



**Life Lessons 101  
Brutal Honesty from David  
Psalm 25:1- 9**

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When you and I pray, do we sometimes go over things the Lord has done for us in the past? Do we shoot honest with Him about our fears, our doubts and what we really need to have happen in our lives other than just bringing a laundry list of specific petitions. I guess what I am saying is, when we pray and talk to the Lord, do we really talk to the Lord?



David does that here in Psalm 25. And since he has crafted this prayer as an acrostic poem in the Hebrew, he will repeat some of the themes.

It is without any definite background indicating the history of the times in which it was composed...But it is one of the nine alphabetical Psalms of the whole collection, and the companion to Ps. 34, to which it corresponds even in many peculiarities of the acrostic structure. (Keil and Delitzsch 1996, 216)

As an acrostic, it means that each verse begins with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet and does so in alphabetical order. Thus, 22 verses.

And the Holy Spirit has had David pack it with truth. Let's dig in.

Psalm 25:title-3

"A Psalm of David. **To You, LORD, I lift up my soul.** My God, in You I trust, Do not let me be ashamed; Do not let my enemies rejoice over me. Indeed, none of those who wait for You will be ashamed; Those who deal treacherously without cause will be ashamed." (NASB 2020)

When David says he lifts up his soul, "the Hebrew phrase does not mean a temporary raising of the heart to God, **but a permanent setting of the affections on him** (see Deut. 24:15; and comp. Ps. 24:4)." (Spence-Jones 1909, 180-181)

David begins by being real with the Lord. He deeply desires to be lifting his soul up to the Lord constantly. For you and me, the longer we walk with the Lord, the more we want to spend in His presence, the more we want to talk to Him, and we continue to expand what it is we talk to Him about.

Nicholas Herman of Lorraine, who also went by Brother Lawrence, wrote on this topic of the practice of the presence of God. It is indeed a practice.

He wanted his life to reflect that style of living, just as David did.

As Brother Lawrence looked at his relationship with the Lord, he learned "that we should establish ourselves in a sense of GOD's Presence, by continually conversing with Him. That it was a shameful thing to quit His conversation to think of trifles and fooleries.

That we should feed and nourish our souls with high notions of GOD; which would yield us great joy in being devoted to Him." (Brother Lawrence of the Resurrection 1906, 10)

But Ken, it's the 21st century, there is simply not the time to spend on simply being with the Lord. Ah yes, the tyranny of the urgent things in our lives over the things that truly matter. Charles Hummel wrote about that.

When we stop long enough to think about it, we realize that our dilemma goes deeper than shortage of time; it is basically a problem of priorities. Hard work doesn't hurt us. We all know what it is to go full speed for long hours, totally involved in an important task. The resulting weariness is matched by a sense of achievement and joy.

Not hard work, but doubt and misgiving produce anxiety as we review a month or a year and become oppressed by the pile of unfinished tasks. We sense uneasily our failure to do what was really important. (Hummel 1994, 4)

This is what David is getting after here at the beginning of Psalm 25, the importance of continuously, as a conscious decision and effort of will, to be constantly lifting up our soul to the Lord. We call that prayer.



Back to the 17th century and Brother Lawrence's observations.

He believed that we ought to act with GOD in the greatest simplicity, speaking to Him frankly and plainly, and imploring His assistance in our affairs, just as they happen. (Brother Lawrence of the Resurrection 1906, 13)

That is easier said than done unfortunately. We tend to get wrapped up in busyness, nothing really important, just busyness. We forget that there is someone right there with us all of the time in the person of the Holy Spirit. We really can indeed walk and be with Him all of the time.

Jesus is our example of time management. When Jesus was here, He knew He only had a limited amount of time to get everything done with those He was training before He would be gone. He knew the cross was coming, and soon. Everything was urgent and everything was important. But what did He do. Yesterday was a busy day, even Peter's mother was made well, and she went right to work. Now it is morning, and what does Jesus do?

