

PSALMS

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to Psalm 10 as we continue our study through the Word of God. Some feel that Psalm 10 is just an extension of Psalm 9, but I see this Psalm standing on its own. It is a Psalm that speaks of the destruction, the devastation that the wicked perpetrate upon others. And it also speaks of the judgment that will come upon the ungodly. Luther expressed it like this, “There is not, in my judgment, a Psalm which describes the mind, the manners, the works, the words, the feelings, and the fate of the ungodly with so much propriety, fullness, and light, as this Psalm.” (Martian Luther, cited in Spurgeon).

So with that said, let’s begin reading in Psalm 10 starting in verse 1 and let’s see what the Lord has for us as we study through His Word this evening.

PSALM 10

VERSES 1-4

1. David enjoyed many victories that the Lord had given him and yet, now when things are not going well he comes to the conclusion that God is far away, He is not paying attention to what is going on. How can David do that? Before we are too hard on David, we need to keep in mind that we have all felt this way before, that God is distant, that He doesn’t seem to answer our prayers in times of trouble. And that is the problem for us, when we are in tough times we lose the perspective of God and what He has told us, that He will never leave us or forsake us!

You see, you must walk by faith, falling back on what you know of God, His character, His love for you. He is there right beside you even in times of trials. And God allows us to go through these times to test our faith, to help us to grow in Him; to help us to see what is in ourselves, what is truly in our heart that we need to give to Him! It is not that God is distant, or He doesn't care or love us, it is truly because He loves us and cares about us that He allows us to go through these times!

2. Also, did you notice the two things that characterize the wicked? They are prideful and boasters. Many times, if you want to see who the wicked are, just listen to what they are saying, how they are boasting, the pride they have. That will give you a good idea of where they stand with the Lord! With the Presidential elections coming up in several months, listen to what these politicians are saying, how **THEY** are going to save this country, how **THEY** are going to save this world! Did you notice who is missing? It is the **LORD!** In other words, it is pride and boasting on their part!

3. Notice also that the wicked take advantage of the poor. In our society this is a growing industry you might say, taking advantage of others and many times they do this with greed. They feed into the greed of others to take advantage of them and God is aware. They may be able to sleep in peace at night but they will have to stand before a holy and righteous God one day and they will not get away with anything! It is as Spurgeon wrote, "There are none who will dispute the justice of God, when he shall hang every Haman on his own gallows, and cast all the enemies of his Daniels into their own den of lions."

4. Think about his phrase, “**God is in none of his thoughts**” and what do you think that leads to? It leads to pride and boasting. “I can do what I want and no one is going to stop me” mentality! Now this phrase can also be translated, “all his thoughts are there is no God.” (See also Psalm 14:1). You see, it is not that the wicked don’t think about God, they just don’t believe that He is real, that the God of the Bible exists and thus, it leads to their wicked behavior. You see, man is continually trying to convince himself that there is no God, and as they continue down this path their hearts are growing cold to what God has placed in there, that there is a God and mans desire to find Him.

VERSES 5-7

1. Now as you read that doesn’t that sound like man today? He is in control of his life and no one is going to tell him otherwise! The height of arrogance! And you can play this out to the ultimate man, the Antichrist and he will boast and it will be his pride that brings him down!

2. Now I want to make one more point here and this is from Isaiah 9:8-10, where we are told, “**The Lord sent a word against Jacob, And it has fallen on Israel. All the people will know - Ephraim and the inhabitant of Samaria - Who say in pride and arrogance of heart: ‘The bricks have fallen down, But we will rebuild with hewn stones; The sycamores are cut down, But we will replace them with cedars.’**”

During this period of time God was bringing judgment down upon the Northern Kingdom of Israel and He was warning them to turn from their wicked ways. The problem for the Northern Kingdom of Israel is that their pride and boasting lead to their destruction by the hands of the Assyrians. God brought warnings and they said, “**The bricks have fallen down, But we will rebuild with hewn stones; The sycamores are cut down, But we will replace them with cedars.**” And notice that this was done “**in pride and arrogance of heart.**” It sounds like this Psalm doesn’t it!

