

## Psalms 12-15

Since we are covering 4 Psalms this week we are just going to go ahead and jump right in here to chapter 12 and we are told this time that again it was written by David to the chief musician and it was on an eight stringed harp or what we might know as a lyre.

If you look with me at verse 1 it says this **12 Help, Lord, for the godly man ceases! For the faithful disappear from among the sons of men.** At this time in his life David is in a place that he feels very alone. Perhaps he was again surrounded by his enemies and every where he turned, he felt like evil was encompassing his life.

Have you ever felt like you were the only godly person that was around as you went through life? I think sometimes the enemy tries to isolate us and make us feel alone especially in the work place or perhaps when we are at certain family functions.

Elijah felt the same way at one point in his life when he said this in 1 Kings 19:10 which says **<sup>10</sup>So he said, "I have been very zealous for the Lord God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars, and killed Your prophets with the sword. I alone am left; and they seek to take my life."**

Being a believer in a largely unbelieving world can be a lonely road indeed. But I want to remind you today that you are not alone and by the way after Elijah said what he did the Lord let him know there were 7,000 others that had not bowed the knee to Baal...and that's why it is incredibly important that you not forsake the assembling of the believers. We need each other. You may go through life and find yourself without any other believers around you, but when you come

back to the fellowship of the church you find that you are surrounded by those who are like-minded.

I do think we should be reminded that the Word does say the following over in Matthew 7:13-14 which says <sup>13</sup>“**Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it.** <sup>14</sup>**Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.** I suppose we could say that being surrounded by the ungodly is par for the course and exactly what the Lord prepared us for.

Again there are times of refreshment and like-mindedness as we come together and we spend time with other believers but it can indeed be a lonely road and that's where David was as this Psalm began.

Look with me at verses 2-4 which say <sup>2</sup>**They speak idly everyone with his neighbor; With flattering lips and a double heart they speak.**

<sup>3</sup>**May the Lord cut off all flattering lips, And the tongue that speaks proud things,**

<sup>4</sup>**Who have said, “With our tongue we will prevail; Our lips are our own; Who is lord over us?”** Speaking of the ungodly or the wicked

David had observed that they being the ungodly spoke idle words to their neighbors...I want to point out to you what some other versions of the Bible say about verse 2 when it says they speak idle words.

Other translations say they speak falsehood, they speak vanity, they speak deceitful and worthless words to one another, they speak words without truth, they lie to one another and that's just a few different translations.

I think you get the idea that the words that come from the ungodly are really just empty words...and I know that's really how my life was before I came to Jesus. My mouth was full of cursing, I constantly lied, I spoke words that were worthless to those around me...At the end of the day my words and my life were lived for things that really just didn't matter.

Notice it says here as well that the ungodly will speak flattering words...In other words they will say things to people to get them to soften up, to let down their guard. Proverbs 29:5 says this about flattery when it says **A man who flatters his neighbor Spreads a net for his feet.**

David then makes a request of the Lord that He would cut off all flattering lips and those that speak proud things and he even gives an example of the things they said when he says that they with their tongue will prevail, that their lips are their own and who is lord over us.

We have here three statements the wicked were saying and all three of them were just wrong...The wicked may boast an awful lot and they may speak a lot of pompous words but in the end the Lord will judge every word. Listen to what Jesus said over in Matthew 12:36 when He said **<sup>36</sup>But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment.**

The wicked may think their lips are their own and they may think the Lord won't judge them but we know that every breath we breathe comes from God and every person on the planet will one day declare that Jesus is Lord...So many in this world think that no one will have authority over them, they refuse God, they deny God, they reject God and yet in the end they will acknowledge the Lord Jesus Christ. Just

because someone denies God exists does not mean that He will not hold them accountable.

Look with me at verse 5 of our text which says <sup>5</sup>“**For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, Now I will arise,”** says the Lord; “**I will set *him* in the safety for which he yearns.**” Notice the soft spot that God has for the poor and the needy...Here we can see the Lord will arise on their behalf and set them in safety.

God surely does have a way of rescuing those who find themselves in very difficult situations. The Lord can provide supernaturally if need be for His children...He takes note of those who cry out to Him when they are in places of oppression...I am reminded of our study this past Thursday in the book of Exodus and the people of Israel were crying out to God as the Egyptians were taking advantage of them and making things so difficult for them...and we were told at the end of chapter 2 that God heard them, that God remembered His promises, that God looked upon them and God acknowledged them.

