



St Barnabas Cray

Trusting God's Faithfulness in Every Challenge

Weekly Devotional Journey

Monday - Lifting Our Eyes: Facing the Mountains Before Us

Morning Devotion

Today's Verse

I lift up my eyes to the hills — where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth. (Psalm 121:1-2 NIV)

Devotional Thought

There is something profoundly honest about the opening of Psalm 121. The psalmist does not begin with triumphant certainty or easy confidence. He begins with a question — a searching, vulnerable, deeply human question: where does my help come from? And before he answers, he lifts his eyes to the hills. To the mountains. To the very things that loom large and cast shadows over his path.

One of the most striking insights from this psalm is the possibility that those hills are not a location for God, but a picture of our problems. The mountains of difficulty. The hills of uncertainty. The

towering challenges that stand before us — the health crisis, the fractured relationship, the financial pressure, the job that hangs by a thread, the grief that will not lift. You cannot deny those mountains. You cannot simply pretend they are not there. And the psalmist does not ask us to. He looks at them directly, honestly, with wide-open eyes.

But then — and this is where the psalm turns — he asks the most important question a human being can ask when standing at the foot of an overwhelming mountain: where will my help come from? This is not a question born of despair. It is a question of orientation. It is the soul asking itself: where am I looking? Where have I decided to look?

In our modern world, we are surrounded by sources of help — institutions, professionals, systems, relationships. And these things are good; they are gifts from God. But the danger the psalmist identifies is the danger of misplaced trust — of allowing the gift to eclipse the Giver. The question is not whether we use these provisions, but where our deepest confidence is anchored.

The psalmist answers his own question with breathtaking clarity: my help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth. Not from the hill. Not from the institution. Not from the individual. From the One who made everything that exists. If God made heaven and earth, then no mountain you face today is beyond His reach. That is where we begin this week — with honest eyes, a searching question, and a deliberate choice about where our help truly comes from.

Reflection Question

When you are facing a difficult situation or a seemingly insurmountable challenge, what is the very first place — or person — you instinctively turn to for help, and what does that reveal about where your deepest trust actually lies?

From Sunday's Sermon

"Where have we come to in our choices, in our decisions about the Lord? Have we started to see the Lord as somebody who would criticise everything? Are we beginning to see God as that taskmaster, that one that is never satisfied? Because the moment God begins to be that far-away being that is always judging you, you will not call him in your time of need."

Today's Application

This morning, take a few minutes to write down the one or two 'mountains' that feel most overwhelming in your life right now. Be specific — name them honestly before God. Then, beside each one, write the words: 'My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth.' This is not a magic formula; it is a deliberate act of reorientation. Throughout the day, whenever anxiety about those challenges rises in your heart, pause and speak that declaration aloud or quietly in your mind. Additionally, examine your instinctive habits: when things go wrong today — however small — notice where your mind goes first. Are you reaching for your phone to call someone before you have breathed a word to God? There is no condemnation in noticing this; there is simply an invitation to gently reorder your first response. Begin practising today the discipline of turning to God first, even briefly, before turning elsewhere.

Morning Prayer

Heavenly Father, I come to you this morning with my eyes open — open to the mountains that stand before me and open to you, the One who made heaven and earth. Forgive me for the times I have looked to my own strength, to institutions, to other people, before I have looked to you. I do not want to deny the challenges I face, but I choose today to anchor my trust in you above all else. You are the Maker of all things, and nothing I face today is beyond your knowledge or your power. Help me, Lord, to make you my first and deepest refuge. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Evening Devotion

Returning to the Source

Evening Reflection

As this day draws to a close, take a moment to reflect on where you looked for help today. Perhaps there were moments of anxiety, frustration, or uncertainty — and perhaps, in those moments, your instinct was to reach outward before reaching upward. That is deeply human, and God is not surprised by it. But this evening is an opportunity to bring all of it back to Him.

