

KEY TEXT

Psalm 26:1-12 (ESV)

Verse 1- Vindicate me, O LORD, for I have walked in my integrity, and I have trusted in the LORD without wavering.

Verse 2 – Prove me, O LORD, and try me; test my heart and my mind.

Verse 3 – For your steadfast love is before my eyes, and I walk in your faithfulness.

Verse 4- I do not sit with men of falsehood, nor do I consort with hypocrites.

Verse 5 – I hate the assembly of evildoers, and I will not sit with the wicked.

Verse 6- I wash my hands in innocence and go around your altar, O LORD,

Verse 7 – proclaiming thanksgiving aloud, and telling all your wonderous deeds.

Verse 8 – O LORD, I love the habitation of your house and the place where your glory dwells.

Verse 9 – Do not sweep my soul away with sinners, nor my life with bloodthirsty men,

Verse 10 – in whose hands are evil devices and whose right hands are full of bribes.

Verse 11 – But for me, I shall walk in my integrity; redeem me, and be gracious to me.

Verse 12 – My foot stands on level ground; in the great assembly I will bless the LORD.

INTRODUCTION

(1) Faithfulness – main criterion

(2) Background of our Key Text

(3) Title

‘WHO IS THE FAITHFUL ONE?’

Outline:

- Who is the faithful one?
- What are the features of the faithful one?
- What are the rewards of the faithful one?
- Christ – Our Ultimate Faithful One

MAIN POINTS

(I) WHO IS THE FAITHFUL ONE?

According to Psalm 26, the faithful one is.....

- **ONE WHO HAS WALKED IN HIS INTEGRITY**

Verse 1a- Vindicate me, O LORD, for I have walked in my integrity....

David begins this Psalm with a call for **VINDICATION from the Lord.**

It is believed that this Psalm was written by David when his cruel persecutor Saul, spread false reports concerning his character.

When the wicked can use no other weapons, they always have their quivers full of slanderous reports.

Application: Let's learn that the best of men must expect to be misrepresented and to have the worse of crimes laid to their charge.

But let us also learn from the example of David to carry our case to the **HIGHEST COURT OF JUSTICE** at once and not to meddle with the lower courts of earth but to go at once to the **COURT OF KING'S BENCH IN HEAVEN** and there plead our cause before the eternal throne.

Vindication is a call for justice.

2 aspects of vindication:

- Call for **PERSONAL VINDICATION.**

David bases his call for justice upon two things: I have walked in my integrity; I have trusted in the LORD without wavering

These are the two great reasons why David makes his declaration for vindication to God.

David has lived a righteous and godly life.

“Integrity”=“completeness in the sense of wholeness or innocence; blamelessness, righteousness”

=“doing what is right”.

But is that all there is to the motive for David’s desire for vindication?

Does David merely want all the people to know that he really is a righteous person, though others may cast dispersions upon him.

David is appealing to the LORD with something **MORE THAN** simply a **PERSONAL NEED FOR RECOGNITION OF THE TRUTH.**

- Call for **VINDICATING GOD.**

If we have lived our lives for the Lord, then our **VINDICATION IS NOT ABOUT SHOWING THAT WE ARE RIGHTEOUS BUT TO SHOW THAT OUR FAITH IS VALUABLE.**

We want to prove God to be true to His word.

If we simply want ourselves to be justified in the sight of others, we are simply caving into the **SIN OF PRIDE.**

However, **WE WANT TO BE VINDICATED SO THAT PEOPLE WILL KNOW THAT OUR FAITH IN GOD IS NOT IN VAIN.**

This is the nature of David's call for vindication.

We do not want the world to think that our integrity has no value.

We do not want the world to look at us and think that our hope and faith are in vain.

We want them to see the Lord in our lives.

We want our lives to be an example to others about how God is true to His Word.

WE ARE TO BE THE PROOF OF GOD'S PROMISES.