How amazing that God certainly hears the cry of His people.

Look with me at verses 6-7 which say <sup>6</sup>**The words of the Lord are pure words, Like silver tried in a furnace of earth, Purified seven times.** <sup>7</sup>**You shall keep them, O Lord, You shall preserve them from this generation forever.** In the first 4 verses we saw how the words of the wicked were and now David gives us a contrast to how beautiful, pure and amazing the Words of God are. You know for thousands of years now the world has scrutinized the Word of God and do you know what has happened over time? The validity of the Bible and the purity of the Bible has only become more

and more evident. As history churns along there is more and more evidence for the truth of God's Word.

When you think about silver and how it is refined each time it is placed in the furnace the impurities rise to the top and each time it becomes more pure...God's Word has always been fully pure, fully inspired by Him and fully perfect but over time its purity only shines greater and greater.

And notice David says that the Lord would keep His Word and they will be preserved from generation to generation. I love that...We talked about this last week but God's Word is a solid foundation that we can build our lives upon. God always keeps His Word and He is always faithful to keep His promises. Man will always fall short and certainly those who are wicked are going to be full of bologna as they go through life, but when the Lord speaks it's a sure thing as His promises are always yes and amen. You and I can build our lives upon His Word and know that no matter what happens in this life that the foundation we are building on will never be broken.

And then to finish out this Psalm look at verse 8 which says **The wicked prowl on every side, When vileness is exalted among the sons of men.** Kind of a bleak ending for this Psalm as David simply acknowledges that the wicked prowl on every side when vileness is exalted. When evil prevails in this world and sometimes it does because we live in a fallen world the wickedness of a people group or country will quickly permeate.

Let's take a look at Psalm 13 which is again to the chief musician and written by David. Verses 1-2 say **13 How long, O Lord? Will You forget me forever?**

**How long will You hide Your face from me?**

**<sup>2</sup>How long shall I take counsel in my soul,**

**Having sorrow in my heart daily?**

**How long will my enemy be exalted over me?**

Well perhaps you have found yourself in a situation like David is when he wrote this. We see the Words HOW LONG 4 times in 2 verses. It would seem that at this point in David's life he felt as though God had forgotten him and that God was almost hiding from him.

Perhaps you have felt like that in your life as you sought to live for the Lord. Perhaps circumstances, situations and trials have come upon your life and you have said "HOW LONG O LORD!" Maybe you have encountered hard times in your life and you are crying out to God to resolve the issues and it would seem the Lord is no where to be found.

Notice David even says he took counsel in his soul...That gives the impression that he was trying to figure things out on his own and trying to work through the situation that was before him...Have you ever had those times in your life that you are crying out to God one minute and you are trying to find the solutions in your heart and mind the next? It's a hard place to be and sometimes it can seem like it's never really going to end.

David also asked How long will my enemy be exalted over me? It would seem that David sensed those who were against him kept getting one over on him, perhaps he was being taken advantage of, or he was just trying to do the right thing and there were those that constantly gave him trouble.

It's a hard thing as you and I go through life and we face so many different challenges and sometimes there will come problems in life that God as we cry out to Him will immediately respond and take care of things...On the other hand there are those times that situations seem to drag on and there seem to be no solutions and you find yourself crying out HOW LONG O LORD.

It's a hard thing to grapple with the fact that God is not on our timetable. That God sometimes allows tests and trials to refine us and cause us to lean into Him in an even greater way than we ever have before. I know I can see in my own life that the trials that last longer seem to teach me a lot more than the things that are over and done with quickly.

I want to remind us today that our heavenly Father is right there with us in the good times in life and the difficult times. He always hears us, He always desires to minister to us and He always has our best interests in mind.

I believe in times of great difficulty when perhaps you may feel like God isn't listening that the very best thing you can do is to remember that God keeps His promises and His Word is always true...**Your emotions may tell you God isn't there, your feelings may lie to you that God is absent** but His Word guarantees us that He will be with us even to the end of the age.

We are even encouraged over in Matthew 7:7-8 with the following which says <sup>7</sup>**“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. <sup>8</sup> For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be**

**opened.** The idea in these verses is we are to keep seeking, keep knocking and keep asking and it will be given to us.

