

OUR INTEGRITY IN CHRIST (PSALM 25)

Last Sunday, we looked at **Psalm 9**, "A Prayer and Thanksgiving for the Lord's Righteous Judgments". One cannot/will not though, be thankful for God's righteous judgments, if they don't know & trust Him or His Word, or if one chooses to be disobedient to His Word. Not only must we put our trust in Him for His righteous judgment with ourselves, of which we will only be declared righteous in Christ, but we have to trust that God will judge others according to His righteousness and justice, and that He is perfect in all of His Ways (**2 Samuel 22:31**) and His Works (**Deut. 32:4**). For starters & most importantly, we must first believe on Jesus as being the Christ, the Messiah, the Anointed One of God, of whom died on a cross for our sins, taking our sins upon Himself to the grave. He then rose from the dead on the third day, thereby He completely, definitively conquered death, sin and evil, as He is far superior to all of that. Then too, WE also will overcome death, sin and evil and have eternal life in and through Him, that is, of course, to all those who will believe on Him AND receive Him, receiving the Spirit of Christ, the Holy Spirit into our hearts of which we are then children of God! **John 1:12-13**, "as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." That is, as Jesus said, all must be "born again" (**John 3:3**), born of the Spirit of Christ, the Holy Spirit to become a new creation in Christ. Then, as the Apostle Paul asks somewhat rhetorically, "Do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and **you are not your own**? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's." (**1 Corinthians 6:19-20**) The Apostle Paul's point of emphasis was on our responsibility in honoring God as His children, loving Him as He has first loved us, but another thing that he points out is that God looks at us as HIS and then our integrity (unwavering moral and ethical soundness-being solid, like a rock) is in Him!

How much do we really realize how incredibly special we are to God as being His! Jesus said, in **John 3:16-17**, "For God SO loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." (**John 3:16-17**) Is our reciprocating response to the love of God, loving Him with all of our heart, soul, strength and mind, as Jesus said that was the Great Commandment of God, and then also loving others as ourselves-**Mark 12:30-31**? The Apostle Peter, I think, really makes it understandable, of God's view of us and then our intended response, "Coming to Him [Christ Jesus] as to a living stone [the Rock], rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, **you also**, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a **holy priesthood**, to offer up **spiritual sacrifices** acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. Therefore it is also contained in the

Scripture, "Behold, I lay in Zion a Chief Cornerstone, elect, precious, and he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame." Therefore, to you who believe, HE IS precious [THAT IS and should be our testimony!]; but to those who are disobedient, "The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone," and "a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense." They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed. [as Jesus said, "For many are called, but few are chosen." (Matthew 22:14)] **BUT YOU** are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, **His own special people**, that you may **proclaim the praises of Him** who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy. (1 Peter 2:4-10) To those who are in Christ we can rejoice and say, what we read last week in **Psalm 9:1-2**, "I will praise You, O Lord, with my whole heart; I will tell of all Your marvelous works. I will be glad and rejoice in You; I will sing praise to Your name, O Most High." (spiritual sacrifices)

With every analogy at some point, if you take it too far beyond its intended meaning, the analogy breaks down to not make sense anymore. With regards to our integrity in Christ, to be solid as a rock, morally and ethically, that kind of makes sense as we are then fitted together with Christ as He is the Chief Cornerstone. Yet we are not merely placed alongside of Christ, we are to remain IN HIM, as He is in us. Jesus, said, "'The stone which the builders rejected has become the Chief Cornerstone'? Whoever falls on that stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder." (Luke 20:17-18) So then, before Christ, we are stones, so to speak, that can be broken or crushed. As Jesus puts our pieces back together, we are then fitted together in Him? Unmovable! What is missing in that analogy is what we get from Jesus' analogy of Him being the Vine and us being the branches in **John 15**, of which Christ Jesus is working in us His Goodness and Righteousness so that we may have integrity in Christ, to the glory of God!

The Apostle Paul gives us another analogy saying, "Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. [We are in a spiritual battle] Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand." (Ephesians 6:11-13) That armor of God is ALL in Christ. Paul says in **Romans 13:14**, "But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts." The armor of God: Truth (**John 14:6**), righteousness (**1 Cor. 1:30**), the gospel of PEACE: He is our good news and He is the Prince of peace (**Isaiah 9:6**), faith (**Romans 12:3**), salvation (**1 Cor. 1:30**), and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God (**John 1:1**). Then Paul

continues by saying, "praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints". (**Ephesians 6:18**) Our watchfulness is primarily, "looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." (**Hebrews 12:2**) Our response to the love of God is then our sharing and showing the love and the gospel of Christ Jesus, from our union and communion with Christ. Now for **Psalms 25**. It is a humble, reverent prayer to God, by David. May we have a heart and mind also to receive this prayer and have it be our prayer to God as well:

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Psalms 25:1-3 To You, O Lord, I lift up my soul. O, my God I trust in You; let me not be ashamed; let not my enemies triumph over me. Indeed, let no one who waits on You be ashamed; Let those be ashamed who deal treacherously without cause.

