

Who Is The One Who Fears The Lord?

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[0 : 00] We are looking at Psalm 25 this afternoon, so I invite you to turn to Psalm 25, looking at the last half of Psalm 25.

Psalm 25, verses 12-22 is our text for this evening. Psalm 25, verses 12-22, the very words of our living God.

Who is the man who fears the Lord? Him will he instruct in the way that he should choose. His soul shall abide in well-being, and his offspring shall inherit the land.

The friendship of the Lord is for those who fear him, and he makes known to them his covenant. My eyes are ever toward the Lord, for he will pluck my feet out of the net.

Turn to me and be gracious to me, for I am lonely and afflicted. The troubles of my heart are enlarged. Bring me out of my distresses.

[1 : 22] Consider my affliction and my trouble, and forgive all my sins. Consider how many are my foes, and with what violent hatred they hate me.

O guard my soul and deliver me. Let me not be put to shame, for I take refuge in you. May integrity and uprightness preserve me, for I wait for you.

Redeem Israel, O Lord, out of all his troubles. There we'll end the reading of God's holy and inspired word. May God now be pleased to bless it to us.

Well, when you think of fear, what is the first thing that pops into your mind? I think for most of us, it would be something threatening.

A danger that is going to harm us. Something that we need to run from. An intruder that needs to stay out of our life.

[2 : 29] However, when we think of the fear of the Lord, which is a statement that comes up quite a bit in Scripture, when we think of that, we should not think of a threat, but rather a friend.

We should not think of a danger to avoid, but an intimate friend that we want to draw near to. Now, this does not negate the high reverence with which we view the Lord.

A reverence that causes us to want to be careful to walk in His ways and do the things that are pleasing to Him. But this is not in light of Him being an angry judge, but of Him being a friend, our God and Savior.

And that's what we see in this psalm here. And I want us to consider three benefits that stem from fearing the Lord. They are God's relationship to us.

And second, our relationship to God. And then third, our relationship to others. So first, God's relationship to us. And he begins with a question here in verse 12.

[3 : 49] Who is the man who fears the Lord? This is a pivot point in this psalm. And David's asking this question not to take a census. How many of you are out there who fear the Lord, but rather in order to drive home a point as a teaching moment in order to show us the benefits?

But we have to ask the question, what is the fear of the Lord? Again, fear of the Lord is not fear of His judgments that cause us to flee from Him.

But such a high regard for the Lord from seeing His great glory that causes us to want to draw near. To serve Him and to worship Him. It's not the same. This illustration is going to fall short. But it's similar to seeing a celebrity. We're drawn towards that person.

We want to run up and get their autograph or meet them. Because we see their greatness and we see their status and we see that they have the ability to bless. And so we want to run up to Him or her rather than run away from them.

[5 : 01] I still remember when I was a teenager and my favorite rock band was coming in town. They were in town and we were going to see the concert later on.

And my friend calls me and says, hey, I found out which hotel they're staying at. And so we hopped in the car and we went across town, downtown to go to the hotel that they were at.

We had no plan. I had no idea how this was going to turn out. But hey, it was worth a shot. And of course we get there and there's kind of a crowd out front and they had heard the same news.

And so we decided, you know, we're going to just run in there and act as if we belong there. You know, walk by the desk, say hi, how's it going? And just keep going in. And so we did that.

And lo and behold, we ran into the lead singer. And we were so excited. We didn't want to run away from him. We ran up to him. We wanted to get his autograph.

[5 : 58] And then he started to ask us questions. He started to ask us where we're from and take an interest in us. And we just couldn't believe it. And then the mob starts coming.

He goes, hey, I have to go. And he bolts and runs off. But we were just amazed at that. And every illustration falls short. But what I want you to pick up from that is that is what it looks like to fear the Lord.

It's not this lead singer running away as what happened when the mob started to come. But rather it's us wanting to run up to him, wanting to draw near because we see a level of greatness.

And we want to be near him. And not only that, we want to be like him. The former quarterback for the Nebraska Cornhuskers looked almost exactly like Patrick Mahomes, who's the famous NFL quarterback.

And they even showed this on TV. They showed a comparison. He had the same haircut. He had the same even earbuds. He had the same mannerisms. He had the same swagger, as the kids say nowadays.