Mark 1:35

"And rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, **he departed and went out to a desolate place, and there he prayed.**" (ESV)

In the military, I ran into this a few times. You knew what the immediate task was, but you had no idea what the next thing was. Literally, you would get to the point of being as complete as possible, then you would wait for further instructions. Once received, right back at it and if you finish early, call in and get further instructions.

We don't like doing that, because it means relying on someone else who may have a bit more knowledge about something or has information about things going on around you that you may not know about. So, we all confront a choice everyday. I have no idea what the actions did yesterday in the area next to me.

I am not aware of anyone moving towards my position or wanting to engage in a conversation, or whatever. But you see, just like I would rely on higher headquarters for that bit of intel to help me make a good decision, I need to live my life just like Jesus and allow higher headquarters, the Father, to provide instructions. Jesus did that always.

David did so a lot and sometimes he was a bit impatient about it too. But as we see here in Psalm 25, he kept on doing it. It was a pattern of his life. Like all of us he failed at it every so often, but he would go back to it since that was where his heart truly was.

Jesus had no divinely drawn blueprint or schedule; he discerned the Father's will day by day in a life of prayer. Because of this he was able to resist the urgent demands of others and do what was really important for his mission. (Hummel 1994, 9)

Many of us are people of action. See the task, do the task, give me another or I'll make one up. We look busy, we act busy, but are we taking care of the important things? Are we spending time with the Lord getting our marching orders for the day?

Are we spending time with our spouse, our children, our grandchildren, our friends. Are we checking in on those brothers and sisters in the Lord who are struggling and need someone to encourage them and love on them today? Are there those only we can reach for Jesus? Or are we moving bricks from one side of the road to the other and back again.



That's how workers in the Soviet Union operated, they had to look busy. Literally, they would move a pile of bricks from one side of the road to another to look busy. Tomorrow, they would simply return it to the other side.

A bumper sticker read, "Jesus is coming ... look busy!" Cute sticker—lousy theology! God knows what is going on in your life. He knows all the opportunities you have neglected, all the acts of servanthood you have performed, and all his attempts to get your attention that you have rejected. (Martin 2002, 23)

David was no different than us. He knows what the key is and is sharing it with us. Jesus knew it as well and He demonstrated the how to for us.

Every morning, He would take time to talk to the Father about yesterday and then wait for instructions for today. That is what the Holy Spirit will do for us, just like He did for Jesus.

Luke 4:1

**"And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness..."** (ESV)

Romans 8:14

**"For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God."** (ESV)

Psalms 48:14

**"For God, our God, is our defender forever. He guides us."** (NET 2nd ed.)

Saying yes to where it is the Spirit is leading us frees us from the tyranny of doing urgent stuff that may not necessarily be what the Lord has for us today. Waiting on the Lord, that is the key.

But the root of all sin is self-sufficiency—independence from the rule of God. When we fail to wait prayerfully for God's guidance and strength, we are saying with our actions, if not with our words, that we do not need him. (Hummel 1994, 13)

Psalms 25:1

**"To You, LORD, I lift up my soul."** (NASB 2020)

Paul's response.

1 Thessalonians 5:16–18

**"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances;** for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." (ESV)

Psalms 25:2–3

**"My God, in You I trust,** Do not let me be ashamed; Do not let my enemies rejoice over me. Indeed, none of those who wait for You will be ashamed; Those who deal treacherously without cause will be ashamed." (NASB 2020)

David is making clear to us here at the beginning of verse 2 that not only does he consistently and constantly lift his soul up to the Lord in prayer, but he wants us to know that is God who he worships. As the one he worships, he places all his trust on Him.

