

Psalm 14

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- [0 : 0 0] and then we'll sing immortal, invisible, God only wise. But let's read the psalm. You may well know that Psalm 14 and Psalm 53 are almost identical.
- Psalm 14, verse 1. There are seven verses. This is God's word too this evening.
- The fool says in his heart, there is no God. They are corrupt. Their deeds are vile.
- There is no one who does good. The Lord looks down from heaven on all mankind to see if there are any who understand.
- Any who seek God. All have turned away. All have become corrupt. There's no one who does good.
- [1 : 0 6] Not even one. Do all these evildoers know nothing? They devour my people as though eating bread.
- They never call on the Lord. But there they are, overwhelmed with dread. For God is present in the company of the righteous.
- You evildoers frustrate the plans of the poor. But the Lord is their refuge. Oh, that salvation for Israel would come out of Zion.
- When the Lord restores his people. Let Jacob rejoice. And Israel be glad. May God bless to us his work this evening.
- Let me ask you a question. If you've got your Bible open in front of you. There's a very significant word in the last verse.
- [2 : 0 9] Which one do you think it is? When I was reading the last verse of this psalm. Suddenly.
- In reading. In studying. I suddenly realized there's a word. In this last verse. Which is highly significant.
- Apart from all the other significant words. There was one word. I thought. Yes. Yes. Thank God for that. Any more?
- When? You need to stop reading the Hebrew, Agnes. When?
- Not if. That is what's behind this psalm. He's not being disparaging about unbelievers. For the sake of it.
- [3 : 2 1] When? The Lord restores his people. Not if. The Lord restores his people. He can only write that. If he knows the promises of God.
- The promises he gave to Abraham. The promises he gave to Abraham. Because. And this is my point tonight. The long sorrow of God.
- And his set purpose. And his set purpose for the reconciliation of sinful humanity. If we probably all have long sorrows. Way back to childhood.
- Where we look back. And. And. And. They possibly still bring us to tears. But imagine being God. Now I know a thousand years is a day. And a day is a thousand years to God.
- But can you imagine. Perfect grief. If you can imagine perfect love. He is love. Then what likes his grief.

- [4 : 21] When people reject. That love. The sorrow of God. Has been.
 Since the inception of humanity. Genesis 131. The Lord looked upon everything he had made. And it was. Very good.
 Human words. Chapter 6. Verse 5. Of Genesis. And the Lord looked down from heaven. And he was grieved.
 Because every inclination of men's heart. Was evil. Six chapters later. Six chapters later.
 From everything being very good. To every inclination of men's heart. Being evil. Now whatever period of time that is.
- [5 : 19] We're not sure. But if a thousand days. If a day is a thousand years to the Lord. A thousand years a day. It wasn't very long.
 For him. And men had turned away already. The long sorrow of God. The long sorrow of God. Is here. In this psalm. The Lord. Verse 2.
 The Lord looks down from heaven. On all mankind. And look at the description. Of mankind's heart there. I hope none of us come under this.
 Because you're heading for the judgment of God. If you're unrepentant. Don't think you're any different from anybody else. That's one of the foolish things men are good at.
 Blindness. We see everybody else's faults. But our own. We point a finger. And there's three point back at ourselves. But we don't bother about them. Well this is God's finger.
- [6 : 20] This is God's finger. Pointing down. His eyes looking upon us. If you like. From his window in heaven.
 And that phrase is used in a lot of the Psalms. God looking down. But it begins with.
 This moral fool. So. And that's what the word means. Do you remember Nabal. The story of Nabal. Do you remember him and his wife. And David and his men. Were protecting all their property.
 And Nabal was so. So unappreciative. With no sense of moral obligation. To David and his men. His wife. Realizes. She's made an idiot of himself.
 Don't say anything ladies. Right. She gets all the parcels. And all the presents. And heads for David. She doesn't tell him. Secretly. Very feminine.
- [7 : 19] Goes to David. Says to David. David I'm sorry. But my husband has said. My husband. Is well named. His name is Nabal.
 Fool. And that's the word here in Hebrew. David says. It's just as well you came. Mrs. Because.
 When I heard what he said. And. He calms down. As men do. Then she goes back.
 Nabal died. Ten days later. When he realized. What he'd done. He went to pieces. At the danger. He'd put them all in.
 A fool. They had looked after him. We're talking about here. About practical illustration. From scripture. He didn't appreciate.
- [8 : 16] The kindness. Of the man of God. That God had put. In place. To lead. To eat. To feed. As a shepherd king. The people of Israel. But judgment.
 Was coming on him. Until his wife. Interceded. And said. Please. Was he.
 Like this. The fool. Says in his heart. There is. No God. I can do. What I like. Even today.
 This is a magazine. That comes into our house. We never read it. To be honest with you. We throw it out. But it's in the paper. It's part of the paper. David Baddiel.

