

THE KING AND HIS COURT

NO. 2362

A SERMON INTENDED FOR READING ON LORD'S DAY, MAY 27, 1894.
DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,
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*“My eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me:
 he that walks in a perfect way, he shall serve me.”*
Psalm 101:6.

DAVID is going to be king and these are the resolutions that he makes before he ascends the throne. He meant that he would look for the best men in the nation and that he would take care of them. He would give them offices about his court so that he might have his work done well—that his people might be judged by wise and righteous men—and all the affairs of state should be managed by those who were faithful to God. This was a very proper thing for him to do. I wish that those who are *not* kings, but who are placed in any position of influence, would have their eyes upon the faithful of the land. Good men should patronize good men. Those who have it in their power, should, to the utmost of their ability, advance those whom they know to be upright and true and gracious men. But, my dear Friends, we are not going to talk about David, now, but about the Son of David, “great David’s greater Son,” the King of Kings and Lord of Lords! There is no doubt that in His Kingdom His eyes are upon the faithful. He looks upon the faithful among His people. He takes them into communion with Himself and He uses them as His servants in conspicuous and remarkable ways—“My eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with Me: he that walks in a perfect way, he shall serve Me.”

My business, tonight, is to speak especially to God’s people about this faithfulness. And I shall handle the subject thus. First, *Who are these faithful men*—“the faithful of the land”? Secondly, *What will the King do with them?* And, thirdly, *How may we get among them,* that we, also, may have this favor from the King of Kings?

I. First, then, WHO ARE THESE FAITHFUL MEN to whom Jesus, our King, will have respect at all times?

I answer, they may be known in part by this mark—they are *true in their dealings with God*. A man who is not honest to God is honest to nobody. He who will rob his God will soon rob his fellow men. Now, I mean by being truthful and upright to God, just this, that we walk before Him in deep sincerity of heart. To make a profession of being what we are *not*, is not being among the faithful of the land! And to come before God with prayers which are *not* prayers, but only the skins and shells of prayers, is not being faithful before God. To profess to sing His praises, when we are only uttering words without heart, is to make ourselves as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal in the ears of God. We are not accepted by Him if our heart is not true. A man who is faithful before God will not go in his religious expressions beyond his religious experience—he will always be afraid of stretching his arm farther than his sleeve will reach. If he has not felt certain changes, he will not profess to have felt them. He would rather err on the side of doubting and distrusting himself than on the side of boasting and claiming for himself what he really does not possess. I think that it is a most important thing to be very true and thorough in our private walk with God. If you are backsliding, it is well to know it. If you are making but small progress, it is well to confess it. If you are an idler, it is well to admit it. If you have become lukewarm, it is well to know it. Nothing is more dangerous than to be saying to yourself, “I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing,” when all the while you are “wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.”

God has His eyes upon the faithful of the land, those who are faithful to Him, who do not attempt to deceive themselves with religious professions which they cannot support. How many a man has become a bankrupt by a lavish expenditure which exceeded his income! He said that he “must keep up appearances,” and he *did* keep up appearances till they became his ruin! God grant that you and I may never try to keep up appearances before Him! Be what you would seem to

be and, in the Presence of God never seem to be or *dream* of seeming to be what you are not! Thus I think we, first of all, know the faithful by their upright dealing with God.

This will lead them to be *true in their dealings with men*. I hope that I need not say much about this, but yet I do not know. I have heard, at times, of professing Christians who are no more straight in business than worldlings are. It is a shame to you of whom this can be said and it is a disgrace to the Church to which you belong! It brings dishonor upon the Lord Jesus Christ if any of you profess to be His servants and yet you lie and cheat, or, what is much the same thing, puff your goods beyond what can honestly and fairly be said of them, or sell them under false names, deceiving the people who purchase from you. I am not going into all the tricks of trade. I remember how good old Latimer, preaching, once, at Paul's Cross, said that he knew a man who had some wheat, poor stuff it was, and he poured out a bushel of good wheat, first, and then he put the bad wheat next. And then he put some good wheat on the top and so mixed it all together, or, rather, he concealed the bad wheat in the middle. Latimer went on telling another tale, and another, until all of a sudden he said, "Now, I am not doing you any good, for, I daresay, some of you will go and do these things, yourselves, tomorrow."

