

Hear My Voice, O Lord!

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[0 : 00] Y'all didn't go to sleep, did you? Sometimes I keep going. We continue this morning in our series in the Psalms, and we've got just a few more here.

Summer is drawing to a close. School is around the corner, but it has been exciting to see the truth of scriptures through the eyes of the psalmist.

And this morning we will see through the eyes of David these truths this morning, and I hope that it will resonate with us, and I hope that God would touch our heart with these truths.

And before we stand and read it, I would just say this, is that David this morning, as we read, or David in Psalm 28, which we were reading this morning, he indicates or he talks about or he distinguishes two different groups of people in this psalm.

And as he talks about these two groups of people, he really makes a distinction that there's really one main thing that differentiates these two groups.

[1 : 08] So two groups of people, one main difference this morning. That's what I ask you to look for as we read it. I would ask you, in honor of the Word of God, would you stand this morning as we read Psalm 28?

Psalm 28, a Psalm of David. To you, O Lord, I call my rock.

Be not deaf to me, lest if you should be silent to me, I become like those who go down to the pit.

Hear the voice of my plea for mercy when I cry to you for help.

When I lift up my hands towards your most holy sanctuary, do not drag me off with the wicked, with the workers of evil who speak peace with their neighbors while evil is in their hearts.

Give to them according to their work and according to the evil of their deeds. Give to them according to the work of their hands. Render them their due reward because they do not regard the work of the Lord or the work of His hands.

[2 : 22] He will tear them down and build them up no more. Blessed be the Lord, for He has heard the voice of my plea for mercy. The Lord is my strength and my shield.

In Him my heart trusts and I am helped. My heart greatly rejoices. And with my song I give thanks to Him. The Lord is the strength of His people.

He is the saving refuge of His anointed. Oh, save your people and bless your heritage. Be their shepherd and carry them forever.

God, we are grateful for this truth, these truths and this psalm and the reality of your mercy and how great it is that you would save.

And so God, this morning, would you open our ears that we might hear spiritually? Would you open our hearts that we might receive the message you have for us this morning? In this I pray in Christ's name.

[3 : 24] Amen. You can have a seat. Did you notice the two groups of people that David draws our attention to this morning?

Even in verse 1, we see him talking about a group of people. In verse 1, he says, those who go down to the pit.

Those who go down to the pit. Who are those? Who are the ones that go down to the pit? Well, in verse 3, he further explains who they are.

Verse 3 says, do not drag me off with the wicked. It's the wicked, this group of people that are categorized as wicked.

And David says that their destination is the pit, that they will be dragged off to the pit. And so this morning, as we look at these two groups of people, I want to look at three different aspects of both of these groups.

[4 : 33] Three aspects of both of these groups. I haven't even shown you, or we haven't talked yet about that second group, but I will draw your attention to verse 9, and we'll see exactly who the second group of people is.

David says, oh, save your people, the people of God. So we have these two categories, this category of the wicked and this category of the people of God.

Totally different spectrum. And what we're going to look at in this psalm this morning as we hear what David says about these two groups of people, you're going to see a great division. But really, there's one main distinguishing truth that separates these two groups of people.

Now, it plays itself out very uniquely, but really there's one group, and one main truth, we've heard it this morning already, read when Dick was up here, and we'll talk about that as we go forward.

First this, what is the destination of the wicked? The destination of the wicked. Well, we've already made this point that the destination of the wicked is the pit.

[5 : 48] Well, what does the pit refer to? You know, we would, in prayer sometimes, talk about the pit.

We would talk about the destination as being hell. You know, he doesn't amplify, doesn't talk much about what it is, but he does say that the wicked go down to this place, the pit.

They're dragged off, in verse 3, to this place called the pit. And so it begs the question, David, what are you talking about? You know, we probably already know, because we, many of us have read widely in the scriptures, I would refer to what Paul says, Apostle Paul, to the church in Thessalonica.

He talks about the destination of the wicked. And here's what he says, reading in 2 Thessalonians, it says this, and he's talking to this church, these Thessalonians, who are being heavily persecuted. And he's encouraging them. He talks about their suffering, and he says this, since indeed God considers it just to repay with affliction those who afflict you, and to grant relief to you who are afflicted, as well as to us, when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

[7 : 28] And here, in verse 9, he shares the destination. He says this, they will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might.

They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction away from the presence of the Lord.

