

"Jeshurun's Rock" | Isaiah 44:1-23

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Isaiah 44:1-23 (pp. 604-605) (ESV)

In this chapter we'll see many similar themes we have heard in the previous chapters: Israel as God's chosen servant, God as the maker and redeemer of Israel, God as the first and last, that no one compares to God, there's an attack against idolatry, there's the theme of God bringing his life-giving water upon dry ground, and then the comforting phrase "fear not." There are a few unique things in this passage, but much of it is repetition. And that is intentional. The Christian life isn't mainly about learning new things, it's mainly about remembering the old things. We remember them so that we can continually apply them to each new season, each new day of our lives. So as we come back to some familiar themes from the past few weeks, come ready to remember – the truths here are simply too important to ever forget.

Given the length of this passage, I'll start by reading the first 8 verses, and then we'll read the remaining verses as we continue to walk through this passage.

- 44** "But now hear, O Jacob my servant,
Israel whom I have chosen!
2 Thus says the LORD who made you,
who formed you from the womb and will help you:
Fear not, O Jacob my servant,
Jeshurun whom I have chosen.
3 For I will pour water on the thirsty land,
and streams on the dry ground;
I will pour my Spirit upon your offspring,
and my blessing on your descendants.
4 They shall spring up among the grass
like willows by flowing streams.
5 This one will say, 'I am the LORD's,'
another will call on the name of Jacob,
and another will write on his hand, 'The LORD's,'
and name himself by the name of Israel."
6 Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel
and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts:
"I am the first and I am the last;
besides me there is no god.
7 Who is like me? Let him proclaim it.

**Let him declare and set it before me,
since I appointed an ancient people.
Let them declare what is to come, and what will happen.
8 Fear not, nor be afraid;
have I not told you from of old and declared it?
And you are my witnesses!
Is there a God besides me?
There is no Rock; I know not any."**

In 2009 I was living in the twin cities when the biggest Ponzi scheme in U.S. history up to that point broke the headlines. It was orchestrated by a Minneapolis businessman named Tom Petters and it totaled \$3.7 billion. Petters convinced investors with promissory notes that their money would be used to purchase discounted merchandise, like electronics, which would then be sold for a profit. He promised returns of 15-20%. The problem was that there was no merchandise, just empty warehouses. Petters then lived a lavish lifestyle with mansions, yachts, a customized private jet, and high stakes gambling. After Petters was exposed, the fallout was huge. Sun Country Airlines and Polaroid went bankrupt, and several hedge funds folded. Several local Minneapolis religious charities were hit hard too, like Minnesota Teen Challenge, because they had invested millions of donated money through an organization called "The Fidelis Foundation" which put their investments in the Petters Ponzi scheme. Now investing in an organization called "the Fidelis Foundation" sure sounds secure, doesn't it? But behind all the promised security and success was absolutely nothing. Petters is now serving 50 years in prison.¹

What gives you a sense of security? Is it your money, your job, your relationships, your health, your grades, your country, your church? Is that sense of security actually founded upon something secure and unchanging and trustworthy? Isaiah 44 is a prophetic call from God to make him your Rock, a foundation that will never be shaken. This prophecy foresaw a time in Israel's future of great insecurity due to their sin – they would be punished with the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple and exiled to a foreign nation. And here God makes a case to Israel and to us that through all the instability in life, he is to be our rock because he is our redeemer.

¹ <https://www.investopedia.com/thomas-petters-ponzi-scheme-11730548>

So in this passage we'll see four reasons to rest secure in the Rock, then we'll consider the deconstruction of idols, and then we'll end with three ways we can rightly respond to God as our rock.

