

## The Refuge of the Hopeless

*“Look on my right hand and see, for there is no one who acknowledges me; Refuge has failed me; No one cares for my soul. I cried unto You, O Lord: I said, “You are my refuge, my portion in the land of the living. (Psalm 142:4-5).*

“No man cares for my soul” is the phrase often lifted out of this text as a ploy to motivate people to become “soul winners”. We are told that we need to learn to weep for souls, to show ourselves compassionate and anxious about the soul of the lost person. Presumably, this earnest alarm and tender compassion will be the most powerful, if not the deciding factor in their conversion.

Our text, however, does not leave that impression. The psalmist has indeed found God to be the sole refuge for his soul, but the care of someone for his soul has not spurred him to seek the Lord. On the contrary, it is the absence of anyone’s care for him that has driven him to the Lord!! If there had been help or sympathy from the sons of men, this man would have never cried unto the Lord.

Now this is an astounding fact. If men have any other option, any other place of refuge than the Almighty, they will happily choose the alternative to the Almighty. Is that not amazing? Men are weak, fickle, unstable, untrustworthy, selfish, devious, deceptive, and mortal. If they do not betray you and let you down before they die, they will surely leave you hanging and helpless when they have to leave this earth. The best and most loving of them, your own father and mother, can only be your refuge until they die. And notwithstanding the advances made by the health-care community, deadly disease is still rampant, old age is incurably fatal, and a thousand possible unpredictable circumstances can kill you any time on any day.

This is not to say that we should be careless about souls. If we believe the scriptures, know ourselves sinners, and eternal death the penalty for sins, then we cannot but mourn and cry out to God for the awakening of the souls of our loved ones, before they perish without hope. But we must not give people any false hope by the earnestness of our pursuit of their salvation. No one loves souls any more than the Lord Jesus Christ. He made no bones about the cost of being His disciples. Watching the rich young ruler walk away still lost rather than lost his fortune, Jesus loved him. But He didn’t “care” enough to lower the price. “Easy believism” is a hard doctrine that gives people a false hope. People who preach and practice it do not love the souls they are deceiving. If they truly loved them they would tell them the truth.

It is a terrifying experience to look around and find yourself alone and not a mortal on earth to rescue you from peril. But it is also a most wonderful and blessed time when you lift up your eyes above the “land of the living” (all of whom shall very soon die) to the Eternal God Who ever lives, and find Him to be your everlasting refuge.

-C.M.