

Psalms 101

This evening - we're continuing our overview of the Old Testament book titled Psalms.

With this as our focus - let's open our Bibles to Psalms chapter 101 - and as we make our way to the 101st Psalm...

...I should take a moment to point out that - this Psalm was written by King David.

And while we can't say for sure when he wrote this song of Praise...

...there are some who believe that this Psalm was written - shortly after he ascended to the throne of Israel.

Well - regardless of when King David wrote this Psalm - what we can say for sure is that - David was re-dedicating himself to the Lord.

And as we make our way through this Psalm - we'll begin to see that...

...King David was committing Himself to the Lord as a person of praise.

Not only that - but - he was also committing himself - to being a person of good character.

And as we consider the way that David was re-dedicating himself to the Lord...

...it's my hope that this psalm will help us to become those Christians...

....who are completely committed to the Lord.

With this as our goal - let's turn our attention to the lyrics that we find here in the 101st Psalm.

Look with me - beginning there at verse 1 - where king David declared...

Psa 101:1 A Psalm of David.
I will sing of mercy and justice;
To You, O LORD, I will sing praises.

Here in the beginning of this Psalm - we find King David - dedicating himself to divine privilege of proclaiming the praises of the LORD.

And with this as his goal - we can see that David was a king...

...who was committed to singing songs of praise - about the mercy and justice of Yahweh.

Now - just to be clear - it'll help you to know that the word - mercy - found there in the middle of verse 1...

...it was translated from the Hebrew word - hesed - which was used in reference to the lovingkindness of God.

Not only that - but - the same Hebrew word was used of the gracious favor - by which sinners can be saved.

And in order to grasp the rich theological meaning of this word...

...we should consider how the Lord used this word - on the day He revealed His name - to Moses.

With this as our focus - hold your place here in the book of Psalms - and let's turn in our Bibles to Exodus chapter 34.

And as we make our way to the 34th chapter of Exodus - I should take a moment to remind you that...

...Moses asked the LORD to reveal His name to Him - - and the LORD informed him that His name is I AM.

And while it's true that this name reveals God as the One Who's existence is infinite...

...it's also true that the Lord also informed Moses that His name is Yahweh.

And the name - Yahweh - is a name that is filled with meaning.

Let's consider how the Lord explained it - here in Exodus chapter 34 - it's beginning at verse 5 - where we learn that...

Exo 34:5 ...the LORD descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD.

Exo 34:6 And the LORD passed before him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth,

Exo 34:7 "keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children to the third and the fourth generation."

Here in these verses - we find the Lord presenting Moses with a list of descriptors...

...so that he might understand the meaning of YAHWEH.

And we must not fail to notice that this list of definitional descriptor includes the Hebrew word - HESED.

Look with me again - there at verse 6 - where the Lord described Himself as "abounding in goodness."

That word - goodness - was translated from the same Hebrew word - which is rendered - merciful - in the 101st Psalm.

And from this - we can see that the Lord is a merciful God - Who is abounding in goodness.

And it's for this reason that King David sang the praises of the LORD.

Not only that - but - David also proclaimed the praises of the LORD - because He is just.

With this as our focus - let's turn back to the 101st Psalm - and let's take another look at verse 1 - where David declared...

Psa 101:1 I will sing of mercy and justice;
To You, O LORD, I will sing praises.

King David was not only proclaiming the praises of the LORD - because of His mercy...

...but - he was also proclaiming the praises of the LORD - because of His justice.

And just to be clear - that word - justice - was translated from a Hebrew word...

...which was used in reference to the judgments of a righteous judge.

With this in mind - let's take a moment to consider the contrast - between the God Who is merciful - and the God Who is just.

On the One hand - the LORD is a good God - Who is ready to pour out His lovingkindness - on those who repent.

And at the same time - He's ready to judge the wicked - with righteous judgment.

This was precisely the point that the Lord was making - when He revealed Himself as being...

“...merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin...”

And in the same revelation - He also revealed Himself as being the Judge...

...Who will by no means clear the guilty - as He visits the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children to the third and the fourth generation."

Christian - listen - we should sing the praises of the LORD - because He is the merciful One - Who is abounding in goodness...

...and at the same time - we should sing the praises of the LORD - because He is the just Judge - Who will punish the unrepentant.

And just like King David - let's dedicate our lives to the Lord...

...as we sing the Praises of the One Who is merciful and just.