And so instead of listening to the alarm, instead of listening to the warnings of the Lord and turning back to Him, instead of humbling themselves in repentance, they boasted of their resolve, that they would rebuild stronger and better than before. They ignored the warning and rejected the call to return. They defied it. Sadly, their defiance led to the nation’s total destruction years later.

What does that have to do with us? Look at our nation and you will see a parallel. I am not saying we are Israel, but there is a very interesting parallel here. Remember the tragedy of 9/11 as the terrorists attacked our nation and many were killed in these attacks, as they took down the Twin Towers in New York. It is out of this incident we see where our nation stands. Let me explain.

Now I want to look at just one of the points here in these words from Isaiah. First of all he tells us that “**the bricks have fallen down, But we will rebuild with hewn stones.**” Yes, the Twin Towers were not made with bricks, but the devastation is the same, these buildings came crumbling down. What I want to focus on is the arrogance of the Northern Kingdom of Israel, that they will rebuild, they will not repent but rebuild.

Post 9/11 these were the words that were spoken, “We will rebuild . . .” That was the Mayor of New York City, Rudi Giuliani. Charles Schumer, the state’s senator said, “We will rebuild . . .” Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton said, “We will rebuild . . .” And even President George W. Bush said, “We will rebuild New York City.” Now you may not think too much of this but here is the thing. If God was giving to us a wake up call, which I believe He was and is, then our response is “In your face, we will rebuild!”

Not only do we hear those words to rebuild but the public utterance of these words in Isaiah, believe it or not, has been spoken by our leaders. It happened on September 11, 2004 VP candidate John Edwards gave a speech in the capital city, quoted this exact scripture word for word in Washington D. C. Without realizing it, he was joining the two nations together and, without realizing it, pronouncing judgment on America. The ancient and the modern were bound together!

Also, on September 12, 2001, the day after 9/11, America issues its official response to the attack. The one in charge of issuing the response was Tom Daschle, Senate Majority Leader. As he closes his speech he makes a declaration, and what do you think he said? Yes, he quoted these words of defiance and judgment out of Isaiah and he did so word for word! Is what happened to the Northern Kingdom of Israel going to happen to us? I don’t know but I would not be so proud or boast what we are going to do. God is gracious and He is merciful but there does come a time of judgment and I pray that America is listening!

VERSES 8-11

1. Notice how the Psalmist sees the wicked, they are the oppressors. They are like lurking beasts ready to strike out at their prey! That is a pretty good description of the wicked, they do prey on the helpless, they prey on the innocent, just as wild animals do.

Now in saying that there are a group of people that are helpless and they are put to death every day in this country and very few really care. In fact, many flaunt the murder of these children. I am sure you have figured out what I am talking about, **ABORTION** or really **THE MURDER OF INNOCENT CHILDREN!** Make no mistake about this issue, it is not a pro-choice issue, it is a pro-death issue, that is what they are standing up for and flaunting. Think about it, you can murder a child in the womb and the government will pay for it. Now think about this for a minute. If you were to hit a pregnant woman and you not only killed her but also her unborn child, that is a double homicide. How can that be? Well, they can't tell us that a child was killed in the womb, so they tell us that the tissue inside this woman had the potential for life and this person took that away. That is garbage, it was not potential life, it is life!

Man today may not hear the cries of those unborn children, but God does and He will hold the people and the nation accountable! As of March 26, 2012 at 9:08 am, there have been 54,854,606 abortions in this country since 1973! As of this date and time there have been 294,933 abortions done so far this year! And if that makes you angry, think about this. World wide, from 1980 to this date and time, there were 1,249,449,064 abortions or the murder of the innocent!