"One of the worst things about the psalmist's defeat, or disgrace, would be that his enemies would make fun of him (see 22:7–8). The expression let me not be put to shame may be handled as in TEV, where "defeat" is the cause of the shame the psalmist would suffer. Following the suggestion of making a



request, one may say, for example, “do not let me be sorry that I trusted in you.”” (Bratcher and Reyburn 1991, 245)

David did not want others to shame or make fun of him because of his trust in the Lord. “If there is no help from God, an audience of gloating enemies will rejoice over his downfall. For Christians there is the assurance that by faith in Christ we come to possess a hope that will never disappoint us (Rom. 5:1–5).” (Harman 2011, 234)

Romans 5:1–5

“By faith we have been made acceptable to God. And now, because of our Lord Jesus Christ, we live at peace with God. Christ has also introduced us to God’s undeserved kindness on which we take our stand. So we are happy, as we look forward to sharing in the glory of God. But that’s not all! We gladly suffer, because we know that suffering helps us to endure. **And endurance builds character, which gives us a hope that will never disappoint us.** All of this happens because God has given us the Holy Spirit, who fills our hearts with his love.” (CEV)

Waiting on the Lord makes you, at times, feel really conflicted. Why am I waiting on God for this thing, this move of the Spirit, this building, this position, and on and on. Am I the only who has tried to see if he can help God out and end the waiting? “Indeed, none of those who wait for You will be ashamed.” He really does not need our help. But there are those who will never wait on the Lord, because they have no relationship with the Lord or they once did, but have decided to do things on their own.

The Hebrew verb used (qâvah) is one of several that our English versions translate by the word ‘wait’, but it is distinctive in that it does not denote passive waiting on God. Rather, it points to prayer that involves action, striving with God in prayer. (Harman 2011, 235)

There it is, that prayer thing again. Waiting is active, not passive. Consider that too.

David shows the other side to waiting on the Lord, those who deal treacherously with God. The word David uses is בגדים (begidim).

The verb expresses the unstable relationship of man to an existing established regulation, and can be translated “to act faithlessly (treacherously).” **It is used when the OT writer wants to say that a man does not honor an agreement, or commits adultery, or breaks a covenant or some other ordinance given by God. The treacherous acts of man stand in contrast to Yahweh’s faithfulness to his covenant and trustworthiness** (chesedh ve’emeth). Thus baghadh, “to act treacherously,” has primarily a religious function. As a rule, the object of this verb is God. But God-given ordinances also include a man’s relationship to his fellow man, and thus occasionally man is also the object of a treacherous act. Sometimes baghadh is used to denote the violation of a purely human ordinance. König and others conjecture that this root is connected with beghedh, “clothing.” In this case, the original meaning of the verb would have been “to clothe, to cover, to veil”; however, this would be weaker than the transferred figurative meaning, **“to behave secretly, to do something veiled, to deceive,” and thus “to act faithlessly (treacherously).”** (Erlandsson 1977, 470)

When I decide not to wait on the Lord and His promises, I am acting faithlessly and with this word, David nails all of us who wander into that occasionally, we are being treacherous to our Lord and Savior.

I don’t like knowing that I am capable of that. But what David says is indeed true, every single time I have tired to help out the Lord when I have been waiting on Him, I am the one who winds up being ashamed, or to use a more modern term, embarrassed. He really does not need our help.



As we examine this word further that David uses, there is something we see taking place in churches all around us where this same word comes into play. I am not talking about doctrinal differences on non-essentials in which we can agree to disagree with our brothers and sisters, we still love Jesus and He is still being preached.

The treachery being referred to here by David is something we see some pastors, teachers, school leaders exercise when they turn away from Jesus and begin to teach another Jesus. This happens when God's character is impugned or lied about. Let me ask a couple of questions about what we see in Ephesians 2.

Ephesians 2:4–10

**"But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them."** (ESV)

"Is the gospel about the gifts or the Giver? Is the gospel about the redeemed or the Redeemer? Is the gospel about earthly riches or eternal reward? Is the gospel about monetary gain or the glory of God? Is the gospel about obtaining my materialistic desires or using what I have to do good works for God? I bet, if you're a biblically discerning Christian, you answered those questions correctly. The prosperity gospel distorts the biblical gospel by making the Good News all about you and all about stuff." (Hinn 2019, 171)

Per David, it is treachery performed by those who know better. Per John, it is potentially much worse. I have added to this to help.

1 John 4:1–4

"Beloved, do not believe every spirit (pastor or teacher), but test the spirits (pastors or teachers) to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets (pastors and teachers) have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit (pastor or teacher) that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, and **every spirit (pastor or teacher) that does not confess Jesus (THE Jesus of the Bible) is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already.** Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world." (ESV)

Those who are actively drawing people away from the God of the Bible to the God of prosperity are traitors to the cause of Jesus Christ. And per John, purveyors of antichrist. Treachery is what the scriptures call it.

Teaching the whole counsel of God is imperative in these last days. Deception is everywhere and there are those who would be more than happy to lead you astray while at the same time teaching things about our Lord that just are not true.

1 Timothy 4:1–3

"Now the Holy Spirit tells us clearly that **in the last times some will turn away from the true faith; they will follow deceptive spirits and teachings that come from demons. These people are hypocrites and liars, and their consciences are dead.** They will say it is wrong to be married and wrong to eat certain foods. But God created those foods to be eaten with thanks by faithful people who know the truth." (NLT)





If you know of a Christian leader who has been led astray to do this, pray for them that the Lord would restore them to His word and His ministry. Jesus was pretty clear in Revelation 2 & 3 about who was in control of His church and what He would do if the church left the reservation.

“Without question, many prosperity teachers are sincere, passionate, and excellent communicators, but these qualities do not excuse false teachings, whether intentional or not. Many genuine Christians listen to prosperity teachers but do not discern how prosperity teachers distort Scripture and the gospel. Of course, taken at face value, the prosperity message—God wants you to be prosperous in everything in the here-and-now—sounds good, but is not found in Scripture.” (Jones 2011, 59-60)

Those who fall into the trap of teaching a false gospel are those who, for whatever reason, have decided waiting on the Lord and His plan just is not working for them anymore. They are actively redefining terms and not only are now traitors to the Lord, but also actively leading others away from the truth of the gospel and many times leaving a trail of broken lives in their wake.

Yes, David’s words here sting, a lot. When we face the reality of how easy it would be to be sucked into this, we return to verse one, and prayer. As David continues, he gives us the solution to the danger we all face.

Psalm 25:4–5

**“Make me know Your ways, LORD; Teach me Your paths. Lead me in Your truth and teach me, For You are the God of my salvation; For You I wait all the day.”** (NASB 2020)

Those who are prone to fall into the trap of treachery are those who somewhere along the line either ceased to pray for this, or never did.

The key to not being embarrassed or humiliated is divulged to us right here. The key to keeping us from falling into the trap of treacherously denying our Lord, doing our thing instead of His, or falling for the treachery of others who would mislead us is right here.

And notice how David says it. “Make me know Your ways.” This is in the imperative, to the Lord. Have we arrived at the point in our walk where we can say this? No matter the cost Lord, make me know your ways.

We can be sure that no man or woman who has been shown the way by God, or taught in His paths, or led in His truth has ever been led into sin or compromise that led to public disgrace and dishonor. (Guzik 2013, Ps 25:3-5)

We have God’s word to guide us as did David, but the problem is this, and it goes back to distractions and the urgent versus the important again. David is taking the first step, His relationship with God is the most important thing he can conceive of, he wants that to have the right priority so much, so he asks the Lord to “make me know.”

For us doing life today, this would be making our time with the Lord, everyday, a priority. He is already sitting down at the place where you spend time with Him in the word and prayer, join Him.

If you could literally see Him sitting there, would you continue to be too busy?

“Christians who are too busy to stop, take spiritual inventory and receive their assignments from God become slaves to the tyranny of the urgent. They may work day and night to achieve much that seems significant to themselves and others, but they don’t complete the work God has for them to do.” (Hummel 1994, 27)



David, the King of Israel, knows this. He carves out the time and asks the Lord to make him do this. Some of us may need to do the same.

