationships, our work relationships that that would guide everything and that we'd find deep hope in that. And then finally, having had that hope that the Lord would give us and make us messengers of Zion in your life and in your words and in your relationships, that you would constantly be about the work of proclaiming Zion, that people would say, there's just something about those Christians at Birmingham which which I do believe actually many parts of Birmingham, they will say this. Okay. I want them to keep saying it. I want them to say it more. I want them to believe it. There's something about those Christians in our city that's just different. There's something about them. I want to know where they're getting it. I want to know about their city, their Zion. I want to know about their King and about their Lord. So, brothers and sisters, walk around the city of the Lord. Consider its towers. Remember the Lord's faithfulness. Tell them to the next generation. Because this is truly God, our God, forever and ever. And he will guide us forever. Let's pray.