

“The God-Centered Life”
Psalm 5
(Preached at Trinity, October 11, 2009)

I’m supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord’s Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I’ll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. The human life is a road of many paths that all have a similar focus – how can I satisfy my inner longing for happiness, safety, and fulfillment. As a child we find this in the nurture of our family. As we enter the teenage years we begin to look beyond our family to the world. The world make us many promises.
 - A. It promises happiness in possessions, pleasure, and prestige.
 - B. It promises safety in wealth and power.
 - C. It promises fulfillment by promising that its ways and material objects will satisfy every human longing.
 - D. This is the path all human beings follow by nature – it is the path of the natural man. It is called the world centered life.
2. There is another path. It too has the same desire for happiness, safety and fulfillment. This path is called the God-Centered life.
 - A. It promises happiness through a transformed heart that enables us to see Christ as the greatest treasure any human being can have.
 - B. It promises safety through the omnipotent God of creation who will keep us and sustain us until the end.
 - C. It promises fulfillment through a relationship with the one who created us to know Him
 - D. This is the path of those who have met Christ. It is the God-Centered life.
3. This Psalm describes this path – a glorious narrow way that leads to life and peace.
4. Psalm 5 begins with a superscription:

“To the chief Musician upon Nehiloth, A Psalm of David.”

 - A. Like many of the Psalms it begins with musical instruction – to the chief musician. “Nehiloth” – a translation from the Hebrew נְהִילֹתָ (nekh-ee-law) Its meaning is uncertain but comes from another word that means “to perforate” or “bore through.” It is only found here in the Bible. It is conjectured that it refers to wind instruments. Because of this most English translations translate it “flute.”
 - B. Another Psalm of David
5. May God grant us wisdom and discernment tonight as we examine the God-Centered life. Are you God-Centered in your life?

- I. The God-Centered life is persistent in prayer – **Verses 1-6**
- A. The Godly person gives himself to continual prayer
1. David made prayer his morning priority and delight
Psalm 5:3 – “My voice shalt thou hear in the morning”
 2. He went to bed in peace and arose each morning with confidence seeking the face of God
 3. David spoke with fervent words as well as silent meditations of the heart
Psalm 5:1 – “Give ear to my words, O LORD”
Psalm 5:1 – “O LORD, consider my meditation”
 4. David rose each morning with an eye to heaven
Psalm 5:3 – “in the morning will I direct *my prayer* unto thee, and will look up.”
 - a. The people of God must keep their eyes lifted up to Him
Psalm 121:1-2 – “I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. ² My help *cometh* from the LORD, which made heaven and earth.”
 - b. In this manner we go through our day with confidence looking to Christ.
 5. This the heart of every Godly person - Prayer marks us and defines us
Robert Murray M’Cheyne – “What a man is on his knees before God, that he is – and nothing more.”
Martyn Lloyd-Jones – “There is nothing that tells the truth about us as Christians so much as our prayer life.”
- B. David also prayed with a sense of urgency and passion
1. Listen to his imperatives: “Give ear” “consider” “harken”
Psalm 5:2 – “Hearken unto the voice of my cry”
 1. He prayed with urgency and passion because the things he prayed for were important. They were urgent needs.
 2. There was a sense of seriousness to his prayers – his prayers were earnest, intense. This is the nature of true prayer. This is the nature of the prayers God turns His ear towards.
 - a. This isn’t to say that we approach prayer as a scholastic exercise. If you do this God will do that. Not at all!!
 - b. I’m saying that God desires us to seek Him with passion and trust.
James 1:6-7 – “But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. ⁷ For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.”
 - c. Listen to James’ testimony about Elijah.
James 5:17-18 – “Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.”

3. Even when the answer is delayed, the God-centered person continues to plead with God.
Luke 11:5-10 – “And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves; ⁶ For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him? ⁷ And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee. ⁸ I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth. ⁹ And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. ¹⁰ For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.”
- C. David prayed with an understanding of his place before God. He had a continual mind upon the tension between the human and the divine.
1. On one hand we have God in all His holiness and infinite perfection
 On the other hand we have sinful man who is at an infinite distance from God.
 2. David never forgot his redemption from sin. He never forgot the nature of sin and its effect upon our relationship with God – **Verses 4-6**
 3. For the believer it causes us to flee all appearance of evil and pursue God which leads us to the second characteristic of the God-centered life