I know I want to achieve everything that the Lord has for me. I have no idea what a lot of that really is, none of us do. As He leads us, He does so step by step and unless we are spending time with Him in His word, talking to Him in prayer and listening to the holy Spirit as He leads us, how will we even know what that next step is?

Once the ways of the Lord are known, of course we want more. I know I do. David did as well. He knew that in life, even if the Lord was making clear to him His ways to do life, there is still the chance to possibly take the wrong path.

Leaving nothing to chance, David not only wants the Lord to make him know His ways, but he also wants the GPS of all GPS systems, God's way which always points us to true north. Jesus would later tell us the danger of not being on the right path.

Matthew 7:13–14

"Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. **For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.**" (ESV)

The pleas are clear, and God is being called upon to teach a way or path in life. (Jacobson and Tanner 2014, 257)

Psalms 25:4–5

"Make me know Your ways, LORD; **Teach me Your paths. Lead me in Your truth and teach me, For You are the God of my salvation; For You I wait all the day.**" (NASB 2020)

David has already stated he wants, desires, needs to have God make him to know His ways. We all do. We need Him to teach us through His word.

We also have this promise that was unknown to David, but not to the follower of Jesus Christ.

John 16:13–15

**"When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth.** He will not speak on his own but will tell you what he has heard. He will tell you about the future. **He will bring me glory by telling you whatever he receives from me.** All that belongs to the Father is mine; this is why I said, 'The Spirit will tell you whatever he receives from me.'" (NLT)

The Holy Spirit makes verse 5 totally real in our lives. He promises to lead us in "all truth." And what about teaching us, that too. The Holy Spirit "will bring me glory by telling you whatever He receives from Me."

We have God's word and as we read it, the Holy Spirit takes that word and teaches us. He leads us into all truth. In other words, He loves to reveal His word to us.

David wants this. He wants the Lord to cause him to walk there, never stray from it and to continue in it as long as he lives.

By application, we too should not only find ourselves wanting Him to make us know His ways, but we also find ourselves wanting the Holy Spirit to have full run in our lives as we study the word. He is the one who will teach us. He is the one who will reveal what it is Jesus is saying to us as we read and study. That's His job.





He promises to do this there in John as we have seen. He will also do this because He is the God of our salvation.

When God saves us, He does not leave us, He wants a relationship with us and He gives us the Holy Spirit to make that possible. What Jesus Christ did for us on the cross through His death and resurrection has indeed made all this possible.

Because He is our salvation, we do indeed wait for Him and retract any thoughts of helping Him out. We want His best, He has said He will take care of us, we need to let Him by waiting on Him.

Psalms 25:6–7

**“Remember, LORD, Your compassion and Your faithfulness, For they have been from of old. Do not remember the sins of my youth or my wrongdoings; Remember me according to Your faithfulness, For Your goodness’ sake, LORD.”** (NASB 2020)

For you and me, the past mercies and blessings that God has lavished on us because of Jesus Christ, do we expect those to continue?

Ephesians 1:3

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,” (NKJV)

Yes, we do indeed expect them to continue. God’s character cannot change. God is love. We know that.

1 John 4:8

“He who does not love does not know God, for **God is love.**” (NKJV)

Who says God has to love the way we love? To be sure, human love is changing, because human beings are changing beings. However, theism affirms that God is an unchanging Being and, therefore, He must love in an unchanging way. God can do whatever good we can do, but He does not do it in the way we do it. He does it in an infinitely better way than we do—an unchanging way. (Geisler 2003, 93)

For David, “past mercies form a ground for the expectation of future blessings. God’s character cannot change; his action as one time will always be consistent and harmonious with his action at another. If he has been kind and merciful to David in the past, David may count on his continuing the same in the future.” (Spence-Jones 1909, 181)

We can too. God does not change; His compassion and His faithfulness do not change.

