

SBC – Feb. 22, 2026
Psalm 101:1-8 (NKJV)
“A Vow of Faithfulness”

Psalm 101 (NKJV)
A Psalm of David.

This is a Psalm of David regarding how he resolves to lead his administration. David was anointed 3 times to be king. He was first anointed by Samuel as a young man (1 Samuel 16:13). After Saul's death he was anointed king over Judah (2 Sam. 2:4); and then 7 years later he was anointed king over all the tribes of Israel (2 Sam. 5:3). In all he waited about 17 years before he was king over the whole of Israel, so he had a lot of time to think about what kind of a leader he wanted to be and what he wanted his administration to represent.

It is thought that very possibly this Psalm was written shortly after the death of Saul when things were still reeling from the abuses and confusions of the last years of Saul's reign. As God's newly appointed king David resolved that His leadership and his reign would be characterized by integrity and faithfulness to God.

Slide # 1

Psalm 101

“A Vow of Faithfulness”

- v. 1 A Commitment to Praise the LORD
- v. 2 A Commitment to Behave Wisely
- vv. 3-4 A Personal Commitment to Righteous Living
- vv. 5-8 A Commitment to Righteous Administrative Standards

1 I will sing of mercy and justice; To You, O LORD, I will sing praises.

From the outset, David resolves to sing God's praises. He says he will sing of God's mercy and His justice.

Mercy here is literally “hesed,” which is often translated as “lovingkindness.” It is also translated as “loyal love”, “covenant love,” or “steadfast love.” It underscores God's faithful, undeserved kindness. God is ever faithful in spite of our unfaithfulness. That is hesed!

Justice speaks of what is right according to God's standards (Ps. 89:14; Isa. 16:5).

Strict justice without hesed would result in the doom of us all. God is perfectly just, but He is also faithful in administering undeserved kindness to those who believe in Him. God in His wisdom has provided both in the cross of Christ. There, we see justice as the payment for sin was made, but we also see faithful, undeserved kindness in reference to all believers.

The first thing David resolves to sing about is God's covenant faithfulness. He is ever faithful to His promises. No matter what, this is the bed-rock reality that the believer falls back on. We often fail, but God is ever faithful. He is ever kind to us, as undeserving as we are. That is worthy of song!

And then, in combo, David resolves to sing of God's justice. God is always fair. He is completely consistent with what is just.

David wanted his rule to be modeled after God, whose ways are characterized by loyal-love and justice!

Thus, to YHWH (the loyal covenant-keeping God of Israel) David would sing his praises. And David resolves to not only sing but also to live with godly integrity.

**2 I will behave wisely in a perfect way. Oh, when will You come to me?
I will walk within my house with a perfect heart.**

Perfect here has the idea of consistent integrity in keeping with godliness. David determined that he would live a life of integrity and godliness.

When David came to royal power, he didn't say:

- "Now I can live the good life." He said, **I will behave wisely.**
- "I'll have the biggest party ever." He said, **I will behave wisely.**
- "I'll show them all how important I am." He said, **I will behave wisely.**
- "I'll punish my enemies and show my power." He said, **I will behave wisely.** – *David Guzik*

But in the same breath, he realizes that he needs God's present help to do it. When he says, "**Oh, when will You come to me?**" this is a personal expression of the need for God to be close and help him in this regard.

With God's help, David resolves walk within his house with a perfect heart.

The sense here is equivalent to the NT emphasis on being blameless or above reproach (cf. 1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:7). It is not the idea of absolute perfection but a consistency of life that has no glaring compromise.

Notice that David realizes that behaving wisely in a perfect way begins with having a perfect heart. Everything begins in the heart, and then the outflow of that is seen in the life.

Slide # 2

Proverbs 4:23 (NKJV)

23 Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life.

The emphasis here is on the heart, for the heart of leadership is the leader's devotion to the Lord. This devotion results in a life lived blamelessly to the glory of the Lord. – **Warren Wiersbe**

And then note that he begins with himself, starting not with others but rather, "***I will behave wisely.***" Godly leadership starts with self. People don't generally advance further than the leadership. "***So go the leaders – so go the people.***" In order for the people to go in a godly way, the leadership must lead in that way. For the leaders, it starts with self!