[7 : 06] Too bad he didn't play as well. But nevertheless, he looked just like Patrick Mahomes. And that's because he saw his greatness and therefore wanted to be like him.

And that is a snapshot of what it means to fear the Lord. We see his greatness and we want to draw near to him and we want to be like him.

And so that is a picture of what it means to fear the Lord. You know, oftentimes we treat God as if it's a privilege for him to have us on his team.

Or as if he fears us. Desperately hoping that we'll come to him. But our God is the most blessed being there is.

And we should marvel at the privilege that the King has summoned us to him. To be in his presence where he blesses us.

[8 : 12] And he even takes note of us. It says here, who is the one who fears the Lord? Him will he instruct in the way that he should choose. Now this is not the sense of God will just tell you what decisions you should make in life.

Of course, there's guidance from the Lord in his sovereign providence. But this is in light of the context of Psalm 25, specifically verses 4-5, where we saw that God teaches us his way to walk in his way.

That's what this is referring to. He personally instructs us. And this should amaze us. It would be like meeting that lead singer.

And not only does that lead singer take an interest in us, but says, hey, I tell you what, why don't you come with me and I will teach you how to play guitar like me. What a privilege that would be. It actually is a great privilege. It costs a lot of money to learn from the greatest. Well, that is what we get with God.

[9 : 20] For nothing. He teaches us his way. He instructs us in the way we should walk to be like him. And this will bring true and ultimate blessing.

Verse 13, His soul shall abide in well-being and His offspring shall inherit the land. There are two amazing blessings here. First, the one who fears the Lord and has taught his way abides in well-being.

And of course, this doesn't mean that you get health, wealth, and prosperity. It's our idolatry of this world that would cause us to think that. Rather, it says our soul will abide in well-being even in the midst of difficulty.

Even in the midst of troubles and trials, our soul will rest secure. This could be translated as His soul shall dwell at ease. And the second blessing is that His offspring shall inherit the land.

That's not referring to our physical children. Although God is often pleased to work through the means of our catechizing them, of our sharing the gospel with them.

[10 : 31] But this is referring to being a part of that family that will inherit the true and better promised land of which the land of Israel was a type in shadow.

Really, this is ultimately referring to Jesus' offspring, the people given to Him by His Father to redeem them. As Isaiah 53 says, Christ will see His offspring and will be satisfied.

What an amazing blessing it is that the greatest, most glorious, most blessed being would not only give us access to Himself, not only personally teach us, but even adopts us into His family and allows us to live in His presence and dwell with Him forever.

And we are part of His intimate group of friends. We see in verse 14, the friendship of the Lord is for those who fear Him, and He makes known to them His covenant. So for those who fear the Lord, those who by His grace have had their eyes opened to His glory to behold the glory of God in the face of Christ.

That is through the gospel. We are His friends. Now, this word means secret counsel, but the idea is stuff that you would only share with friends.

[11 : 58] And it's not that God has some secrets for you, but this is referring to that specific knowledge of the Lord and His ways that believers have, that the world does not have.

It's what Jesus is talking about in John 15, 15, where He says, No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing, but I have called you friends.

For all that I have heard from My Father, I have made known to you. Jesus communicates to us this saving knowledge of God, revealing His will, revealing the way of salvation, and He is our friend.

He is for us. He comes alongside us and helps us and bears our burdens. And this should cause us to want to draw nearer to Him.

A second benefit that stems from fearing the Lord. First, we saw God's relationship to us. Now, let's look at that from a different angle. Our relationship to God. Our speaking to God. We see in verses 15-20 some pretty intense suffering.

[13 : 09] Pluck my feet out of the net. I am lonely. I am afflicted. The troubles of my heart are enlarged. Bring me out of all my distresses.

Plural. Forgive all my sins. How many are my foes? With violent hatred, they hate me. You see here, this is intense suffering.

But before we jump right to us, we need to realize that this is ultimately the suffering that our Lord Jesus Christ went through.

And it's the suffering that He went through for us on account of our sin. Because this is what was required. A whole life of suffering, not just on the cross, but a whole life of suffering in order to pay for and atone for your sin and my sin.

And so when we read the Psalms, we read of our Lord Jesus Christ's suffering. We read of His sufferings. The sufferings He went through for our sake. But this also describes the sufferings we go through.