Is a Jew. And an atheist. You'll hear him on the telly. But I wouldn't watch him. If I was you. His language is terrible. And if you. Even if you try to read something. You'll want to put it away.

[9 : 12] As a believer. The language is awful. But he says here. This is just this afternoon. I read this. I used to be certain.

We as a species. Were progressing slowly upwards. He's an atheist. And a Jew. But now. I don't think that. At all. Now who could deny.

That with all the development. In science. That we've had. In the western world. The moral development. Of man. Has not kept pace with us. We are still.

The same. As we always. Were. Man has never changed. It doesn't matter. Whether it's in Judea.

Or here. Or any part of earth. You will find people. Coveting. Lying. Stealing. Breaking all sorts of laws.

[10 : 11] And God's law being broken. And he's not first. And that's why. Because if you don't love God. With your heart. Soul. Mind. And strength. You'll not be given the grace.

To love your neighbor. As yourself. You're in the position. Where you're saying. I don't believe.

He exists. But if they were telling the truth. Many people. And I know this. I was 22. Before I was born again. You will still pray.

In quietness. You'll still at times think. Please help me Lord. You don't know who you're talking to. But you see the result.

Of being a moral fool. And saying. There is no God. The descriptions.

[11 : 12] They are corrupt. Their deeds are fine. Oh he has his people. The Lord has his people. But as he looks upon. And around them. He sees.

No one. Respects him. Or cares for them. He looks down from heaven. To see. If there are any.

Who understand. And there could be. In this room tonight. Somebody who says. They know. God. The test is very simple.

You will be wise. To salvation then. That's the test. Understanding. Is the bridge. Between knowledge. And wisdom. If I want my car fixed.

Right. I wouldn't go to Cameron. Because. See. I know what a car is. And I know what colour your car is. I know what size your engine is.

[12 : 08] I don't know what your phone number is. But I know your car has got four wheels. That's all he'd know. But he has no understanding. So he's not wise. As how to fix my car.

I would go to George. Am I right George? See you tomorrow. But I would go to George. Because George. George just doesn't know a car.

He understands the car. And he's got the wisdom. How to fix the thing. Right. When you don't have understanding of anything. You can say.

I know. I know. I know. You will lack wisdom. Because you don't understand. What you're talking about. And it's the same in many areas of life.

There are people who know many, many things. But they're not wise with that. Because they don't understand how to deal with it. This person.

[13 : 05] This fool. God is observing him. And no doubt speaking to him through nature. Like he does with many. But there is no understanding.

If he had understanding. The next clause in that sentence is. There's not any who seek God. He would seek God. If he understood God. But he doesn't.

Because he's in the dark. There's no light. The light of his word is not in his heart. It's just religion. If he goes to church.

And if you're here tonight. Because you go to church. You're not saved. Just because you go to church. You may say.

Well. I'm not really like that fool. I'm not turned. Really. To be honest with you. I couldn't say this publicly.

[14 : 02] But I have to say it. To explain myself. This man. David Baddiel. Is dreadful language. And dreadful attitudes. This poor man is a Jew. And an atheist.

But he can't quite figure out. Why it is. Science. Hasn't changed man into a better people. Because he's not going to recognize the sin.

In all of us. This person here. All have turned away. The Lord looks down and says. All have become corrupt. That word in Hebrew. In the corrupt.

You know what that means? Soured like milk. Stinking. This kind of behavior. Stinks in the nostrils of God. It's a moral fool.

You see. It's not just somebody. Who's a clown. With a mask. In a circus. But somebody. Who morally. Is foolish. And have no understanding.

[15 : 06] When I look back to Eden. And we think of the long sorrow of God. Stephen. Put up that first. Heading for me. Will you in the box please. Which means to do it. Isn't it? Oh it's good to have you behind me Stephen.

The only true searcher of human hearts. Looking and sees again. There is little belief. In or any affection for him. That's what's in verses 1 to 3.

Isn't it? Do you not find it absolutely fascinating. In our culture book. That we've got. Wellness. Wellness. Well being. Yoga.

All the fantastic things. That are coming from. We've got goop. From that silly actress. I can't remember her name. Please. I hope you're not insulted. Maybe you practice them.

But. What are people looking for? What are they looking for? They're looking for.

[16 : 09] Peace. Well being. They're looking for comfort. The sense of confidence. In this world. We've. You know. Survived without confidence. But they often have to become corrupt.

