

# God's Righteousness

*Believers can live with hope knowing that God will always do what is right and just.*

## Psalm 5:1-12

**1** Listen to my words, LORD; consider my **sighing**. **A** **2** Pay attention to the sound of my cry, my **King** **B** and my God, for I pray to you. **3** In the **morning**, **C** LORD, you hear my voice; in the morning I plead my case to you and **watch expectantly**. **D** **4** For you are not a God who **delights in wickedness**; **E** evil cannot dwell with you. **5** The **boastful** **F** cannot stand in your sight; you hate all evildoers. **6** You destroy those who tell lies; the LORD abhors violent and treacherous people. **7** But I enter **your house** **G** by the abundance of your faithful love; I bow down toward your holy temple in reverential awe of you. **8** LORD, lead me in your righteousness because of my adversaries; make your way **straight** **H** before me. **9** For there is nothing reliable in what they say; destruction is within them; their throat is an **open grave**; **I** they flatter with their tongues. **10** Punish them, God; let them fall by their own **schemes**. **J** Drive them out because of their many crimes, for they rebel against you. **11** But let all who take refuge in you rejoice; let them shout for joy forever. May you shelter them, and may those who love your name boast about you. **12** For you, LORD, bless the righteous one; you surround him with **favor like a shield**. **K**

### Exploring Key Words

- A** "Meditation" (KJV); "lament" (NIV). A quiet murmur, usually spoken as a complaint.
- B** David was an earthly king. However, He recognized God as the true King. He longed for God's kingdom to be established more than his own. See Matthew 6:10.
- C** The psalms encourage prayer in the morning. See Psalm 30:5; 59:16; 88:13; 92:2. Of course, the apostle Paul urged his readers to "pray constantly" (1 Thess. 5:17).
- D** David pleaded his case to God. Once he did, he rested in God for the response. This implies an active waiting, not passive watching.
- E** "Hath pleasure in wickedness" (KJV); "pleased with wickedness" (NIV). Where God resides, evil cannot stand.
- F** The Hebrew wording is related to *halal*, which means "praise" or "shine." However, David used it negatively to describe those who take pride only in themselves.
- G** David found comfort in God's presence. He did not try to enter by virtue of his own goodness. He relied on God's faithful love.
- H** A smooth path or the right direction. This stands in stark contrast to those who follow their own inclinations. See Proverbs 3:5-6.
- I** Paul used the imagery of verse 9 to describe the human condition without Christ (Rom. 3:13). On our own, we have no hope of salvation.
- J** "Counsels" (KJV; ESV); "intrigues" (NIV). Sinners make their plans, but God makes sure their schemes collapse on them.
- K** Not a good luck charm or magical talisman. However, His shield is large enough and strong enough to protect all who trust in Him.



## NOTES

**The Source of Righteousness (Ps. 5:1-6)**

- David, the psalmist, went to the Lord in prayer to plead his case.
- He proclaimed that God never delights in evil nor can boastful men stand in His presence. The Lord detests evil.

**The Benefit of Righteousness (Ps. 5:7-10)**

- In contrast, David knew that he could approach God because of His great love. He could ask for the Lord's guidance to walk in righteousness.
- His adversaries had spread lies and caused destruction. He asked God to punish them for their rebellion against Him.

**God's Blessing on the Righteous (Ps. 5:11-12)**

- The psalmist challenged all believers to praise God forever and asked God to protect His people.
- He concluded the psalm with a declaration of confidence in God's blessing and safety for the righteous.

**Summary Statements**

*Believers can live with hope knowing that God will always do what is right and just.*

- Believers can know for certain that God is fully righteous, and His acts will always be righteous.
- The righteous enjoy God presence and depend on His guidance.
- God will bless and protect the righteous.

**Memory Verse**

*Psalm 5:12*

**Key Doctrine**

*Man*

Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the creative purpose of God. (See Romans 3:22-24; Ephesians 2:8-10.)

## ENGAGE

*Is it easy or difficult for you to acknowledge you need help? (PSG, p. 113)*

- Waking up in the morning and contemplating the day's challenges can be overwhelming, especially when yesterday's burdens are still a reality today.
- Psalm 5 is a morning prayer David prayed when he woke up with a heavy sigh and longed for God's help as he contemplated another day of contending with his enemies. He recognized he needed God's help for that day.
- David's prayer provides encouragement to believers as they wake up to similar mornings.

**Bonus:** *How can starting your day with God make things better?*

## EXPLORE

### 1. THE SOURCE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS (PS. 5:1-6)

**Bonus:** *Who do you turn to for help or advice? Why do you consider that person reliable?*

- In the Old Testament, when something is stated twice, it expresses emphasis. When it's stated three times, it is superlative. David's prayer begins with three parallel imperatives: "listen," "consider," and "pay attention." These three rapid imperatives communicate the intensity of David's petition: his "sighing" and his "cry."
- David also used three parallel expressions to address God: "LORD," "my King," and "my God." Taken together, these titles highlight David's personal relationship with Him. David's intensity was balanced by his submission.
- "In the morning" has more significance than simply identifying when he prayed during the day. It highlights that his situation weighed so heavily on his mind that it was his first waking thought. His first step in solving his problem was to take it to the Lord.
- David grounded his request in God's character. He knew that God loves what is good and despises what is evil. God rejects the boastful and wicked, while upholding those who put their trust in Him.

