

**Sermon Series:** More Than Enough: How Jesus Meets Our Deepest Needs

**To be used with:** Session Five: Our Need for Protection

**Sermon Title Possibilities:** The Believer's Protection;  
Our Protection in Christ

**Scripture:** Psalm 91

**Connection with Unit Theme:** To complement the small group study *More Than Enough* these sermon outlines will use similar Scripture passages to reinforce the same themes as the study regarding our need for protection.

**Introduction:** We want protection from outside threats, so our nation has a standing army with sophisticated weapons and defense systems. We want protection from lunatics and terrorists when we travel, so airlines have installed security measures from checking luggage to metal detectors we have to walk through. We want protection at our homes, so we lock our doors and install alarm systems to ward off intruders. We want protection at work, so we toe the company line and do the job of three people hoping against hope we won't be among the latest to be laid off. We want protection for our future, so we invest in 401(k) plans, make insurance payments, and trust in a government program called of all things Social Security. But as one retiree said, "For what they actually send you, you can't afford to be 'social' and really can't feel 'secure.'"

In our desperate hunt for protection, it must be understood that we will not find ultimate protection in government, or retirement accounts, or the latest technological wizardry. "Security is mostly a superstition," said Helen Keller. "It does not exist in nature, nor do the children of men as a whole experience it. Avoiding danger is not safer in the long run than outright exposure. Life is either a daring adventure or nothing."

Psalm 91 occupies a special place in the hearts of those who have faced discouragement, defeat, despair, or danger. It is *the* Psalm of protection. It identifies where we can find protection and promise when we are facing a major crisis or when our lives may be in peril.

### **1. Know you have the ultimate Protector. (vv. 1-2)**

God gives us ultimate security in an insecure world. His name is the Most High, the Almighty, the Lord, my God. "Most High" indicates his sovereignty. God is high above every other power. "Almighty" reveals his strength, highlighting God's power. "Lord" identifies his salvation. "My God" shows his special personal relationship with his people.

God protects us because it is his nature.

He is like a father that protects his children from danger. He is like an "umbrella" that protects us from the elements and outside forces that seek to harm us. He is like a

“refuge” that offers a place of safety and security when threatened. He is like a “fortress” that protects from invading enemies.

God is our protector and our defender, our comforter and our friend.

## **2. Believe that you are safe in God’s arms. (vv. 3-4)**

“Under his wings” is a figure of speech used as an image of God’s power being utilized for the protection and nurturing care of his people. The word picture is of a mother hen gathering her chicks under her feathers in order to protect them.

The Psalmist reveals that we have protection for:

- *Subtle traps.* “The hunter’s net” implies those subtle traps that are lying wait for us. Those events that seek to deceive us into a trap: the pick-pocket we don’t see, the phone solicitor’s call at a moment of vulnerability, the acquaintance who has a deal we shouldn’t pass up.
- *Catastrophic happenings.* “The destructive plague” implies the events that come on everyone. There is no secretive or deceptive nature about them. Those events that happen to everyone: a recession, a flood, a virus.
- *Unforeseen events.* “The cover” implies protection from long distant arrows. Those events we do not see coming: an errant golf shot, a drunk driver running a red light, a burglar prowling when we’re on vacation.
- *Everyday misfortunes.* “The shield” (a small rounded shield which was carried in the hand or worn on the arm) implies protection from hand-to-hand combat. Those day-to-day occurrences that seek to trip us up: traffic jams, falls when walking across an ice-laden parking lot, or people that make us angry.

It was this compelling image, God covering the frightened with wings, that became the inspiration of William Cushing’s beloved hymn, “Under His Wings.” In that song, the author successfully conveys the meaning of Psalm 91. When facing various perils God can be counted on for help, comfort, and protection. Cushing wrote: “Under His wings I am safely abiding, Though the night deepens and tempests are wild: Still I can trust Him—I know He will keep me: He hath redeemed me and I am His child.”

## **3. Realize that you have twenty-four hour protection. (vv. 5-6)**

The Hebrew day had four equal parts and this verse reveals each. “Night” represents the time between 6 p.m. to midnight. “Day” represents the time between 6 a.m. to noon. “Darkness” represents the time between midnight to 6 a.m. “Noon” represents the time between noon to 6 p.m. This is an ancient Hebrew way of saying that God gives us round-the-clock protection, twenty-four hours a day.

The effect of God’s protection should be freeing. We do not have to live in fear or worry. We know that our heavenly Father is watching over us at all times. He never sleeps. He never goes on vacation. He never takes a day off. He is always there. Watching. Guarding. Protecting.

#### **4. Result of the protection. (vv. 9-16)**

We have guardian protection. “Angels” (*angelos* means messenger) are God’s heavenly beings doing his work on earth. Though the term *guardian angel* is not a biblical one, the idea is implied in the Bible, in a general sense at least.

We have guaranteed promises. Count the number of “wills.” God will deliver . . . will protect . . . will answer . . . will be with you . . . will rescue and honor you . . . will give you honor . . . will satisfy . . . will show you His salvation. Those are wonderful promises.

#### **5. Activating the protective measures. (vv. 1-2)**

In order for us to activate God’s protection we need to apply three simple steps:

- A. *Reside with God.* “Lives” means to spend the night. It carries with it the idea of one who abides or resides with God. Are you walking in God’s presence? Are you continually conscious of God’s presence?
- B. *Rest in God.* “Dwells” is to wrap up in the warmth of someone. The idea is that we spend time with God through Bible study, prayer, being with God’s people in worship. The closer in relationship we are with God the greater our sense of assurance of protection.
- C. *Rely on God.* “Trust” means we are to depend on God. Here we rely on God. When we genuinely trust someone we are fully expecting them to carry the load.

**Conclusion:** God’s protection plan depends on God not on us. Our proximity to God determines our protection.

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