

WHO MAY DWELL WITH THE LORD?

PSALMS 15

THE MAN GOD APPROVES

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Though short in length, this Psalm is full of challenges to those of us who wish to live with God, now and forever.
- B. David was inspired by the Holy Spirit to write this Psalm, and through the foresight of God, we have it for our learning.
- C. The Psalm is easily divided into three sections:
 - 1. Two practical questions (v.1).
 - 2. Eleven answers (v.2-5a).
 - 3. The conclusion (v.5b).

II. DISCUSSION

- A. Two Practical Questions
 - 1. The Questions:
 - a. "Lord, who may abide (sojourn) in Your Tabernacle?"
 - b. "Who may dwell in Your holy hill (Temple)?"
 - 2. Compare the relationship between sojourn and Tabernacle with the relationship between dwell and Temple.
 - 3. For David's contemporaries, under the Mosaic Law, the literal meaning would be obvious. The tabernacle was a temporary place for God's people to worship, while the Temple was the permanent site.
 - a. For those of us living under the Law of Christ, our sojourning place is the church.
 - b. The permanent dwelling place - Heaven.
 - 4. We could update David's questions: Who will be in the church? Who will be in heaven?
- B. Eleven Answers
 - 1. Verse 2 - Three answers
 - a. "He who walks uprightly", that is sojourns correctly (Titus 2:11,12; Col. 3:5-14)
 - b. "And works righteousness" He thinks right, speaks right, acts right and does right!
 - (1) Peter confirms this point (Acts 10:34,35).
 - (2) John concurs (1 Jn. 2:29; 3:7).
 - (3) Righteousness is our personal possession, obtained by doing God's will.
 - c. "And speaks the truth in his heart", not a hypocrite - he is what he says he is.
 - 2. Verse 3 - Three answers
 - a. "Does not backbite with his tongue"
 - (1) The backbiter is a coward, he will not confront a person face to face.
 - (2) The backbiter is brutal in his maliciousness.
 - b. "Nor does evil to his neighbor", in addition to not being a backbiters also not a gossips a false teacher, or a false flatterer.
 - c. "Nor does he take up a reproach against his friend"

- (1) Not does he not originate gossip, he doesn't spread it either.
 - (2) The God approved man will invoke the Golden Rule (Mt. 7:12).
3. Verse 4 - Three answers
 - a. "In whose eyes a vile person is despised." That is, have an aversion toward the person because of the vile things he does:
 - (1) We understand that the NT teaches us to hate the sin, but love (agape) the sinner.
 - (2) We are not to "fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness." (Eph. 5:11)
 - b. "He honors those who fear the Lord." In addition to looking out for the best interests of his brethren, he gives them the respect due a God approved man.
 - c. "Swears to his own hurt and does not change." Sometimes we make promises that if broken would be to our profit. This is wrong.
 4. Verse 5a - Two answers
 - a. "Does not put out his money at usury." Usury is an illegal rate of interest. Loan sharking. In his business dealing, as in his social and religious lives, the God approved man is fair, merciful and compassionate.
 - b. "Nor does he take a bribe against the innocent." To testify falsely in a court of law (perjury) or to manipulate the innocent for money (land frauds, pyramid schemes) are examples of this sin.

III. CONCLUSION

- A. Verse 5b - A very simple conclusion: "he who does these things shall never be moved."
 1. The "things" here are obviously those things mentioned in verses 2-5a.
 2. Application for the God-approved Christian
- B. Closing Thoughts
 1. God determines whom He approves.
 2. The church is the avenue for us to obtain His approval.
 3. Character and reputation are both important to the God approved man. "What God knows us to be and what others think us to be."
 4. The emphasis on work to be accomplished, an obedience of faith, shows the dire consequences of a faith only or apathetic practice of one's religion.

Adapted from Ch. 4 of Robert Taylor's, *Studies in Psalms*.

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