

RUN TO THE FORTRESS OF GOD'S LOYAL LOVE

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1. See your enormous need to find shelter in this fortress.

The soul that sins will die. The soul in an unrepentant man has every reason to cry out in utter despair since he has no remission of his sins and God has granted him no forgiveness. Yet the lost sinner, alienated from God, blinded by his own sin, living in the darkness has no understanding that the wrath of God presently rests upon him. Nevertheless, the dire need exists for all sinners to see the enormity of their sin, the purity of God's Name, and the extremity of their guilt, and the eternity of God's punishment. Sinners must see their need! They must understand their lostness, their nakedness, their peril, their predicament as a impotent worm under the omnipotent hand of God. To be God's enemy cannot be minimized. It must not be ignored. It shall not be brushed aside. Unless one sees his need, he will not run to the fortress. Unless one sees the impending danger, he will not take appropriate action. Sin has consequences and God's righteousness demands an eternal payment and an infinite penalty for every transgression against Him. The need is enormous. A shelter is needed.

2. Run to the fortress with deliberation, determination, duty & urgency.

If a patient in a doctor's office just received news that he had a terminal illness that, if left untreated, would take his life imminently. Yet, the doctor provides one solution. Action can be taken to eliminate the illness from the body and bring about healing. How swift would that ill patient run to the remedy! How immediate would be his reception of the solution! And so it is, the sinner must recognize the heavy hand of God's holiness holds the flaming sword of anger over the sinner's neck. The situation could never be more urgent! This life and death predicament could never be more grave. The sinner, condemned by God's holiness, guilty before God's judgment bar, and offensive before God's righteous eye, must run to the only fortress that can save — and save fully — from the deserved and awaiting punishment from the Almighty. And a sinner who sees himself rightly will flee with deliberation to Christ! He will have determination as he looks to the only Savior! He will urgently run to the remedy! O the urgency of this situation. The sinner cannot trot to the Savior. He never stumbles across a Savior

and trips into the Kingdom of God. The rebel never tiptoes unwillingly or unknowingly into the arms of God. The sinner must fly to Christ as his only hope of escaping the severity of God's punishment.

3. Enter through the only gate leading into the fortress.

None can climb over the towering city walls at his own whim to enter the city wherever he so chooses. No man can create his own gate by which he may enter a fortified city. No! For one to enter in, he must pass through the gate that leads in to the city. It is the same for the sinner. He cannot find a fortress to deliver him from the whirlwind of God's wrathful storm by his own creativity; rather, he must enter through the only gate provided by God that leads him into the fortress of safety. The gate that leads to this safety is Jesus Christ. He is the gate. He is the door. He is the way to the Father. He welcomes all who come to Him. Yet they must come to *Him* — and Him alone. Creating another gate is impossible. Forming another path to safety cannot happen. Suggesting that the storm of divine judgment will not ultimately come nor will it ultimately find the rebel is foolish thinking. The only way one can escape from God's wrath is by fleeing to God's mercy. And the gate that leads one to God is Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.

4. Find protection behind the massive walls from all storms, all enemies, all armies, all winds.

High walls and soaring towers protect the inhabitants residing inside the city from all invaders, all terrorists, and all adverse storms. So it is with God's great grace. All who come through Jesus Christ, the door, to rest in the fortress of God's love find security from all enemies. Those who find rest for their souls in Christ Jesus have eternal rest from all storms, they have eternal victory over all enemies, and they have eternal protection from all stormy winds. No other place does God's child want to be than hiding in the safe fortress of His loving grace. Thus, no circumstance, no enemy, no worrisome predicament, no spiritual attack can inflict a terrible wound through the massive walls of God's protection. As the ruling Sovereign over His fortress, He guarantees protection to all His cherished children who reside within.

5. Enjoy the lavish & glorious blessings inside the fortress of God's love.

Inside the fortress one finds endless blessings from God that he lavishes upon all those who reside within. He eagerly lavishes heavenly blessings on His own who have come to Him for safety and security. He enjoys blessing His chosen ones with glorious and satisfying benefits as they dwell in perfect safety. And, of course, the perfect blessings all center in the full enjoyment and unhindered realization of His splendid initiation, salvation, protection and beauty.

6. Fellowship with, worship, serve & praise the Master of the Fortress for providing protection from the Storm outside.

Those whom God draws to Himself are those who run to Him as their Rock, their fortress, their stronghold. Those who come to Christ have all access to God Himself without end, without hinderance, without frustration, without distraction forever and ever. Thus, those who have come through the gate must fellowship with, worship, serve and praise Him for His grace in providing a fortress whereby a once-rebellious sinner can find deliverance from God's almighty justice since He poured out the full punishment upon His own Son who Himself is the only gate by which the believing transgressor can enter the fortress of God's loyal love. The only appropriate response for this one must be worship, gratitude and endless joy in *Him!*