Now compare the number in this country, the 54,854,606 to all those killed from the Revolutionary War through the Vietnam War and all the way to 2006, and I think you will be shocked when you hear the total! That has amounted to 1,346,000. And look at all the war protests that have occurred over the years and yet, for the unborn, murdered in the womb, their cries go silent! What a sad nation we have become. In just a little over 60 seconds, 3 babies have been murdered in the womb! We have a 9/11 every day!

2. How can the wicked do this? First of all they don't believe in God and since they don't believe in God they don't believe in the judgment of God! You see, God is gracious and He is merciful and many wrongfully mistake the long-suffering of God with God can't do anything about it, or He doesn't care, or He is not real, or even worse, He approves of their evil. What a twisted way to think. In doing that you can rationalize anything in your own eyes but to God it is still sin. They want to believe that there will be no final judgment, so they feel free to do as they please. But the truth is that God will establish justice as we will see as we move on in this Psalm. They will not get away with their wickedness no matter if they believe in God or not!

VERSES 12-13

1. David is crying out to God to rise up and destroy the wicked. Don't let them continue in their wicked activity; don't let them come against the helpless anymore. I think we all long for the day when righteousness will fill this land but until that day, we are to shine forth the light of Christ, we are to be that preserving force in this decaying nation and world!

2. Notice again the reason they continue down this evil path. They don't believe there will be a judgment. They don't believe they will have to stand before God. How wrong they are. Think about this for a minute. You can go to school and the teacher can tell you that there will be a final exam on Monday and this will determine if you pass or fail. Now you can believe what the teacher is telling you or you can reject it, the choice is yours. But also understand that there will be a judgment out of all this and if you can't stand, you will fail! It doesn't matter if you believe it or not! Horne put it like this, "The long-suffering of God, instead of leading such a one to repentance, only hardens him in his iniquity. Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, he thinks it will not be executed at all." What a wake up call!

VERSES 14-15

1. Here is this wonderful truth about God, something that the Psalmist realizes. God does know, God does see, God will act upon the wicked. He sees everything that is going on, nothing gets by Him and He cares about the helpless and we are all helpless apart from Him and thus, we need to look to the Lord to be the strength of our lives!

VERSES 16-18

1. First of all we need to understand that God will deal with the wicked. They won't get away with anything. And God does stand up for the fatherless, the widowed, the orphaned and don't mess with them because God is the defender of the underdog. I also see this pointing to the man of sin, the Antichrist who will be destroyed!

2. Now something I want you to be aware of in these Psalms. Often the Psalmist starts out in despair but he ends with hope. David opened up with, “Lord, where are you?” “Lord, I don’t see you?” “Lord, why are the wicked prospering?” And notice how the Psalm ends, the wicked have perished and the Lord is on the throne. Did the situation change? No, but David’s perspective did. He was refocused on the Lord! It is as Morgan wrote, “Under the rule of God, the day must come when, ‘That man who is of the earth may be terrible no more.’ These were the concluding words of the song, and they constitute a fitting answer to its opening inquiry.”

PSALM 11

Some feel that David wrote this Psalm on the run from King Saul, but most likely it was when he was fleeing from his son Absalom, who usurped the throne from him. Fear causes us to take our eyes off the Lord and flee, that was the advice he will receive. And David is learning not to trust in the words of man but in the words of God!

VERSES 1-3

1. How important it is to have the proper focus, putting your trust in the Lord who is in control. It is out of that you can rest. Now, in contrast to those that do not trust the Lord but upon the situation that is before them, they flee the situation. They run away from their problems. And think about this, in doing that does this change anything at all? No, the problems are still there and many times they are multiplied because of your actions, your running away! You see, the best thing to do, the only thing we should do is to trust in the Lord, to rest in Him, for that is where true peace is found in the midst of the storm you are facing!

