

1 REAL Security

- Who is our refuge in times of trouble?

2 Securing our Money

- People used to hide their money under the mattress.
- But when they figured out that the mattress was one of the first places that burglars look for cash, they decided to put their money in other places.
 - an old sock in the bottom of the sock drawer ...
 - a watertight plastic bottle in the tank on the back of the toilet ...
 - an envelope taped to the bottom of the cat's litter box ...
 - a big coffee cup in the back of a cupboard ... or in
 - an envelope inside a DVD case.

3 Be Careful . . .

- However, when you keep all your money at home and think you're being very clever on where you hide it, you might become very disappointed.
- This happened to a man in Baltimore, Maryland when he returned from a weekend fishing trip with his buddies.
- He discovered that while he was gone his wife finally followed through with the Garage Sale she had been promising.
- In fact, she sold his old DVD collection that he never watched any more.
- But, how was she suppose to know that inside the DVD cover "The Color of Money," her husband had hid \$20,000.00.

4 Electronic Banking

- Fearing such losses, most people choose to put their money in bank accounts that can be accessed online with the use of passwords.
- They come up with a simple string of characters -- somewhere between six and 16 -- and figure that their money will remain safe.
- However, it may be no safer than if it were sitting in a plastic bottle in a toilet tank.

5 WIRED – Kill the PASSWORD

- According to Wired magazine (November 15, 2012), a password is no longer an adequate means of securing precious data.
- No matter how complex or unique, our passwords can no longer protect us.
- Sadly for us, hackers are now breaking into computer systems and releasing lists of names and passwords on a regular basis.

6 WIRED – Kill the PASSWORD

- This is all very depressing.
- We can only hope that Internet security experts are working hard to stay one step ahead of the bad guys.

- At some point, we're going to have to move past the password.
- Or go back to taping an envelope to the bottom of the kitty litter box.

7 Don't Get Hacked!

- Mat Honan, who wrote the article in WIRED magazine, lost his entire digital life in the span of an one hour.
- Even though his Apple, Twitter, and Gmail passwords were all robust—seven, 10, and 19 characters; alphanumeric and some with symbols, he was still hacked.
- Using his Apple account they were able to wipe clean his iPhone, iPad, and MacBook computer.
- He lost every email, message, and every picture he had taken of his 18-month old daughter.
- His conclusion, our digital lives are simply too easy to crack.

8 Psalm 71

- C.S. Lewis calls the book of Psalms the prayer book of the Bible, and he is right. Here are prayers of celebration and joy, of sadness and lament. Psalm 71 is a Psalm of lament. King David is approaching the end of his life and is experiencing a great deal of uncertainty as to his own future. ...
- In you, O LORD, I have taken refuge; let me never be put to shame. Rescue me and deliver me in your righteousness; turn your ear to me and save me. Be my rock of refuge, to which I can always go; give the command to save me, for you are my rock and my fortress. Deliver me, O my God, from the hand of the wicked, from the grasp of evil and cruel men. For you have been my hope, O Sovereign LORD, my confidence since my youth. From birth I have relied on you; you brought me forth from my mother's womb. I will ever praise you. (Psalms 71:1-6 NIV)

9 Psalm 71

- The psalm begins with the words, In you, O Lord, I take refuge; let me never be put to shame (v. 1).
- The psalmist asks God to be a rock of refuge, a strong fortress, to save me, for you are my rock and my fortress (v. 3).
- We do not know if the psalm-writer was being chased by enemies and needed to hide, or if he was struggling with illness, weakness or age, and needed healing and help.
- But in any case, he pleaded to God, In your righteousness deliver me and rescue me; incline your ear to me and save me (v. 2).
- At times, we all need a strong fortress -- a refuge that cannot be penetrated by hackers or criminals, illnesses or enemies, failures or betrayals.

- We long for a place that is a rock of refuge, a mighty fortress, a bulwark that never, ever fails.

