

Guidance in Judgment

Ps 25:8-9

1

8 Good and upright is the Lord; Therefore He instructs sinners in the way. **9** He leads the humble in justice, And He teaches the humble His way.

The Psalmist prays in this psalm for three things...

2

- A) Instruction
- B) Guidance
- C) Forgiveness

When we look at these three petitions the obvious importance of all three become strikingly apparent. In this same chapter the writer prays...

Ps 25:4-5

3

4 Make me know Your ways, O Lord; Teach me Your paths. **5** Lead me in Your truth and teach me, For You are the God of my salvation; For You I wait all the day.

It seems to me that he is asking God not about His dealings with men, but rather about men's conduct as prescribed by God. Do you see the slight difference in how the thoughts of verses 8 & 9 are presented as to verses 4 & 5. In verses 8 & 9 he views these thoughts not from the perspective of prayer but from a perception of contemplation. I realize that this may be a fine delineation between them, but it I see that verses 4 & 5 speak to the dependence of man upon God, His truth and salvation, while the thoughts in 8 & 9 looks at the willingness of God to give man what he needs.

This is nothing new in man's discussions with his creator. Sometimes we are in need of asking God for the things that are needful in our lives. Sustenance, shelter, forgiveness, wisdom, understanding, these are all things that man asks God for. But sometimes we just need a friend, a comforter, a confidant that we can talk to.

Make me know your ways is a request before God for instruction that the Good and Upright Lord gives to those who seek it. Here's the point, either attitude is incomplete without the other. Don't our prayers of request depend upon our confidence that God is good and will answer? Don't our thoughts and recognition of His character give us the confidence to make of Him our requests? The text contains a striking view of

4

- 1) The divine character
- 2) The confidence that is built upon that character
- 3) The condition on which the fulfilment of that confidence depends

In this lesson we are going to look at these thoughts.

5) 1) The divine character

The Psalmist calls Him...

6) *The Good and Upright Lord*

OT:2896 **Towb** (tobe) 7

From OT:2895; good (as an adjective) in the widest sense; used likewise as a noun, both in the masculine and the feminine, the singular and the plural (good, a good or good thing, a good man or woman; the good, goods or good things, good men or women), also as an adverb (well):

KJV - beautiful, best, better, bountiful, cheerful, at ease, fair (word), (be in) favour, fine, glad, good (deed, -lier, -lieth, -ly, -ness, -s), graciously, joyful, kindly, kindness, liketh (best), loving, merry, most, pleasant, pleaseth, pleasure, precious, prosperity, ready, sweet, wealth, welfare, (be) well ([-favoured]).

OT:3477 **Yashar** (yaw-shawr') 8

From OT:3474; straight (literally or figuratively): -convenient, equity, Jasher, just, meet (-est), pleased well right (-eous), straight, (most) upright (-ly, -ness).

There is a point to be made here. As with any viewpoint, there are at least two sides of the view. Though many have more than two, there is always at least two. Two men, one a rancher and the other an avid sportsman, look at out over a 30 acre field, the rancher says that would make a great pasture and the sportsman says that would make a great golf course. Neither of them are wrong or right, they just see things from a different perspective. That's because there aren't really any absolutes when it comes to perspective. Perspectives are established and developed on our experiences, our likes, our dislikes, our opinions and agendas, all the things that matter to us, to me.

I looked up the word perspective to see if the definition gave me a different perspective, here is what Webster says...

Per·spec·tive 9

1. The art of drawing solid objects on a two-dimensional surface so as to give the right impression of their height, width, depth, and position in relation to each other when viewed from a particular point.

2. A particular attitude toward or way of regarding something; a point of view.

"most guidebook history is written from the editor's perspective"

Synonyms: outlook, view, viewpoint, point of view, POV, standpoint, position, stand, stance, angle, slant, attitude, frame of mind, frame of reference, approach, way of looking, interpretation

Remember that just a minute ago I said that there are no absolutes with perspectives, that isn't quite accurate. There are no absolutes when it comes to perspectives concerning things of this

world. We will view those things from our own perspective, but when it comes to God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, the Word of God, man's perceptions are not valid unless they match with what has been revealed. Now, I really haven't been rambling, the point I am trying to make is that religions of today accepts the fact that there are different perspectives of God and that as long as you accept God, it doesn't matter how you view Him or His commandments, it doesn't matter what your perspective is.

