

“Psalms: Week 10”

SUNDAY, MARCH 9, 2025 - MICHAEL BOWERS



Summary - “Psalms: Praise and Worship”

This week, as we dive into Psalm 101, David, our Psalm writer, gives us a quick case study that could be called Leadership 101. In eight verses, he outlines a host of resolutions that allow him, and each of us, to stay in the light rather than the darkness. Each of these statements give us instruction to lead in our homes, in our workplaces, in our churches, and lead others out of spiritual darkness and into the light. David is giving us clear directives that are not resolutions to make once a year, or only when the light shines, but every day - morning by morning. The fact that David is our writer makes this psalm more credible because we see how someone who could write such words could fall so far, yet even in his failure, he could find grace and repent. Because of this, David is not calling us and giving us a few trite lessons to stay in the light for a season. He is giving us principles and declarations for a lifetime. This is not a calling to be a guest in the house of the Lord, but to abide by planting roots to see His fruit in our lives. This is an opportunity to stand in the light of grace, mercy, and love. This psalm of protection ended up being a psalm of warning. We cannot pretend and act like the darkness is not around us, and make light of evil. As David so painfully learned and points out to the reader of scripture, this war is real, and it is a battle for our hearts, souls, minds, and every relationship we hold dear. May we embrace this psalm, but more importantly, embrace a relationship with the holy God, who is faithful to forgive, and a Holy Spirit that empowers us to live in the light.

Scripture - Psalm 101 “Out of the Darkness and into the Light”

I will sing of steadfast love and justice; to you, O Lord, I will make music. 2 I will ponder the way that is blameless. Oh when will you come to me? I will walk with integrity of heart within my house; 3 I will not set before my eyes anything that is worthless. I hate the work of those who fall away; it shall not cling to me. 4 A perverse heart shall be far from me; I will know nothing of evil. 5 Whoever slanders his neighbor secretly I will destroy. Whoever has a haughty look and an arrogant heart I will not endure. 6 I will look with favor on the faithful in the land, that they may dwell with me; he who walks in the way that is blameless shall minister to me. 7 No one who practices deceit shall dwell in my house; no one who utters lies shall continue before my eyes. 8 Morning by morning I will destroy all the wicked in the land, cutting off all the evildoers from the city of the Lord.

Key Apps, Websites, and Online Tools for Further Study

- <https://www.blueletterbible.org/>
- <https://www.biblegateway.com/>
- <https://biblehub.com/>
- <https://www.youversion.com/>
- <https://www.bibleref.com/>
- <https://bible.org/>
- <https://netbible.org/>
- <https://enduringword.com/bible-commentary/>
- <https://www.desiringgod.org/>
- <https://www.gty.org/>
- <https://www.gotquestions.org/>
- <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/>
- <https://carm.org/>
- <https://dwellapp.io/>

Further Scripture Study

Psalm 1; [Psalm 101](#); Proverbs 4; John 8:12; Ephesians 5:1-20; Colossians 1:9-14; 1 John 1:5-10

As you study the scripture verses provided for this week, study for right context and right questions..

Right Context:

- The verse itself and key word(s) that stand out in the verse (meanings)
- The verses around the verse, the section of scripture, the chapter, the book, old/new testament, and relation to the rest of scripture
- Author and Date (Who wrote the book and when?)
- Audience (Who is the book written to? Main characters in the story and/or text?)
- Main points and overall purpose of the book
- Historical background, cultural significance, setting, people, rulers, etc.
- Scripture references; let scripture interpret scripture as much as possible

Right Questions:

- What does this passage say?
- What does this passage mean to its original audience?
- What is this passage teaching me about God?
- What does this passage tell us about man?
- What does this passage demand of me? (Is there a command to obey? Is there a promise to claim? Is there a sin to avoid? How is this applicable to me?)
- How does this passage change the way I relate to people? (What actions must I take in response to this passage?)
- What does this passage prompt me to pray? (For God, for others, for my community, for family, etc.)

Key Thoughts

Throughout Psalm 101, David issues nine declarations that help to lead him, and us today as believers, into the light of God's truth and wisdom; a life lived in worship to God.

1. I Will Worship the Lord (vs. 1) - Notice what moves David to worship. The song did not lead him to worship; instead, the character of God crafted and created the song. What we sing about in our worship of God should translate into who we desire to be in our lives and relationships.

While worshipping the love and justice of God, David also declared his desire to model the love and justice of God. It is easy to say that David had significant moments of failure in these areas, but David's failures are not to become our excuses. We can't allow men and women in scripture, or men and women who we follow today, who have fallen into sin, to be our reason not to worship; their sin cannot become our excuses. Their sin, conviction, repentance, and the grace of God must be driving forces that lead us away from sin and into deeper relationship with Christ. We must always remember that God has offered salvation to those who believe in their hearts that God raised Christ from the dead and in this has set the believer free from sin. This is why we worship!