10 Strong Fortress

11 A Mighty Fortress is our God

- Martin Luther felt the need for such a place when he took his stand against the Roman Catholic Church during the Protestant Reformation.
- In 1529, he wrote a hymn which began, “A mighty fortress is our God, a bulwark never failing; our helper he amid the flood of mortal ills prevailing.”
- But Luther goes deeper in the German version, speaking of a “Feste Burg.”
- Historians explains that “a Burg was a fortified town. When invaders approached, the surrounding populace fled to the safety of the walls” -- sometimes to layers of walls within walls.
- In his hymn, Luther is saying that God is like the most powerful of all Burgs, one in which nothing can breach the walls.

12 Salzburg Castle

13 The Flood of Mortal Ills

- Let's be clear, however -- life in the Feste Burg is not free of struggles.
- As long as we live, we are going to face what Luther calls a “flood of mortal ills.”
- We will still experience personal attacks, betrayals, failures, illnesses, and the difficulties that come with advancing age.
- But God acts as a helper amid the “flood of mortal ills,” one who supports us and shields us from complete annihilation.
- Inside the Mighty Fortress we discover that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:38–39 NIV)

14 God Rules the World!

- Psalm 71 continues with the words, “Rescue me, O my God, from the hand of the wicked, from the grasp of the unjust and cruel” (v. 4).
- The writer of the psalm is turning to God for help, and asking to be rescued from the cold grip of wicked, unjust and cruel people.
- In short, writes biblical scholar J. Clinton McCann, Jr., “the psalmist trusts that God -- not the wicked -- rules the world.”
- The psalmist is saying that God the Creator is really in charge of the grand sweep of human history, despite the evil, unfair and heartless acts that people commit every day.

- God can be trusted to work his purposes out, in spite of the selfish and sinful decisions that people make.

15 God is our Protector!

- After this, the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision: “Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your very great reward.” (Genesis 15:1 NIV)
- But you are a shield around me, O LORD; you bestow glory on me and lift up my head. (Psalms 3:3 NIV)
- For surely, O LORD, you bless the righteous; you surround them with your favor as with a shield. (Psalms 5:12 NIV)
- The LORD is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer; my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge. He is my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold. (Psalms 18:2 NIV)
- The LORD is my light and my salvation — whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life — of whom shall I be afraid? (Psalms 27:1 NIV)

16 God is our Protector!

- We wait in hope for the LORD; he is our help and our shield. (Psalms 33:20 NIV)
- For the LORD God is a sun and shield; the LORD bestows favor and honor; no good thing does he withhold from those whose walk is blameless. (Psalms 84:11 NIV)
- You are my refuge and my shield; I have put my hope in your word. (Psalms 119:114 NIV)
- Keep yourselves in God’s love . . . (Jude 1:21 NIV)

17 Being Blameless

- While our God is a Mighty Fortress, we can frustrate His grace, if we give in to our fears and give into our emotions.
 - We can slander those who oppose us without first finding out all the facts.
 - We can worry and fret and instead of speaking faith and confidence in God, we become sarcastic (conveying contempt) and cynical (distrustful).
 - Instead of looking in the mirror and judging ourselves, we complain and point the finger at someone else or even God.
- The Bible is clear about this and commands us, Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. (Romans 12:21 NIV)
- This is why it says, “If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink.” (Romans 12:20 NIV)

18 Real Security

- Real Security is not in a Password, it is to keep ourselves in God’s Love.
- If we do so, we will be more than conquerors.

- For God will be our shield, our refuge, our strong tower, and our mighty fortress.
- As it says in Psalm 91, He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty. . . . “He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust.” (Psalms 91:1-2 NIV)

19 Conclusion

- So tonight as take communion . . . let us consider how Jesus overcame evil by enduring the cross (doing good) and was rewarded with honor, title, and power, so that we might be imitators of His faith and way of life.
- As the Scripture says, Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart. (Hebrews 12:2-3 NIV)