Not only that - but - we should also dedicate our lives to the Lord - by walking on the narrow path of righteousness.

Let's consider the example of King David - found here in the 101st Psalm - look with me beginning there at verse 2 - where he declared...

Psa 101:2 I will behave wisely in a perfect way.

Oh, when will You come to me?

I will walk within my house with a perfect heart.

Psa 101:3 I will set nothing wicked before my eyes;

I hate the work of those who fall away;

It shall not cling to me.

Psa 101:4 A perverse heart shall depart from me;

I will not know wickedness.

Here in these verses - we find king David - dedicating himself to living a life of righteousness.

And while it's true that those who trust in the Lord might still stumble and fall every single day...

...it's also true that those who want to live a life that is pleasing to the Lord - should aim for perfection.

It's been said that those who aim at nothing - will hit the target every time.

And it's sad to say that - there are many Christians - who are failing to live a life that is pleasing to the Lord...

...because - they are failing to aim for perfection.

Not only that - - but - there are also many Christians who are failing to live a life that is pleasing to the Lord...

...because - they are pursuing the wrong kind of perfection.

For example - there are many who spend all of their time and money - trying to perfect their bodies.

This includes the gym rats - who are trying to achieve the chiseled features of a Greek god.

And so - they spend all of their free time at the gym - trying to perfect their body.

Then there are those who spend all of their money on plastic surgeries.

For example - Bryan Ray has had more than 90 surgeries in order to look like Britney Spears....

...while a guy named Justin Jedlica has undergone 150 procedures - trying to look like a Ken doll.

Then there's the model Pixee Fox - who had six ribs removed in order to achieve a tiny waist.

And listen - most of the people who have multiple procedures...

...end up looking like they belong in a circus side-show.

It's absolutely insane what people are willing to do - in the name of achieving physical perfection.

For example - a recent trend known as looksmaxxing - has many teens and young adults...

...using a hammer to fracture their cheek bones - and chin...

...because they believe that the healing process will improve their appearance.

This is coocoocachoo!

And then there are those who are injecting a substance known as synthol into their muscles...

...because - it gives the appearance of larger muscles.

And what all of these people fail to realize is that - they will never be satisfied with their bodies...

...because - we won't have perfect bodies - until we're in heaven.

With that being the case - we will do better to follow in the footsteps of King David - who was determined to behave wisely in a perfect way.

That phrase - behave wisely - was used of those who are cautious in the way they make decisions.

The same word was used to describe those who are prudent - and circumspect.

And as we consider King David's example - I can't help but to remember what Paul wrote...

...in the letter he sent to the Christians in Ephesus.

It's in Ephesians chapter 5 - beginning at verse 11 - where Paul declared...

Eph 5:11 ...have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them.

Eph 5:12 For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret.

Eph 5:13 But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light.

Eph 5:14 Therefore He says:

“Awake, you who sleep,

Arise from the dead,

And Christ will give you light.”

Eph 5:15 See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise,

Eph 5:16 redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

Rather than entering into fellowship with those who engage in the unfruitful works of darkness...

...Christians have been called to walk circumspectly - so that we can live a life that is pleasing to the Lord.

Rather than behaving like a fool - we should redeem the time - because the days are evil.

With this as the goal - let's consider how King David set out to behave wisely.

Look with me again - there at verse 2 - where David declared...

Psa 101:2 I will behave wisely in a perfect way.

Oh, when will You come to me?

I will walk within my house with a perfect heart.

Psa 101:3a I will set nothing wicked before my eyes;

Now - I wanna stop right here - so that we can consider this commitment that King David was making.

In order to behave wisely in a perfect way - David was determined to be a man of discipline...

...as he walked around in the privacy of his own home.

And just to be clear - he declared: "I will set nothing wicked before my eyes"

With this in mind - we must take a moment to realize that - it's never been easier for us to set wicked things before our eyes.

Now that we all have smartphones that are connected to the internet...

...it's never been easier to look at every form of pornography.

And it's sad to say that - this is how many Christians spend their time.

According to the latest research from Barna...

...75% of Christian men acknowledge that they view pornography to some extent.

Not only that - but - 40% of Christian women acknowledge that they also view pornography to some extent.

And while I realize that those who are struggling with porn might think that nobody knows...

...we can be certain that our sins will find us out.

With that being the case - I encourage every Christian to walk circumspectly - so that we might behave wisely in a perfect way.