Slide # 3

Acts 20:28 (NKJV)

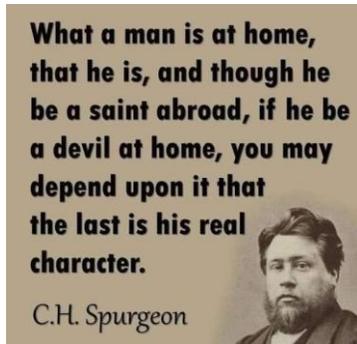
28 Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

1 Timothy 4:16 (NKJV)

16 Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.

And the first point of reference where a commitment to godly living shows up is at home – in your own house. David started with himself and started within his own house.

Slide # 4



[David] made it clear that there must be no separation between the leader's personal life and his or her official life, the private and the public. – **Warren Wiersbe**

“This is the hardest place to walk in perfectly. It seems easier to walk perfectly among strangers than in one's own house. But you may rest assured that a man is really no better than he is to his own.

...Understand that in the home-life God is educating and training you for the greatest victories. There you are learning the deepest lessons in sanctification. You need not run to conventions, sermons, and holiness meetings; if you would resolve to walk in your house with a perfect heart, you would discover how far from perfect you are...”

- **F.B. Meyer**

This is the training ground and proving ground for those who would be elders and deacons (cf. 1 Tim. 3:5). Again, this is not talking about absolute perfection. David had his issues here. Sometimes very godly people struggle with prodigals. I don't think the issue is whether or not you have a rebel child, but rather how you deal with it. Jesus said, families would be divided over Him (Matt. 10:34-37).

The priest Eli had 2 wicked sons and he was judged severely for it because he did not take a stand (1 Sam. 2:22-30). Samuel also had wicked sons, but he was commended by God in the highest of ways by placing him right next to Moses in terms of honor (Jer. 15:1; Ps. 99:6). The difference was in their stand for the Lord. This becomes the issue! I often say that Cain and Abel had the same parents. One was a rebel, and one was a saint. It was not a matter of parenting, but a matter of choice! When children become of age, they make their own choices.

There comes a point where we love them evangelistically, but we can't condone their sin. And we employ the secret weapon – which is prayer!

Within his own house, David determined he would walk without compromise with a perfect heart – a heart devoted to God.

To achieve this, David said...

3 I will set nothing wicked before my eyes; I hate the work of those who fall away; It shall not cling to me.

“**Wicked**” here refers to that which is worthless or vile. The eye gate is very dangerous. To remain “blameless,” one must be proactive as David was. We must determine to set nothing wicked before our eyes. We must guard what we see.

It is like Billy Graham said: “***You can’t help the first look, but you are accountable for the second look.***” The flesh is such that it craves another look, which turns into sinful lust.

Slide # 5

Proverbs 27:20 (NKJV)

20 Hell and Destruction are never full; So **the eyes of man are never satisfied.**

1 John 2:16 (NKJV)

16 For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, **the lust of the eyes**, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world.

David knew the measure of a person’s spiritual life is seen (no pun intended) in what one chooses to set before their eyes. Let that sink in!

David’s commitment here mirrors that of Job.

Slide # 6

Job 31:1 (NKJV)

1 “**I have made a covenant with my eyes**; Why then should I look upon a young woman?”

Sadly, one can be committed and still fall hard. This is what happened to David.

Slide # 7

2 Samuel 11:2 (NKJV)

2 Then it happened one evening that David arose from his bed and walked on the roof of the king's house. And from the roof he saw a woman bathing, and the woman was very beautiful to behold.

At first glance, David should have hidden his eyes, but alas, the second look took him down, leading to a black mark on his record that was never removed.

Slide # 8**1 Kings 15:5 (NKJV)**

5 because David did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, and had not turned aside from anything that He commanded him all the days of his life, except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite.