2. Now verse 3 is interesting and I think this is born out of those that don't trust in the Lord as they say, **"If the foundations are destroyed, What can the righteous do?"** In other words, "Everything is falling apart. Run away, flee away, there is nothing left to do!" That is not the heart of someone who trusts in the Lord but has allowed fear to cause them to flee! For those focused on the situation, it does seem hopeless.

3. What I want you to also see is there is a contrast in the next few verses. It is not hopelessness because of the situation. The foundations of God can never be destroyed! Then what can we hope in? Well, I am sure I don't have to tell you but let's see what David says, he answers this question for us!

VERSES 4-7

1. Here is what you need to do - look up! God is in control. He sees right into the heart of man. And let me say this. I believe that this foundation that David spoke of, this foundation that was broken speaks of the Word of God. Remember that Paul said in Ephesians 2:20, “**having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone.**” You see, they laid down the Word of God for us, that foundation has been set and now this building is being built by the evangelists, the pastor/teachers and the teachers!

Thus, if a person moves away from the truths of God found in the Word of God, the foundation of their faith is being destroyed. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. Thus, if this is removed it is hard to have faith in something you don't know or believe in. And the key for me is that Jesus Christ is the Chief cornerstone! It all rests upon Him!

And so as we understand this, as we have this correct perspective, nothing will move us off the course that God has for us. It is like this, the Lord is on the throne, He is watching over us, He is testing us, He knows what we are going through and He allows all this for a purpose, to help us to grow in the faith!

2. Now for the wicked, that is a different story. They will face the judgment of God upon their lives. And thus, we want to share the Gospel message, the Good News with the wicked so that they may become the righteous in Christ Jesus! And please understand that the only reason we are righteous is because the righteousness of Christ has been imputed into our lives by faith. He exchanged our sinfulness for His righteousness! (See II Corinthians 5:21). So in knowing all this, there really is no need to fear, just look up and rest in Him!

PSALM 12

This Psalm was written by David and some feel that this deals with David's time when he was on the run from King Saul. It is a cry unto God to deliver him from the midst of a lying and arrogant people. Again, that is a possibility when it was written but we are not sure. The key here in this Psalm is we see David bemoan the vicious words of his adversaries, and in contrast praises the pure and precious Word of God. That is something we need to be careful with. Not to get caught up with the wicked activities of others, but to focus on the precious and true Words of God that will build us up and not bring us down!

VERSES 1-2

1. This is the time we often cry out to the Lord, when we are all alone or we feel we are. That is what we see here with David, he sees himself alone, none are by his side who love the Lord! And that was wrong, David was not alone. He let life's situations overwhelm him and it caused him to get a distorted picture of the situation.

Remember Elijah, he kills 450 prophets of Baal and the 400 prophets of Asherah on Mount Carmel and then one woman, Jezebel is after him and he flees for his life. And as he was in this cave of self pity, hiding from the world, he came to this conclusion, ". . . **I alone am left; and they seek to take my life.**" I Kings 19:10.

And God has to get him re-focused and tells Elijah that he is not alone and that God has 7,000 who have not bowed their knee to Baal. And God told Elijah to get out of the cave of self pity, where he is doing nothing but feeling sorry for himself and get back to doing the work that He had called him to do. And I think that is what God is saying to us. Don't live in that cave, for in that cave you are of no use!

2. Now look at the wicked and how they talk. They speak "**idly**" or "**lies**" empty words! They also speak with "**flattering lips**" or they are trying to butter someone up to get what they want! And they speak with a "**double heart**" or they are two faced. They will say one thing in front of you and then something else when they are away from you. Or they think one thing and say something else! As Christians, that should not be found coming from our lips. We should not lie or flatter or be two faced when we speak. We need to speak the truth, we need to be honest and not use our words to get something from someone, being deceitful!

VERSE 3-4

1. Again we see the arrogance of the wicked. "I can say what I please and you are not going to tell me otherwise!" That is true, you can say whatever you want but also understand that you are accountable for what you say and the Lord will judge you! In fact, Solomon tells us in Proverbs chapter 6 that a lying tongue is an abomination to the Lord, and yet the wicked are feeling that they can do anything, achieve whatever they want by using flattering words. There are a lot of smooth talkers out there that can sell you the shirt off your own back, but they will not be able to talk their way out of Hell!

VERSE 5

1. Who huffs and puffs and wants to blow our house down? It is the big bad wolf and the reality of that is this. This big bad wolf is none other than Satan who wants to destroy our lives and he will try to take advantage of the weak, the needy. But make no mistake about it, God will hear their cry and He will deal with the wicked as well as Satan! We can be sure of that!

VERSES 6-7

1. See this in contrast to the words of the wicked. David says that God's Word is pure and shall be preserved forever. They are perfect, seven being the number of perfection. Now if you have something that is pure, if you add anything to it, will it be any purer? Of course not! And if that is the case, then the church should not be adding anything to the Word of God or taking away from it because it is pure – don't pollute it! One of the battle cries of the Reformation was *SOLA SCRIPTURA* or Scriptura alone! May we take up that cry!

It is as Spurgeon wrote, "The Bible has passed through the furnace of persecution, literary criticism, philosophic doubt, and scientific discovery, and has lost nothing but those human interpretations which clung to it as alloy to precious ore. The experience of saints has tried it in every conceivable manner, but not a single doctrine or promise has been consumed in the most excessive heat."

2. But make not mistake about it, there are those who continue to attack the truths of God found in the Word of God. They try to discredit it and put it down, but it has stayed the test of time. You see, the attacks have come and continue to come against the Word of God and yet the Bible remains strong. This is from Time Magazine, "After more than two centuries of facing the heaviest guns that could be brought to bear, the Bible has survived – and is perhaps the better for the siege. Even on the critics' own terms – historical fact – the Scriptures seem more acceptable now than when the rationalists began the attack."

(Time Magazine, cited in Boice)

3. The battle rages on, the attacks will continue and intensify, this time coming from within the church itself, but we need to stand strong. If there is no foundation for us then the whole structure will crumble. And make no mistake about it, God's Word will stand and man will go back to the dust of the earth! Jesus made that point when He said, **“For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. . . . Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.”** Matthew 5:18, 24:35.

It is time to take a stand and fight for what we believe in and not compromise with those that try to discredit or change the Word of God. Listen to what Spurgeon wrote in his day and how it truly applies to us today. He wrote, “Give up no line of God's revelation. . . . Brethren, we cannot endure this shifty theology. May God send us a race of men who have backbones! Men who believe something, and would die for what they believe. This Book deserves the sacrifice of our all for the maintenance of every line of it.” Absolutely!

VERSE 8

1. There are a few points we can make here. First of all we tend to exalt wickedness today and as we do, wickedness runs rampant! Look at the tragic death of the famous singer Whitney Houston and how she is now held up as some kind of a role model for singers. She is looked upon as someone who is so great. Yes she had a great voice, but is that what makes a person great? Oprah Winfrey said that her voice was “the voice of God.” And guess what, she had all kinds of drugs in her body and she drowned in her bathtub. And yet they try to say she had this heart condition that killed her. No, it was the cocaine that killed her! She had so many drugs in her system that she passed out and drowned!

Secondly, even as the precious Word of God is spoken and it is available to men, many still prefer wickedness. Now that can be depressing but I don't think this Psalm ends that way. David knew that the wicked would be judged, they would not continue on forever and he could rest in that even though, for a season, the wicked flaunt their wickedness!

Many of you have heard of the French atheist and philosopher, Voltaire. He boldly proclaimed that “In twenty years, Christianity will be no more. My single hand shall destroy the edifice it took twelve apostles to rear.” Twenty years later, the house in which he penned those words was purchased by the Geneva Bible Society and was used to publish and distribute the Word of God. Voltaire was exalted for a season, but he faded away. Not so the Word of the Lord. It remains this day and will remain throughout eternity. Never forget that!

PSALM 13

In this Psalm we see David crying out to God to hear and answer his prayer, but God seems to be silent in this trial that he is going through. And again, notice the transition in this Psalm. It starts off in discouragement and despair and David finishes the Psalm in a place of trust and joy and encouragement that is only found in the Lord!

VERSES 1-2

1. When you read this you can easily see that David is in despair. It is one of those deep breath moments where you just sigh! And let's face it; we all have had times in our Christian walk where God was silent as we cried out to Him. And as we go through those times we may develop some misconceptions regarding God. We may see Him as being unfair, that He doesn't care, that He doesn't answer prayer. That is wrong, and David will find this out. And the key is this. When you go through times like this, fall back on what you know of God, that He loves you and will not forsake you.

2. Notice that we see David cry out three times “**How long . . .**” as he is speaking to God, crying out to God. I think Spurgeon sees the importance of what David was going through as he wrote, “Whenever you look into David’s Psalms, you may somewhere or another see yourselves. You never get into a corner but you find David in that corner. I think that I was never so low that I could not find that David was lower; and I never climbed so high that I could not find that David was up above me, ready to sing his song upon his stringed instrument, even as I could sing mine.” I think that is why the Psalms minister so much to us, because we go through these times just as the Psalmist did!

VERSES 3-4

1. David is scared, he is afraid that if he goes to sleep his enemies will kill him. So he is crying out to the Lord to not let the enemies boast in their victory against him, but let him sleep and get some badly needed rest. He is looking for some encouragement in this situation. And where do you think he will find it? The answer may surprise you, but it really shouldn’t! Let’s read on and see.

VERSES 5-6

1. Did God answer David? No, God is still silent! So what does David do? He falls back on what he knows of God, how God has answered his prayers in the past and how God has delivered him in the past from his enemies, and is using that to give him strength and encouragement in the present. We too must have the proper perspective as we go through these silent times; we must focus back on Him and His faithfulness to give us the strength in the present situation we face. And please keep this in mind, God does speak to us through His Word, we are not listening all the time and that is the problem!

2. One more point here and that is what David says in verse 6, “**I will sing unto the LORD . . .**” I realize that there are some that don’t enjoy worship music, but I think God has given us this kind of music so we can get focused back on Him and off the situations we are facing. I remember long ago, before I was saved, before I was married. Julie and I had a fight and it was a good one. And I was so mad I sat in my room all alone and I put on some of my music that I was listening to back then and you know what it did for me? Absolutely nothing! In fact it kept me in the depressed mood that I was in. But let me say this. When you are going through a tough time as a Christian, maybe you are downcast, turn on some worship music and worship the Lord and it will change your countenance, you will be singing with joy in your heart because you are focused on the only One that can help, the **LORD!**

PSALM 14

In this Psalm David is looking at the characteristics of the ungodly, and calling for the kingdom of God to be established. Morgan sums it up like this, “The thought of the whole psalm is that the safety of godliness, and the peril of ungodliness.”

VERSES 1-3

1. Why does God call this person a fool? Because he is rejecting what he knows to be true. You see, in the original text this phrase, “there is” was not there, it is in italics. And thus, this verse should read, “**The fool has said in his heart, ‘No, God.’**” They are saying “No” to God even though the evidence points to God, that He exists! And thus, this is not a matter of the intellect, but a matter of the heart. Nature itself cries out that there is a God, so it is not that they can’t believe in God, it is a matter of the will, they don’t want to believe in God! You see, he is not necessarily saying there is no God, but he is saying no to God. It is as Proverbs 1:7 says, “**The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, But fools despise wisdom and instruction.**”

And to say no to God is just irrational. Look at the evidence that is out there and see for yourself! Henry Bosch points out these facts regarding the design that God has in His creation and this is just a short sample. There is design in everything that God has created! He wrote,

The earth rotates on its axis at approximately 1000 miles per hour. If that had been 100 miles per hour, our days and nights would be ten times longer, and our planet would alternately burn and freeze. Under such circumstances vegetation could not live!