And whether we're at home - or we're in the world...

...let's become those dedicated disciples - who set nothing wicked before our eyes.

We should also consider how our relational connections will impact this commitment.

Look with me again - beginning there at verse 3 - where King David declared...

Psa 101:3 I will set nothing wicked before my eyes;
I hate the work of those who fall away;
It shall not cling to me.

Psa 101:4 A perverse heart shall depart from me;
I will not know wickedness.

Here in these verses - we find David - referring to those who fall away from the faith.

And we should notice that David was quick to insist that - he hated the works of those who fall away.

In other words - King David hated the sin - not the sinner.

When it comes to those who fall away from the faith - - we will all do well to remember that...

...we have been called to love our neighbor - with the agape love of the Lord.

At the same time - it's also important for us to remember that...

...God hates the sins of those who are walking in the wickedness of this fallen world.

Let's consider how King Solomon explained it in Proverbs chapter 6 - it's beginning at verse 16 - where he declared...

Pro 6:16 These six things the LORD hates,
Yes, seven are an abomination to Him:
Pro 6:17 A proud look, A lying tongue,
Hands that shed innocent blood,

Pro 6:18 A heart that devises wicked plans,
Feet that are swift in running to evil,
Pro 6:19 A false witness who speaks lies,
And one who sows discord among brethren.

Christian - listen - the LORD hates a proud look - and the LORD
hates those who use their tongues to lie.

The LORD hates the Hands that shed innocent blood - and the
LORD hates a heart that devises wicked plans.

The LORD hates the Feet of those who swiftly run to
evil...

...and the LORD hates a false witness who speaks
lies - in order to sow discord among brethren.

To sum it up with simplicity - the Lord hates the sins of those who
are walking in wickedness.

At the same time - He loves sinners so much that He sent His
only begotten Son...

...to receive the just punishment that we deserve - so that
sinners might be saved by the merciful grace of God.

With all of this being the case - it's important for Christians to realize
that...

...we've been called to love the sinners that the Lord wants to
save.

At the same time - we should also hate the sins that are
celebrated - by those who are walking in wickedness.

I like the way that King Solomon put it - in Proverbs chapter 8 - it's
verse 13 - where he declared...

Pro 8:13 The fear of the LORD is to hate evil;
Pride and arrogance and the evil way

And the perverse mouth I hate.

Those who truly have a reverential respect for the Lord - will hate the things that He hates.

And those who hate the things that the LORD hates - will begin to separate themselves...

...from those who are walking in wickedness.

To make my case - let's consider how the scholars who created the New English Translation rendered verses 3 and 4 - they put it like this...

Psa 101:3 I will not even consider doing what is dishonest. I hate doing evil; I will have no part of it.

Psa 101:4 I will have nothing to do with a perverse person; I will not permit evil.

King David was quick to separate himself from those who pursued perversity...

...and if i had to guess why - it's probably because he knew how perverse people will affect the way we live.

I like the way that Paul put it in 1st Corinthians chapter 15 - it's beginning at verse 33 - where he declared...

1Co 15:33 Do not be deceived: "Evil company corrupts good habits."

1Co 15:34 Awake to righteousness, and do not sin; for some do not have the knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame.

Christian - listen - the Evil company we keep will always corrupt our good habits.

And if you disagree - then - you're disagreeing with the Holy Spirit - Who inspired Paul to write these words.

If you think you can spend your time - being influenced by those who are living in sin - without being affected...

...you're deceiving yourself with willful ignorance.

And listen - this is true of the backslidden believers - who are living in sin.

Let's consider how Paul put it in 1st Corinthians chapter 5 - it's beginning at verse 11 - where he declared...

1Co 5:11 I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner—not even to eat with such a person.

1Co 5:12 For what have I to do with judging those also who are outside? Do you not judge those who are inside?

1Co 5:13 But those who are outside God judges. Therefore “put away from yourselves the evil person.”

From this - we can see that there are times when we must protect our own walk with the Lord...

...by separating ourselves from carnal Christians who are living in sin.

And much like King David - we should avoid the perverse people who might lead us astray.

With this as the goal - we should consider how King David separated himself from those who were living in sin.

Let's pick up our study of the 101st Psalm - look with me beginning there at verse 5 - where David declared...

Psa 101:5 Whoever secretly slanders his neighbor,
Him I will destroy;
The one who has a haughty look and a proud heart,
Him I will not endure.

