

Dwelling in God's Presence - Psalm 15

Remember: The fool is the one who refuses to acknowledge the covenant-keeping God (in practice, an atheist).

So, who WILL dwell with him?

- See Matthew 25:31-46 for Christ's discussion that very closely mirrors this.

Two contrasting approaches

- Psalm 15 is the "negative" - those who won't be there.
- Psalm 23 is the "positive" - these are the things God will provide.

Why is it comforting to recall that God provides?

What does God provide?

- Salvation. Note on thing: In some other faiths, things like "conversion" and "salvation" are two separate events. "Conversion" is the re-turning of our heart toward God and the truth; "salvation" is when God rescues us from our sin and its penalty.
- **Salvation – past** (saved from penalty at moment of "conversion" by "justification") (Romans 5:1, Eph. 2:8-9, Titus 3:5, Rom. 8:1)
- **Salvation – present** (saved from power of sin during "sanctification") (Rom. 6:14, Phil 2:12-13, 1 Thes. 5:23, 2 Cor. 3:18)
- **Salvation – future** (saved from presence of sin forever by "glorification") (Rom. 13:11, 1 Pet. 1:5, Rom. 8:23, Rom. 3:20-21)

Psalm 15 – the sins that shouldn't be in our lives

- **Vs. 1 – who can be in God's presence?**
 - Think of "if I regard iniquity in my heart, God will not hear me."
 - Think of Revelation where it says "nothing that causes a lie, etc" can be in His presence.
 - Think of 2 Peter 1; 1 John where it says if you continue in sin (unchanged despite knowing the price God paid for our sin), "how abides the love of God in you?"
- **Vs. 2-5 – Godly living essential to pleasing God; Evil works displease God.**
 - Walk uprightly (in the fear of the Lord) and do righteous things, speaking truth in the innermost parts (this language is echoed throughout Scripture).
 - Contrast between "upright" and "underhanded"
 - Contrast between "false heart" and "truthful heart"
 - Contrast between speaking truth from the mouth and speaking truth from the heart

These examples are then taken and given "okay, this is what it looks like."

- **Vs. 3a – Doesn't Backbite** – doing and saying things behind your neighbor's back to hurt them or lift yourself up ("taking matters into your own hands")

- Gossip and Flattery
 - Gossip – saying something behind someone's back you wouldn't say to their face
 - Flattery – saying something to someone's face you wouldn't say behind their back.
- **Vs. 3b – Doesn't take up another's reproach** – becoming offended by someone else's problem and taking it as "your own."

Side Note: A fine line: you should bear one another's burdens and seek justice, but don't carry them to the point that you become offended on someone's behalf. You help the victim and oppose the offender as much as is needed, but don't meddle in another person's affairs ("Dog by the ears principle"). Gossip often leads to unrelated people getting involved in problems that are none of their business, and when the original parties solve their problem, all the "gossiped to" people still carry the grudge.

- **Vs. 4a – Not a respecter of persons**
 - This doesn't mean "don't honor the king," but rather "don't let someone off the hook because they're powerful/rich/connected"
 - God doesn't care who you are or what station you hold – He judges sin on a case-by-case basis irrespective of your "clout."
 - **Note: How is Psalm 23:1 is the cure for this temptation?**
- **Vs. 4b – Honors his word**
 - Not all promises pan out the way you'd hope – a godly man keeps his word.
 - Wedding vows - "for better or worse" for a reason – marriage is hard, communication is hard.
 - NDA-type situations – business doesn't always pan out – keep your word.
 - Debt payments and contracts – unless forced into it through duress, if you entered into a contract voluntarily, you promised to pay it (the Bible provides solutions for if you "became surety for your neighbor," and it's basically "pester them until they let you go.")
 - **Note: how do you show trust for God when things don't go the way you planned?.**
- **Vs. 5 – Don't take advantage of stupid people**
 - It's easy to take advantage of people in their time of need.
 - Don't be a loan shark. If you need a sign on your building saying "it's legal to do this," it's probably a business you shouldn't be part of.
 - Don't corrupt justice – the poor innocent party deserves just as much representation as the rich. Don't corrupt justice for a kickback
- **Vs. 5 – the 2 Peter 1 Principle**
 - "if these be in you, and abound, they make you that you shall not be barren nor unfruitful"

Your thoughts follow your actions – do the work and the thoughts and feelings will follow.

Conscience Question – if no one on earth could ever find out, what would you do?