The moral of the story is we are never safe until we are home! There are potential pitfalls everywhere, and Satan is doing his best to try to trip us up. And of course, our greatest enemy is within, called the flesh.

Interestingly, David fell as an older man – probably in his 50's. In recent days, we have seen a number of older high-profile Christians fall hard. Day in and day out, we must never allow our hearts and eyes to wander. It is a battle to the pearly gates, and we are never safe until we are home! We must never let down our guard. We must ever be vigilant.

Yet, we shouldn't think David was a hypocrite because he failed in completely living up to these high standards. It isn't hypocrisy to have a standard that you can't completely meet. Hypocrisy is when you have one standard for yourself and a higher standard for others.

- **David Guzik**

David said, "***I hate the work of those who fall away; it shall not cling to me.***"

Hate indicates utter and absolute rejection. David was committed to hating what God hates and loving what God loves.

Slide # 9**Psalm 97:10 (NKJV)**

10 You who love the LORD, hate evil! He preserves the souls of His saints; He delivers them out of the hand of the wicked.

What David is describing is apostasy – those who depart from God and the faith. To “**fall away**” is the exact opposite of hesed – covenant faithfulness! David hates the “work” – the sinful works of apostasy that rebel and turn away from God. He wants no part of this. His driving desire is to remain faithful to God for his whole life.

As Paul shared in Romans 7, this is the heartbeat of genuine believers. We hate the very sin that entices us. We hate it when we fall (Rom. 7:15-18). As Jesus said, “The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.” (Mt. 26:41) This is why Paul said, “make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.” (Rom. 13:14) If you give it an inch, it will be the ruler! None are above falling (1 Cor. 10:12).

4 A perverse heart shall depart from me; I will not know wickedness.

The word “perverse” means twisted – morally twisted in that it refuses to conform to God’s Word and His will (cf. Prov. 3:32; 6:16-19; 11:20).

David knew that the company you keep influences you. As Paul said in 1 Cor. 15:33, “Evil company corrupts good habits.”

What David describes is Biblical separation. He doesn’t want to be party to the perverse who are twisted in their morals. He refuses to condone or go along with this. He wants nothing to do with these people.

David knew that to live a godly life involved proactive determination. You can’t wait until you are faced with compromise to not compromise. You have to be committed before it hits you in the face. David proactively hid God’s word in his heart so that he might not sin (Ps. 119:9-11).

David does not want those serving alongside him to be characterized as perverse people.

Slide # 10

Proverbs 29:12 (NKJV)

12 If a ruler pays attention to lies, All his servants become wicked.

Proverbs 13:20 (NKJV)

20 He who walks with wise men will be wise, But the companion of fools will be destroyed.

To go along with sin as a leader results in the corruption of your whole administration. David wanted nothing to do with this (cf. Prov. 12:26).

David now goes on to describe the type of wicked perversion he wants nothing to do with that would corrupt his entire government.

5 Whoever secretly slanders his neighbor, Him I will destroy; The one who has a haughty look and a proud heart, Him I will not endure.

Slander is “character assassination.” It is not true, but the person slandering seeks to destroy someone with lying words. This is one of the most evil things in the world. And it is especially malicious when it is done secretly, which is always the most effective way to try to destroy someone.

It is one thing to tell someone to their face, but slander behind the back secretly when the person can’t even defend themselves, is especially evil. The name “devil” means “slanderer”. It is what he specializes in, and a person is never more devil-like than when they secretly slander people.

David says, “I will destroy such a person. The word “destroy” literally means “silence.” David will destroy this person by shutting them down and not allowing them a voice at the table. They will have no part in his administration.

Neither will he tolerate the one with a haughty look that is proud in heart. The facial expression is the haughty look, but it is produced by a proud heart. These are people who puff themselves up and think they are better than others.

The word proud means “wide or expanded” and refers to those who are inflated with their own self-importance. They are so full of themselves that they have a hard time submitting to anyone. David doesn’t want these cocky people in his administration. All they do is run others down and exalt themselves.