The psalmist's declaration — 'my help comes from the Lord' — was not made in a moment of calm. It was made in the shadow of mountains. It was a choice, not a feeling. And choices can be

renewed at the end of a long day just as readily as they are made at the beginning of one. Think back over the events of today. Where did you sense God's provision, even in small things? Where did you notice His hand at work, perhaps through a person, a moment of unexpected peace, or a door that opened? The Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth, was present in all of it — whether you noticed Him or not. Let this evening be a moment of recognition and gratitude.

Evening Reflection

Looking back over today, where can you trace the hand of God at work in your circumstances — even in ways you may not have noticed in the moment?

Evening Prayer

Lord, thank you for this day — for every moment of it, including the difficult ones. I return to you now, as my help and my hope. Open my eyes to see where you were at work today, and quiet my heart to rest in your faithfulness tonight. Amen.

Tuesday - The God Who Does Not Sleep: His Watchful, Unfailing Care

Morning Devotion

Today's Verse

He will not let your foot slip — he who watches over you will not slumber; indeed, he who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. (Psalm 121:3-4 NIV)

Devotional Thought

There is a tenderness in verses three and four of Psalm 121 that is easy to rush past. The psalmist moves from the grand declaration — 'my help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth' — to something extraordinarily intimate: He will not let your foot slip. He who watches over you will not slumber. The God who created the cosmos is also the God who watches over your next step. That is a staggering truth.

The imagery of the foot slipping is vivid and deeply personal. A path through rocky terrain, a moment of imbalance, a sudden loss of footing — these are the kinds of experiences that make the heart lurch with fear. And the psalmist is saying: God is there, in that moment. Not as a distant observer, but as a guardian who is actively, attentively present. The Passion Translation renders this beautifully: 'He will guide and guard me, never letting me stumble or fall.' That word 'guard' carries weight. It speaks of deliberate, watchful protection.

And then the psalmist makes an extraordinary claim: God neither slumbers nor sleeps. In the ancient world, this was a pointed contrast to the gods of the surrounding nations — gods who grew tired, who needed rest, who could be caught off-guard. The God of Israel is different. He does not go on holiday. He does not clock off at the end of the day. He does not grow weary of watching over you.

This is not merely a poetic sentiment. It has profound practical implications for how we live. If God is truly, always, vigilantly watching over our lives — our coming and going, our sleeping and waking,

our stumbling and rising — then we are never truly alone. Not in the darkest night. Not in the most confusing season. Not in the moment when everything seems to be unravelling.

The challenge for many of us is that we know this truth theologically but have not allowed it to settle deeply into our hearts. We affirm God's watchfulness on Sunday and then spend Monday through Saturday living as though everything depends entirely on us. Today, let this truth move from your head to your heart: God is watching over you, right now, without interruption.

Reflection Question

In what area of your life do you most struggle to believe that God is actively watching over you — and what would it look like to genuinely trust His care in that specific area today?

From Sunday's Sermon

"God is so faithful to you and I that he would be there to practically hold you, to ensure that you do not fall. That's how faithful he is. There's a declaration that God is my keeper. He is the one who keeps me. Are you there yet? Are you thinking of God as the keeper?"

Today's Application

Today's application is about cultivating an awareness of God's watchful presence throughout the ordinary moments of your day. Begin by choosing a simple, repeated reminder — perhaps setting a gentle alarm on your phone two or three times during the day with the words 'He is watching over me.' When it sounds, pause for thirty seconds and simply acknowledge God's presence in whatever you are doing at that moment. Beyond this, identify one area of your life where you have been carrying anxiety as though God were absent — perhaps a health concern, a relational tension, or a financial worry. Write a short prayer of surrender about that specific thing, handing it consciously to your Keeper. Finally, at some point today, do something that reflects trust rather than anxiety in that area — make a decision, have a conversation, or simply rest rather than strive — as a practical act of faith in God's watchful care.