**I know that life can be so hard at times** and some of you are facing difficulties that are incredibly difficult and make my difficulties seem small...I want to just encourage you that God is love, that He does care for you, and He will when the time is right bring to an end the trials that you face...It may not be right away, it may not even be in this world but one day all things will be made right once again.

I like what Peter said over in 1 Peter 5:10-11 which says the following **<sup>10</sup> But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you. <sup>11</sup> To Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.** I pray the Lord will meet you today by His Spirit filling you afresh if you find yourself like David saying “HOW LONG O LORD”

Look with me at verses 3-4 of Psalm 13 which say **<sup>3</sup> Consider and hear me, O Lord my God; Enlighten my eyes, Lest I sleep the sleep of death; <sup>4</sup> Lest my enemy say, “I have prevailed against him”; Lest those who trouble me rejoice when I am moved.**

So David is crying out to the Lord, and then he begins to ask the Lord to just consider and hear him...In verses 1-2 it said he was trying to counsel himself...but now he is seeking the Lord asking Him to intervene and enlighten his eyes...Isn't it interesting how the Lord can change our perspective as we seek Him out? I think that's what David

means when he says enlighten my eyes...It's as if David is saying "Lord help me to sense your presence, help me to have your perspective, help me to get my eyes off of the here and now and place them on eternity.

And then David simply requests that the enemy would not prevail against him and those that trouble him end up rejoicing should David be moved. You know there can come times in our lives when we can find ourselves feeling like the enemy is going to have victory over us whether it be a coworker or a family member or someone that just hates Christians.

The response we can have before the Lord can be "Lord don't let them trounce me" "Lord don't let them prevail" and that's how David was feeling as he went through this time in his life.

So David is reaching out to the Lord, He is putting his attention on God and then look at how things change for David in verses 5-6 which say this **5 But I have trusted in Your mercy; My heart shall rejoice in Your salvation.**

**6 I will sing to the Lord, Because He has dealt bountifully with me.** I have to just stop here and just rejoice because there are times that God as we seek Him just shows up and changes our whole attitude about a situation we are facing. We can go from the pits of despair to the joys of the mountains in our walk with Christ.

I want to encourage you today if you find yourself in the pits to stop and make some extra time to just be with Jesus. The Lord can cause His countenance to fall upon us, He can show us His glory and His goodness but so often our hearts are stuck on the here and the now. Perhaps today we should be reminded of the glorious eternity that we

have waiting for us one day as the Lord has gone to prepare a place for us. Perhaps we should be reminded that the Holy Spirit lives inside of all who believe in Jesus Christ, that the Lord is ever present in our lives. Perhaps we should be reminded that the Lord sees it all and He knows how to judge the wicked and take care of business on our behalf.

David says I have trusted in your mercy and my heart shall rejoice in your salvation...and David finds himself singing unto the Lord...Maybe today you need to just put on some worship music and just bring your heart before Jesus just laying everything out before Him.

It would seem from the context of these last few verses that indeed God has met David and ministered to him.

Chapter 14 of Psalms and this is really going to shock you but we are told here that this was to the chief musician and it was a Psalm of David...and I want to point out to you here that you might write down Psalm 53 as when we come to that it's almost identical to this Psalm that we have before us.

You might also make note that these words are quoted by the apostle Paul in Romans 3:10-11.

Let's go ahead here and read verse 1 which says the following  
**14 The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt, They have done abominable works, There is none who does good.**

I don't want to pick on anyone as we work through this but David makes it clear here that saying there is no God is a foolish thing for a person to think. To me it's not all that hard to look around and know

that there is a God who is intelligent and incredibly creative that created the universe and all that is in it.

The scientific community by and large denies that God created the heavens and the earth but the Bible declares that God created everything we see before us in just 7 small days. That's how amazing our God is that He could make all the trees and plants in one day and all the animals on a different day.

This might remind us of what we have over in Romans 1:20-23 which says the following <sup>20</sup> **For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, <sup>21</sup> because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. <sup>22</sup> Professing to be wise, they became fools, <sup>23</sup> and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things. So it is for those that reject God, they come to the place of the fool...common sense says that God does exist.**

Verses 2-3 continue to build on this when it says <sup>2</sup> **The Lord looks down from heaven upon the children of men, To see if there are any who understand, who seek God. <sup>3</sup> They have all turned aside, They have together become corrupt; There is none who does good, No, not one.**

You know this is the sad truth about humanity. Many in this world have the idea that man is basically good. Have you ever heard people say that? I know I have when you talk to someone on the streets and

you witness to them you ask them if they are good enough to get to heaven and most people are going to say they have lived a mostly moral life...But when you really dive into it with them they end up confessing they are liars, cheats, adulterers and so much more.