Psalms 25:7

**“Do not remember the sins of my youth or my wrongdoings; Remember me according to Your faithfulness, For Your goodness’ sake, LORD.”** (NASB 2020)

Later, David will realize, most likely because of his sin with Bathsheba, just how God does indeed forgive those who ask Him to forgive and turn from their sin. We call that repentance.

David will later think on how much he has been forgiven and say the following.

Psalms 103:8–14

“The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. He will not always chide, nor will he keep his anger forever. He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities. **For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his steadfast**



**love toward those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us.** As a father shows compassion to his children, so the LORD shows compassion to those who fear him. For he knows our frame; he remembers that we are dust.” (ESV)

God chooses to, when He forgives us for our sin as we come to Christ, to forget our sin.

We are the ones who keep dredging our sins up and wallowing in them, felling condemned, which is exactly where the enemy wants us to be. A reminder for all of us.

Romans 8:1

**“There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.”** (NKJV)

We would do well to emulate his love in our attitude to others and the way most of us experience that is through forgiveness. You see, God is able to forgive us completely because our sins have been taken away by the death of Jesus and God chooses to remember them no more. It is this ability to forgive and forget that most of us find immensely difficult in our interpersonal relationships. (Gordon 2003, 285)

Jesus has been here on this planet. He was hanging on the cross while others said things about Him, yet He prayed “Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.” (Luke 23:34b, NASB 2020)

And let’s take it one step further. Many are told that Jesus died for their sins. However, what they are not often told is that Jesus also died to destroy the effects of sin—not only the sins they committed personally, but also the sins others have done to them. Christians (not just unbelievers) suffer from overwhelming amounts of guilt, shame, condemnation, rejection, and a host of other devastating emotional pressures that transform life into raging pain. But Jesus died for the severe pain we suffer, and He wants us free of it. And that means that He is not interested in adding more to our current heartache—it is neither biblical nor godly to keep trying to “atone” for our sins or “prove” that we are truly sorry. To all who truly repent, God forgives. (Hayward and Beeson 2017, 20)

He is the good shepherd; we covered this in Psalm 23.

Psalm 23:3

**“He restores my soul;** He guides me in the paths of righteousness For the sake of His name.” (NASB 2020)

To forgive someone does not necessarily mean we forget what they did to us. We may need to remain on guard with certain folks until the Kingdom. Forgiveness stops us from bitterness and frees us.

Mark 11:24–26

“Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them. **And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses. But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses.**” (NKJV)

In other words, if we are holding onto unforgiveness, and yes, I do know how hard it is to forgive some folks, our prayer life is hindered. Our relationship with the Lord is hindered.

Prayers are hindered both by lack of faith and by an inability to forgive, common maladies among ancient and modern people. (Black 1995, MK 11:25)



I like how Chris Hayword and Ray Beeson explain it. "Forgiveness was never meant to exonerate the one who created the wound. Nor does it mean a person must now return to an unjust situation or deny that that situation was unjust. **Forgiveness is not saying it didn't happen. That would be a relinquishment of our rights. It would also be a lie, for the offense did happen. In releasing someone, we are not releasing them from all justice. But we are releasing them to God's justice, not ours. Legally, the offender owes a debt to the offended. But we can turn the debt of our offender, who has never repaid their debt, who is not around, and who has never shown repentance, over to Jesus.** The debt still exists, but the ownership of the debt and the associated pain are transferred to Jesus. (Hayword and Beeson 2017, 123-124)

For David, as he asks God not to remember the sins of his youth, and I would be one of those standing there with him praying the same, consider, is there anything that is hindering my prayers right now that I need to deal with. The extent of our love for the Lord and for our brothers and sisters is many times, measured by our extent to forgive those who have offended us.

I have come to realize that not everyone who has offended me will come running up and ask forgiveness. But I have decided, sometimes multiple times in a day to forgive those who have offended me and be free of the baggage. When will I have to stop forgiving them and asking the Lord to let me forgive them? I don't know, I'm not there yet.