II. The God-Centered life presses hard in the pursuit of God – **Verses 7-8**

- A. David was continually drawn to God in worship
Psalms 5:7 – “in thy fear will I worship toward thy holy temple.”
1. Notice David puts it in the form of a comparison / contrast
Psalms 5:6-7 – “the LORD will abhor the bloody and deceitful man.
⁷ But as for me”
 2. Lost humanity is far removed from God but we have been reconciled
 We find ourselves irresistibly drawn to God in worship.
 3. David is talking about public worship – the community of faith. He worshipped God in secret (**Verses 1-2**) but he did not forsake the public assembly
 4. Worship is the overflow of our gratitude to Christ
 We come by mercy – David still has sin and forgiveness in mind
 We also come in fear – a holy awe as we come into the presence of God
 There is nothing common about this in David’s eye.
- B. You can see in David a sense of hard pursuit after God
1. We have been saved, yet our salvation is still something we pursue
 See **Philippians 3:8-14**
 2. Paul says, “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling”
 3. Never is salvation to be seen as a lazy coast but a hot pursuit
2 Peter 1:4-10

- C. David pursued God hard in all of life
1. **Verse 8** – “lead me, O LORD, I thy righteousness” – In other words David sought hard after God in his pursuit of holiness.
 - a. Even more so because of the presence of David’s enemies who were seeking to discredit him as king.
 - b. We are being continually watched – we must lead holy lives.
 2. “Make my way straight”
David is praying that God would lead him down smooth paths, lest he stumble. Our Lord taught us to pray this
Matthew 6:13 – “And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil”
- III. The God-Centered life is passionate about protecting God’s glory – **Verses 9-10**
- A. David is praying that God judge those who assault His glory
Psalms 5:10 – “Destroy thou them, O God; let them fall by their own counsels; cast them out in the multitude of their transgressions; for they have rebelled against thee.”
1. In our modern sensibilities such language offends us
 2. We should be offended by those who curse God!
Paul give us God’s command, “Be ye angry, and sin not”
 3. Sin should make us angry. We should hate sin the way God hates sin.
Look back at **Verses 4-5**
Psalms 5:4-5 – “For thou *art* not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness: neither shall evil dwell with thee. ⁵ The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity.”
- B. David makes it clear that their condemnation is of their own doing
Psalms 5:10 – “let them fall by their own counsels; cast them out in the multitude of their transgressions; for they have rebelled against thee.”
1. God isn’t bringing judgment upon the innocent but the rebellious.
 2. The Day of Judgment will be a time in which God’s justice will be perfect, His holiness vindicated and all of God’s people will rejoice.
- IV. The God-Centered life is prolific in the praise of God – **Verses 11-12**
- A. David again gives a contrast – **Verse 11** – “But”
Psalms 5:11 – “But let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice”
1. David contrasts the “rebellious” of **Verse 10** with the “believers” of **Verse 11** – “those that put their trust in thee”
 2. David describes them as full of joy – high rejoicing and praise
- B. This great joy finds its source in two blessings
1. God’s protection – “because thou defendest them”
Psalms 5:12 – “For thou, LORD, wilt bless the righteous; with favour wilt thou compass him as *with* a shield.”

- a. Paul speaks of this in **Romans 8**
Romans 8:38-39 – “For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, ³⁹ Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”
 - b. No force in this universe is powerful enough to defeat us
 God will preserve us until the end.
John 10:27-28 – “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: ²⁸ And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any *man* pluck them out of my hand.”
2. Because we know Him
Psalm 5:11 – “let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee.”
 - a. God is synonymous with His name – to love His name is to love Him.
 - b. To know Him is to rejoice in Him. This is what drives the believer to seek to know Him more

Conclusion:

1. Are these things true of you? Are you living a God-centered life? A God-centered life is the life of a Christian. It is to be captivated and arrested by Christ in such a way that your entire life is caught up in Him.
 - Is your life characterized by persistent prayer?
 - Are you pressing hard in the pursuit of God seeking His presence worship and guidance in your pursuit of holiness.
 - Are you passionate about protecting God’s glory – do you hate sin?
 - Are you prolific in the praise of God? Do you rejoice in Christ
2. May God grant us to live a life centered upon Him, a life captivated by Christ. In every area in which we find deficiency the solution is Christ. Seek Him, love Him, pray, worship, adore Him.