

Alderwood Community Church
August 19, 2018

Getting Really Close to God

Psalm 15

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Big Idea: God can be as close to us as a dear friend!

James 4:8 “Come near to God and he will come near to you.”

This Psalm begins with a wonderful question: **Verse 1** “*LORD, who may dwell in your sanctuary? Who may live on your holy hill?*” In other words, what are the characteristics of God’s good friends?

*This psalm declares the **terms of friendship** between man and Jehovah.*

--G. Campbell Morgan in *Exposition on the Whole Bible*

1. UNIMPEACHABLE _____—**Verse 2a** “*He whose walk is blameless and who does what is righteous...*”

- *Blameless [NAS, walks with integrity]. 1. An unimpaired condition. 2. Adherence to a code of moral, artistic, or other values. 3. The quality or state of being complete or undivided.*
- **The Apostle Paul:** *I am conscious of nothing against myself.*

1 Corinthians 4:4

- *We break rules—we violate God’s will—because we think breaking them will help us win, or at least avoid pain....In a strict sense, I cannot break the **rules**. They endure, for they reflect **the way things are**. I can only break myself against them. -- John Ortberg in *When the Game Is Over**

2. BRIDLED _____—**Verse 2b-3** “*...who speaks the truth from his heart³ and has no slander on his tongue, who does his neighbor no wrong and casts no slur on his fellow man.*”

- **Matthew 12:34-35** “*For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks.³⁵ The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him.*”
- *The absent one must be safe among us.--Amy Carmichael*

3. DISCRIMINATING _____—**Verse 4a** “*...who despises a vile man but honors those who fear the LORD...*”

Compromise never works. We always get burned. Even though we rationalize around our weak decisions and tell ourselves that wicked associations really won't harm us (“they'll get better, our good will rub off their bad!”), we get soiled in the process.

If you put on a pair of clean white gloves on a rainy day and then go out into the backyard to the flowerbed and pick up a glob of mud, trust me, the mud will never get “glovey.”

The gloves will definitely get muddy. Every time.

In all my sixty-plus years on earth, I have never seen glove mud. Not once.

*In simple terms, that's what **1 Corinthians 15:33** is saying: "Do not be deceived: 'Bad company corrupts good morals.'"--Charles Swindoll in *Wisdom for the Way**

4. INVIOLEATE _____—**Verse 4b** "...who keeps his oath even when it hurts..." KJV= *He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not.*

- *When you make a promise, you tie yourself to other persons by the unseen fibers of loyalty. You agree to stick with people you are stuck with. When everything else tells them they can count on nothing, they can count on you. When they do not have the faintest notion of what in the world is going on around them, they will know that you are going to be there with them. You have created a small sanctuary of trust within the jungle of unpredictability: You have made a promise you intend to keep.--Lewis Smedes in *Christianity Today*, "The Power of Promising"*

5. INCORRUPTIBLE _____—**Verse 5** "...who lends his money without usury and does not accept a bribe against the innocent..."

- *The Hebrew word for interest is derived from another word meaning "to bite."-- John Calvin*
- *Money at interest (5a) is condemned in the Bible, not in general (cf. **Deuteronomy 23:20; Matthew 25:27**) but in the context of trading on a brother's misfortunes, as a comparison between **Deuteronomy 23:19** and **Leviticus 25:35-38** makes clear. The latter passage equally forbids selling him food at a profit. In the family, one carried the weaker member; outside it the law allowed discretion, while forbidding extortion and encouraging generosity (cf. **Exodus 23:9; Leviticus 19:33f.**). In this psalm, no distinction is hinted at between a brother and a stranger in need.--Derek Kidner*

P.S. Aside from the blessing of being close to God – a life of these qualities is a life of ultimate security. **Verse 5a**, "He who does these things will never be shaken."