Does that strike you? Can you imagine what that actually is like?

That there's no grace at all. You know that all of us experience the common grace of God? We all experience the blessings of God. All of mankind experiences the common blessings that God gives to all of us.

But there's coming a day for the wicked when they will no longer experience the grace of God. In any respect, they'll no longer be in his presence.

[8 : 35] They'll be eternally separated from him. If you remove all goodness, which God is a source of good, from their lives, from the life of anyone, if you removed all goodness, what do we have left?

We would probably use the term hell. And we could read in Revelation, the book of Revelation, when it talks about in symbolism, the beast and the harlot and the dragon, when they are removed, when they are ultimately destroyed.

You remember what Revelation says? It says they will be cast into the lake of fire. This place where worm does not die is what the scriptures talk about.

This place of unending pain. And that's the destination of the wicked. But you know, it doesn't have to be so.

Doesn't God offer, doesn't he offer salvation to any who would come to him? This extension of his grace to all is open to all.

[9 : 46] But you know, it's not unjust what God is saying here. It's not unjust how David is pointing us to the destination of the wicked. The second point is this. Look at their deeds.

If you look at the deeds of the wicked, then we would say it's just, it's right that the holy God would punish, would judge based on their deeds. And what do you see here in verse 3?

They're workers of evil. They speak peace. In other words, they say something that sounds very gentle, very loving, very peace-filled, and yet, even when they speak it, there's evil in their hearts.

They're quick to deceive. He talks about in verse 4 that their deeds are evil. And he also says the works of their hands are evil.

And then he goes on to say, God, render to them their due reward. So I ask the question of us, church, is it right that God would punish eternally those who walk in these evil ways, those who choose what is evil?

[11:03] Those who would be classified as wicked. Is it right that God would punish? The answer, biblically speaking, is absolutely. We don't understand the great holiness of God.

We understand it cognitively, and we've embraced it somewhat, but it's far greater, I think, than we can fathom. But I want you to see that their destination is eternal separation.

Why? Because their deeds. Because their deeds are evil. They do not honor God in any way. They do not do what is righteous. They do not do what is loving.

Even what appears to be loving is backed up in their heart with deception. So the way that they would be categorized, this group, is wicked. And so their destination is eternal separation.

Because their deeds are wicked, why are their deeds wicked? Why would they walk in such a way? Why would they choose to mistreat and dishonor and deceive and hurt and wound and kill?

[12:20] Why? Well, the Word of God says why. Because their hearts, their hearts are far away from God. Their hearts are full of evil.

You see it in verse 3? While evil is in their hearts, their hearts are full of evil. people. You know, in verse 5, I think this is the difference between these two groups of people.

We'll talk more deeply about this as we look at it. But in verse 5, listen to what David says about this group called the wicked. He says this, they do not regard the works of the Lord or the works of His hand.

They do not regard. They do not look. They do not praise. They do not notice. They do not care. All that the Lord has done and all of His grace that has been poured out on mankind, they do not care. They do not regard it. Why? Because their hearts are evil. Though God proclaims His greatness in all of His creation.

[13:38] When y'all look at what is created, do you marvel? Do you find yourself going, wow, wow. You know, I think when I was young and first in the faith, even before I was a Christian, I still marveled at the complexity of things.

I think I'm just wired that way. But once I came into the kingdom, it all tied together as this is the handiwork of God. And so, things that I've noticed under a microscope, things that I've noticed on top of a mountain and looking out and seeing, it just makes us worship, doesn't it?

It amazes. And yet, those who are wicked is as if they don't even notice. There's no worship, no praise, no real interest in their hearts.

Their hearts do not regard the Lord. Let me ask this. Do you see yourself in the picture of this group of people, these wicked? You know, for those of us who've been changed, for those of us who've been born again, for those of us who've been drawn into His kingdom, for those of us that call ourselves and really genuinely are born again Christians, you know, it's different, isn't it?

We say, no, no, no, we're not like that. We're not wicked. We don't have evil in our heart. But let me ask this. Was there a time when you did? You know, we, even before we accepted Christ as Lord and Savior and understood our need and our sin and our separation from the Holy God, our rebellion, even before we came into the kingdom, you know, we weren't as bad as we could have been.

[15:27] it's possible to be more evil, but you know what the Word of God says? It says there's nothing good in us before Christ.