I. Reasons to Rest Secure in the Rock (43:28-44:8)

1. He is faithful to his covenant of grace (43:28 - 44:2)

First, four reasons to rest secure in the Rock from the first 8 verses of this chapter. The first reason we are to rest secure in God our Rock is because he is faithful to his covenant of grace. We see this in the first two verses of Isaiah 44. This chapter begins with a call for Israel's attention, "**But now hear, O Jacob my servant**" (v. 1a). God was about to give Israel a message that contrasted his previous message. And what was that message? Last week Pastor Chris preached on Isaiah 43 and that chapter ended with the promise of punishment for sin. Here's are the last two verses of Isaiah 43, "²⁷ **Your first father sinned, and your mediators transgressed against me.** ²⁸ **Therefore I will profane the princes of the sanctuary, and deliver Jacob to utter destruction and Israel to reviling.**" Jacob was going to face utter destruction for their sins of idolatry and the wickedness that was rampant in their nation. This pronouncement of utter destruction may be a prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in 586 BC by the Babylonians. So that devastating pronouncement at the end of Isaiah 43 then gives way to a new and different announcement in Isaiah 44. Even though utter destruction was coming for Judah, the story wouldn't be over. God's relationship with his chosen people wasn't ending. God was going to stay *faithful* to his covenant of grace even though his people had been *unfaithful*.

God calls Jacob to hear, to listen, because help would be coming on the heels of punishment. Look at verse 2, "**Thus says the LORD who made you, who formed you from the womb and will help you: fear not...**" Israel was not to fear that this sentence of utter destruction would end their covenant relationship with God. The story wouldn't be over. Judgment and exile were a part of a longer story, a history of God's redemption of his people, a history that began with Adam and Eve and had continued throughout the millennia and would continue even after the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem. There would be life after exile, mercy after judgment, revival after rebellion. God's people are to find their security in him as their rock because he is always faithful to his covenant of grace,

his promise to his people to be their God when they believe in the promised savior Jesus Christ. Even though God's people would go into exile and their descendants would be scattered, God, because he is faithful to the covenant he made with Abraham, he would pour out his Spirit on future generations so that they might put their faith in the LORD.

So brothers and sisters, you cannot find anyone more faithful to their promises than God himself. Read the Bible, read the promises that are for all who put their faith in Christ, and rest secure in those promises. Rest in the faithfulness of God, that although we sin like Israel, God is faithful to discipline us as a loving father (Heb. 12:5-7). He will lovingly correct us and restore us back to a right relationship with him. Rest secure in the Rock, the one who makes and keeps his promises.

2. He loves his chosen people (1-2)

The second reason we should rest secure in God our rock is because he loves his chosen people. Look again at verses 1-2, **"But now hear, O Jacob my servant, Israel whom I have chosen! 2 Thus says the LORD who made you, who formed you from the womb and will help you: Fear not, O Jacob my servant, Jeshurun whom I have chosen."** The Lord reminds Israel who they are and whose they are: they are the chosen servant of the Most High! He himself formed them into a people. He set his heart on them in love and chose them out of all the peoples of the earth to be his treasured possession (Ex. 19:5). He blessed Israel so that they became fruitful and multiplied. He rescued Israel from slavery in Egypt. He helped them in the wilderness and gave them the promised land of Canaan as their very own.

And at the end of verse 2, God calls them an endearing name: **"Jeshurun."** What does Jeshurun mean? It's first used in Moses' song in Deuteronomy 32.² There's some uncertainty about the exact meaning of "Jeshurun," but scholars generally give it a positive, affectionate meaning, perhaps meaning "upright" or "beloved." Even though God has sent Isaiah to prophecy to a rebellious people, God still affectionately calls them, "Jeshurun," seeing them not so much as what they currently are in their rebellion, but who they will

² God is also called a "rock" for the first time in Deut. 32. There are many more parallels between Deut. 32 and Isaiah 44, leading me to believe that Israel was to be reminded of Moses' song as they heard Isaiah's prophecy.

one day be by His grace, by *His* faithful covenant keeping. Israel, who now is turning its back on God will one day be “upright” because of the mercy of God. It is so comforting and reassuring to know that God sees us not only for what we are now, but he also sees us for who we will be: his glorified bride, shining in perfect holiness and righteousness! So dear Christian, rest in the love of God for you. He loves you and he chose you so that he might forever love you. Rest secure in his love. His love for you does not falter when you fail – he sees the big picture of not just who you are now but also who he's making you to be. He loves you and he will always love you. There is no rock more secure than God's love.