Morning Prayer

Father, what a comfort it is to know that you never sleep, never slumber, never look away. You are watching over me right now — over every detail of my life, every step I take, every challenge I face. Forgive me for the times I have lived as though I were on my own, as though everything depended on my effort and my vigilance alone. I receive today the truth that you are my Keeper. Help me to walk through this day with the quiet confidence of someone who is held. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Evening Devotion**Held Through the Hours****Evening Reflection**

As you settle into the quiet of this evening, consider the hours that have passed since you woke this morning. Through all of it — the busyness, the conversations, the moments of pressure, the small victories and the minor frustrations — God was watching. Not with a critical eye, waiting to catch you out, but with the attentive care of a loving guardian who neither slumbers nor sleeps.

There may have been moments today when you felt very much alone — when the weight of a decision felt entirely on your shoulders, or when a wave of worry washed over you unexpectedly. In those moments, God was present. His watchfulness did not waver because your awareness of it did. This is the nature of grace: it holds us even when we are not holding on. The psalmist's words are not a reward for perfect faith — they are a promise for fragile, ordinary people walking through a complicated world. You were kept today. Give thanks for that, even if you can only see it in hindsight.

Evening Reflection

Was there a moment today when you felt alone or unprotected — and looking back now, can you see any evidence that God was present even then?

Evening Prayer

Lord, thank you that you were watching over me today, even in the moments I forgot you were there. I rest now in the knowledge that your care does not end when my eyes close. Keep me through this night, and wake me tomorrow with a fresh awareness of your faithfulness. Amen.

Wednesday - The God Who Chose to Trust: Choosing to Trust the God Who Is Faithful

Morning Devotion

Today's Verse

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight. (Proverbs 3:5-6 NIV)

Devotional Thought

We are now at the heart of what this week's journey is really about: the decision to trust. And it is, as the sermon makes unmistakably clear, a decision. Not a feeling. Not an automatic response. Not something that happens to you. It is something you choose — deliberately, consciously, sometimes against every instinct and emotion you possess.

This is one of the most important and most countercultural truths in the Christian life. We live in a world that tells us to trust what we can see, measure, and control. We are conditioned to rely on systems, strategies, and our own resourcefulness. And when those things fail — as they inevitably do — we are left feeling helpless and afraid, because we have built our lives on foundations that

were never designed to bear the full weight of our trust.

The psalmist of Psalm 121 understood this. He was not a naive man who had never encountered hardship. He was a person who had looked at the mountains of difficulty — who had felt the ground shift beneath his feet — and had made a choice: my help comes from the Lord. That choice did not make the mountains disappear. It did not instantly resolve every problem. But it fundamentally reoriented his soul towards the One who is truly trustworthy.

Proverbs 3:5-6 calls us to the same reorientation. Trust with all your heart — not with a portion of your heart, not with the leftovers after you have tried everything else, but with all of it. And lean not on your own understanding. This is the difficult part, because our own understanding feels so immediate, so logical, so reliable. But our understanding is finite. Our perspective is limited. God's is not.

To trust God's faithfulness is not to abandon wisdom or to be passive. It is to hold our plans, our analysis, and our best efforts with open hands — submitting them to a God who sees infinitely more than we do. It is to say, as the sermon invites us: 'Lord, help me to put my trust in you and in you alone.' That is the decision before you today.

Reflection Question

What is it, honestly, that makes it most difficult for you to trust God fully in this season of your life — and what would it mean to surrender that specific barrier to Him today?

From Sunday's Sermon

"To trust in the faithfulness of God, as with almost every other thing in life, is a choice. It's a choice you and I would need to make. You need to choose who you would trust in. Nobody can make it for you. I'm going to trust God. I'm going to trust that God is faithful. Even though nothing seems to be working."