[14 : 24] For a disciple is not above his master. And if the world hated him, it will hate us. But when we fear the Lord, we bring our fears to Him.

When we fear the Lord, we bring our fears to Him. As we see here, consider all the troubles I'm going through.

Consider my enemies. Consider their violent hatred. We bring this to the Lord. In verse 15, He says, My eyes are ever toward the Lord. For He will pluck my feet out of the net.

The psalmist describes himself as prey that's been caught in a hunter's trap. And that's the suffering that He went through in this world. That's some of the suffering that we go through in this world.

The enemy wants to lay a trap for us. Our enemies of sin, death, and the devil wants to trap us. Wants to snag us. And sometimes we get snagged, but we look to the Lord to pluck us out.

[15 : 32] We look to the Lord to keep us safe. And then He says in verses 16-18, Turn to me and be gracious to me, for I am lonely and afflicted.

The troubles of my heart are enlarged. Bring me out of my distresses. Consider my affliction and my trouble and forgive all my sins.

Beloved, this describes this life. It's a life of suffering. It's a life of sorrows. We live in a sin-cursed world where things are not always alright.

Where we go through deep, deep affliction and trouble. And what do we do? We bring it to the Lord. And we ask Him to turn to us.

That's what the psalmist asks. Turn to me and be gracious to me as if to say, let the sunshine of your face come back upon me again. It's hiding behind these dark clouds and I can't feel the warmth.

[16 : 36] Turn again to me. Let the sunshine of your face come out upon me again. Satisfy me in my deepest distress. When we are lonely.

When we are lonely. When we are all alone and it feels like no one understands. When we are afflicted. When we are going through some of the greatest difficulties of this sin-cursed life that come upon us.

When the troubles of our heart are enlarged. when we just carry them in our chest and feel it in the pit of our stomach and we are carrying it around.

We go to God in prayer. We are invited to come to Him. Crying out to Him. Laying these burdens before Him.

We ask Him to bring us out of these distresses. Out of our affliction. Because He does see. He does hear. And He will deliver us.

[17 : 46] For only our eternal God who is infinite in power. Glorious in might. Only He can deliver us.

And only His face can satisfy us. There might be a barrier to see. In our affliction we may wonder if the Lord will really hear us because we have sinned against Him.

We have this remaining pollution that doesn't go away fully until we get to heaven. And so we may wonder if the reason why we are going through affliction is because we have sinned.

And often times it's our own sin that can afflict us. When we blow it again. When we struggle with the same sin over and over again.

When we fall again. When we know that we shouldn't and we said that we weren't going to and we were going to try really hard. Our first call is usually not God.

[18 : 59] God is the last person we want to go to with our shame. Why would He want to hear from me anyway?

Look at what I've done again. We prefer to avoid Him thinking that certainly He doesn't want to hear from us. And so we tend to then handle it ourselves.

Carry the weight of our guilt and shame ourselves. struggle against our sin ourselves. Try to conquer our sin ourselves in hopes that if I can get a handle on this then I can finally have confidence before God that I'm acceptable.

And then I can come to Him. forgive all my sins.

We don't handle it ourselves and re-earn the right to come to Him. Rather, Scripture commands us to go to a throne not of judgment but of grace.

[20 : 09] And what does grace mean? grace means that God is favorable towards us when we deserve the opposite. That He gives us His favor even when we've merited the exact opposite.

And we go to this throne of grace to receive help in our time of need timely help because there stands a faithful and merciful and sympathetic high priest waiting for us there to help sinners not the righteous but sinners.

sinners. And that throne of grace will never run dry even if it's the millionth time we've come. God can even say you haven't come enough.

You should come more. And 1 John 2 says that if anyone does sin we have an advocate with the Father Jesus Christ the Righteous One.

It doesn't say if anyone has sinned you better take it more seriously because God's patience is running out. No it says we have an advocate.

[21 : 29] He is an advocate for sinners. And He is the Righteous One. It goes on to say He is our righteousness and He is our propitiation.

He has it covered. He has everything covered for us sinners. sinners. Jesus Christ is our righteousness. He has fulfilled the whole law for us even under testing.