2. I Will Pay Attention to the Blameless Path (vs. 2) - David outlines that if you want to stay in the light or move from darkness to light, you must carefully examine the paths you are taking in life. What decisions are we making? Who are we walking the paths of life alongside? Where is the journey going to lead?

We must, at times, pause in our decisions, slow down, and examine the path, the decision, the direction, the job offer, the reconnection to an old friend online, the \$5 bet, the click-bait, the lunch meeting with a co-worker and ask: Where might this path lead me? (see Proverbs 4)

3. I Will Walk with Integrity (vs. 2) - Integrity is the quality of being honest and having strong moral principles. It's about doing the right thing, even when it's difficult or no one is watching. Integrity is transparency. It is marked with honesty.

God responds publicly to who we are privately. Who we are in our home, sitting at a desk, choosing a path to live, and being faithful are more important than who we proclaim ourselves to be. David stated something in verse 2 that would ultimately be revealed in his downfall, the condition of his heart: "I will walk with integrity of heart within my house."

4. I Will Not Set My Eyes On Anything Worthless (vs. 3) - What the heart loves, the eyes will seek and find. This calling from David to us, in our homes and relationships, is to examine what we are using our eyes to view, drawing us to the things of light.

When we guard our vision, our direction is set toward Him.

Key Thoughts

5. I Will Flee A Perverse Heart (vs. 4) - If vs. three was about keeping our eyes pure to make evil fall away from us, verse five is a declaration: "I want to keep that which is clearly and easily distinguished as destructive and evil far from me."

Whatever our heart entertains, it engages in. Whatever actions we engage in will lead us down a path.

6. I Will Not Tolerate Those Who Slander or are Prideful (vs. 5) - A slanderer is a person who administers poison to an unexpected victim. Every single proud thought, word, and deed of ours in some way seizes for self what belongs to God alone, or, claims for self what is valid of God alone.

Following Jesus Christ is not about leading people to ourselves, but to Christ. Slandering others, and looking down upon others, will derail our pursuit to lead others out of darkness and into the light.

7. I Will Surround Myself with the Faithful (vs. 6) - David is now telling us who he does want in his camp and court. He wanted people around him not filled with deceit, those not pursuing selfish gain. There is a vast difference in decision-making when you are not alone versus when you are surrounded by those who are faithful and by those who are deceitful or proud.

Stepping into the light requires faithful friends to examine our actions and intentions.

8. I Will Not Allow the Deceitful to Abide With Me (vs. 7) - As authors Aiken and Merida put it in Exalting Jesus in Psalms, "The people we listen to and spend time with are sure to influence who we are and how we live." Another way that this could be expressed is through the old saying, "If you lie down with dogs, you'll get up with fleas."

David needed to surround himself with truthful and wise leaders who would speak to his leadership. We need this as well as we lead our homes, places of work, schools, teams, and communities.

As we lead we must remember that this starts in our hearts and homes. Our homes must be places of truth. Our homes must be places where sinful behavior is not allowed and where forgiveness, grace, and truth abound.

9. Every Morning I Will Remember (vs. 8) - Every morning, we must remember that this world is a war. Every morning, we must remember that we are in a spiritual battle. Every morning, we must aim to not become complacent to evil.

Key Thoughts

This week: READY Yourself

- Read Psalm 101 every morning before you start your day.
- Examine David's "I Will" and "I Will Not" Statements
- Ask a faithful friend for help.
- Determine a new guardrail to put in place for your eyes and your heart.
- You pursue the light by abiding in a relationship with Jesus Christ.

Reflect & Respond

"To you, O Lord, I will sing praises." Is this true in your own life? Are you only singing praises to God or are you placing your worship on other things/people? When you do worship, is it because of His loving kindness and justice (salvation) in your life, or, is your worship misplaced? (vs. 1)

What needs to change in your life and/or your relationship with God in order to worship Him more intentionally? (Personally, in church on Sundays, in your home, with your spouse, with your children, etc.)

Read Proverbs 4. Where are the paths of your life currently leading you? Is it into darkness or is it into the light? How are these paths playing out in your own walk and your own home? (vs. 2)

Is there any worthless idol that you are currently setting before your eyes/heart, and in doing so, putting in place of God? What needs to happen for you to release your grip on it? What do you currently need to flee? (vs. 3-4)

Pastor Michael shared that, "Slandering others, and looking down upon others, will derail our pursuit to lead others out of darkness and into the light." Is there anyone who is being prevented from walking in the light of God due to your slander, pride, and selfishness? (vs. 5)

"The people we listen to and spend time with are sure to influence who we are and how we live (Aiken/Merida)." Who are you currently listening to and spending time with? Who is influencing you in your day to day? Who in your life has been given permission to examine your actions, words, and intentions? (vs. 6-7)

Are you prepared each day for the war that you are walking into? Are you spiritually ready for the battle that lies ahead; prepared to walk in the light, or are you complacent in your walk; prepared only to stumble into darkness and evil? (vs. 8)

This week, READY Yourself so that you may flee darkness and walk in the light as He is in the light (see READY acronym at the very top of this page 5)