Good and upright is the Lord. This is not a description of perspective, it is an absolute. A man might be considered to be a good man by some but a scoundrel by others. That's perspective. But God is good and upright, that's not perspective, it is a fact. Good and upright are descriptions of God's character. So are merciful, kindness, compassionate, loving, generous, all-powerful, all-knowing, eternal. It is the perfection of His characteristics that make God God. It is the manifestation of His characteristics towards us that make Him our God. It is our acceptance of the manifestations of His perfection that makes us his children.

It is the divine character of God that should lead us to our next point...

10 2) The confidence that is built upon that character

Do you see how the passage is structured? God is good and upright, THEREFORE, because He is good and upright He chooses to instruct sinners in the way. Jesus says...

John 14:6 **11**
6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.

The idea of the way here represents the only avenue that is available to be restored to his creator. God gives instruction through Jesus Christ that will show man how to restore that relationship.

2 Cor 4:5-6 **12**
5 For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your bond-servants for Jesus' sake. 6 For God, who said, "Light shall shine out of darkness," is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

Paul tells us that it is through Jesus Christ that God instructs us in His light so that we might come to know his knowledge revealed in Christ. Remember what the Eunuch said to Phillip when he was asked if he understood what he was reading...

Acts 8:31 **13**
31 And he said, "Well, how could I, unless someone guides me?"

Friends, we all need to be lead into the understanding of what we need to do. That is why God gives us His instruction.

James 1:5-6 **14**

5 But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him. **6** But he must ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind.

James explains the point for us. We are to ask God for what we need, what we lack, but it must be asked in confident faith, without doubt. The reality of the two aspects of good and upright in the perfect divine character is for us a guarantee that God will not leave men, however guilty they may be, to grope in the dark, or keep stay silent to him. The Psalmist tells us of the guidance that leads to the one important thing for all men; what must we do in regard to the Law that God has given us.

Eccl 12:13 **15**

13 The conclusion, when all has been heard, is: fear God and keep His commandments, because this applies to every person.

God will not leave man without instruction because He is good and upright.

I'm curious, what does love mean to you? Not what the definition of love is, not what 1 Cor. 13 says, not the warm fuzzy emotions we read on a Hallmark card, but what does it mean to you? We talk about loving our children, our spouses, our parents, what do we mean? We want the very best for our children, and we are all willing to sacrifice whatever is necessary for that to be. We want our parents to be proud of us so we work hard at giving them reasons to be. Love comes in a variety of forms, but ultimately it is to be a deep rooted sense looking out for and desiring for the best of the object of that love. Take note of Solomon's words in...

Prov 13:24 **16**

24 He who withholds his rod hates his son, But he who loves him disciplines him diligently.

Love, true love, is doing the most difficult task for the good of someone else. Brethren, God so loved us that He sent His Son to give Himself for us, physically and spiritually. How difficult was it for them to knowingly be separated because you and I sin? That is the example of love that has been given to anyone who is not so blinded by the world and Satan to see.

2 Cor 3:4-6 **17**

4 Such confidence we have through Christ toward God. **5** Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God, **6** who also made us adequate as servants of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

Paul writes that our confidence comes not from anything we can or will do, but that any accomplishment to be had must be had, and can only be had, through Jesus Christ and found in that which the Spirit gives.

God's character is illustrated as being perfect in its goodness and uprightness. His perfection of character is that which should give us the confidence to put our trust in Him and His truth. That brings us to our last point of discussion...

18 3) The condition on which the fulfilment of that confidence depends

What's the saying, there is no such thing as a free lunch? It would be nice if, as many in the world think, God would just give everyone salvation, regardless of their attitude towards Him or His Word. Wouldn't that be nice? We would no longer be bound to obey His truth. We could engage in the pleasures and desires of the world without consequence. We would have no obligation to love and forbear our brothers and sisters in Christ, let alone those of the world. Wouldn't it be nice to have no accountability for our words and actions? But we do have such accountability.

2 Cor 5:10

19

10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

Listen, friends, with your hearts. What do you hear God saying to you? What do you see in God's love for you? More importantly, what do you see that your response to His love should be?

The humble will be led in judgment, and the submissive will be taught His way. The fact of our being sinful only makes it all the more vital that God should speak to us and guide us into salvation. But the condition of our hearing and profiting by His guidance is our humility in accepting His truth.

Because God is Love, and God is Righteousness, He can and will speak only words of righteousness that will lead us into that righteousness.

The Psalmist didn't know how God was going to speak by His Son who is called the Light of men, and who has said,

20

“He that follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.”

Therefore He instructs sinners in the way of Jesus Christ

He leads the humble in the justice of Jesus Christ

He teaches the humble His way through Jesus Christ

What do we hear Him teaching? Where do we see Him leading? What do we allow Him to instruct us in and through Jesus Christ?