Of all people, Peter learned this lesson. He said the following.

1 Peter 4:8

"And above all things have fervent love for one another, for "love will cover a multitude of sins."" (NKJV)

Psalms 25:8-9

**"The LORD is good and upright; Therefore He instructs sinners in the way. He leads the humble in justice, And He teaches the humble His way ."** (NASB 2020)

David has just hit us with fact, two attributes of God. His goodness aka His holiness and/or His love. And then His uprightness, better known as His righteousness and again holiness. David makes this statement assuming we all understand what he has just said.

What are these two attributes which David states as the basis for why God instructs sinners, that is us by the way, how to live.

His goodness, "if contemplated as that which is within God, is akin to His holiness; if contemplated as that which proceeds from God, is akin to love. The infinite goodness of God is a perfection of His being which characterizes His nature and is itself the source of all in the universe that is good. The specific terms employed in setting forth the goodness of God are (a) benevolence, which is goodness in its generic sense as embracing all His creatures and securing their welfare; (b) complacency, which is that in God which approves all His own perfections as well as all that conforms to Himself; (c) mercy, which is God's goodness exercised in behalf of the need of His creatures; and (d) grace, which is God's free action in behalf of those who are meritless, which freedom to act has been secured through the death of Christ. (Chafer 1993, 206)

Then there is His uprightness, which we also call His righteousness. When you are talking about God, this is an absolute term, it is who He is. And when you use the term, you will also bring in one more fact, He is holy. With respect to character, God is transparently holy and righteous in all His acts. When combined with love, His righteousness results in grace. God's righteousness is ever absolute and perfect to infinity: "In him is no darkness at all." God's righteousness is seen in two ways: (a) He is a righteous



Person (James 1:17; 1 John 1:5) and (b) He is righteous in all His ways (Rom. 3:25–26). (Chafer 1993, 270)

The biblical Hebrew words for holy are *godesh*, meaning “apartness” or “sacredness,” and *gadosh*, translated “sacred” or “holy.” The Greek word *hagios* means “righteous,” “holy,” or “pious.” Theologically, God’s holiness means that He is totally and utterly set apart from all creation and evil. (Geisler 2003, 314)

How can a good and upright, a holy and righteous God instruct sinners? God cannot ignore sin because of His holiness, but He can forgive sin because He is good. God’s grace, as we have already discovered, flows from His goodness and with what Jesus Christ accomplished on the cross, Jesus has taken care of the holiness part of the equation for us. With His imputed righteousness, God sees in us, the righteousness of His Son Jesus and because of His grace, He can now forgive our sin and provide the instruction that David asked for earlier in the Psalm.

The goodness of our God leads us to expect the reclaiming of sinful men. We may not conclude from God’s goodness that he will save those sinners who continue to wander in their own ways, but we may be assured that he will renew transgressors’ hearts and guide them into the way of holiness. Let those who desire to be delivered from sin take comfort from this. God himself will condescend to be the teacher of sinners. (Spurgeon n.d., 394)

Because we are sinners, found in the condition caused by the fall, the only way we can learn how to please God is He will have to train us. As He teaches us and instructs us in the way, we learn how to please Him. That brings us joy, happiness, satisfaction and more than that, peace with God and the peace of God. We do not get what we deserve, we get instead, God’s grace.

So how do we go about receiving this training opportunity? That one is easy, for us today, Jesus Christ. To come to Christ means we have humbled ourselves to Him.

1 Peter 5:6–9

“Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, so that He may exalt you at the proper time, having cast all your anxiety on Him, because He cares about you. Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. So resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brothers and sisters who are in the world.” (NASB 2020)

David tells us here that as we bring ourselves into submission of the Lord He leads and guides us, literally to walk alongside and direct us along the way. And He teaches us, keeps us on course as a good shepherd would.

We are going to stop there and pick up in verse 10 next time.

Let’s pray.

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