And I wonder if we see ourselves in the rebellion that we used to be in when we were in Adam.

So I ask this question and you've heard it if you've been around this church for long, you've been in Sunday school or even from the pulpit, I've mentioned this, the natural state of man.

What is the natural state of man? You know, there's four options here and I think there's a lot of confusion even in the hearts and understanding and the minds of Christians.

They don't really know how to answer this question. What is the natural state of man? Well, he could be, man could be 100% good in everything he does, in every way, in every thought, in every desire.

[16:27] We would quickly say, well, that's not me. But some say, we are, as humans, we're mostly good with a little bit of bad. And a lot of people would land there.

We're mostly good with a little bit of bad. Some would go on to say, no, no, no, that's not quite right. What I find is we're mostly bad, but there's good in everybody.

There's at least some good in everybody. And then some would go on to make the claim that no, no, no, that's not right either. There's nothing good in us. We're all bad. So you see the four options here?

Either we're all good, mostly good with a little bad, mostly bad with a little good, or we're all bad, which is true. Well, let's let the Word of God declare it. Let's let the Word of God answer this question so that we recognize the truth.

Listen to this section of Scripture that was read this morning by Dick. Did y'all catch who we used to be? Now, Paul is saying this about all of mankind.

[17 : 37] All of mankind. He says this. He said, you were dead, spiritually dead. Why? Because of your trespasses and sins in which you once walked.

Following the course of this world, following the devil, the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now still working in the sons of disobedience, those who have not acknowledged God. He's still very actively at work in the hearts of them. Among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh carrying out the desires of the body and the mind and were by nature children of wrath. Do you embrace that as true for you? If that is true, which one of those four seems to be true? We once walked following the course of this world.

We were by nature children of wrath. Let's look at another place in the book of Romans, which is Paul's explanation for this very same thing.

[18 : 43] He says, the Jews, he's arguing with the Jews to say, hey, you're no better than the Gentiles. Why do you think that your nationality is going to save you? Just because you're a Jew and you were a part of the tribe of Israel, it doesn't mean that you immediately get a free ticket to heaven.

He says, no, no, no. Listen to what the word of God says in Psalm 14 and Psalm 53, which is what David is quoting here. David says this, are we Jews any better off?

No, not at all. For we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks are under sin as it is written. None is righteous. No, not one, not one, not one person on the face of the planet is righteous.

No one seeks for God. All have turned aside. Together they have become worthless without worth. No one does good, not even one. He goes on to say, their throat is an open grave.

Who's he talking about? All of mankind. All of mankind. Their throat is an open grave. They use their tongue to deceive. The venom of asps, snakes, is under their lips.

[20 : 02] Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness. Their feet are swift to shed blood. In their path are ruin and misery. In the way of peace they have not known.

There is no fear of God before their eyes. And we turn back to this psalm and how similar does this sound when David says they do not regard the work of the Lord or the work of his hands.

They don't even regard it. You know, unless God does a work in the heart of a person, a man or a woman, he will be in this camp of the wicked.

You know there's only two camps? David is talking about the only two camps there are. those who are wicked and those who are his.

And how is it that a person goes from being wicked to being not wicked? From being wicked and separated from God with an eternal destination, eternally separated from God to the point where they're changed men.

[21 : 15] How? Well, David shows that. This morning in this psalm, you'll see that David is an individual that's included in this grouping of people called God's people, God's children.

And David represents the group of God's people. He's an example. He's one of those who has been changed. And in what way was he changed?

It's his heart. His heart has been changed. So, I hope you heard the point that I was trying to make that you know of those four choices, you know where we land, there's none good, not one.

We have no good in us, not any. There's not partly good and some bad, it's all bad. There's no righteousness in us. How is a man who has no righteousness, who's an enemy of God, who is born wicked, how is it that he's going to be included in this grouping of people called God's people?

Well, it's the work of God, right? It's the work of God on the heart of a man. It's heart change. And so, I ask you the question, how is it that a heart is changed?

[22 : 33] Well, obviously, we'd say it's the power of God. Why some and why not others? Let me flip over, you don't have to flip, but I'm going to read a couple of verses out of the book of John.

So, Apostle John is sharing about this truth. How is it that a man goes from the grouping of the wicked and he's transferred into the group that is the people of God?

How? Here's what John says. He says, you know that no one can come to me, this is Jesus speaking, no one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him.