To get it. And the love of money. Is a root of all evil. Just think of the fool.

The rich fool in Luke 12. The man comes to him. And says. Tell my brother. To share his inheritance with me. Jesus tells a parable.

And at the end of it. The fool is saying to himself. I've got all my barns. But that. I'll just eat. Drink. And be merry. And suit myself. And the voice comes. You're a fool.

And this night. Your soul. Is required of you. Who is going to have all your stuff. Then. That's foolishness. That's a moral fool.

[17 : 09] Who has no sense of. Accountability. Even to God. And can play the game. And double talk.

And please everybody. But in his soul. The Lord's looking down. Then the Lord sees darkness. Verse 4. Next one Stephen.

For me please. 46. Can you do that? Yeah. Yeah. Verse 4 says. Do these evil doers.

Know nothing? Do they know nothing? Do they not realize. That God has a people. And he cares for them.

And while they try to destroy them. In their atheism. As is happening now. In our atheistic. Secular. Humanistic society.

[18 : 08] The church has not just been marginalized. Metaphorically speaking. They're cutting off our hands and feet. We're still in the same situation.

There is a darkness. In the heart of men. And if it wasn't serious. Would God give his son. To die for them. Why would Jesus come? Why come to die? And promise forgiveness. If it wasn't serious.

We can't do anything. About that ourselves. And I've said it time and time again. Until I'm fed up listening to myself. It really worries me. And I've been in the ministry since 1977.

And even in the 10 years before that. When I became a Christian. And started preaching. Even in my home fellowship. Where I was saved. I could see people in those places.

[19 : 13] And I think. Are they the Lord's? I'm not convinced. Some of them were. I'm not the judge. They become Baptists.

That doesn't mean they become a Christian. We're meant to be a Christian first. Then the Lord leads us. To where he wants us to worship. And where we put our lot in and serve.

But it worries me sick. But people become religious. Because if I was this fool.

And I knew that the Lord. Was amongst the people. That I am crucifying. And torturing. And dealing bad with. I would be thinking.

How do I get that protection? But the darkness is so deep. Satan and sin. Are anti-God. Anti-Christ.

[20 : 14] And that's who's active in our world. Now globally. As we progress towards the Lord's coming. Where the truth is a lie. And the lie is the truth. As Paul says in Thessalonians.

Only God. Can save us. No one else. No one else.

That little girl. Speaking to David Hume. I've always remembered that story. For years. And him standing there. With all his philosophy.

And education. And sophistication. And reputation. And she tells him. I pray to God. He will show you that he exists. My goodness.

The enemy is busy friends. Remember when you pray for your family. Your friends. Your fellowship. Remember. They are up against it. Satan has a hold on them.

[21 : 13] Because of their sin. That's why Jesus said. Satan has no hold on me. Because he has no sin. He can tempt him. But he can't make him sin. Because he has no hold on Jesus.

But he has a hold on humanity. And this long sorrow of God. And his set purpose. For the recovery. The reconciliation of mankind.

Sinful humanity. Here we have it telling us. The righteous. Are cared for by God.

In the midst of all of this. Isn't that tremendous? Isn't that tremendous? It's tremendous to know that. The gates of hell will not prevail against it.

What was he talking about? His church. Because he's in the circle. Of the righteous.

[22 : 14] And he makes their quarrel. His own. You touch me. You touch them. You touch the other one. You remember when Saul of Tarsus. Was going on the Damascus road to Syria.

And he was brought down off his high horse. Literally and metaphorically speaking. He heard a voice saying. Why. Are you persecuting.

Me. Not my church. Me. He didn't even know who he was. He said. Who are you Lord? See.

He said. See. When people attack the church. They attack God. He was attacking. Not just the name of Jesus.

And not just the people. He was attacking. The body of Christ. And the purpose of God. Because God and his people are one. We are one with the Lord.

[23 : 08] And with the Father. God is in your midst. And the purpose of God. So it doesn't matter what this postmodern society is. We call it now. Where there are no absolutes. And what's true for you.

And pure for you. And doctrine for you. That's fine. Just leave me alone. There's no big picture. There's no biblical world view. Really expressed in the West here. Remember. Remember.

If you're one of the righteous. God is in your midst. No matter how many fools. He looks down and sees. And we're meant to be.

The salt of the earth. And the light of the world to them. What a unique. Significant. People we are. At this point.

I'd like us to read. Romans chapter 3. The reason why. Is this. The use of the word. The righteous.

[24 : 18] My heading. My Bible. Has a subheading. After he's. He's explained. How the world. Has ignored God.

