

Judge me, O LORD; for I
have walked in my
integrity: I have trusted
also in the LORD;
therefore I shall not slide.

—Psalm 26:1

Studies in the Psalms

PSALM 26

INTEGRITY

QUICK REVIEW

LESSON ONE

- » We must all watch our own integrity

LESSON TWO

- » We need to watch what kind of people we associate with

LESSON THREE

- » We must make God's house a high priority in our life

ABOUT THIS PSALM

Psalm 26 has a lot to do with the subject of integrity. Webster's dictionary defines integrity as, "the quality of being honest and having strong moral principles; being morally upright." Integrity means doing the right thing at all times and in all circumstances, whether or not anyone is watching you. We live in a world where too often people's morals are based on the "the end justifies the means theory." Many times this is the very opposite of real integrity.

AUTHOR

We are informed in the title that the author of Psalm 26 is David, the son of Jesse from Bethlehem. We cannot know for absolute certain as to when, or where this psalm was given. There is however a high likeliness that Psalm 26 was written about the time of the death of King Ishbosheth. Upon King Saul's death, Saul's cousin, Abner, immediately placed Ishbosheth, the fourth son of King Saul, on the throne of Israel. No doubt Abner, at least in part, did so to substantiate his own position and protect himself from the rightful king, King David. Unfortunately, not long after this Abner was killed. In II Samuel 4, we are informed that two of Ishbosheth's captains in his army took it upon themselves to Kill King Ishbosheth. They thought their actions would please David. Quite possibly these are David's words of defense that he had nothing to do with those who took Ishbosheth's life.

THEME

Integrity can often be something that plays out as a test. One test is whether or not a person always does the right thing, even if no one is looking. Another test is if someone still does the right thing even when everything else seems to be going wrong. There was a man mentioned in the Bible named Job. Job went through a terrible experience that was a powerful example of being tested. Job lost all of his possessions and almost all his family. But worst of all, Job's friends judged him and said he must have done something wrong to cause his problems. God, however, knew the truth about Job. Job 1:1 says, "There was a man named Job who was blameless and upright, he feared God and shunned evil." In Job 2:3 God further states, "There is none like Job on earth, a blameless and upright man who fears God and shuns evil... he held fast to his integrity even though the devil tried to destroy him without cause." (Paraphrased) Job stayed true to God in spite of the circumstances, and Job's life circumstances turned around for good.

PERSONAL APPLICATIONS//PSALM 26

INTEGRITY

PSALM 26:1-3: “Vindicate me, O LORD, for I have led a blameless life; I have trusted in the LORD without wavering. Test me, O LORD, and try me, examine my heart and my mind; for Your love is ever before me, and I walk continually in Your truth.”

QUESTIONS

In these verses, David is both stating his case and asking for God to test him in these areas of his life. What are the qualities that David says he holds? And what are the ways that David asks God to help him examine his integrity?

Besides David and Job, can you think of any other people from the Bible who lived lives of integrity, yet still faced difficult circumstances? (Want a few examples? Check out Genesis 39:2-16, Daniel 3:3-27, and/or Daniel 6:4-24)

Does a life of integrity automatically equal an easy life?

PSALM 26:4-5, 9-10: “I do not sit with deceitful men, nor do I consort with hypocrites; I abhor the assembly of evildoers and refuse to sit with the wicked... Do not take away my soul along with the sinners, my life with bloodthirsty men, in whose hands are wicked schemes, whose right hands are full of bribes.”

QUESTIONS

In these verses, how does David describe a Godly character? Would your life be harder or easier if you were pursuing these same aspects of integrity?

How do we respond when people are rude to us, take us for granted, or belittle us in some way?

PSALM 24:6-8, 11-12: “I wash my hands in innocence, and go about Your altar, O LORD, proclaiming aloud Your praise and telling of all Your wonderful deeds. I love the house where You live, O LORD, the place where Your glory dwells... But I lead a blameless life; redeem me and be merciful to me. My feet stand on level ground; in the great assembly I will praise the LORD.”

QUESTIONS

Do you think David is describing a love for the physical parts that comprised the tabernacle or that he loves to be around God? Ask yourself - do you love to be near to God? Do you enjoy prayer? Do you enjoy reading God's word? Do you enjoy the company of other disciples?

According to these scriptures, how do we get our feet set on level ground?

CLOSING SCRIPTURES

- » James 1:22-23: “Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.”
- » Romans 8:16: “The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.”
- » John 13:35: “By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you love one another.”
- » Proverbs 29:18: “Where there is no vision the people perish.”
- » Romans 10:17: “So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”