Application: Too often we have self-centered attitudes reflected in our self-centered prayers, desiring things in life to God the way we want them to go. But we are supposed to have a greater focus than upon ourselves. What should be our greater concern is when we are leading righteous life, a life of integrity, these slanderous words bring a **reproach against God**. Therefore, the call is not to salvage our own name but to **SALVAGE THE GLORY OF GOD THROUGH US**.

Application: Integrity! Are you living a life of integrity now?

The faith you have inwardly towards Christ is always expressed outwardly through a life of integrity.

Though we are all justified before God by faith and not by works, yet before men, we must be justified by our works, rather than by our faith.

It is in vain for us to plead our faith when we are slandered. The only answer that can effectually shut the mouth of an adversary is to point to a life of integrity – a blameless life.

Hence in this psalm, we see David not only brings his faith before God but also the fruit of his faith.

David holds integrity as his **PRINCIPLE** and walks in it as his **PRACTICE**.

Are you living one now or is your life ridden with lies, deceit, falsehood and errors?

So here we see the faithful one has the **CHARACTER** of integrity.

- **ONE WHO HAS TRUSTED IN THE LORD WITHOUT WAVERING**

Verse 1b (ESV)- and I have trusted in the LORD without wavering.

KJV -I have trusted also in the LORD; therefore I shall not slide.

The position of David was **slipping** – his enemies were always busy trying to trip up his heels but David said, **“I shall not slide.”**

Here we see that beyond David’s character of integrity is **COMMITMENT** – his unwavering trust in the Lord and his conclusion is certain – **I SHALL NOT SLIDE OR I SHALL NOT SLIP.**

“I have trusted also in the LORD” –FAITH is the root and sap of integrity.

HE WHO LEANS UPON THE LORD IS SURE TO WALK IN RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Faith will work hard for the Lord and in the Lord's way but faith refuses to lift a finger to fulfill the devices of the unrighteous and cunning man.

E.g. Rebecca and Abraham.

FAITH TRUSTS GOD TO ACCOMPLISH HIS OWN PROMISES.

TRUST IN GOD (CONFIDENCE IN GOD) IS THE MOST EFFECTIVE SECURITY AGAINST SIN.

“Therefore I shall not slide” – The way is slippery and many times we walk like a man upon ice – yet faith keeps our faith from slipping and it will continue to do so.

Those who doubt and those who do not believe are sure to fall and slip on these slippery ways.

But the way of integrity and faith, though often rough, are always **safe**.

We cannot trust in God if we walk crookedly (without integrity).

STRAIGHT PATHS AND SIMPLE FAITH BRING THE PILGRIM HAPPILY TO HIS JOURNEY'S END.

Application: Where is your faith now? Is it going up and sliding back. That is where the '**backslider**' word comes from.

The faithful one trusts God without wavering; without sliding back.

- **ONE WHO DARES TO OPEN HIMSELF UP TO EXAMINATION**

Verse 2 – Prove me, O LORD, and try me; test my heart and my mind.

Here David invites God to come and probe his heart.

“Prove me” – It means to **“examine me”**.

David is asking God to search his motives(**his heart**)and thoughts(**his mind**).

The examination begins in the heart and mind.

The examination of the heart and mind is always necessary for these are the **SOURCE OF OUR ACTIONS**.

“Try me” – Here David is asking God to intensify the test to humble him and **prove his true character**.

The word here **“try”** is the same word used when **metal is tested or proven**.

“Test my heart and my mind” – David wants God to **REFINE** his heart and mind as one **REFINES silver**.

Could it be that David is asking for God to send **adversity** to show his true character?

How many of us would dare to ask that?

Yet David, being the faithful one dares to open himself up for close examination by God.

- **ONE WHO KEEPS GOD'S STEADFAST LOVE BEFORE HIS EYES**

Verse 3a– For your steadfast love is before my eyes.....

KJV- For your lovingkindness is before mine eyes.