Today's Application

Today's focus is on the interior act of choosing trust. Begin by identifying the area of your life where trust in God feels most difficult right now — be as specific as possible. Then, write out a short declaration of trust, in your own words, addressed directly to God. It does not need to be eloquent; it needs to be honest. Something like: 'Lord, I do not understand what you are doing in this situation, but I choose today to trust your faithfulness over my own understanding.' Keep this declaration somewhere visible — in your pocket, on your desk, as a note on your phone. Return to it every time anxiety or doubt rises today. Additionally, consider whether there is a practical decision you have been delaying because you are waiting for certainty before you trust. Ask God whether He is inviting you to take a step of faith today, even without all the answers you would like.

Morning Prayer

Father, I acknowledge today that trusting you is a choice — and I want to make that choice, genuinely and with my whole heart. I confess that too often I lean on my own understanding, that I try to calculate and control rather than surrender and trust. Today, I choose you. I choose to believe that you are faithful, that your purposes are good, and that your ways are higher than mine. Help me, by your Spirit, to hold on to that choice throughout this day, especially in the moments when it feels hardest. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Evening Devotion

The Quiet Courage of Trust

Evening Reflection

Trust is not always a dramatic, mountain-moving act of faith. Most of the time, it is quiet and unglamorous. It is choosing not to catastrophise when a conversation goes badly. It is resisting the urge to grasp for control when a situation feels uncertain. It is going to sleep without having resolved everything, because you have placed it in hands more capable than your own.

How did trust look for you today? Perhaps there were moments when you consciously chose to believe God's goodness over your own anxious thoughts. Perhaps there were moments when you slipped back into old patterns of worry or self-reliance — and that is honest and human. The invitation this evening is not to assess your performance, but to notice the journey. Trust is not perfected in a single day; it is formed over a lifetime of small choices, each one building upon the

last. God honours the intention of a trusting heart, even when the execution is imperfect. He knows you. He sees your desire to trust Him. And He is faithful to meet you in that desire.

Evening Reflection

Where did you experience the peace that comes from choosing trust today — and where do you still need God's help to surrender control?

Evening Prayer

Lord, I give you the end of this day — the moments of trust and the moments of doubt alike. Thank you that your faithfulness does not depend on the consistency of mine. Help me to rest tonight in your goodness, and to wake tomorrow with a renewed willingness to choose you. Amen.

Thursday - Shade at Your Right Hand: The Intimate Protection of God

Morning Devotion

Today's Verse

The Lord watches over you — the Lord is your shade at your right hand; the sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon by night. The Lord will keep you from all harm — he will watch over your life.
(Psalm 121:5-7 NIV)

Devotional Thought

By the time we reach verses five through seven of Psalm 121, the psalmist has moved from the cosmic — God as Maker of heaven and earth — to the exquisitely personal: the Lord is your shade at your right hand. That phrase deserves to be savoured. In the fierce heat of the ancient Near Eastern climate, shade was not a luxury — it was life. To have someone stand at your right hand and shield you from the burning sun was an act of intimate, attentive care.

The right hand, in biblical culture, was the place of honour, strength, and close relationship. When the psalmist says the Lord is your shade at your right hand, he is saying something extraordinary: God is not watching from a safe distance. He is not monitoring your life from some remote vantage point. He is right beside you — close enough to shield you from what would otherwise harm you.

The promise extends to both day and night: the sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon by night. This is a picture of comprehensive, uninterrupted protection. There is no hour, no season, no circumstance in which you are outside the covering of God's care. The Passion Translation renders verse seven and eight with wonderful vividness: 'You will be guarded by God himself. You will be safe when you leave your home and safely you will return. He will protect you now and he will protect you forevermore.'

Now, we must be honest and pastorally careful here. This promise does not mean that Christians are exempt from suffering, loss, or hardship. The Bible is far too honest for that, and life is far too complex. What it does mean is that nothing happens to you outside of God's knowledge and care. No harm reaches you without passing through His hands first. And even in the things He permits, He is present — as shade, as shelter, as the One who holds you at your right hand.

This is the God who has inscribed your name on the palm of His hands. He sees you. He knows you. He has not forgotten you. Today, let that truth be your shade.

Reflection Question

In what specific area of your life do you most need to experience God as your 'shade at your right hand' — His close, protective, personal presence — and have you asked Him to make that real to you?

