

David's Integrity in Life, and his Confidence in the Lord

Psalms 26-27

Psalm 26 - *"Vindicate me, O LORD, for I have walked in my integrity. I have also trusted in the LORD. I shall not slip. Examine me, O LORD, and prove me. Try my mind and my heart, for Your lovingkindness is before my eyes, and I have walked in Your truth. I have not sat with idolatrous mortals, nor will I go in with hypocrites. I have hated the assembly of evildoers, and will not sit with the wicked. I will wash my hands in innocence, so I will go about Your altar, O LORD, that I may proclaim with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all Your wondrous works. LORD, I have loved the habitation of Your house, and the place where Your glory dwells.*

Do not gather my soul with sinners, nor my life with bloodthirsty men, in whose hands is a sinister scheme, and whose right hand is full of bribes. But as for me, I will walk in my integrity. Redeem me and be merciful to me. My foot stands in an even place; in the congregations I will bless the LORD."

Background Notes for Psalm 26

In Psalm 26 we see the importance David placed on integrity in his life, and his desire to be separate from sinners. Psalm 27 reveals David's confidence in the Lord, and his desire to be in communion with the Lord. We don't know the exact occasion of Psalm 26, but David was claiming his integrity and trust in the Lord in contrast to those who were deceitful and guilty of wrongdoing.

At first we might think that David was claiming to be perfect, and that the Bible teaches salvation by good works. No. David was not claiming that he lived a perfect life - but he did claim to be innocent when people were finding fault with him and accusing him of wrongdoing. David was willing to prove his integrity by allowing the Lord to test and examine his life (v2). This is something we might be reluctant to do, because sometimes we're not innocent of wrongdoing.

Doctrinal Point for Psalm 26

The lives of believers should be characterized by integrity.

As believers, we will never be sinless in this life - but we should sin less! And no one should ever be able to question our integrity. People should know us as honest, fair, ethical, and righteous in the way we live our everyday lives and in our dealings with others.

Psalm 26 says that if we want to live a life of integrity, two things will characterize our lifestyle:

1. Separation from sin and sinners (v4-6; 9-10).

David made a determined effort to separate himself from sinners and their sinful lifestyles. And so should we! *"I will wash my hands in innocence"* (v6) means taking definite action to separate ourselves from things that defile or contaminate us. It means we'll be determined not to get mixed up in unrighteousness. Knowing that a day of judgment was coming, David did not want to be associated with sinners.

Separation from sin and sinners doesn't mean avoiding sinners to the point where we don't have opportunities to share God's love and truth with them. However, it definitely means that if we want to live a life of integrity, we cannot participate in their unbiblical and ungodly ways and practices. It means that our closest friends - the folks with whom we choose to spend the most time - will be believers who love the Lord

2. Separation unto the Lord and His people (v6-8; v12).

In verse 12, "standing on level ground" is the idea of a solid footing. We too can have a solid footing if we separate ourselves from sin, and live with the goal of pleasing Jesus. David loved to praise the Lord in the Lord's house (v7-8), and he loved the fellowship of the Lord's people: *"In the congregations I will bless the LORD"* (v12).

No wonder David could claim a life of integrity. He practiced separation from sin and sinners, and he loved to be in the Lord's house with the Lord's people. Do you love to go to church, or Bible study, or fellowship group? Do you love to spend time with the Lord's people? The lives of believers should be characterized by integrity.

Practical Application for Psalm 26

Follow Psalm 26:3 for integrity.

"For Your loving-kindness is before my eyes, and I have walked in Your truth" (v3).

Psalm 26 is about David's claim of integrity, and two things characterized David's life: separation from sin and sinners, and devotion to the Lord and His people. If we want to live a life of integrity that is pleasing to the Lord, these things will characterize our lives as well. The key for making this happen in our lives is found in verse 3: *"For Your loving-kindness is before my eyes, and I have walked in Your truth."*

If we want to walk in His truth we must keep our eyes on the Lord, and we must obey His Word. The more we realize the Lord's wonderful and gracious love and kindness for us, and the more we know and believe and obey the truth of His Word, the more we will live a life of integrity that is pleasing to the Lord. So - follow Psalm 26:3 for integrity!

