

## February 17th – Who May Come to Worship?

*“Who may ascend into the hill of the Lord? Or who may stand in His holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who has not lifted up his soul to an idol, nor sworn deceitfully.”  
(Psalm 24:3-4)*

In today’s psalm, David explores the extent of God’s sovereignty and asks some critical questions. He begins with a declaration – “the earth is the Lord’s and all it’s fullness” (v. 1). Simply stated, everything belongs to God – He is sovereign over everything in the world. As such, He is worthy of worship and praise. But that begs the question – who may ascend into the holy hill of the Lord or who may stand in His holy place?

To understand these questions, we need to understand something about Jewish worship. The Jews worshiped in Jerusalem on top of Mount Moriah – the place where Abraham was willing to sacrifice his son Isaac thousands of years ago. When the ancient Jews went to worship, they had to ascend the southern steps to make their way on top of the temple mount. And even prior to climbing the steps, they had to wash themselves in the *mikveh* located at the base of the southern steps.

Not just anyone could ascend the temple mount and approach the presence of God. Preparation had to be made in order to worship the Lord. I fear this is something we miss in our 21<sup>st</sup> century worship. Ask yourself – before coming to worship, do you ask God to forgive your sins (clean hands) and to change your heart (a pure heart)? Before coming to worship, do you denounce all idols and pledge your allegiance only to Christ? If so, you’re just the sort of person God wants in worship.