In contrast are humble servant-leaders who value others. This provides strong leadership, and David knew it. He said he would not endure the haughty and the proud! They would find no place in his government.

In contrast to the proud, here is the kind of person David is looking for to serve with him.

6 My eyes shall be on the faithful of the land, That they may dwell with me; He who walks in a perfect way, He shall serve me.

David is looking for faithful people to serve alongside him, those who walk in a perfect way, which is to say with faithful integrity. These are people you can depend on. They are faithful – trustworthy.

Recently, I listened to a podcast with Chuck Swindoll, who has recently had to step down as the main teaching pastor because of eye problems. But he was asked what he had learned in his many years in the ministry. Chuck said the greatest mistake he ever made was putting people into leadership too soon! Of all the things he learned, this was right at the top. Don't put people into leadership too soon! If you know Chuck's story, there were KEY leaders who really made his life "hell" for a time.

Chuck emphasized what you want is FAITHFUL men, he said, "not yes men, but also not no men," but faithful men! Spoken like a seasoned pastor who knows what he is talking about!

David didn't want the slanderer, he didn't want the haughty, he wanted the faithful who walks in a perfect (that is, blameless) way that is above reproach! David says this person shall "serve me," and they indeed would serve him well.

But in contrast David says...

7 He who works deceit shall not dwell within my house; He who tells lies shall not continue in my presence.

David had no place for deceitful liars in his administration. They too would not continue in his presence. David, in effect, says to them, "You are fired," or rather, "you are not hired at all in the first place."

Neither slanderers, the proud, nor liars would be allowed in his administration. He knew they would not serve his government well. These kinds are to the detriment of a godly leader. David wants them gone. He didn't want them around at all!

8 Early I will destroy all the wicked of the land, That I may cut off all the evildoers from the city of the LORD.

Again, “destroy” means “silence.” David is not going to allow the wicked of the land a voice at his table at all!

He intended to “cut off” all the evildoers from the city of the LORD, which is to say Jerusalem, which was the capital of the land. In view here, especially, are those in KEY leadership, which is the driving emphasis in the chapter.

“Cut off” here probably means removal from service. Their position would be terminated.

Those in leadership with David in Jerusalem would not be wicked; they would not be evildoers. David would cut them all off!

Ultimately, David’s ambition will be completely fulfilled in the greater David’s reign, where indeed the wicked will all be cut off, and the righteous will rule and reign with the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Duke of Saxe-Gotha (an area in Germany in the 1800s), related that he sent an unfaithful minister a copy of the 101st Psalm, and that it became a proverb in the country so that when an official had done anything wrong, he would certainly soon receive the prince’s Psalm to read.” - (Franz Delitzsch, cited in Charles Spurgeon)

Psalm 101 has great principles in terms of what should define godly leaders and has great principles regarding those who would serve alongside them and those who should not!

David was sold out, committed to the Lord, and he wanted to lead accordingly! In effect, he made certain resolutions that he intended to live by and govern by. It is good to be so resolved!

Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758) is often called the greatest theologian America has ever known. As a young man preparing for ministry, he wrote out 70 resolutions that he read once a week that guided him throughout his life.

Note just a few of these 70 resolutions:

5. **Resolved:** Never lose one moment of time; but seize the time to use it in the most profitable way I possibly can.

7. **Resolved:** Never to do anything which I would be afraid to do if it were the last hour of my life.

14. **Resolved:** Never to do anything out of revenge.

21. **Resolved:** Never to do anything, which if I saw another do, I would consider a just reason to despise him for, or to think in any way lesser of him.

45. **Resolved:** Never to allow any pleasure or grief, joy or sorrow, nor any affection at all, nor any degree of affection, nor any circumstance, but what advances the gospel.

The point is that both David and Jonathan Edwards thoughtfully resolved how they wanted to live to the glory of God.

A good question for us is, are we so resolved?

May we resolve with David...

I will behave wisely in a blameless way...

I will walk within my house with a blameless heart...

I will set nothing wicked before my eyes...

God help us to be so resolved!