Right before David's eyes was the steadfast love of the LORD.

Some people appear to have their miseries, their sorrows, their sins before their eyes but happy is that believer who always has God's steadfast love before him.

The **steadfast love** of the Lord is defined as

- “the lovingkindness of the Lord (KJV);
- the loyal love of God;
- the covenant love of God;

- **the mercy of God.”**

Pulpit commentary quotes- *“He keeps God’s loving-kindness, or mercy ever before his eyes – reflects on it, meditates on it, presents it to his thoughts - continually.”*

Why is it important to always be mindful of God’s steadfast love?

It reminds us who it is that we belong to.

It reminds us that He loved mankind and yet mankind falsely accused Him as well. Yet that didn’t deter Him from loving us still.

Satan always causes us to doubt God’s love.

Charles Spurgeon said that if we find our Christianity dull and flagging, then the proper way to revive it is to **THINK MORE THAN YOU HAVE DONE UPON THE LOVINGKINDNESS OF GOD.**

- **His lovingkindness is a good subject.**

- His lovingkindness is a wide subject.
- His lovingkindness is a pleasing subject.
- His lovingkindness is a plain and simple subject.
- His lovingkindness is an always suitable and seasonable subject.
- His lovingkindness begins in eternity.
- His lovingkindness is given freely.
- His lovingkindness is certain.
- His lovingkindness is faithful.
- His lovingkindness goes into the smallest details.

Sometimes when are falsely accused, we feel like giving up but when we put the steadfast love of the Lord before us, like David, we will commit to continuing on, thus becoming the faithful one.

- ONE WHO WALKS IN GOD'S FAITHFULNESS/TRUTHS

Verse 3b – and I walk in your faithfulness.

KJV – and I have walked in thy truth.

Amp- And I have walked [faithfully] in Your truth.

How does the steadfast love of the Lord motivate us?
It drives us to be **obedient**.

The idea of “**walked**” speaks of **ACTION**, of **MANNER OF LIVING**.

David knew the importance of both a right **INWARD LIFE** (mind and heart) and right **ACTIONS AND DEEDS**.

“**I have walked in thy truth**”- means 2 things:

- David endeavored to hold fast to truth both in **DOCTRINE** and in **PRACTICE**.
- By God’s truthfulness and faithfulness in giving him the promised grace, David had been **ENABLED TO WALK UPRIGHTLY**.

Summary: Who is the faithful one? He is.....

- one who walks in his integrity;
- one who trusts in the Lord without wavering;
- one who dares to open himself up for examination;

- one who keeps God's steadfast love before his eyes
- one who walks faithfully in God's truth.

In one simple sentence – **THE FAITHFUL ONE IS ONE WHO LIVES BY THE GRACE REVEALED.**

(II) WHAT ARE THE FEATURES OF THE FAITHFUL ONE?

4 features:

- **HE DOES NOT SIT WITH THE WORTHLESS**

Verse 4- I do not sit with men of falsehood, nor do I consort with hypocrites.

KJV- I have not sat with vain persons, neither will I go in with dissemblers.

Amp- I do not sit with deceitful or unethical or worthless men, nor seek companionship with pretenders (self-righteous hypocrites).

Here David describes “negative associates”:

- **VAIN PERSONS**

They are the idolatrous mortals.

Their desire is for vain and useless things.

Amplified version calls them the **deceitful, unethical and worthless** men who would **compromise** their good morals in order to attain their idolatrous desires.

- **HYPOCRITES**

KJV calls them the **dissemblers** which means **PRETENDERS**.

Clarke defines the hypocrites as **“the hidden ones, the dark designers, the secret plotters.”**

The deviation from integrity is hypocrisy. ***“If we fail to face up to our inadequacy, we fall into the trap of the Pharisees: HYPOCRISY. Hypocrisy is the opposite of integrity and this is precisely what Jesus accuses the Pharisees and teachers of the law of in Matthew 23.”***

Amp defines hypocrisy as “self-righteous hypocrites.”