3. His Spirit is the well-spring of life (3-5)

The third reason from this chapter for why we should rest secure in the Rock is because his Spirit is the well-spring of life. Look now at verses 3-5,

- “ ³ **For I will pour water on the thirsty land,
and streams on the dry ground;
I will pour my Spirit upon your offspring,
and my blessing on your descendants.**
- ⁴ **They shall spring up among the grass
like willows by flowing streams.**
- ⁵ **This one will say, ‘I am the LORD’s,’
another will call on the name of Jacob,
and another will write on his hand, ‘The LORD’s,’
and name himself by the name of Israel.”**

Here God says that he will help his people after they face punishment by raining down a spiritual revival upon their descendants. Israel in their rebellion is like a wilderness, void of life, void of faith. But God promised to pour out his Spirit upon that dry ground, upon the offspring of Israel, so that they might come alive and grow like trees besides rivers of water. God had brought about numerous revivals in Israel's history, and he promised once again to revive his people. The exiles who were sent to Babylon and who would return, they would identify themselves as the LORD's, as a people belonging to him. Just as God had formed and created his people with the calling of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, so also God would re-create his people after the majority of them had fallen away from him. Our God is the creator-savior, the one who saves his people by his creative powers, by creating spiritual life and faith where there was once nothing.

God would perform the greatest outpouring of his Spirit at Pentecost in the book of Acts, when he would give his Spirit to not only the apostles, but also to the gentile peoples who would hear the gospel, believe it, and be saved. And so even gentiles, non-Jewish people, can become the offspring of Israel when they put their faith in Jesus Christ, the true Israelite.³ Jesus is the offspring of Abraham through whom all the families of the earth will be blessed!⁴ And Jesus said in John 7 that whoever believes in him, “**out of his heart will flow rivers of living water**” (7:38) which is the Spirit of God, the Spirit poured out upon one’s soul to revive them, to bring them new life.

Do you have the Spirit of God in your heart? Is there within your heart faith and trust in the Lord Jesus? Is he the security of your heart? If so, then the Spirit has been poured out upon you! Do you see yourself as a sinner in need of the gruesome cross of Christ? Have you asked him for his forgiveness? Then the Spirit is flowing in your heart like an ever-flowing supply of the life of God. Is your heart growing in loving what God loves, hating what he hates, and obeying his commands? Are you rejoicing in God and praying to him as a child to a father? This too is a sign that God has mercifully poured his Spirit upon you. That is the third reason we are to rest in the rock, for he is like the wilderness rock that Moses struck and gushed out water for Israel; he pours out his Spirit on his people that they might have abundant life forever.⁵

4. He is unique and unmatched (6-8)

And fourth, we should rest secure in our Rock because he is unique and unmatched. Look at verses 6-8,

**6 Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel
and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts:
“I am the first and I am the last;
besides me there is no god.**

³ Rom. 2:28-29, “²⁸For no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical. ²⁹But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. His praise is not from man but from God.”

⁴ Gal. 3:16, “¹⁶Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, “And to offsprings,” referring to many, but referring to one, “And to your offspring,” who is Christ.”

⁵ 1 Cor. 10:4, “For I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, ²and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, ³and all ate the same spiritual food, ⁴and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ.”

- 7 **Who is like me? Let him proclaim it.**
Let him declare and set it before me,
since I appointed an ancient people.
Let them declare what is to come, and what will happen.
- 8 **Fear not, nor be afraid;**
have I not told you from of old and declared it?
And you are my witnesses!
Is there a God besides me?
There is no Rock; I know not any."

God challenges his people to find anyone who can compare with him. He is unique and unmatched. He alone is the King of Israel, greater than any earthly king. And Jesus, an Israelite and descendant of the kingly line of David, he would come to be the everlasting King to reign over God's people forever. Verse 6 calls God not only the king of Israel, but also Israel's redeemer. And so it is with the Lord Jesus Christ. He is our King-Redeemer, the royal Son of God who put on human flesh, was born of a poor, insignificant family, and lived the perfect life and died as an atoning sacrifice for the sins of his people in order to redeem them, to make his beloved people his very own forever. God is the unmatched king and redeemer. He is also unmatched in his eternality. In verse 6 he declares, "**I am the first and I am the last.**" And do you remember who else said he was the first and the last? Jesus, in Revelation 1 which we read earlier in the service. Jesus is the eternally existing son of God, the Alpha and the Omega. No one is like him. In verse 7, God also declares that no one is like him in his sovereign power and omniscience. He appointed an ancient people, he formed all the peoples of the earth, and he uniquely called and appointed Abraham to have descendants as numerous as the stars. God alone can declare what is to come and what will happen, for he alone not only knows the future, but declares and ordains what it will be. No one is like him. He is infinite in power. Rest in this unique and unmatched Rock.

