

**John Wesley:**

God is our refuge and strength,  
an ever-present help in trouble.

Psalm 46:1

We live in an age that encourages us not only to prepare for every eventuality, but to insure against every eventuality as well. We build a house and insure it against burning down. We invest in possessions and insure them against being stolen. We pursue a healthy lifestyle and insure ourselves for when we fall ill. We earn a living and invest in policies to insure an income for when we stop working. If we can, we surround ourselves with high walls, burglar bars, alarms and armed response personnel. None of these is necessarily bad and might even be good stewardship of our resources, except that...our trust can end up being primarily in these things and not in our God. Who or what do you trust in for your present and future protection? Where do you look for strength? Who or what determines whether you sleep peacefully?

Many of us need to learn what the Psalmist discovered, but we can only accept the following truths from a place of spiritual poverty. Firstly, real peace giving refuge is not to be found in fortresses, but in God. The only safe place to be is in God. Secondly, notice the verb is...He is our refuge, not He will be or might be, but He is, here and now and always. He is never distant or withdrawn, He is with us. Thirdly, the God who is a refuge is our refuge. You and I can say: "God is my refuge."

"God is our refuge and strength." Is He your refuge and strength? Beware of imitations, the things mentioned in the first paragraph, becoming idols that give you a misplaced sense of peace and strength. If you lose all those things tomorrow (and how does that possibility make you feel?), God will still be God and your refuge and strength would remain unchanged.

Thou seest my feebleness;  
Jesu, be thou my power,  
My help, and refuge in distress,  
My fortress and my tower.  
Give me to trust in thee,  
Be thou my sure abode;  
My horn, and rock, and buckler be,  
My Saviour and my God. (296)