[As we believe on Christ Jesus and put our trust in Him, **Proverbs 3:5-6** then says, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths." And in that, we wait on the Lord to take care of things before us, in how He chooses and in His time. Meanwhile, in our communion, fellowship with Him in prayer and in His Word, we are "being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God" (**Philippians 1:11**), so as to bear the "fruit of the Spirit [which] is love, joy, peace, longsuffering [patience], kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law." (**Galatians 5:22-23**) And as we are reminded in the love chapter **1 Corinthians 13**, without love our works are in vain. Anybody can be religious, mean-spirited, and judgmental. "Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things." (**1 Corinthians 13:4-7**) I think I can safely say that none of us have been perfected in the love of God, yet that is where He is leading us and what He is working in us. It is when we step outside of that, choosing not to be His living stone of integrity and love, we can then be causing harm to the body of Christ and the testimony of Christ. "For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: Who committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth; who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously; who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed. For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls." (**1 Peter 2:21-25**) We can

also be reminded by **Romans 12:19**, "Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, "**Vengeance is Mine, I will repay**," says the Lord." That is a promise by God!]

Psalms 25:4-9 Show me Your ways, O Lord; teach me Your paths. Lead me in Your truth and teach me, for You are the God of my salvation; on You **I wait all the day**. Remember, O Lord, Your tender mercies and Your lovingkindnesses, for they are from of old. Do not remember the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions; according to Your mercy remember me, for Your goodness' sake, O Lord. Good and upright is the Lord; therefore He teaches sinners in the way. The humble He guides in justice, and the humble He teaches His way.

[Right Way (**Psalms 107**). **James 4:10**, "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up." **1 Peter 5:6-7**, "Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you."]

Psalms 25:10-11 All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth, to such as keep His covenant and His testimonies. For Your name's sake, O Lord, pardon my iniquity, for it is great.

[To those who are sharing and showing the love and the gospel of Christ Jesus, bearing the fruit of the Spirit, we are guaranteed to receive mercy and truth! We are in the New Covenant in Christ Jesus. We are no longer under the law of death but of the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. "There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but **according to the Spirit**. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death." (**Romans 8:1-2**) Yes, "for all have sinned [against God] and fall short of the glory of God [that's the bad/sad news; the good news:], being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." Thank You Lord! The Apostle John reminds us, "My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world. (**1 John 2:1-2**) "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (**1 John 1:9**)]

Psalms 25:12-14 Who is the man that fears the Lord? Him shall He teach in the way He chooses. He himself shall dwell in prosperity, and his descendants shall inherit the earth. [And as Jesus said, "**Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth**." (**Matthew 5:5**)] The secret of the Lord is with those who fear Him, and He will show them His covenant.

[Once again, as review, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of

wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.”
(**Proverbs 9:10**) “The fear of the Lord is to hate evil; pride and arrogance and the evil way and the perverse mouth I hate.” (**Proverbs 8:13**) Then, where He is leading us, working in us, perfecting in us, the Apostle John says this, “Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, **so are we in this world**. [remember, “God is love” (**1 John 4:7-8**) There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. We love Him because He first loved us.” (**1 John 4:17-19**) Without the LOVE OF GOD, our faith, our testimony, and our works are nothing. It is God’s love that is being expressed to the world at present and we are His ambassadors, His representatives of that love and testimony to the grace and mercies of God. “As He is, so are we in this world.” That is the blessing of an active relationship w/Him!

Psalms 25:15-19 My eyes are ever toward the Lord, for He shall pluck my feet out of the net. Turn Yourself to me, and have mercy on me, for I am desolate and afflicted. The troubles of my heart have enlarged; bring me out of my distresses! Look on my affliction and my pain, and forgive all my sins. Consider my enemies, for they are many; and they hate me with cruel hatred.

[According to the New Covenant that is in Christ Jesus, and in our relationship with Christ, He tells us, “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, **love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.**” (**Matt.5:43-45**) Love, bless, do good, & pray!

Psalms 25:20-22 Keep my soul, and deliver me; let me not be ashamed, for I put my trust in You. Let integrity and uprightness preserve me, for I wait for You. Redeem Israel [all of Your people], O God, out of all their troubles!

[We are then putting our trust in Him, Christ Jesus, our Savior and Lord, to keep us in His integrity. That is the Hebrew word “tom” or “tamam” (tah-mawm)¹, and it refers to completeness. That completeness is found in our Prince of Peace (shalom, Hebrew; eirene, Greek = completeness or wholeness). That is where we are told, by the Apostle Paul, “Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice! Let your gentleness [fruit of the Spirit] be known to all men. The Lord is at hand. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” (**Phil. 4:4-7**)]

1 <https://biblehub.com/hebrew/8552.htm>