

Psalm 5 – In Whom Do You Trust?

Trusting and believing go hand in hand. The one we believe in is also the one we trust, and vice versa. We cannot go through life without trusting someone or something. Children trust their parents from the day they are born. They have no choice. If they do not, they die! The trust is total and absolute. As they grow older, their trust shifts to self or someone else. Most of us never stop trusting. If we do, we become miserable and frightened. We may become paranoid, thinking that everyone is out to cheat us, or to destroy our business, to ruin us or even kill us. Our trust pertains to things of this life. When that trust is betrayed, we may be cheated or lose some material possessions or earthly entity. However, in things pertaining to life after this life, there are eternal consequences.

In whom do you trust? As Christians, we say that it is in God through Christ that we trust. This is the correct answer. However, God does not want the correct answer from us. He demands a life of trust rather than words of trust! From Psalm 5, we see that this life of trust is measured by three responses in times of adversity.

1. **Our Cry – 5:1-6** – To whom do you go for help? David went to his God for help. He asked his LORD (covenantal name) to listen to his words of help. He begged his LORD to hear him (the urgency is in the synonymous parallelism used in verse 1 plus vocative “O LORD”). David shifted gear to a vociferous cry for help in verse 2. This time, he deliberately addressed his LORD as his King and God. The use of the word “King” emphasizes David as subject to the LORD doing His holy will. David belonged to God’s kingdom only. He wanted to do God’s will as a subject of his King. The word “God” refers to the power of God that is absolute; He is more than able to help. The emphasis here is in the synonymous parallelism used in verse 2 as well. David cried to God for help first thing in the morning. To delay was not an option for David. He appealed to the covenantal relationship (use of LORD) as he addressed God. He would wait patiently with anticipation the LORD’s reply as he looked up (v3).

The attribute of God that David highlighted here is instructive. Through a negative form, “The LORD is not a God who hath pleasure in wickedness”, God’s holiness was highlighted. The LORD will not allow evil to live or exist in His presence. God and evil cannot co-exist (v 4). God will have to cast away evil instantly. His holiness will drive away all evil from His presence! How then could the LORD not hear David’s cry for help as his enemies were persecuting him? David called his enemies fools who do not have the strength or ability to stand in the sight of God. Evil is not something that exists outside of evil man. The LORD will dispel evil from His presence, and He will do the same to the evil men who perform the evil! God hates all workers of iniquity! God hates sin and sinners as well! “Popular” theologians have played down this truth. We are not talking about “once only” sinners with a grievous heart of repentance, but life-style labourers of evil work! God hates the sinners who delight in doing evil, who gloat and mock at righteousness and all things sacred and

holy! They delight in darkness and sin, and mock at Hell and God because there is no fear of God in them! That is why David called them fools! God will destroy them that speak leasing (i.e. falsehood), who lie, murder, and use deception. God will surely punish. They will never escape God's awesome wrath that will inevitably come.

2. **Our Worship – 5:7-9** – There is a clear contrast between David and his enemies here. David, as a child of God, could enter into God's presence and experience intimate fellowship because of God's mercy toward him. David was careful not to be presumptuous or arrogant before God. He acknowledged that it was because of God's mercy that he could enter into the house of the LORD - not just God's mercy but a multitude of mercy! "Mercy" in the Bible is "God withholding the punishment we deserve." David realized that there is none righteous before a holy God, not even him. He acknowledged that he was not consumed by God because of God's great mercies bestowed upon him. With a heart and mind of gratitude, David approached God in fear as he worshipped. To worship is to serve and to serve is to worship. What David meant was that he desired to serve the LORD and please Him in all that he did. If serving the LORD included persecution for the faith, i.e. the sufferings he was enduring at the time of writing this Psalm, then so be it. David told God that he wanted to submit to His holy and perfect will for his life. The "temple" here refers to the tabernacle, or more specifically, the Holy of holies where the presence of the LORD was. There was no physical temple, as Solomon had not built it yet! Solomon might not even have been born yet, although we cannot be certain as we do not know when this psalm was written.