They are pretenders – looking so righteous on the outside but inside is like a dead grave.

The faithful one will not sit with the vain or worthless person or the hypocrites.

The word “sit” means “choose to converse with them.”

It portrays a posture of EASE AND CONTINUANCE.

- HE HATES EVILDOERS

Verse 5 – I hate the assembly of evildoers, and I will not sit with the wicked.

KJV calls it the “congregation of evildoers” while amp calls it the “company of evildoers”.

These refer to those who assemble for wicked purposes.

“I will not sit with the wicked” – has the idea of sitting down with and taking counsel from.

Why is it important to consider who we rub shoulders with?

- We tend to become like them; tend to get our advice from them
- We tend to get a bad reputation from association

C.S Lewis says, *“Many people have a very strong desire to meet celebrated or ‘important people’, including those whom they disapprove....But I am inclined to think a Christian would be wise to avoid, where he decently can, any meeting with people who are bullies, or lascivious, cruel, dishonest, spiteful and so forth. Not because we are ‘too good’ for them. In a sense we are not good enough. We are not good enough to cope with all the temptations, nor clever enough to cope with all the problems, which an evening spent in such society produces.”*

- **HE HAS INNOCENT HANDS**

Verse 6- I wash my hands in innocence and go around your altar, O LORD,

Verse 7 – proclaiming thanksgiving aloud, and telling all your wonderful deeds.

David did not believe he was sinless or perfect.

He did need to **WASH** his hands but he could do so in the **INNOCENCE** of a clear conscience before God.

He availed himself of **GOD'S ALTAR**, both for **ATONEMENT** and for offerings of **THANKSGIVING**.

Application: Probably people wash or cleanse their hands more today than ever before in history after the COVID outbreak.

Perhaps every time we do, we should remind ourselves to **RECEIVE THE CLEANSING THAT COMES FROM JESUS AND HIS WORK ON THE CROSS AND OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO CLEANS OUR HANDS FROM**

WICKED ACTIONS, OUR MOUTH FROM WICKED WORDS AND OUR HEARTS FROM WICKED DESIRES.

Outward cleanliness is good but worth little for eternity if our life and heart are filthy before God.

“Go around your altar” – There was no ritual practice of walking **around** or dancing around God’s altar among the ancient Hebrews.

=happy circle of worshippers.

=literal sacrifices -the many sacrifices that circled the altar

The faithful one always avails to the cleansing blood of Christ with thanksgiving.

- **HE WORSHIPS GOD**

Verse 8 – O LORD, I love the habitation of your house and the place where your glory dwells.

David is saying **HE LOVES TO BE AROUND GOD.**

David loves to be in the **PRESENCE OF THE LORD**.

For David, a right walk with God is more than the avoidance of evil.

It is also a simple yet deep love for God and His presence.

He loves the tabernacle because it represents the **HOUSE OF GOD**; it is the **PLACE OF GOD'S GLORY**.

“Obedience cannot be sustained without the sweetness of God’s presence and glory.”

Application: How near are you to God? Do you realize that you can be as close to God as you want to be? Do you love the house of God where the presence of God’s glory dwell?

The faithful one loves the house of God because that is where the glory of His presence dwells and that is

the place where he can worship God and bless God in the beauty of His holiness.

(III) WHAT ARE THE REWARDS OF THE FAITHFUL ONE?

- **DIFFERENT FATE FROM SINNERS**

Verse 9 – Do not sweep my soul away with sinners,
nor my life with bloodthirsty men,

Verse 10 – in whose hands are evil devices and whose right hands are full of bribes.

Verse 11 – But for me, I shall walk in my integrity;
redeem me, and be gracious to me.

David does not act like the rest of the world. He does not live like them and does not act like them.