Not to say okay now you do the same. Let's see how you do. Yes we need to follow His example but what we do is never our righteousness before God.

Rather our righteousness ever remains the righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ. And it's never transferred to us. Even in our good days. our righteousness in and of ourselves is never considered before God as our righteousness before Him.

It is always Christ. It's always His and never any of ours. Ours contributes nothing to it. He's fulfilled the whole law for us and we get credit for it.

[22 : 36] And that includes Him being our propitiation. that is He has satisfied God's justice against us. It is satisfied. It is finished.

Forever. Never to flare up even when we fall into sin. He ever remains our advocate. He ever remains our righteousness.

He ever remains our propitiation. It's all Him. He has done it all. The Father is satisfied and has raised Him from the dead and He is seated at the right hand of the Father on high.

That means He is forever satisfied with us. And so we can go to Him in all our afflictions, even our self-afflicted wounds.

We come to Him and we say, deliver us from our afflictions and forgive all my sins. and so we come to Him as beloved children and not ever as enemies, asking God to deliver us from our enemies.

[23 : 46] Verses 19-20 Consider how many are my foes and with what violent hatred they hate me. Oh, guard my soul and deliver me. Let me not be put to shame, for I take refuge in you.

we have foes that hate us with violent hatred. We may not experience this all the time among unbelievers, but we do have a cruel enemy, Satan, who wants to bring us down.

He will do whatever he can to bring us down. He hates us with a cruel hatred. but greater is our Lord.

And we come to him and we say, oh, this enemy, he hates me with utter hatred. He hates your people with utter hatred. And the Lord knows and the Lord keeps us and the Lord preserves us. And our own sin, our own flesh, it's the same way it wants to drag us down, but we come to him, we ask him to help us. our greatest temptations. And we say in verse 21, may integrity and uprightness preserve me for I wait for you.

[25 : 02] Oh, the enemy wants to bring us down, but oh, Lord, Lord, let me not be brought down with him. May integrity and uprightness preserve me for I wait for you.

I come to you. I depend upon you for this integrity. I come to you. You may help me walk in your ways and not give in to the enemy or stoop to his level.

And so that his name is not reproached. A third and final benefit stemming from fear in the Lord is our relationship to others.

Look at verse 22. Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles. The psalmist turns now from himself to God's people.

When we do not fear the Lord, when we do not stand in awe of his greatness and see his glory, we tend to be consumed with ourselves.

[26 : 06] We tend to be worried and fixated on our problems and our troubles. How is this going to work out? Will it work out? What do I need to do?

God won't hear me because I'm just too sinful. He will not pardon my guilt. And so we end up carrying our sorrows, bearing our troubles, focusing on ourselves, and we have a weight too heavy to ever bear another's burden.

We end up being self-focused, self-centered. We end up using others to help bear our burdens, being so focused on what we're going through and our suffering, and therefore we miss others. Suffering. However, when we fear God, when we see His great goodness in the face of Christ, we know that He hears us, He cares for us, and He loves us with an infinite love that we can't imagine. then we trust Him. Then we lay our burdens down, knowing that He will take care of them. Cast all your anxiety on the Lord, for He cares for you.

[27 : 23] Then we can turn our attention to others and help bear their burdens and thereby fulfill the law of Christ. We see David do that here in this prayer, turning and praying for God's people.

really the top thing, not the only thing, but the top thing we can do in service to elders is pray for them. But this is also Christ praying for us.

Remember, the Psalms are the words of Christ. He prays that we, the true Israel, will be delivered from all our troubles. Here we see our Savior's heart.

He does not look down at us and say, suck it up. Look at all I've done for you. I suffered worse. Stop complaining. I'm sovereign. I'm the one who brought this into your life after all.

Deal with it. Rather, he prays to God, oh God, deliver my people from all their troubles. His heart is warm and compassionate towards us.

[28 : 32] He is merciful and sympathetic. prophetic. He sees our suffering and not our sin. And because our Lord was delivered from all his troubles and has entered heaven as our forerunner, so will we.

And this beloved, she calls us to marvel in standing off such a Savior who, though he is high and exalted, dwells with the lowly, causing us to fear him and therefore draw nearer to him. Amen. Let's pray. Let's Let's Let's Let's Let's Let's Let's pray. Thank you.