And made their own idols. And then he turns to the Jews. In chapter 2. And says. You're no better than they are. You're supposed to. And you don't. Then he turns to the faithfulness. Of God. In chapter 3.

Of Romans. But from verse 9 on. The statement is made. No one. Is righteous. No one. No one. On earth.

Is righteous. Now that. Rings a bell. With Psalm 14. Because God looked down. From the heaven. And no one. Does good.

This long sorrow. Of God. Through the years. In amongst it all. There is a set purpose. God has set his mind to. So he's going to show.

[25 : 14] There's no difference. Between Jew or Gentile. Let's read this. What shall we conclude. Romans 3 verse 9. Do we have any advantage.

He's speaking. As a Jewish person. Do we. Have any advantage. Not. At all. For we have already.

Made the charge. That Jews and Gentiles. Alike. Are all under the power. Of sin. Sin. Sin has authority over us. They have no authority. Over Jesus. That's why the grave.

Could not hold him. That's why he. Must set us free. Jews and Gentiles. Are alike. As it is written. And here. Psalm 14.

Is quoted. With all the other. Old Testament text here. Psalm 14. Is part of it. There is no one righteous. Not even one. There is one who.

[26 : 09] There is no one who understands. There is no one who seeks God. All have turned away. They have together become worthless. There is no one who does good. Not even one.

Their throats are open graves. Their tongues practice deceit. The poison of vipers. Is on their lips. Their mouths are full of cursing. And bitterness. Their feet are swift to shed blood.

Ruin and misery marks their ways. And the way of peace. They do not know. There is no fear of God. Before their eyes. Now we know. That whatever the law. That's God's moral law.

Says. It says to those. Who are under the law. So that every mouth. May be silenced. And the whole world. Held accountable to God. Therefore no one will be declared.

Righteous in God's sight. By the works of the law. Rather. Through the law. We become conscious of sin. These righteous people.

[27 : 07] These are not just religious people. These are people who have trusted in God. For salvation. These are people who trust him.

In faith. Even a thousand years. Before Jesus comes to Bethlehem. And long before that. Abraham's faith. It was reckoned to him as. Righteousness.

So we are all condemned. Under God's ten commandments. The moral law. Every one of us. But listen. Righteousness through faith.

Romans 3. 21. But now. Apart from the law. The righteousness of God. Has been made known. Apart. From.

The law. To which the law. And the prophets testify. This righteousness. Is given through faith. In Jesus Christ. To. All.

[28 : 05] Who believe. There is no difference. Between a Jew and a Gentile. For all have sinned. And fall short. Of the glory of God. And he just quoted. The Old Testament scriptures.

To show that. Including Psalm 14. And all are justified. Freely. By his grace. Through the redemption. That came by Christ Jesus. God presented.

Christ. As a sacrifice. Of atonement. Through the shedding. Of his blood. Behold. The Lamb of God. Who takes away. The sin of the world. Said John. He was born.

To be butchered. For us. Through the shedding. Of his blood. To be received.

The benefits. Of that. To be received. By faith. Not. By. Works. Nobody. Can keep. The Ten Commandments. The law.

[28 : 59] Makes us conscious. Of our sin. That's what it's for. God. He did this. God.

To demonstrate. His righteousness. Because in his forbearance. He had left. The sins committed. Beforehand. Unpunished. See. There was a time. He did it.

To demonstrate. His righteousness. At present time. So as to be just. And the one. Who justifies. Those who have faith. In Jesus. He is just. Because. Through Jesus.

Who keeps the law. God makes. A righteous judgment. The law is kept. By him. The sinless one. You can have. That righteousness. If you come to him. You can be justified.

Before me. You're not guilty. That. Is forgiveness. In Jesus name. That's the gospel. These people.

[29 : 57] Where God. Is in their midst. They're not Pharisees. They weren't Pharisees there. But they're not self-righteous people. They are righteous people.

They are the remnant of grace. That has always been there. And no matter how many unwise fools. Attack them. And it's the same today friends.

Nothing changes. God is still the same. He's never changed. We change. He never changes. He keeps every promise. And in verse 27 of Romans 3.

It says. Romans 3. Where then is the boasting? It is excluded. Leave your big head at the door. Because sin has made our world look a big fool.

Satan loves to make the church look a big fool. But we're not. Because we believe there is a God. And he has revealed himself in Christ Jesus.

[30 : 56] And through that atoning substitutionary grace. He has propitiated God's wrath. And he has expiated our sins. And we have fellowship with God.

And he has done it. And he has done it. Wow. If God hadn't done it. Where would we all be going? He probably wiped us out long ago. But you see.

