

Surround Us with Your Favor Like a Shield (Psalm 5)

Good morning, friends. I hope you are staying warm and safe in the midst of this winter storm.

I am grateful for technology that allows us to connect. Today reminds me of 2020 when COVID hit. For the previous 15 years or so, I had longed for us to be online streaming our services. I am grateful to my sons, Michael and Timothy, for helping us get online when we were unable to gather face-to-face during COVID. Today, I am grateful for Michael's help so that I can have this time with you.

Today is going to be like a chat. I want to share some of my current thinking with you. Then, we will look at Psalm 5 together, which is a passage giving vocabulary to my prayers in this hour.

Thank you for your generous giving.

1. Next Sunday, we will give you an update on how we finished the year financially.
2. Today, I want to say "thank you" for responding to the Lord and for being so generous.
3. The Lord turned things around for us financially in a miraculous way during the last six months of 2025. We ended the year amazingly. Praise the Lord. And, thank you for listening to the Lord and for stepping up.

Let me give you a reminder about our new way of giving.

1. We are funding our budget differently in 2026. Instead of giving to a whole bunch of designated offerings, we are bringing all of our tithes and offering into *One Fund*.
2. This way of giving is new for all of us.
3. Let me tell you my story.
4. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact [Magan Yarbrough](#). She can help you figure out our new way of giving.

Today, we finish our 21 Day First-Love Fast.

1. Our fast was called *Fast Forward*.
2. Thank you for participating in the 21-day fast as the Lord directed.

3. Enjoy your lunch today.

Next Sunday:

1. Next Sunday, Pastor Joshua will share what the Lord is showing him about worship. His message is amazing.
2. Next Sunday, we will baptize three people. Originally, baptism was scheduled for today. However, plans changed because of the winter storm.
3. And, over the next several weeks, you are going to hear amazing stories of impact from our different ministries. God is at work. The Lord is reaching people. And, we get to help them become disciples of Jesus.

Now, let me share with you something I am learning and praying from my time of devotion in God's word.

For 2026, I am using the YouVersion Bible App to read through the Scripture. The plan I am using is from the BibleProject.

Psalm 5:1-12 (NIV84) For the director of music. For flutes. A psalm of David.

1 Give ear to my words, O LORD, consider my sighing. 2 Listen to my cry for help, my King and my God, for to you I pray. 3 In the morning, O LORD, you hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation. 4 You are not a God who takes pleasure in evil; with you the wicked cannot dwell. 5 The arrogant cannot stand in your presence; you hate all who do wrong. 6 You destroy those who tell lies; bloodthirsty and deceitful men the LORD abhors. 7 But I, by your great mercy, will come into your house; in reverence will I bow down toward your holy temple. 8 Lead me, O LORD, in your righteousness because of my enemies— make straight your way before me. 9 Not a word from their mouth can be trusted; their heart is filled with destruction. Their throat is an open grave; with their tongue they speak deceit. 10 Declare them guilty, O God! Let their intrigues be their downfall. Banish them for their many sins, for they have rebelled against you. 11 But let all who take refuge in you be glad; let them ever sing for joy. Spread your protection over them, that those who love your name may rejoice in you. 12 For surely, O LORD, you bless the righteous; you surround them with your favor as with a shield.

The prayer of expectation in God and expression of dependence upon God (Psalm 5:1-3).

Psalm 5:1 Give ear to my words, O LORD, consider my sighing. 2 Listen to my cry for help, my King and my God, for to you I pray. 3 In the morning, O LORD, you hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.

The Champion of right (Psalm 5:4-6).

Psalm 5:4 You are not a God who takes pleasure in evil; with you the wicked cannot dwell. 5 The arrogant cannot stand in your presence; you hate all who do wrong. 6 You destroy those who tell lies; bloodthirsty and deceitful men the LORD abhors.

The pilgrim spirit of being on journey with God (Psalm 5:7-8)

Psalm 5:7 But I, by your great mercy, will come into your house; in reverence will I bow down toward your holy temple. 8 Lead me, O LORD, in your righteousness because of my enemies— make straight your way before me.

The campaign of lies (Psalm 5:9-10)

Psalm 5:9 Not a word from their mouth can be trusted; their heart is filled with destruction. Their throat is an open grave; with their tongue they speak deceit. 10 Declare them guilty, O God! Let their intrigues be their downfall. Banish them for their many sins, for they have rebelled against you.

The joy, protection (refuge), and confidence in the Lord's presence (Psalm 5:11-12)

Psalm 5:11 But let all who take refuge in you be glad; let them ever sing for joy. Spread your protection over them, that those who love your name may rejoice in you. 12 For surely, O LORD, you bless the righteous; you surround them with your favor as with a shield.

Here are some ways that I am praying this morning about our current context.

In the name of Jesus:

- Surround those who are unemployed with your favor like a shield, leading them to the right job.
- Surround those who are underemployed with your favor like a shield, leading them to a job that provides more than a livable wage so that they can have enough with which to be generous.
- Surround my family and friends with your favor like a shield, giving them grace, provision, protection, and wisdom for every situation and circumstance.

- Surround those who are fighting systems of injustice with your favor like a shield, protecting them from abuse and violence.
- Surround those who are serving, defending, and rescuing the poor, the marginalized, and those in need with your favor as a shield, so that they have the resources, protection, and wisdom to speak up for those who have no voice.
- Surround those who are fighting authoritarianism in our country with your favor like a shield, giving them favor to raise up others to stand up, giving protection to them and their families from threats of retribution, and giving them courage to continue fighting the good fight of faith.
- Surround those who are suffering from chronic pain with your favor like a shield, relieving their suffering, leading them to answers and breakthroughs, and giving them grace to stand and overcome in the midst of suffering... and ultimately touching them with your gift of healing.
- Surround those who have lost power in the midst of this winter storm with your favor like a shield, providing for their needs, protecting crews working to restore power quickly, and helping to provide and restore what is needed generously.

Lord, thank you for your presence, power, and protection in our lives. We confess that we need you. We are dependent upon you for our daily bread and provision. We celebrate your nearness. We praise you for your goodness and mercy.

Be with my friends and family today, in the name of Jesus.