From Sunday's Sermon

"God will protect you now and he will protect you forevermore. That's his faithfulness. And so when that mountain of problem or that challenge comes at you, we need to always remember the promise of Jesus in Matthew 28:20, where he said that I will be with you always. Even till the end of time."

Today's Application

Today's application is about cultivating an awareness of God's intimate nearness, not just His sovereign power. Begin your morning by reading Psalm 121:5-7 slowly, three times. Each time, pause on the phrase 'at your right hand' and let it sink in — God is that close to you today. As you move through your day, practise what some spiritual directors call 'the awareness examen': at each transition point in your day (leaving the house, arriving at work, taking a lunch break, returning home), take thirty seconds to acknowledge God's presence right beside you. If you are going through a season of particular vulnerability — illness, grief, uncertainty — consider writing a letter to God today, describing honestly how you feel and asking Him specifically to be your shade in that place. Let the act of writing become an act of drawing near to the One who is already near to you.

Morning Prayer

Lord, I am moved today by the truth that you are not far away — that you are my shade, right beside me, at my right hand. In the heat of this day's pressures and demands, I ask you to make your nearness real to me. Protect me from what would harm me, and even in the things you permit, help me to feel your presence as my shelter. I trust that you are with me — not in some abstract theological sense, but truly, intimately, personally. Thank you, Father. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Evening Devotion

Sheltered Through the Day

Evening Reflection

Evening is a good time to look back and ask: where did I experience God's shade today? Not necessarily in dramatic, miraculous ways — though those happen — but in the quieter, more ordinary expressions of His care. The conversation that could have gone badly but didn't. The moment of unexpected calm in the middle of a stressful situation. The thought that came to you at just the right time. The friend who called when you needed to hear a voice. These are not coincidences. They are the shade of a God who is watching over your life with attentive, personal care.

It is easy, at the end of a demanding day, to focus on what went wrong, what was left undone, what still feels unresolved. The practice of noticing God's protection and provision — even in small things — is a discipline of gratitude that slowly reshapes the way we see our lives. We begin to recognise that we are not navigating this world alone. We are sheltered. We are kept. We are held by the One who neither slumbers nor sleeps, whose shade never lifts, whose right hand never withdraws.

Evening Reflection

Where did you notice God's protective, personal care today — however small or ordinary it may have seemed?

Evening Prayer

Father, thank you for being my shade today. I may not have noticed every moment of your protection, but I trust that you were there through all of it. As I rest tonight, I am grateful to be held by you. Guard me through the night, and let me wake tomorrow with eyes to see your goodness. Amen.

Friday - Now and Forevermore: Living in the Fullness of God's Faithfulness

Morning Devotion

Today's Verse

The Lord will keep you from all harm — he will watch over your life; the Lord will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore. (Psalm 121:7-8 NIV)

Devotional Thought

Psalm 121 ends with one of the most sweeping declarations in all of Scripture: the Lord will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore. Those final two words — 'forevermore' — are the psalmist's way of saying that the faithfulness of God has no expiry date. It does not end when the circumstances improve. It does not conclude when this particular mountain is behind you. It stretches into eternity itself.

This week, we have been on a journey through the themes of this extraordinary psalm. We have looked honestly at the mountains before us. We have marvelled at a God who neither slumbers nor sleeps. We have wrestled with the choice to trust. We have received the truth of His intimate, personal presence as our shade. And now, on this final day, we are invited to step back and see the full picture: this is a God whose faithfulness encompasses the whole of your life — from this present moment, with all its complexity and challenge, to the eternal horizon that lies beyond it.

The sermon reminded us that yes, there is a day coming when there will be no more tears and no more sorrow. That is the ultimate destination of God's faithfulness. But in the meantime — here, in this part of eternity — there will be challenges. There will be mountains. There will be seasons when everything feels dark and nothing seems to be working. And in all of those seasons, God's faithfulness is the constant. It does not fluctuate with our circumstances or our feelings.