How did David do God's will? Verse 8 explains succinctly. David needed direction from the LORD as he pleaded for his LORD to "lead" him. This is like a child asking his father to hold his small hand in His, and to guide his footsteps. David did not wish to do anything against God's will, even in the face of his enemies' mocking and taunting. He wanted to do what was right because he knew that it was the only way to please the LORD. Notice again David's use of "O LORD" (vocative and covenantal). He pleaded with his covenantal LORD to lead him based upon His righteousness and not David's. It is so easy to retaliate and demand our pound of flesh from our enemies. A man of God must refrain from such evil and sin. To behave like his enemies must not be the way of God's child, even when it is within his power and right to do so. He must reflect God's grace and attribute in his life, especially in the face of great persecution. He must not lower himself and wrestle in the filthy mud with his enemies. David could not control the words and actions of his enemies, but he knew that he could control his own. He pleaded with his LORD for strength and help to lead him in a way that would honour God; to make His way, which is based upon God's righteousness, clear to David as he wanted to walk only in this path!

The marks of the enemies of David are in verse 9. The first thing David noted was that they had no faithfulness, i.e. they did not intend to keep their word. Their words

were crooked. They intended to lie. They uttered their words with the intent to deceive in order to get what they wanted. As long as they achieved their desires, they would speak lies to obtain them. Their inward parts, i.e. motives, were rotten to the core. David used the phrase “very wickedness”. They desired only ruin in the people in their lives. In this instance, they desired only ruin for David and all that he did and stood for. The throat is that part of man where words come forth. David described the mouths of his enemies as an open chasm of the sepulchre for dead bodies, which rot and stink. This is a most descriptive picture of the words, hearts and innermost being of David’s enemies. They used flattery; smooth words and sweet nothings are the best way to fool most, if not all, men. Fanning the egos of sinful men always seems to work. Many strong men have fallen to flattery. David had sufficient discernment to know their ploy. He pleaded with his LORD to see him through this onslaught of temptations from these evil men. They may have the appearance of being friendly because of their use of flattery, and yet David knew that their hearts were evil and their words were full of lies and falsehood!

3. **Our Joy – 5:10-12** – David and all believers have the best sense of justice because they have the word of God. David cried to God for justice, hence the use of the vocative “O God.” “Use their own words to condemn and punish them, O God!” The evidence spews out of their own mouths. Let their evil counsel boomerang back at them and may they fall into their own pit! David appealed for just retribution. To cast them out is to destroy them (additional reason revealed by David). This is synthetic parallelism where the second line adds to the thought mentioned in the first. The emphasis is in the additional thought, which is the reason for David’s cry for justice. They have rebelled against God and not David, even though these were David’s enemies. The theological truth is that evil men who thwart God’s servants doing God’s work, are actually fighting against God! Hence, David’s theology is right!

However, David’s appeal to all who continue to trust in the LORD, regardless of the external circumstances they find themselves in, is to rejoice! No external force, including the evil words and works of wicked men, can ever vitiate or affect the relationship and fellowship the believer has with his LORD. How blessed it is for the believer to know that God is real and that God is pleased with him. Shout for joy because the LORD defends His own in His time. Let all who love God’s name be joyful in God. The believer’s basis for joy is God Himself. He is a friend of God! The LORD will definitely bless the righteous, no matter what man will do to him on this earth. To suffer for Christ is to be blessed by Christ! He must keep being righteous and not fall into sin as he faces the evil works of sinful men. The imputed righteousness (positional) is given to all sinners at the time of their conversion. God will from henceforth view every sinner saved by God’s grace as righteous for eternity. Subsequently, this righteousness (practical aspect) is the sanctification that every believer must daily strive for, with God’s enabling. This what the Bible means when it says to be holy. Whenever we commit a sin, we must repent. One day, both the

positional and practical aspects of righteousness will be the same. That will be the day of glorification. God will defend and protect all His children. Nothing can ever happen to any one of them without God's permission!

Trust in the LORD in both good times and times of adversities. This is part of every believer's calling as Christians! God will shield every believer in every area of his life, who will always be secure for eternity. The word "favour" in verse 12 refers to "good pleasure." Amen.