If the earth were as small as the moon, the power of gravity would be too weak to retain sufficient atmosphere for man's needs; but if it were as large as Jupiter, Saturn, or Uranus, extreme gravitation would make human movement almost impossible. If we were as near to the sun as Venus, the heat would be unbearable; if we were as far away as Mars, we would experience snow and ice every night, even in the warmest regions. If the oceans were half their present dimensions, we would receive only one-fourth the rainfall we do now. If they were one-eighth larger, our annual precipitation would increase fourfold, and this earth would become a vast, uninhabitable swamp.

Water solidifies at 32 degrees above zero [Fahrenheit]. It would be disastrous if the oceans froze at that temperature, however, for then the amount of thawing in the polar regions would not balance out, and ice would accumulate throughout the centuries! To prevent such a catastrophe, the Lord put salt in the sea to alter its freezing point.

- Henry Bosch, Our Daily Bread

You see, it is not just random chance happenings that we are here. And that is why the Bible calls those that reject God, say “No!” to Him “Fools.” It is a choice for them to make and many have suppressed the truth and they end up worshiping the creature instead of the Creator who is blessed forever! That truly is a fool! The person who claims to be an atheist or an agnostic does so not because of intellectual struggle but because of rebellion - not wanting God to rule over him or her. So they come up with foolish theories to rid themselves of their accountability to God. But they are still accountable!

2. Now what is the result of a person who has self on the throne of his heart, instead of God? It is very simple, they are corrupt, their works are abominable, and they do what they feel is right, not what God has said. And as much as atheists come against Christianity, what do they use their money for? To destroy Christians! You listen to some of the professors, even here in town, and their goal is to destroy the faith of Christians! Do you see what they end up doing, they do not use their money, their talents you might say, to build up, but to tear down. For the most part they don't build hospitals, help the needy, but try to destroy the truth. Think about this for a minute. What would this world be like without Christians? Now many would like that but they are sadly mistaken because it would be a survival of the fittest atmosphere!

3. And as good as man thinks he is, God says they are not good. Yes, this may be very blunt but God is trying to get people's attention here. As God looks down upon man, apart from Christ being in their lives, they are not good. And it doesn't matter how good you think you are, apart from Christ, it is counted as nothing.

VERSES 4-7

1. As you see what is happening in the world today and how the world is coming against those who believe in Jesus and His Word, it can get discouraging. But remember this; as much as the wicked come against God's people, they won't win. Spurgeon puts it like this and he nails it in regards to what people may say to us but they can't take away our salvation. He wrote, "You young men in the great firms of London, you working men that work in the factories - you are sneered at. Let them sneer. If they can sneer you out of your religion, you have not got any worth having. Remember you can be laughed into hell, but you can never be laughed out of it."

2. And as David finishes up this Psalm he is looking forward to the time of the Tribulation Period, as God protects His people, the Jews, for 3½ years in the rock city of Petra from the Antichrist and his army. And truly salvation will come out of Zion as God brings back His people from captivity and sets up His kingdom here on earth, to rule and reign for 1,000 years. He will gather them from the four corners of the earth and bring them back to Jerusalem!

It is as Zephaniah 3:14-17 says, **“Sing, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O Israel! Be glad and rejoice with all your heart, O daughter of Jerusalem! The LORD has taken away your judgments, He has cast out your enemy. The King of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst; You shall see disaster no more. In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: ‘Do not fear; Zion, let not your hands be weak. The LORD your God in your midst, The Mighty One, will save; He will rejoice over you with gladness, He will quiet you with His love, He will rejoice over you with singing.’”**

Yes, the nations may deny the Lord today but one day He is coming back and He will free those who have been in bondage, captivity to their ways and He will establish His Kingdom on this earth!