So the good old man checked himself and dealt with the evil rather by way of generality than by specialty. That man is not faithful in God's esteem who is not upright, honest, true to a hair's breadth, in his dealings with his fellow men! We must stand to our bond even though we lose by it. We must be true to the word we speak though it be to our own hurt. God grant that His Spirit may work in us, not only the ordinary integrity which may be found in many a natural man, but something deeper and more thorough than that in all our dealings in business, in the family and everywhere else, for the eyes of the King are upon the faithful of the land!

Now, dear Friends, such people will, in the next place, always *be true in their dealings with men on God's behalf*. I think this passage bears very pertinently upon the minister, the Sunday school teacher and the Christian worker. The eyes of Christ are upon the faithful of the land. If I come here and teach you what I do not believe, or if I conceal what I do believe, or if I tell you something which has in it a suppression of the Truth of God, or if I preach to you orthodox doctrine while in my own heart I believe something different, remember that I cannot be said to be one of the faithful of the land! And if I, as a minister, sit still and watch the Gospel of Christ trampled in the mire and hold my tongue for fear of shame and contempt, I cannot be called one of the faithful of the land! If you, dear Sunday school teachers, in your instruction of the children, keep back from them anything they ought to know, or if, in telling them what they ought to know, you do not press it home upon their consciences. If you do not pray with them. If you do not long for their conversion, you are not faithful to their souls on God's behalf and the eyes of Christ will not be fixed upon you with approval!

It is a very hard thing, to always be faithful with men on God's behalf. I know that it is so even in visiting the sick. One is tempted to begin to comfort some of them when they ought not to be comforted—to say very soft and gentle words to them because they are ill, when, perhaps, they have never felt their need of a Savior—and never been awakened to any sense of spiritual need. I remember one who was greatly condemned for the action that he thought it right to take. Two or three of us had been to see a sick and dying man who always welcomed visitors. We prayed with him and told him the Gospel, but we were all under the impression that we had produced no effect whatever upon his mind—that he was passing into another world without any knowledge of his lost estate—without any repentance or faith in Christ. The good man to whom I refer—he is now in Heaven, but I well remember the reproach that he suffered for what he did—he stood at the foot of the bed and he said, "Friend, you are a deceived man. You are dying and you have no well-grounded hope. You always say, 'Yes, yes, yes,' to all we say, but my inmost thought of you is that you are without God and without hope. And if you die as you are, you will be lost forever."

The man's wife was thunderstruck and so was he! But when we went to visit him the next day, you should have seen the change that God had worked in him! There was a broken-hearted man crying for mercy! A man in sore trouble and distress of soul. The faithful messenger of God had told him the naked truth—it pained him to do it, but he had been more faithful to the sick man than others who had spoken very kindly to him! Oh, I believe if we are faithful, so that we are clear of the blood of all men, faithful to the Truth of God, faithful to our own consciences, faithful to the consciences of those with whom we have to deal, then we are among the number of whom the text says, "My eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with Me."

Have you and I been faithful to our own children and faithful to our own parents? Wives, have you been faithful to your own husbands about their souls? Do you not think that some of us might go home, tonight, and pour out floods of tears before God as we confess, “No, we have not been as faithful as we should have been to what we know of the Gospel, and to those to whom we were bound to teach it”? Christ has a special eye of love for those who are faithful in their dealings with God, faithful in their dealings with man and faithful in their dealings with the souls of men on God’s behalf. Oh, that we may be among that happy company!

Then, observe that these faithful men are *thorough in all that they do*. If you read the second part of our text, you will see that the Psalmist also says, “He that walks in a perfect way, he shall serve me.” May I be permitted to say, especially to you who are commencing the Christian life, that if you wish to live near to God and to be greatly used of Him, it is important that you should begin as you mean to go on—by endeavoring to walk in a perfect way? There are some who tried, at first, with their own convictions. I cannot help quoting myself, at the risk of being called egotistical. When I was converted to the Lord Jesus Christ and made to rejoice in Him, I read the New Testament for myself. I had no friend and no relative who was a baptized Believer. I come of a stock in which infant Baptism has long been religiously observed. I read the Scriptures and I saw, there, that only the *Believer* was to be baptized. That Truth of God came to my conscience, but the suggestion which came to me from friends was, “Well, it really is a pity to introduce this matter, for all those around you think differently.”