Therefore, he asks God to **PRESERVE HIS LIFE.**

He refuses to associate with the wicked in life and so he asks God to keep him from **SINNERS IN DEATH.**

Thus, David declares, **“I shall walk in my integrity.”**

Again, David’s life is different than the world’s way of living.

David says that he has lived righteously. And this is the cause for David to ask God to **redeem him and to be gracious to him.**

- **LEVEL GROUND**

Verse 12 – My foot stands on level ground; in the great assembly I will bless the LORD.

David, despite the dangers all round, could be confident of his position – **“My foot stands”.**

He stands on level ground **IN AN EVEN PLACE** – a repeat of his confidence in the first verse – **“I shall not slip.”**

“He seems to say to them all, “Hoot at me if you will: seek to trip me up as you please: God is high above you all, and in him I shall still stand my ground, for

blessed be his name, notwithstanding every attempt of the enemy to throw me down, my foot standeth in an even place, and in the congregation will I bless the Lord.”” – Spurgeon

“In the great assembly I will bless the LORD” – David is so confident that he says that he will **BLESS** and praise God publicly, among others in the congregation, not as an outcast or castaway.

*“The song began in the minor but it has now reached the major key. Saints often sing themselves into happiness. The **EVEN PLACE** upon which our foot stands is the **SURE, COVENANT FAITHFULNESS, ETERNAL PROMISE AND IMMUTABLE OATH OF THE LORD OF HOSTS**; there is no fear of falling from the solid basis, or of its being removed from under us.” – Spurgeon.*

(IV) CHRIST – OUR ULTIMATE FAITHFUL ONE

Many of us have missed the mark of being the faithful one.

If so, allow me to direct your attention to the Greater David. Our Greater David, Jesus, is truly the **ULTIMATE FAITHFUL ONE.**

He fulfills the 5 definitions of the Faithful One.

Yet, by the false accusations of wicked men and authorities, He was crucified on the cross.

David was delivered and **VINDICATED** by Yahweh from all his wicked accusers but not this Greater David.

He died as a result of wrong accusations and wrongful sentence so that today if you are being wrongly accused, He can be your vindication, your justice.

David was confident in his plea for vindication from Yahweh because David rested in the integrity of Yahweh through the sacrificial lamb.

Jesus showed His steadfast love, His covenant faithfulness on the cross for us so that today if we

have been the unfaithful one, His faithfulness can become ours.

If you have lost your integrity, then let Christ's righteousness be imputed to yours; if you have slid back in your faith, let Christ's faithfulness on the cross restore you.

Exchange your unfaithfulness for Christ's faithfulness for you so that by the mercy and goodness of Christ, you can let His blood wash and cleanse you of all your failures and so be able to walk in God's faithfulness again.

Today, we can all be the faithful one because of Christ's faithfulness to us.

If you can see that, you can start to return to God, love him and start to worship and bless him again.

Your inward faith would be translated to an outward faith of integrity and faithfulness.

So shall you then be able to stand on a level ground.

Your level ground is won by your Greater David who had walked the uneven road of Golgotha so that today you can stand on the level ground of His sacrifices, atonement and covenant faithfulness.

Jesus took the lot with the sinners on the cross and in hell so that today you do not have the same fate as sinners provided you do your part of the covenant by being committed to Him as His faithful one.

To the degree you keep the faithfulness and steadfast love of God before your eyes, to that degree will you be the faithful one.

CONCLUSION

Today, maybe you feel you are in the courtroom like David.

You have the Accuser of the brethren, Satan, or even evil and worthless people, accusing you.

There is the Judge at the bench, Yahweh.

And there is you, the Accused.

But know this – your Advocate is Jesus.

**He is your Defending Attorney, your
Defending Barrister-at-law.**

**The only way to shut the mouth of the adversary
(spiritual or literal) is to point to the blameless life of
Jesus, bring His Faith and the Fruit of His faith before
God.**

**When you do that, God's mercy will enable you to
walk in integrity and to trust Him without sliding,
without wavering, thus becoming the Faithful One.**

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