To live in the fullness of God's faithfulness is to hold two things together at once: the honest acknowledgement of present difficulty, and the unshakeable confidence in God's ultimate

goodness. It is to say, with the psalmist, 'I see the mountain — and I know the One who made the mountain.' It is to say, with the sermon, 'No matter how insurmountable that mountain looks, if God needs to drill a tunnel through it, He will. Nothing is impossible for our God.'

This is not naive optimism. It is hard-won, Scripture-rooted, cross-shaped faith. It is the kind of trust that is formed not in the absence of difficulty but in the middle of it — and it is the most beautiful and enduring thing a human being can possess.

Reflection Question

As you come to the end of this week's journey through Psalm 121, what is the one truth about God's faithfulness that you most need to carry with you into the coming days and weeks — and how will you anchor yourself to it?

From Sunday's Sermon

"I can tell you categorically from this place that God never fails. You may think of the solution in a particular way and he may bring it in another way. But I can assure you, all things will work together according to scripture. No matter how high that mountain can be, no matter how insurmountable that mountain looks, if God needs to drill a tunnel through it, he will drill it. Nothing, absolutely nothing is impossible for our God to do."

Today's Application

As this week draws to a close, take time today for a more extended act of reflection and commitment. Find a quiet space — even fifteen or twenty minutes — and do the following: First, write down the key truth about God's faithfulness that has meant the most to you this week. Second, identify the 'mountain' that feels most present in your life right now, and write a specific prayer of trust about it — naming the challenge, naming your fear, and then deliberately choosing to place it in God's hands. Third, think about who in your life is also facing a mountain right now. Is there someone you could encourage this week with the truths of Psalm 121 — a phone call, a message, a coffee together? The faithfulness of God is not meant to be hoarded; it is meant to be

shared. Finally, commit to returning to Psalm 121 regularly — perhaps once a week — as a touchstone of trust in whatever season lies ahead.

Morning Prayer

Lord God, Maker of heaven and earth, I come to the end of this week with a heart that is more aware of your faithfulness than it was at the beginning. Thank you for this psalm, for its honesty about the mountains we face and its unshakeable confidence in you. I choose today — and I want to keep choosing — to put my trust in you and in you alone. Not because my circumstances are easy, but because you are faithful. Not because I always feel it, but because your Word declares it and your character confirms it. Watch over my coming and going, Lord — now and forevermore. In Jesus' mighty name, Amen.

Evening Devotion

Forevermore: Resting in the Faithfulness That Never Ends

Evening Reflection

As this week comes to a close and the evening settles around you, let the final word of Psalm 121 linger in your heart: forevermore. It is a word that refuses to be contained by the limits of this week, this season, or even this lifetime. God's faithfulness to you does not end when Friday does. It does not diminish over the weekend or take a break while you rest. It stretches forward into every day that is yet to come, and beyond even those days into eternity itself.

You have spent this week sitting with some of the most profound truths in Scripture — truths about a God who sees you, keeps you, walks beside you, and holds your future in His hands. Perhaps some of those truths have settled deeply and brought real comfort. Perhaps others have felt more like aspirations than present realities — things you want to believe but are still learning to trust. Both of those responses are honest and valid. Faith is a journey, not a destination. And the God who began a good work in you is faithful to complete it.

Rest tonight in the knowledge that you are watched over. You are kept. You are held. And tomorrow, and every day after it, the Lord will be your help — the Maker of heaven and earth, your shade at your right hand, your keeper now and forevermore.

Evening Reflection

As you reflect on this whole week, what has shifted in your understanding of — or trust in — God's faithfulness, and what do you want to carry forward from here?

Evening Prayer

Father, thank you for this week — for your Word, for your presence, for your faithfulness that never fails. I rest tonight in the truth that you are watching over me, now and forevermore. Whatever tomorrow holds, I trust it to you. You are my help, my keeper, my shade. In Jesus' name, Amen.