You might for homework just go and read Romans 1-3 and in those chapters we learn that man is just sinful through and through. We know from the scriptures that none is righteous no not one.

Man thinks they are good, man thinks they are doing the right thing, but God sees the truth and God's verdict is that all of humanity is laden with sin and destined for an eternity in hell.

And we ought not think that anyone is getting away with anything as they go through life. The Bill Gates' of this world and the George Soros' of this world will be held accountable before God one day just like you and I will. So many in this world think God will never judge and they won't have to give an account to anyone but God says otherwise.

At the end of the day humanity without Jesus Christ is corrupt and there is not one that does good. Any man or woman that stands before God based on their own morality and merits will be found guilty if they fail just once in life in any way shape or form which makes a man or woman destined for hell.

There is only one way to be found right with God, only one way that God might see us as pure and holy before Him and that is as a person comes to Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins. Without Jesus we are destined for an eternity away from the Father...With Jesus we are seen as righteous, pure and holy.

Look at verses 4-5 which say this <sup>4</sup>**Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge, Who eat up my people as they eat bread, And do not call on the Lord?** <sup>5</sup>**There they are in great fear, For God is with the generation of the righteous.**

David asks do those who work iniquity have no knowledge? That's a good question I think, when I look at those that live for evil I can sometimes have the perception that they don't know anything at all...or I can think "Lord how can they be so blind and so far from you and without understanding" and then I think the Lord reminds me of how I used to be before I came to Christ.

I was a slave to sin before I came to Jesus. I had no regard for good or evil but instead I lived for the desires of my flesh. Nothing mattered but choosing to live for myself. I didn't care if others suffered and sadly I didn't care what my family thought either. It's a sad place to be in life when you have no regard for God.

And I can understand when David says of the wicked that they eat up the people as they eat bread. We talked a little about this last week but so often the wicked will do whatever it takes that they could be number 1 in life and they don't care if others are taken advantage of...Those that don't call on the Lord sure can cause a lot of hurt, pain and trauma to others.

Notice also in verse 5 that it says of the wicked that they are in great fear. I would say there is great uncertainty in the lives of the wicked as they live for evil. Living for the wrong things in life will leave a person high and dry, it will leave them as empty as can be as they go through life and it will leave them in a place of uncertainty and fear.

I can relate to that in my own life. I was full of fear and paranoia as I lived for myself and I believe God allowed that in my life to work towards getting my attention...God has a way of bringing us to the end of ourselves that we might cry out to Him.

Look at verse 6 which says this **6 You shame the counsel of the poor, But the Lord is his refuge.** The wicked will shame the counsel of the poor they will ignore their needs they will overlook them on a regular basis but look at what happens to those who are poor in this world and poor in spirit as they find that the Lord is their refuge.

You know David talks about that a lot in the Psalms that God is a refuge, that we can find security in Him, that He can be a shield to us and a minister to us in so many ways and I hope you have discovered that in your own life as you have sought to live for the Lord.

Verse 7 says this **7 Oh, that the salvation of Israel would come out of Zion! When the Lord brings back the captivity of His people, Let Jacob rejoice and Israel be glad.** This is kind of an interesting verse for David as he concludes this almost has a prophetic statement as he looks forward to the salvation of Israel that would come out of Zion and that the Lord would bring back His people as they are held in captivity...I do believe this is pointing really to a day we live in now as we watch the Lord gather His people Israel back into the land...What a day it will be when the Lord completes His work on behalf of the people of Israel.

That's a day to look forward to a day to rejoice in and a day to pray that it might come quickly.

All right one more Psalm here today and Psalm 15 again is written by David and this time it's not a song. Chapter 14 was all about the wicked and how there are none who do good and that all are corrupt before God and then chapter 15 begins kind of asking a question when it says this in verse 1 which says **15 Lord, who may abide in Your tabernacle? Who may dwell in Your holy hill?** I think if anyone really has a heart to know and serve God they are going to ask what is it that is required that I might be in the presence of God...We might ask who is it that can be with you Lord? Or who is it Lord that you would choose to allow to continually be in your presence?

And then we get the answer in verses 2-5 which says this **<sup>2</sup>He who walks uprightly, And works righteousness, And speaks the truth in his heart; <sup>3</sup>He who does not backbite with his tongue, Nor does evil to his neighbor, Nor does he take up a reproach against his friend; <sup>4</sup>In whose eyes a vile person is despised, But he honors those who fear the Lord; He who swears to his own hurt and does not change; <sup>5</sup>He who does not put out his money at usury, Nor does he take a bribe against the innocent.**

**He who does these things shall never be moved.**

So we really get quite a list here don't we...and the list includes those things that need to be done and those things that don't need to be done.

The first thing we see is that a person needs to walk uprightly and see works of righteousness in their life. In other words if someone wants to be in the presence of God they need to live a holy life, they need to do the right thing consistently, they need to live a sincere and

unblemished life and there can't be any legitimate accusations brought against that person.

You might say that a person that can be in God's presence needs to be filled with integrity which means filled with Godly character and the goodness of the Lord.

We also see here that they will be a person that speaks the truth in his heart...You know it's kind of easy to speak good things from your mouth but to have the right heart is another thing altogether.

I am reminded of the Pharisees and how they lived their lives in a way that the world would say is holy and pleasing to God. But when Jesus spoke of them his assessment of them was that on the outside they were like white washed tombs but on the inside in the heart the place that only God sees they were full of dead men's bones. Jesus also said they were like a cup or a dish which on the outside was beautiful but on the inside it was full of filth...The person that wants to dwell in God's presence must be clean both on the outside and on the inside.

If a person wants to dwell with God the requirements and standards are quite high.

And then we see that the person God is allowing to be with Him is going to use words that don't backbite others. They speak pure words about people even when they aren't around. It's a sad thing when people speak nicely to your face but you learn later they aren't speaking so nicely...I would simply say its wrong to gossip and slander others.

This type of person will also be someone that does not do evil to their neighbor and they don't take up a reproach against a friend and that

means they don't spread rumors or engage in bringing drama against someone they are supposed to be close with.

We also see in verse 4 that those who will dwell with God will honor others that serve and fear the Lord...in other words this kind of person will have a similar mind with those that love the Lord and they will support them and uphold them.

We can also see here that this kind of person will stand by their word to their own hurt...Meaning if they have said something they follow through with it...If they have promised to do something they don't turn around and do something else or make other plans.

And then we are told that they don't lend money at usury meaning they don't make a loan to someone and make an exorbitant amount of money on interest.

Finally it says anyone that does these things will never be moved.

As we close today I have to ask have any of us ever been able to do all these things? The answer is a resounding no. And this might strike fear in our hearts that perhaps we couldn't be a part of God's kingdom or abide or dwell with Him.

I'm thankful that though man falls short and man does not do good that Jesus has come and has lived a perfect life and died as a sacrifice for us and the Bible is clear that when a person comes to faith in Jesus that the righteousness of Jesus is then placed on to that person's account. If we are in Christ, though we may fall short in this world of God's perfection the blood of Jesus covers us and ministers to us making us pure and complete before the Father.

Romans 5:19 says <sup>19</sup> **For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous.** Jesus is that righteous man and His love as we come to Him by faith makes us pure and right in the eyes of the Father.

So to answer David's question fully as to who can dwell in the holy hill of God and abide in His tabernacle the response is not those who do right and good but instead those who have accepted Jesus Christ in their hearts and as you do that you'll find that you are seen as pure, spotless and white.

If you haven't received Christ in your heart you should for He loved you so much that He went to the cross that your sins might be forgiven.

As we conclude today and turn to worship if you need to accept Jesus I just encourage you to grab me after the service or even cry out to the Lord right here where you are and the Lord will surely meet you.

Let's pray.

## Psalms 12-15 “Who May Dwell In His Tabernacle?”

### Psalm 12

#### **Verse 1**

1 Kings 19:10

Matthew 7:13-14

#### **Verses 2-4**

Proverbs 29:5

Matthew 12:36

### Psalm 13

#### **Verses 1-2**

Matthew 7:7-8

1 Peter 5:10-11

### Psalm 14

#### **Verse 1**

Romans 1:20-23

### Chapter 15

#### **Verses 2-5**

Romans 5:19