Psalm 27 - *“The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? When the wicked came against me to eat up my flesh, my enemies and foes, they stumbled and fell. Though an army may encamp against me, my heart shall not fear. Though war may rise against me, in this I will be confident. One thing I have desired of the LORD, and that will I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in His temple. For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion. In the secret place of His tabernacle He shall hide me. He shall set me high upon a rock. And now my head shall be lifted up above my enemies all around me; therefore I will offer sacrifices of joy in His tabernacle. I will sing, yes, I will sing praises to the LORD. Hear, O LORD, when I cry with my voice! Have mercy also upon me, and answer me. When You said, “Seek My face,” my heart said to You, “Your face, LORD, I will seek.” Do not hide Your face from me. Do not turn Your servant away in anger! You have been my help. Do not leave me nor forsake me, O God of my salvation. When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD will take care of me. Teach me Your way, O LORD, and lead me in a smooth path, because of my enemies. Do not deliver me to the will of my adversaries, for false witnesses have risen against me, and such as breathe out violence. I would have lost heart, unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living. Wait on the LORD. Be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart. Wait, I say, on the LORD!”*

Background Notes for Psalm 27

In Psalm 27, David expressed his confidence in the Lord in the midst of his adversaries.

Question: Does a Christian ever need to pray, *“Do not leave me nor forsake me, O God of my salvation”* (v9)? The answer is NO. Remember, David was lived and was praying this in **Old Testament times**. Today, the Holy Spirit dwells in all true Christians, so we don't have to ask the Lord not to abandon us. He never will! We must always read the psalms (and the rest of the Old Testament) in light of the New Testament.

Doctrinal Point for Psalm 27

The lives of believers should be characterized by confidence.

Throughout this psalm, we see David's courageous confidence in the Lord, even when he faced adversaries or false witnesses or violent opposition, or when he experienced needs. We, too, face adversaries, and we have needs, so let's see the factors that went into making up David's courageous confidence.

1. *David was looking to the Lord and not to himself* (v1-3).

“The Lord is my light and my salvation. Whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid? Though war may rise against me, in this I will be confident.” No wonder David was confident! What about us? Do we

look to the Lord for light in the darkness of danger or anxiety? Do we look to the Lord for defense in times of trial, or when we're persecuted by evildoers and adversaries?

2. *David desired to worship and fellowship with the Lord in the Lord's house (v4-6; 8).*

"One thing I have desired of the LORD, that will I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in His temple..." "When You said, "Seek My face," My heart said to You, "Your face, LORD, I will seek." We too will gain courageous confidence if we desire to worship the Lord, and if we make time to spend in communion with the Lord. The question is, do we?

3. *David had placed his sure hope in the sovereign plan of God for his life. (v13-14).*

"I would have lost heart, unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living... Wait, I say, on the LORD!" David knew that in spite of the problems, trials, disappointments, and opposition going on his life, God was in sovereign control. He was confident that somehow he would come to know and experience the goodness of God through it all. And we can have this confidence too!

But notice - David was willing to wait patiently and confidently on the Lord to see the results (v14). We must be willing to wait on the Lord as well. The more we see the Lord's hand at work in our lives when we wait on Him (even for long periods of time), the more confidence we gain.

For more than thirty years we've waited on the Lord, and we have seen Him meet all the needs of Growing Christians Ministries. We now have great confidence that He can, and will, meet all the ongoing needs of the ministry. The lives of believers should be characterized by confidence.

Practical Application for Psalm 27

What "one thing" would we ask of the Lord?

"One thing I have desired of the LORD, and that will I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in His temple."

If you have one thing to ask of the Lord, would you have made the same choice that David made? Or would you have asked for success, or money, or long life, or constant happiness? David wanted to know and experience the presence of the Lord more and more! He wanted close fellowship with the Lord more than anything else in his life.

What about you? What about me? What "one thing" would we ask of the Lord?