SCRIPTURE:
A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked. For the arms of the wicked shall be broken: but the Lord upholdeth the righteous.

The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand.

The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and his tongue talketh of judgment. The law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide.

... the salvation of the righteous is of the Lord ... And the Lord shall help them, and deliver them: he shall deliver them from the wicked, and save them, because they trust in him (Ps. 37:16–17, 23–24, 30–31, 39a–40, KJV).

Forsake me not, O Lord: O my God, be not far from me. Make haste to help me, O Lord my salvation (Ps. 38:21–22, KJV).

MEDITATION:
King David wrote these words long before anybody knew Jesus. However, it's clear that he speaks not only of the children of God, the faithful of Israel, but he also speaks prophetically of Jesus: the righteous man, good man ("there is none good, but God"), steps ordered by the Lord, speaking wisdom, and talking judgment. And although his steps never slid, he did fall—walking to the cross. And hanging there, although he had no sin, he cried out, "My God, my God: why have you forsaken me?" He was forsaken because our sin was on him. When he gave up his spirit, and when his earthly body, born of a mortal woman, died, our sins (all of them—past, present, and future) died as well. "Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Therefore, do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts" (Rom. 6:11–12, NKJV).

God's children are far beyond being children by heredity. We are called to be righteous, good, delighting in his way, speaking wisdom, talking of judgment, keeping the law of God in our hearts, and trusting in him. Just like King David, crying out to the Lord, our salvation, "Be not far from me ... make haste to help me" (Ps. 22:19).

REFLECTION:
It is easy to think of ourselves merely as "sinners; saved by grace" and forget that our sins are gone. Dead. We are told to "reckon ourselves" (our sinful selves) dead. Because that's true, we are free from our sins. We're not slaves to sin any more. We are able to live the righteous lives God wants us to live. "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8:36, KJV). Our salvation is not an insurance policy for when we die. It's not a lifestyle for Sundays. It's far more than a worldview. It's a total transformation from death to life. The Apostle Paul says, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God" (Rom. 12:1–2, NKJV). How is it possible to be "transformed" into being "righteous"? Only by being in him. Speaking of those who have new life in Jesus, the New Testament uses the term "Christian" twice. It uses the word "believers" twenty times. But over two hundred times, all of the writers of the epistles call us "in him" (or in
Jesus, in Christ). Jesus himself exhorted us, "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me" (John 15:4, NKJV). Preaching the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus told us, "You are the light of the world" (Matt. 5:14a, NKJV). It seems strange at first, considering he told the Jews, "I am the light of the world" (John 9:5, NKJV). But it's not strange when one considers our identity as in him.

**PRAYER:**
Father, as we remember this season, Jesus freely giving his life so we would be free from our sins, we also remember that he rose to new life—eternal life. And because our old selves died with him on that cross, our hope is assured, believing we will rise with him to new, eternal life. Transform our thinking and transform our lives so that we might be the light of the world today to this dark and perverted generation. Help us, by your Holy Spirit, to live each day in him, just as he lives in you. In Jesus’s name, amen.

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:**
Charles E. Hunt is Professor of Electrical Engineering at UC Davis. His research focuses on electronic materials and devices, particularly energy conversion through efficient materials for light sources and imagers. He and his wife Carla have been married 44 years, and have six children and five grandchildren. This year, they celebrate 35 years as members of University Covenant Church in Davis. He is the author of the book *Miracles in My Life* (Kharis Publishing, 2020). Charles serves as President of the Northern California ASA Chapter.

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