He has a set purpose. All during the sorrow years. Because he loves the world he made. Now.

This brings me to the when. The last point. Sorry to take so long. God has had this purpose all along.

Psalm 14. Verses 6 and 7. But you can go to Romans 11 if you want. But I'll just read the verses in Psalm 14. To finish up. Because this is the point.

[31 : 58] For his people and their encouragement. I'll read the last two verses of Psalm 14. You evildoers frustrate the plans of the poor.

Because the poor are powerless. That's often said in political realms in the world. The poor in any country are powerless. Only the rich get their influence. They can buy this. That's a common thing in the Western world.

But not when you're the Lord. You evildoers frustrate the plans of the poor. But the Lord is their refuge. Oh that salvation for Israel.

The righteous ones. And all of the nation that God would save. Would come out of Zion. When. Not if. Not if. That's what that struck me.

When I was reading this time and time again. When. Not if. The Lord restores his people. Let Jacob rejoice. And Israel.

[33 : 00] Be glad. Romans 11. Verses some of you will know well. He's reminding us Gentile Christians.

That we're grafted on branches. We're. We should get her. We should get her. We should get her head right. We're grafted on. Verse 25.

I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery. Brothers and sisters. So that you may not be conceited. Israel has experienced a hardening in part.

Until the full number of the Gentiles. Has come in. Until. When. When. They come in.

Then. Israel. And he quotes. As it is written. The deliverer will come from Zion. He will turn godliness away from Jacob.

[34 : 05] And this is my covenant with them. When I take away their sins. That's the covenant. He will take away their sins. And they will be able to stand before him.

Now. We read in Romans 3. There's no difference between a Jew and a Gentile. As far as sin is concerned. We're all sinners by nature. We're under condemnation of the moral law of God.

But. With that long sorrow. God's had since Eden. He's had this set purpose of reconciliation. And no matter how many moral fools there are.

In the world. We've maybe been one ourselves. We shouldn't be now. If we're a Christian. This man's prayer.

Is coming to pass. What did Jesus say? I have come. That you may have life.

[35 : 04] And life. In all its fullness. He wasn't speaking to me and you. He was speaking to the Jews. In Israel. It's amazing.

How many things the Lord said. To his people in Israel. That the church has just gathered up. And applied to itself. With not a thought. As to who. He was first speaking to.

That's not sensible. It's not even reasonable. So friends. This series on the Psalms. I was given this one.

And it's not if. It's when. But if you're not a Christian tonight. You're outside that righteous fold.

No matter how many church services you're attending. Not everybody who goes to church. Goes to heaven. You have to come into Christ. Not just into the church.

[36 : 04] Then. You've got that relationship. With the Father. Remember that little girl. And Professor Hume. Remember you can be very intelligent.

Be very knowledgeable. And all the rest of it. And be ignorant. Of how to know God for yourself. And it's still the same today.

It's getting worse. And worse now. Pray for each other. Because some of you could be in sticky situations. Maybe in your work. You don't know what to say. You don't know what not to say.

Pray for each other. In this present day. And remember. And thank God. For this long sorrow. He has suffered. But thank him. For the purpose.

He's had in his mind. So that today. We have a saviour. At the right hand of God. Our high priest in heaven. Interceding for us. Because we are.

[37 : 06] His church. Jew and Gentile. Alive. Isn't that miraculous? Isn't it? It's miraculous. May we find.

In days to come. Young people. Like Cameron. Older folks. People of middle ages. Who come to the cafe. To the women's meeting. To the men's meeting.

Think to themselves. We've got people in this church. Who've been coming here. Longer than me. And I've been 15 years around here. I nearly said longer than somebody else. But no. Nobody's longer than him.

And they still don't know the Lord. They still don't know him. Because David and I and Robert. Had a discussion with him. Two weeks ago.

And he still doesn't. Honour the Lord. How dark. Sin is. It holds on to self-righteousness. Only God.

[38 : 01] Can break that. By mercy. Pray. For the people. Who come around our church. Who are still in that terrible position. Pray God will give them understanding.

Then they'll be wise to salvation. And then they'll trust. And they'll receive. Father God. We're going to sing this lovely hymn.

Before the throne of God above. I have. We take possession. I have. I have this person. We have this person.

If it were not for you. Where would we be? We bring all our prayers. Friends. Family. And fellowship. To you. And we pray.

That we would stand. On the ground. That Christ has established. In himself. He is the foundation. He is the head. Let it be. No other foundation.

[39 : 02] We ask your blessing. In our lives. Thank you. For our opportunity. Today. In Jesus name. Amen.