PSALM 15

Many feel that this Psalm was written after David was trying to bring the Ark of God from Kirjath Jearim. If you remember, the Ark was captured by the Philistines when Israel brought it into battle. And after a series of judgments that came upon the Philistines, the Ark was sent to the land of Kirjath Jearim, to the house of Abinadab. David, having a heart of worship wants to bring the Ark of God back to Jerusalem and eventually that will take place. He first mishandled the Ark by not transporting it the way that God had said, but eventually it will be placed in the tent until the Temple was built by David’s son, Solomon.

VERSE 1

1. Some read this wrongly and try to make a works theology out of this. To come before God you have to do certain works, wrong! It is not “how” can I come before God, but “**who**” can come before God? That is a big question and that is what David is asking here. And David is speaking of Mount Zion, the place where the tabernacle was and eventually the Temple will be built. Who can dwell in the presence of God? Let’s read on and see what David has to say.

VERSES 2-3

1. You see, these are the characteristics, or the fruit that is born out of a person who is in Christ. James put it this way in James 2:17-18, “**Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. But someone will say, ‘You have faith, and I have works.’ Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.**” And I love the way that Calvin put it, he said, “Faith alone saves, but the kind of faith that saves is never really alone!”

Our salvation is based solely in Christ but that faith then is seen in what we do, what we say. It is manifested in our lives! And if it is not, then your faith is dead James tells us. Our faith is living and it is seen in our actions! But we can only come before the Father in Christ! There is no other way!

2. Now here's the thing. When we think of sin we usually gravitate to the ones we feel are really big. Murder, stealing and-so-on! And we miss the point. You see, what about backbiting? What about gossip? What about doing evil towards our neighbor? And not only those that do it, but those who receive it; it is all an abomination before God. May our life reflect Christ! May our words be His Words! And what we receive, may we listen with the ears of our Lord. That is what the Lord desires of us!

VERSES 4-5

1. God does not want us to hold up evil, and yet we see that being done today. We should hold up those who love the Lord, for as their character is caught by others, it will influence them for the better. And when we give someone our word that we will do a certain thing, we must honor that, even though it may not work out to our best interest.

We also are not to charge interest to our brothers, they are family. We are not to let money influence our actions. We are not to oppress those who don't have. This is what God has called us to do!

And the key to me is that if we do these things, we will not be moved. And understand this; David is not talking about salvation, but of fellowship. You see, to walk in fellowship with God, we must walk in fellowship with our brothers and sisters in the Lord. Listen to what Jesus said in Matthew 22:37-40, “**. . . ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.**”

Here we see Jesus quote out of Deuteronomy chapter 6, part of the Shema, which means “to hear.” The whole portion goes like this, **“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one! You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.”** Deuteronomy 6:4-9.

Here is the Law of God simplified for us. This is what God desires of us. He wants us to love Him with our complete being. Secondly, and linked together, we are to love each other. Now here in Matthew chapter 22 Jesus finishes up by saying, **“On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”** Matthew 22:40. What does that mean?

I believe that Jesus was pointing to the cross and I love this. You see, if our vertical axis with God is right, if we love God supremely, then our horizontal axis with man will be in line also. Do you see the picture that emerges from this? You have a vertical and horizontal axis and it forms a cross! In other words, all that God has said through the prophets and the Law hang on the finished work of Christ on the cross of Calvary! And that means apart from Him, apart from surrendering our lives to Him, we can never love God as He desires and we in no way will be able to love our fellow man as He desires. It points us back to the cross, to Jesus and the work He completed and apart from Him we can do nothing!

Let me close this evening with these words from John who said in I John 2:9-11,
“He who says he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness until now. He who loves his brother abides in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him. But he who hates his brother is in darkness and walks in darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.”

Here is the picture of the person who lives for God in time and for eternity. And really think about it, no one else would be comfortable in God’s presence! The fool who says “No” to God will not want to be with the one he has rejected. But for those who love the Lord, not perfect, but put their faith in Him, they will enter in!