**What were your first thoughts this morning? How do they compare with David's first thoughts? (PSG, p. 117)**

### 2. THE BENEFIT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS (PS. 5:7-10)

**For what area of life do you currently need God's guidance? (PSG, p. 118)**

- Instead of contrasting himself with the wicked, David focused on God's "faithful love." The Hebrew word

*hesed* refers to the Lord's mercy, goodness, kindness, graciousness, compassion, and loyalty to His people.

- David did nothing to deserve to enter God's "house." He was accepted because of the *hesed* God had shown him. As a result, David was bowed in awe of Him.
- Proper worship always leads to proper obedience. But David needed God to help him resist his enemies. These individuals were bent on destroying others, so David asked God to reveal their guilt and crush their evil schemes.

**Bonus:** *How should God's justice define the way you pray about your enemies?*

### 3. GOD'S BLESSING ON THE RIGHTEOUS (PS. 5:11-12)

**Bonus:** *What can you praise the Lord for? What is holding you back?*

- As David concluded this psalm, he exhorted everyone who loves the Lord to "rejoice," to "shout for joy," and to "boast about" Him. To love the Lord's name is to love Him, as His name represents who He is.
- David praised the Lord for His faithfulness to bless and protect those who take refuge in Him. The words "refuge," "shelter," "surround," and "shield" emphasize this idea.
- As believers experience spiritual warfare, they can trust that God is holding nothing back to protect them (Rom. 8:37). As a result, they can join David in praising the Lord.

**How did David's view of the character of God affect his perspective of his circumstances? (PSG, p. 120)**

## CHALLENGE

As a group, discuss how adults can hold one another accountable for seeking God and trusting His direction.

**How does being a part of a Bible study group help you to recognize and experience God's presence and guidance? (PSG, p. 121)**

Challenge adults to examine the content of their prayer lives.

**How can recognizing God's loving and righteous character change the way you respond to life's difficulties? How does it change the way you pray? (PSG, p. 121)**



### For Further Discussion

Scan here for additional discussion questions for this week's study.



### BIBLE SKILL (P. 120, PSG)

Compare an Old Testament teaching to how it is expressed in the New Testament.

In Psalm 5, David pleaded with God to help him in his time of distress. In the New Testament, we see people in distress coming to Jesus for help. Luke 8:40-56 is the account of two people who brought their troubles to Jesus. Read this passage, then consider the following questions: ***What caused their desperation? How did they turn to Jesus for help? What did Jesus do in response? What does this teach you to do with your despair? What does it teach you about Jesus's response?***

Direct adults to work in groups of two or three to complete the Bible Skill activity on page 120 of the PSG. After a few minutes, review the questions from the activity. Allow volunteers to share their responses.

### OBJECT LESSON: ROPE

Display a piece of rope and enlist two volunteers to pull on opposite ends of the rope. Explain that in Psalm 5 the psalmist seems to be in a tug of war with his enemies.

Emphasize that David recognized God as the source of righteousness and sought His help in conquering his enemies. Point out that he gave us a great example of trusting God's presence and depending on His guidance.



## DIG DEEPER

### GOD'S HOLINESS

Sometimes, we may be tempted to justify our actions by thinking that God will somehow “understand” if we step out of line just once. We rationalize our behavior by defining God through our own standard of right and wrong. However, this flies in the face of biblical teaching about God and His attitude toward sin. We cannot excuse our transgressions by expecting God to respond to sin as we might.

In Psalm 5:4-6, David provided a clear picture of how God feels about sin. We serve a Master who cannot delight in wickedness. It would violate His character and nature to find any sense of pleasure in our wrongdoing. In fact, God's holiness ensures that “evil cannot dwell” (v. 4) where He resides. Just as darkness cannot exist in the presence of light, sin cannot withstand the presence of our holy God. Where our holy God is present, Satan and his works of evil must flee (Jas. 4:7).

But while sin in a general sense stands in opposition to God, individuals who practice sin also live under the judgment of God. David referred to the “boastful” (Ps. 5:5). These are individuals who arro-

gantly trust their own inclinations above the faithful direction God provides. They cannot stand in God's presence (1:4-5). Eventually, those who reject God and refuse to submit to His authority will be destroyed. That is, they will experience eternal punishment and separation from the Lord.

But it doesn't have to be that way. Just as God's holiness serves as a warning for those who turn from His paths, His purity and perfection offer tremendous hope for those who embrace Him. For his part, David found relief and refuge in God's house, His presence. He understood that following God would lead him in the proper path and allow him to avoid the pitfalls that endangered his enemies.

God's holiness demands judgment of the wicked, but it also demands blessings on those who trust Him. The former group will experience His wrath and eternal punishment, while the latter will live in security under His shield of protection and provision.