II. The Deconstruction of Idols (44:9-20)

1. What idols actually are (9-17)

Isaiah's prophecy then takes a turn toward the topic of idolatry. Idolatry was a rampant problem in Israel and so God wanted to make it crystal clear that no one is like him, not even the idols. Before Israel entered the promised land, God commanded them in

Deuteronomy 7⁶ to destroy all the nations living there, because otherwise they would tempt Israel, often through intermarriage, to follow their gods. God warned his people about this in Deuteronomy, but the people did not listen and they never fully eradicated the pagan nations. And just as God had predicted, they struggled with idolatry ever since.

Here is Isaiah 44, God is going to condemn idols again as he has been doing a lot in the surrounding chapters, but this time he uses an interesting and persuasive argument against idols: he deconstructs them. He exposes them for how they came to be and what they really are. Idols had a certain mystical ethos to them, because of their appearance and the pagan culture that taught that they were powerful. They were kind of like voodoo dolls or tarot cards today. If someone gave you one of those you'd probably feel uncomfortable having them in your possession because of their appearance and the mysterious and evil culture associated with them. The idols of the Israelites day had the same mysterious ethos to them that made people fear them. And so God pops the bubble of their empty ethos by revealing what they truly are in their nature: mere pieces of metal or blocks of wood. Nothing more. As we look at this next section, we'll look first at what idols actually are in verses 9-17 and then in verses 18-20 we'll see what idol-worship does to us. Read with me verses 9-17 as God deconstructs these idols:

⁹ All who fashion idols are nothing, and the things they delight in do not profit. Their witnesses neither see nor know, that they may be put to shame. ¹⁰ Who fashions a god or casts an idol that is profitable for nothing? ¹¹ Behold, all his companions shall be put to shame, and the craftsmen are only human. Let them all assemble, let them stand forth. They shall be terrified; they shall be put to shame together.

¹² The ironsmith takes a cutting tool and works it over the coals. He fashions it with hammers and works it with his strong arm. He becomes hungry, and his strength fails; he drinks no water and is faint. ¹³ The carpenter stretches a line; he marks it out with a pencil. He shapes it with planes and marks it with a compass. He shapes it into the

⁶ Deut. 7:1-6, "When the LORD your God brings you into the land that you are entering to take possession of it, and clears away many nations before you, the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations more numerous and mightier than you, ² and when the LORD your God gives them over to you, and you defeat them, then you must devote them to complete destruction. You shall make no covenant with them and show no mercy to them. ³ You shall not intermarry with them, giving your daughters to their sons or taking their daughters for your sons, ⁴ for they would turn away your sons from following me, to serve other gods. Then the anger of the LORD would be kindled against you, and he would destroy you quickly. ⁵ But thus shall you deal with them: you shall break down their altars and dash in pieces their pillars and chop down their Asherim and burn their carved images with fire. ⁶ "For you are a people holy to the LORD your God. The LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth."

figure of a man, with the beauty of a man, to dwell in a house. ¹⁴ He cuts down cedars, or he chooses a cypress tree or an oak and lets it grow strong among the trees of the forest. He plants a cedar and the rain nourishes it. ¹⁵ Then it becomes fuel for a man. He takes a part of it and warms himself; he kindles a fire and bakes bread. Also he makes a god and worships it; he makes it an idol and falls down before it. ¹⁶ Half of it he burns in the fire. Over the half he eats meat; he roasts it and is satisfied. Also he warms himself and says, “Aha, I am warm, I have seen the fire!” ¹⁷ And the rest of it he makes into a god, his idol, and falls down to it and worships it. He prays to it and says, “Deliver me, for you are my god!”

Idols are nothing like our God. Idols are created by man, while God is the uncreated one, the first and the last who himself created man. Idols are physical things, metal or wood, shaped with the great effort of man. But God transcends space and time and matter. In verse 15, God mocks idols by giving the scenario of a man who grows trees for fuel for his fire so he can bake his bread and be warm, but when he discovers he has a leftover piece of wood, he spontaneously decides to make a god out of it and he worships the very thing his own hands made. He even calls out to the idol to deliver him. This sounds absolutely absurd, doesn't it? And it is absurd.

