

Windows to the Heart of David, #2 David's Commitment to Holiness

Intro: This week we've continued to read about one of the great characters of the OT—King David. In 1 & 2 Samuel we are given a record of his deeds; but in the psalms we are given a window into his heart. So while we read about David's deeds, we are also trying to learn more about his spirit and why God said about him, "I have found a man after my heart who will do all my will."

What is it that made David so great? Last week we noticed one of those things—his dependence upon God. Now let's consider another—his commitment of holiness. That commitment to holiness is wonderfully expressed in this familiar prayer from Psalm 19.

Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord, my rock and my Redeemer. (Psalm 19:14)

David's prayer for holiness

Acceptance in the sight of God meant everything to David. David sought this acceptance because God had been a source of protection and deliverance in times of danger. "My rock" and "my Redeemer". David recognized that of all our outward deeds one of the most difficult things we have to do is to keep our speech holy. If we can control our tongues, then, like James said, we will be able to bridle the whole body. Thus David prayed that "the words of his mouth" would be acceptable! But David is not merely concerned with external righteousness! "Let the meditations of my heart" be acceptable. These words taken together, like a window into the heart of David, reveal his commitment to holiness. But how is it possible to achieve that holiness? Perhaps the answer is found in the words that precede this great prayer to God.

How David achieved that prayer for holiness

David acknowledged the glory of the Lord as the foundation of man's obedience—19:1-6

Holiness begins with the acknowledgment of God's greatness. No man will submit to God who does not first know the glory of God. David saw the glory of God in all things created. His sense of God's greatness was rooted in observing the skies—the sun, the moon, the stars. These were a continual reminder of God's greatness. It is ironic that we know more about David's world in scientific detail than David could have ever dreamt yet even with this increased knowledge people neglect to honor Him as God.

David acknowledged Law of the Lord as the standard of man's holiness—Ps.19:7-10

If holiness begins with the acknowledgement of God's greatness in nature, it continues in the acknowledgement of God's goodness in revelation. The God of creation is the God of revelation; the God who made the stars is the God who revealed the Scriptures. David knew that God had appeared to his ancestors and through Moses had given the Law for the people of Israel. David gives his tribute to the Law of the Lord. Each term calls attention to something about it:

Law (reminds us that they are the teachings or instructions of God)

Testimonies (reminds us that they are founded in the truthfulness of God)

Precepts (reminds us that we are obligated to perform them)

Commandment (remind us of the authority of God behind them)

Fear (reminds us of the respect that those who obey the words of God have for him)

Judgment (reminds us that the word of God distinguishes right from wrong)

Because of Law is from God, it possesses the features of a divine revelation.

Perfect—spotless and harmless, absolutely well-meaning.

Sure—faithful, raised above doubt

Right—upright

Clean—pure like gold

True—Incapable of being falsified, dependable

Desirable—attractive in terms of benefit and thus valuable to him

Sweeter than honey—attractive to man's spirit as the answer to the longing of his soul toward God

Because the Law is from God, it brings the blessings of God to man.

Restoring the soul—bringing back, imparting newness of life

Making wise the simple, the person who is "open" or easily led astray

Rejoicing the heart—elevating the spirit of man to higher satisfaction

Enlightening the eyes—giving clear direction to man

Enduring forever—it has lasting import to man's life

It warns us of danger & enables us to be rewarded

David acknowledged the grace of God as remedy for man's ignorance and weakness.

If holiness requires that we acknowledge God's greatness in nature and God's goodness in revelation, it also requires that we acknowledge God's grace in our imperfections.

David acknowledged the imperfection of his efforts and need for grace in his limited self-understanding.

Who can discern his errors? Acquit me of hidden faults. (Psalm 19:12)

God's word is perfect; but our own understanding of it and even of ourselves is progressive. David was keenly aware of this as he asked God to not only forgive him of that for which there has been "repentance" (that is, where there is an informed conscience and a change of mind) but also those sins he committed and did not know. Cleanse me of "secret faults".

David prayed for God's help in overcoming known sin—Ps. 19:13

Also keep back Thy servant from presumptuous sins; let them not rule over me; then I shall be blameless, and I shall be acquitted of great transgression. (Psalm 19:13)

Keep me back or hold me back from presumptuous sins, that is sins of willful disobedience to God which in their continued practice "rule over" or dominate our character.

Here David trusts in God to provide the moral power to overcome known sins and to keep them from gaining control over his life.

The result of these two requests is to be blameless and acquitted of great transgression before God. By trusting God's power and grace a righteous man may avoid the practice of sin.

Conclusion: Even now as we live under the law of Jesus, we must have this same spirit of commitment to holiness. David's own example teaches us how we must be.

We too must acknowledge the glory of the Lord as the foundation of our obedience.

We too must acknowledge the Law of the Lord as the standard of our holiness.

We too must acknowledge the grace of the Lord as the remedy for our ignorance and weakness.

It is entirely in keeping with the Christian spirit to say the prayer of David, "Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, Oh Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer".