

**SBC – April 21, 2024**  
**Psalm 26 (NKJV)**  
**“A Prayer for Vindication”**

**A Psalm of David.**

Once again we are not certain of the occasion for this Psalm. However, the contents of the Psalm suggest that David is being accused of fellowshiping with ungodly people and thereby being unfaithful to the LORD. David asks God to vindicate him and defends his integrity in this matter. He is not claiming sinlessness, but certainly is claiming “not guilty” regarding the specific charges that were being made against him.

**Slide # 1**

***OUTLINE – Psalm 26***

**“A Prayer for Vindication”**

- vv. 1-3 A Plea for Vindication
- vv. 4-8 Innocence Proclaimed
- vv. 9-10 What David Does Not Want God to Do
- vv. 11-12 What David Wants God to Do

**1 Vindicate me, O LORD, For I have walked in my integrity. I have also trusted in the LORD; I shall not slip.**

Vindicate is the idea of exoneration. He is asking God to clear his name regarding the accusations being made against him.

One of the most hurtful and destructive things is when people make false charges against someone.

David insists that he has walked in integrity and trusted in the LORD. The last part of verse 1 is often translated as “without wavering”.

**Slide # 2**

**Psalm 26:1 (ESV)**

**1 Vindicate me, O LORD, for I have walked in my integrity, and I have trusted in the LORD without wavering.**

To walk in integrity is to walk consistently with single hearted devotion. It does not denote perfection but being innocent of the charges being made against him.

## **2 Examine me, O LORD, and prove me; Try my mind and my heart.**

David has a clear conscience on integrity and yet asks God to examine him and prove him. To examine means to try and as one would in a court of law. To “prove” is the idea of trying as one would do so with precious metals to see of what quality they are.

The mind relates to motives and the heart relates to affections.

David invites God’s scrutiny. Really he is asking God to reveal if there is something out of line that he has missed. This is a good thing to do because we all still have the flesh. We can have a clear conscience and yet still potentially be overlooking something.

That is why it is good to come before God as David did and ask God to examine and prove us. And when we do so with an honest heart God is faithful to reveal what He wants us to see – if there is anything we are overlooking.

### **Slide # 3**

#### **1 Corinthians 4:4 (NKJV)**

**4 For I know of nothing against myself, yet I am not justified by this; but He who judges me is the Lord.**

#### **Jeremiah 12:3 (NKJV)**

**3 But You, O LORD, know me; You have seen me, And You have tested my heart toward You. ...**

### **3 For Your lovingkindness is before my eyes, And I have walked in Your truth.**

“Lovingkindness” is the Hebrew word “hesed” meaning God’s loyal covenant keeping love. It denotes absolute faithfulness. This has been David’s focus. He has sought to live accordingly. He says, “I have walked in Your truth.”

### **4 I have not sat with idolatrous mortals, Nor will I go in with hypocrites.**

**5 I have hated the assembly of evildoers, And will not sit with the wicked.**

This is biblical separation. David has not thrown in with or identified with idolaters – as evidently was being claimed. He refused to associate with hypocrites which is to say pretenders who pretend to be committed to God but live a double life.

He has hated in the sense of finding repulsive the assembly of evildoers and he refuses to sit with (that is have fellowship) with the wicked.

David is clearly aligned with God and not with the wicked as he plainly says.

It is one thing to love the lost “evangelistically” but quite another to have fellowship with them – to enter into their wickedness with them.

The old saying, “Birds of a feather flock together is really true.” I have a bird feeder outside my window. I have noticed that different kinds of birds come to feed at different times and generally the same type of birds all come together at the same time. They move together. They eat together. The “fellowship” together.

David is saying that his way of life is not to fellowship with the wicked. He does not identify with them at all. He does not consort with them. He is of a whole different KIND.

In the modern world this idea takes on an entirely different dimension, in many ways unknown to King David. We choose associations in our entertainment, and we often choose very poorly. We allow the wicked to amuse us, then to be our examples, then our models, and finally our idols. David’s statement here also applies to these kind of contacts and associations. – **David Guzik**

Many people have a very strong desire to meet celebrated or ‘important’ people, including those whom they disapprove.... But I am inclined to think a Christian would be wise to avoid, where he decently can, any meeting with people who are bullies, or lascivious, cruel, dishonest, spiteful and so forth. Not because we are ‘too good’ for them. In a sense we are not good enough. We are not good enough to cope with all the temptations, nor clever enough to cope with all the problems, which an evening spent in such society produces.” -**C.S. Lewis**

**1 Corinthians 15:33 (NKJV)**

**33** Do not be deceived: “Evil company corrupts good habits.”

**2 Corinthians 6:14 (NKJV)**

**14** Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?

We often quote 2 Cor. 6:14 in relation to marriage and that believers are not to be yoked in marriage to an unbeliever. That is certainly true, but really what Paul is addressing here in 2 Corinthians is the matter of worship. We are not to partner with unbelievers in worship, ministry, or spiritual service. Rather, we are to practice biblical separation.

It is easier to pull a person down off a table than to pull them up onto it. Yes, we want to love the lost evangelistically but we must be wise. We must be careful to maintain a walk of no compromise and there is to be no fellowship with evil.

We should note that there is an aspect of separation that is not brought out in the Psalm. Though we should be separate from sinners as far, as silent assent or complicity with their evil is concerned, we should not be isolated from them when it comes to telling them about their need of Christ. The Lord Jesus Himself was a friend of sinners; He not only received them but ate and drank with them. But He never compromised His loyalty to God or failed to tell about their sin and their need of forgiveness. – **William MacDonald**

**6 I will wash my hands in innocence; So I will go about Your altar, O LORD,**

In contrast to the evildoers who find their fellowship in wickedness David would wash his hand in innocence. To wash his hands is symbolic language saying he would get right and have a clear conscience and thereby he would go to the place of worship.

Probably people wash or cleanse their hands more today than ever before in history. Perhaps every time we do, we should remind ourselves to *receive* the cleansing that comes from Jesus and His work on the cross, and our *responsibility* to cleanse our hands from wicked actions, our mouth from wicked words, and our heart from wicked desires. – **David Guzik**

There is positional cleansing that we receive at the moment of saving faith. Hebrew 10:14 says, “by one offering He has perfected forever”. This is what Jesus did by way of the cross. This is the position of every believer as they have been perfected forever by the offering of Christ.

However, in our walk we often get our feet dirty and we need the cleansing of maintenance. This has to do with our practice – our walk. And the way we apply this cleansing is through confession.

### **Slide # 5**

#### **1 John 1:9 (NKJV)**

**9** If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Bill Waters told me when he got saved they gave him two John verses – one in the gospel of John and one is 1<sup>st</sup> John. One relates to our position and one relates to our practice. And we need to know them both with proper understanding.

### **Slide # 6**

#### **OUR POSITON....**

#### **John 3:16 (NKJV)**

**16** For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that **whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.**

#### **OUR PRACTICE...**

#### **1 John 1:9 (NKJV)**

**9** If we **confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us** from all unrighteousness.

In view here in David’s experience was cleansing related to maintenance in his walk. In coming to God’s altar (the place of worship in the OT) he wanted to be clean before God.

### **Slide # 7**

#### **John 4:24 (NKJV)**

**24** God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”

God honoring worship is to worship Him in spirit (from our hearts) and in truth (genuineness). God wants us to be authentic – not playing games and this expresses how David wanted to come before God’s altar.

**7 That I may proclaim with the voice of thanksgiving, And tell of all Your wondrous works.**

As one comes before God with a clean conscience then they are in the position to offer acceptable worship. As David says, “That I may proclaim with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all Your wondrous works.”

Thanksgiving and praises out of a clean heart are acceptable worship. This is what God is looking for.

**8 LORD, I have loved the habitation of Your house, And the place where Your glory dwells.**

Not only has David disassociated from evildoers but he loves to be in the presence of the Lord. In the OT the special presence of the LORD was associated with the tabernacle and then later the temple.

David lived in the days of the tabernacle which was a special tent made up of the holy place and the holy of holies with which God’s intimate presence and glory was associated.

In Psalm 26:8 “where Your glory dwells” is more literally, “of the tabernacle of Your glory”.

### **Slide # 8**

“The *habitation* must mean the *holy of holies*, where the Divine Presence was manifest; and the *place of the tabernacle* must refer to the *mercy-seat*, or the place where the *glory of the Lord* appeared between the cherubim, upon the lid or cover of the ark of the covenant.” - **Adam Clarke**

David genuinely loved the Lord and being in His presence!

**9 Do not gather my soul with sinners, Nor my life with bloodthirsty men,**

This verse is a little hard to understand. Clearly, David does not want to be grouped together with these ungodly people.

But beyond that some think he is asking that God not allow him to experience the common fate of sinners in this life who meet with an untimely demise in the sense of a premature death.

If swift judgment took the wicked away, it should not touch one who remained separate from them.

– *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*

Others take it further thinking that David is asking because he had refused to join in with them in their ungodliness that he is asking that he escape their fate in the life hereafter.

He had shunned the practices of sinners, murderers, and payoff men in life; now he pleads to escape their company in death.

– *William MacDonald*

Again, we note that David lived in the OT days when the afterlife was more cloudy than where we live under the New Covenant in the NT. He did not have the level of assurance that we have.

### **Slide # 9**

**2 Timothy 1:10 (NKJV)**

**10** but has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who has abolished death and **brought life and immortality to light** through the gospel,

**10 In whose hands is a sinister scheme, And whose right hand is full of bribes.**

Verses 4 and 5 and then 9 and 10 reveal the kind of people that David did not want to be associated with.

### **Slide # 10**

Idolatrous mortals  
 Hypocrites  
 Evildoers  
 Wicked  
 Sinners  
 Bloodthirsty  
 Schemers  
 Bribery

**11 But as for me, I will walk in my integrity; Redeem me and be merciful to me.**

“**But**” is a contrast word. In contrast to wicked evildoers David has determined he will walk in integrity.

And in view of this he asks God “redeem” him which is the idea of rescuing him and vindicating him as requested earlier in the chapter. And to that end he asks that God be merciful (or gracious) to him.

**12 My foot stands in an even place; In the congregations I will bless the LORD.**

David was convinced that he stood on level ground where he would not slip. This is the place of spiritual stability and confidence.

### ***Slide # 11***

Walk of integrity – v. 1  
 Trusts the LORD – v. 1  
 Orders life by God’s lovingkindness – v. 3  
 Walks in God’s truth – v. 3  
 Separation from hypocritical evildoers – vv. 4-5  
 Worships with clean conscience – v. 6  
 Loves the place of worship – v. 8  
 Looks to God for deliverance – v. 11

In short David was sincere about living a God-oriented life. This defined his life or what he called a walk of integrity. This is to have your feet planted in an even place that is stable and sure.

And so David concludes: “***In the congregations I will bless the LORD.***”



Note the contrast: David would not sit with the assembly of the wicked as seen in verses 4-5. But in contrast he would bless the LORD in the assembly of the faithful as seen in verse 12.

**Years ago I read of a person** who was really struggling with their assurance. And the person talking to them said: “Where would you rather be – where would feel more comfortable – at a bar room full of worldly minded people or in prayer meeting with God’s people.”

Well, the person responded they wouldn’t feel comfortable at all in the drunken bar room scene but felt right at home in a prayer meeting with God’s people.

Who you hang with, who you fellowship with says volumes about where your heart is really at. And that is the issue in Psalm 26. David argued that his life, his integrity of living for God and desiring the things of God spoke for itself.

“The song began in the minor, but it has now reached the major key. Saints often sing themselves into happiness.” – **Charles Spurgeon**

The Psalm began with a plea for God to vindicate David in terms of his walk of integrity and his trust in the Lord, and it ends with the conviction that indeed God will do this as David says he is standing in an even place and there with God’s people he will bless the LORD.

A life of integrity will in the end be vindicated by God. It is here that one stands in an “even” (stable) place!

God help us to live accordingly!