Deconstructing something or someone that appears to have transcendent power is a powerful technique in exposing it for what it truly is. Take, for instance, items that people think give them “good luck.” As Christians we don't believe in luck, we believe in God's providence. And so those filthy socks that you aren't washing because your team hasn't lost since you wore them, they aren't lucky at all. They're just dirty socks, made by someone overseas, and heading to a landfill soon. They are powerless.

But what about some modern idols that people more commonly worship today? Let's take social media influencers, even Christian ones. They make thousands if not millions of dollars promoting the kind of lifestyle you wish you had. So let's deconstruct those idols and expose them for what they really are. These influencers have a meticulously staged life and often have a staff to help with every photo, every video. Their pictures are photoshopped, their videos are filmed with professional lighting and editing techniques. There is so much life they're not living with their friends and family because they're putting in so much time being an influencer. They only show you what they want you to see, but behind the scenes they're just normal humans who sin, who hunger, who thirst, who cry, who long for something more than what they're getting in this life.

The same goes for many of the celebrities people idolize today. What do those famous musicians and actors look like if they don't have make-up on, if they weren't in their designer clothes with their professional lighting and photoshop and video-editing? Who are they without their professional production and marketing teams propping them up to appear to be more than what they really are? They're just humans, nothing more. Athletes we admire for a while often turn out to be womanizers or abusers or addicts. Celebrities who seem to have it all have many broken relationships, high divorce rates, and terrible egos. Do not idolize people, see them for what they really are by nature: merely human and sinners like the rest of us. They have not transcended the universal human experience of suffering or reached plateaus of joy and satisfaction that cannot be reached with a simple, godly life.

Or what about the idol of sexual immorality? If that is a vice you struggle with, then deconstruct that idol. Think about what it really is by nature, not what you are being sold in an image. Behind the pixels are abused women, modern-day slavery, daughters who hate their fathers for not loving them well. If you break down what's really going on you'll find drug addiction, suicide, STDs, abortions, eating disorders, adultery, divorces, and death. They offer a transcendent experience of pleasure, but it is a lie from Satan himself. Behind the mask is a world of pain and suffering and evil. Deconstruct the idol of immorality. Remind yourself of the evil that it truly is, that to participate in it is to participate in the abuse of other people. Deny yourself, take up your cross, and pursue the true and lasting pleasure of seeing the beautiful face of God. As Jesus said in the sermon on the mount, "**the pure in heart.... shall see God**" (Matt. 5:8).

Idols are empty and powerless, they are a Ponzi scheme that offer no real security. Deconstruct your idols. Don't ruin your whole life chasing after the life you think they'll give you. They are vanity of vanities as the author of Ecclesiastes would testify.

2. What idol-worship does to us (18-20)

So what does idol-worship do to us? Idols may be empty and powerless, but *worship is very powerful*. So idol-worship can and does make a huge impact on us. Let's read about this in verses 18-20,

¹⁸ They know not, nor do they discern, for he has shut their eyes, so that they cannot see, and their hearts, so that they cannot understand. ¹⁹ No one considers, nor is there knowledge or discernment to say, “Half of it I burned in the fire; I also baked bread on its coals; I roasted meat and have eaten. And shall I make the rest of it an abomination? Shall I fall down before a block of wood?” ²⁰ He feeds on ashes; a deluded heart has led him astray, and he cannot deliver himself or say, “Is there not a lie in my right hand?”

This is what idol-worship does to our hearts and minds. We become blinded. We don't think straight. We let ourselves get sucked into the mystery or beauty of something or someone, we admire them, we're in awe of how much greater they are than us. And we start to imitate them. Psalm 115:8 says of idols and idol-worshippers that, **“Those who make them become like them; so do all who trust in them.”** Idols are thoughtless and senseless. They cannot see and they cannot hear. And when we worship idols, we become like them. We lose our spiritual sight, we lose our minds, we lose our reasoning, we become deaf to hear what is right and true. We are like the man in verse 20 whose heart is so deluded that he becomes enslaved to the very idol that he asked to deliver him! Idol-worship is *enslavement*. But the worship of the one true God is *freedom*. What are your idols? And what are they doing to you? The perfect antidote is to pursue the worship of God and to find your security in him and in him alone.