Let me say it again, I messed that up. No one can come to me, Jesus, unless the Father God who sent me draws him. No one can come unless the Father draws him.

Again, in verse 65, it says this, and he said, this is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father. You know, we read that salvation is not the result of our works.

[23 : 44] You know, we read it in Ephesians 2 earlier. Did you hear it? It's by grace you're saved, by faith, not according to your works.

It's not as if you can do all these good things and earn your way into heaven. Do you know that's not possible? Because the standard is perfection. That would mean you never sinned ever even once in your life.

How many times did Adam have to sin before he had to exit the garden? Do you realize the holiness of God demands perfection? And he would have had to have been absolutely perfect. He took from the fruit of the tree that he was not supposed to touch and then what do you have to do? You've got to leave. You've got to leave.

And they put an angel with a flame and sword at the gate of the garden and said, don't you come back. If you come back you'll die. Because your sin can't be in the presence of a holy God.

[24 : 44] And here it is that's not based on our works and what we do is based on the drawing of God. Even when we were dead and our trespasses isn't God, but God, God gave us life.

Life comes from God. This eternal life, a changed spirit, a changed heart. How does it happen? It's the work of God. It's the work of the Holy Spirit that draws us to God, that makes us aware of his holiness, that makes us aware of our sin, and causes us, gives us the motivation to do what David says right here.

Look, do you see what David did? To you, O Lord, I call. And in verse 2, I cry to you for help. Do you see the difference between the wicked who don't even regard God or the works of his hands? And here's David saying, God, I see you, I know you, and I desire you, and I call to you, God, my rock. It's because of you that I have any hope. It's because of you that I have any joy.

It's because of you that my life has been changed. There is a desire that's spilling out of the heart of David here. He calls to the Lord, be not deaf to me, God, I desire to hear from you.

[26 : 06] Do you know that the wicked don't desire to hear from him? No interest. No interest. Does God, is God able to hear from the wicked?

Let me just say this, if there's a person on the planet that's in the camp of the wicked that says, God, I see my sin, I'm sick over my sin, God, would you help me?

Do you think God hears that? Listen, you know what, how do you explain that? That's a heart that is humbled, that's a heart that is reaching out to God, that's a heart that is genuine and says, God, help me.

It's not some insurance policy prayer. All right, just in case, I want to make sure I make it to heaven, what do I need to say? Oh, yeah, okay, can you help me?

What words do I need to use? It's like a formula. It's like an insurance policy. Well, I've done that. All right, I went to church 12 times. Man, I've got to be good now.

[27 : 08] I'm good. You know, that is not a heart that's reaching out to God and saying, help me, God. But look at David. He's calling out to God. He's crying out to God. He's lifting up his hands in verse 3 toward the most holy sanctuary.

So we've looked at the three aspects of those who are wicked, their destination, their deeds, and their heart. And now what we see in the life of God's children is a heart that has been changed. A heart that is soft to God, a heart that desires God, a heart that calls out to God, a heart that cries to God for help, a heart that yields to the holiness of God, who lifts up his hands and said, praise you, Lord, praise you, Lord.

I've come to see how great you are. Let me ask you, what is your heart like? It's my hope that everyone sitting in here is a born-again believer, that you're saved, that you know him, and that your

heart has been changed from a heart of stone to a heart of flesh, from a hard heart to a tender heart.

From a heart that does not regard God in any way to a heart that says, I long for you. For those of us who have come into the kingdom, do y'all know the change?

[28 : 31] Have y'all come to recognize how different we are? When God gives us a new heart and changes us, it is like, it doesn't happen, the night and day difference doesn't happen, it kind of grows over time.

But the things that we used to love and long for and do are so different now that we're in the kingdom, the things that we long for and desire are different. And when we choose what we used to like, there's a conviction, there's a sickness, there's a grief in our heart.

We're different people, we've been born again. And so I'm asking if there's someone here who is still investigating Christianity, that still doesn't really know what it means to be saved.

God, listen, the difference is this, it's a heart that says, God, help me. God, I want you, I need you. You know, God always hears that, he always, always, always hears a genuine heart that reaches up. And you know what, it doesn't take magic words, it doesn't take correct phrases, it doesn't take a lot of talking, you know what it takes?

[29 : 40] A heart that says, I need you. God, I want you. Would you change my life? Would you call, if you're not sure, or if you maybe are sure that you're not in the kingdom, that you're just kind of on the edges of this thing trying to figure out what in the world is really true here, do you have a desire to call out to him and cry out to him?

I hope you do. And I'm telling you, if you do, he will hear you. And if you're genuinely sick over your own sin and you recognize that you were rebellious towards him, you know that if you'll say, God, forgive me, you know what the word of God declares?

From someone who from the heart says, forgive me, he says, as far as the east is from the west, I'll remove your sin from you. Based on the work of Jesus Christ on the cross.

David is a man whose heart has been changed. And do you see how it changes his deeds? Again, these three aspects, the destination, the deeds, and the heart.

The heart of David has been changed. You know, it's fun when we read the scriptures and we ponder the life of David who we've talked about a lot.

[30 : 59] We'll talk about more. But David is a shepherd who has an instrument in his hands. He's worshiping God with no one around. You know, there's something important to see here, is that those whose hearts have changed desire to worship, and the heart of David was changed.

I don't know when. The word of God doesn't declare when, but we see the deeds of David. We see that with the changed heart, that there's worship that happens.

Genuine, heartfelt, real worship. A recognition of his holiness and a lifting up hands. Wow. And that's what we talked about earlier.

Look at creation. For those who are in the kingdom, how can you look and not say, wow, look at the incredible beauty of what God has made, and the creativeness of what he's made, and the marvel of all these things that just shout beauty, and shout the beauty of God.

And it causes us to praise as Christians. Do you, I mean, how can you go to the mountains and see the beautiful landscapes and not go, wow? Or how do you go to the ocean and see the power of the ocean, and the beauty of the ocean, the vastness of the ocean, not say, wow?

[32 : 22] Or how do you take a microscope and look at one drop of water and see all the life that's teeming in there and not say, wow? It's a changed heart. But look at his deeds. Here, David doesn't go into deeds all that much in this psalm.

But if you turn back to Psalm 26, he speaks a little more about that. In verse 3 he says, I walk in your faithfulness.

I do not sit with men of falsehood, nor do I consort with hypocrites. I hate the assembly of evildoers. I will not sit with the wicked.

Do you see the division here? Do you see the difference? David, who at one time in his life, don't know when he changed, his heart was changed, but he was wicked, just like you and I and every man that's on the planet, until God does something to captivate the heart of David and draw him to himself.

And then David's heart is changed, where he acknowledges God and cries out to God and calls out to God and says, I need you. And his deeds change.

one another and God looks at the trophies of his grace look what he has done through the the work of Christ on our behalf I'm gonna close with Ephesians 1 I just want you to listen to what has been done for the sake of the heritage of God that is us just let the word of God speak to you here and I want you to listen to the according to the phrase according to what is the reason that God has given grace special grace to us that leads to salvation why would he do that what was the reason according to we'll see here listen blessed be the God

Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and blameless before him in love he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ according to the purpose of his will again according to what the will of God to the praise of his glorious grace with which he has blessed us in the beloved in him we have redemption through his blood the forgiveness of our trespasses according to what according to the riches of his grace which he lavished upon us in all wisdom and insight making known to us the mystery of his will according to what according to his purpose which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time to unite all things in him things in heaven and things on earth in him we have obtained an inheritance having been predestined according to what according to the purpose of him who works all things according to what according to his own will it's by the will of God that we know him it's by the will of God that we've been brought into the kingdom it's by the will of God that he's drawn us and he's tapped on our heart and said do you see my glory do you see my glory will you respond to me will you call to me and cry to me let's pray father again this morning

I think of your mercy that father we didn't deserve your mercy we were an offender an offense to you because of our sin and yet you forgave us father I thank you for your mercy I thank you for your gift of salvation I thank you for your son Jesus who would come and suffer suffer the ridicule of the Jews he would suffer the cruelty of a cross he would be beat to a pulp for our sake when he didn't deserve any of that being righteous and just and holy God I thank you that you would tap on our hearts and you would draw us to yourself I thank you that it would change our heart the way we would desire you we desire your honor we desire to worship you we desire to sing to you we would be full of overflowing song your cup is overflowing God thanks to you I thank you for the indwelling Holy Spirit that you've given to us

God that we might be taught we might be made we might be changed into the very image of Christ we might be united with our Savior in the heavenly kingdom soon come Lord Jesus we pray Amen