Psa 101:6 My eyes shall be on the faithful of the land,
That they may dwell with me;
He who walks in a perfect way,
He shall serve me.

Psa 101:7 He who works deceit shall not dwell within my house;
He who tells lies shall not continue in my presence.
Psa 101:8 Early I will destroy all the wicked of the land,
That I may cut off all the evildoers from the city of the LORD.

Here in the final verses of this chapter - we find King David - describing the way that he separated himself - from evil doers.

And he began by assuring his audience - that he was unwilling to tolerate those who slandered their neighbors.

And while the scholars who created the New King Jimmy inform us that David was ready to DESTROY the slanderers...

...the Hebrew word rendered - destroy - might be better rendered - silence.

I like the way that scholars who created the New International Version rendered the beginning of verse 5 - they put it like this...

Psa 101:5a Whoever slanders their neighbor in secret, I will put to silence...

In other words - King David wasn't going to allow people to secretly slandered the good name of their neighbor.

And what this means is that - he was ready to loose friends - by calling out those who were gossiping.

Christian - listen - if people constantly come to you with secret slander about others...

...then - the chances are - it's because you're willing to hear it.

Would it be to God that we become those who silence the slander of others.

We should also consider what King David wrote - there in the second half of verse 5 - where he declared...

Psa 101:5b The one who has a haughty look and a proud heart,
Him I will not endure.

King David wasn't willing to endure the attitudes of the arrogant...

...nor was he spending time with those whose hearts were filled
with pride.

One reason why is because - God rejects the proud - but
gives grace to the humble

And what this means is that - we should follow in the
footsteps of King David...

...by separating ourselves from those who are
arrogant and proud.

In contrast to this - David surrounded himself with those who were faithful
to the Lord.

Let's consider how he put it - there in verse 6 - where he declared...

Psa 101:6 My eyes shall be on the faithful of the land,
That they may dwell with me;
He who walks in a perfect way,
He shall serve me.

In other words - King David wasn't willing searching for those who
were faithful to the Lord...

...because - these were the people that he wanted to surround
himself with.

And just to be clear - David was looking for perfect
people...

...but rather - those who were walking on the path of
perfection.

With all of this in mind - we should consider the difference between those who are on the path of perfection...

...and those who are on the broad road that leads to destruction.

It's in Matthew chapter 7 - beginning at verse 13 - where the Lord Jesus declared...

Mat 7:13 "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.

Mat 7:14 "Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.

Those who are on the path of perfection - have entered the narrow gate - by faith in Jesus Christ.

Everyone else is on the broad road that leads to destruction.

And seeing how both groups are headed in two different directions...

...then - we should make sure that we're on the right road.

One reason for why we need to make sure that we're on the narrow path of righteousness...

...is due to the fact that - there will be many church goers - who will be cast into the lake of fire.

Let's consider how the Lord Jesus put it - in

Mat 7:21 "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.

Mat 7:22 “Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’

Mat 7:23 “And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’

Now - as we consider this word of warning - I encourage everyone to make your calling and election sure.

And one way that we can do this is by considering the company we keep.

Please hear me when I tell you that - if you are more comfortable hanging out with unbelievers...

...then - the chances are - you're also on the broad road that leads to destruction.

With this in mind - let's consider how King David wrapped up this psalm - look with me - beginning there at verse 7 - where David declared...

Psa 101:7 He who works deceit shall not dwell within my house;
He who tells lies shall not continue in my presence.

Psa 101:8 Early I will destroy all the wicked of the land,
That I may cut off all the evildoers from the city of the LORD.

As we consider the final verses of this Psalm - I can't help but to consider how Christ Jesus will fulfill these lyrics.

And while it's true that the LORD is the merciful One - Who is ready to save every sinner...

...He is also the just Judge - Who has promised to punish every evil doer - who will not repent.

And knowing that there's coming a day - when every evildoer will receive the just judgment of God...

...I encourage every unbeliever to repent - and receive by faith...

...the free gift of grace - that God bestows
on those who trust in Jesus.

As for those who have already been saved - by faith in Jesus Christ...

...let's follow in the footsteps of King David - as we dedicate our
lives to the Lord - each and every day.

And as we do - let's become committed Christians - who
proclaim the praises of the Lord...

...because He is the merciful Messiah Who has come to
save sinners...

...according to the Goodness of His gracious favor.