III. Responding Rightly to the Rock (44:21-23)

1. Remember (21)

In the last three verses of this section, God takes the focus off of idols and back onto his people Israel and how they should respond. In the next three verses he gives three commands, one command for each verse, that instructs them, and us, in how we are to respond rightly to God our Rock.

First, we are to remember. Verse 21:

**²¹ Remember these things, O Jacob,
and Israel, for you are my servant;
I formed you; you are my servant;
O Israel, you will not be forgotten by me.**

Notice the chiasmic poetry in this verse. The two middle lines have the same phrase “**you are my servant**” and the first and last lines both have two words that are opposite of one another: remember and forgotten. Israel was to remember all these things in this prophecy: who God is, who God is for them as their Rock and Redeemer and King, and who

they are: the chosen and beloved servant of God. We find our identity not so much by asking who we are but by asking *whose* we are. You belong to whoever or whatever you worship. Your heart is able to rest secure when you learn and then remember daily that you belong to God as his chosen servant, his beloved bride, his adopted child. There is no greater security than to know that God holds you in his hand as his treasured possession, as the apple of his eye. We may forget who God is, but as the last line of verse 21 says, God will never forget us, his beloved.

When God is disciplining us or having us go through a dark trial, it may feel like God's forgotten us. But a few chapters later, in Isaiah 49, this is what God says to you who feel that God has forgotten you,

**“¹⁴ But Zion said, “The LORD has forsaken me;
my Lord has forgotten me.”**

**¹⁵ “Can a woman forget her nursing child,
that she should have no compassion on the son of her womb?
Even these may forget,
yet I will not forget you.**

¹⁶ Behold, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands;”

As surely as a mother would never forget her nursing child, so also God will never forget you, even in the midst of your dark trial. He sees you and he is with you although you cannot see him. As I said earlier, the Christian life is more about remembering old things than about learning new things, and so remember, dear Christian, the promise of God written right here before your very eyes: God will never forget you.

2. Return (22)

Next, we are to respond to God our rock by returning to him. Verse 22:

**²² I have blotted out your transgressions like a cloud
and your sins like mist;
return to me, for I have redeemed you.**

Have you wandered away from following the Lord Jesus Christ? Have you been living your own way? Have you been squandering all that God has given you on your desires and passions? Then it is time to remember who God is, whose you are, and it is time to return to the Lord in repentance. The last phrase here is so amazing – God calls us to return to him, and then he gives this reason, **“for I have redeemed you.”** “I have redeemed

you” – that’s in the past tense, isn’t it? Even though this prophecy is 700 years before Christ, the redeeming work of Christ on the cross was considered a done deal - **“I have redeemed you... I have blotted out your transgressions.”** God’s plan of redeeming his people through the cross was as good as accomplished because he had promised to do it. Return to the Lord, repent of your sins, cast off the guilt of your sins upon the crucified Christ, and rest secure in his forgiveness.⁷

3. Rejoice (23)

Third and finally, we are to respond to God our rock by rejoicing in all that God has done for us. Verse 23:

²³ **Sing, O heavens, for the LORD has done it;**
 shout, O depths of the earth;
 break forth into singing, O mountains,
 O forest, and every tree in it!
 For the LORD has redeemed Jacob,
 and will be glorified in Israel.

How can we keep from singing the praises of God after we’ve heard all these amazing truths about him? God has ultimately redeemed us for his own glory, to display his matchless worth and to be known and honored and loved and praised. To worship God is to live out the very purpose for why you exist. And there is no greater security for your soul than to find that ultimate purpose and live it out. So let us praise our triune God today, tomorrow, and every day, as long as we live and forever and ever in the everlasting kingdom of heaven. Let us pray and then let us rejoice at the Lord’s table.

⁷ And sometimes returning to the Lord looks like reconciling with someone you’ve been at odds with. As you have received the forgiveness and peace of Christ, so also share that same forgiveness and peace with those you are in conflict with. Returning to Jesus often looks like reconciling with others.