I have never ceased to thank God that I was thoroughly honest to my convictions about the ordinance. Do any of you think it a trifle? Very well, waive that point for the moment, but when a man is not honest to his convictions about a trifle, the next thing is that he is not honest to his convictions about something else—and so he gets off the lines—and if you begin to go a little aside, for the sake of peace, or to prevent disturbances, or to please your friends, you have taken a way of life which will lead you, I cannot tell, where! Be determined that if others do as they please, you are not accountable for their action—but still do what you believe to be right! If you are a Christian, go through with it! Be a follower of Christ in every respect as far as the Word of God and your own conscience lead you. I found that the habit of beginning to think for myself and to follow my convictions was useful to me, and it has been useful to me to this day. And at this moment, before the living God, I am able to stand on my own feet, to lean neither on this man nor on that, but only on that eternal arm which will support any man and woman—every man and woman who, in the sight of God, determines to follow the Truth of God wherever it may lead them!

Now, I earnestly pray every Christian person here, especially in the beginning of life, to look well to this matter, for the joy of your life, the peace of your life, the inward rest of your life will much depend, under God, upon your being faithful to your convictions in every point as God shall help you! The great King, Himself, seems to say, tonight, “My eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with Me: he that walks in a perfect way, he shall serve Me. He is the man whom I will pick for My servant. I will put him here, or I will place him there, where I am unable to station some others because they are not clear and straight in their conduct and because they are not to be depended upon for loyal obedience to their Lord and Master.”

Thus have I tried to describe who the faithful men of the land are. May we all be numbered among them!

II. But now, secondly, I want very briefly to answer this question, **WHAT WILL THE KING DO WITH THEM?** David says, “My eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land,” and David’s son, the Lord Jesus Christ, says the same. What does He mean?

Well, first, *His eyes of search will seek them out*. That dear Brother who is faithful to God is only a young apprentice, but he has been faithful in not breaking the Sabbath. Nobody knows about him, dear young man, but the eyes of the Lord are upon him! There is a working man who, the other day, in the midst of a swearing company, rebuked the blasphemer and spoke up for Christ. That noble action is not recorded in the newspaper and never will be—but God’s eyes are upon the faithful of the land. There is a poor woman who, the other day, lost a good deal by being straight and honest. No one will report it. Nobody will put her down in the Legion of Honor. No, but God’s eyes are upon the faithful of the land! And when you, through the Grace of God, are led to follow Christ faithfully, quite alone, not wishing to be seen, doing in secret what only God, Himself, knows—it is reward enough for you that the Lord Jesus Christ sees what you do and He, Himself, will one day reward you openly.

But there is more than that. When King David says, “My eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land,” it means that *his eyes of favor will cheer them*. The King would first search them out and then he would bring them forward. He would promote their interests, he would see that the faithful men were not thrust into a corner and neglected, he would have an eye to cheering them as they had an eye to pleasing him. I believe that God greatly favors and blesses those whom, by His Grace, He makes to be faithful. If you are unfaithful, your unfaithfulness will come home to you, sometime or another. I mean, if you are a child of God, for there is *discipline* in the House of the Lord. I am not talking, now, about the punishments of the Law of God—the children of God are not under the Law—I am speaking about the discipline of the Gospel. You are saved by free, rich, Sovereign Grace and you are made a child of God. From the moment of your new birth you come under the discipline of the great Father’s House and if you are unfaithful, your unfaithfulness will deprive you of many a comfort and many a joy! It will dog your footsteps and track you when you least expect it. Look at David. After his great sin, he was never the man that he had been before—and many were the griefs and pangs of heart which he brought upon himself by that one terrible fall. The Lord grant that we may be kept faithful, so that God’s eyes of approval may rest upon us and that we may joy and rejoice in Him from day to day!

But then the text, after saying, “My eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land,” adds, “that they may dwell with Me.” *The faithful shall dwell with God*. Oh, this is a choice privilege! When Grace makes a man faithful, God rewards his faithfulness by permitting him to dwell in close communion with his Lord! It is a wonderful thing to me that if we have any good works, God always works them in us, and then he rewards us for them as if they were our own! He gives us Grace and then smiles on us because of the Grace that He, Himself, gives! So, if He makes a man faithful, He then rewards him for it according to His Grace, and says, “He shall dwell with Me.”

I think I see David carrying out this resolution. There is a poor but honest man away down there in Bethlehem and David hears of his strict integrity and sends him a letter. “Come to Jerusalem,” says the king, “I will make a courtier of you. I will make a friend of you. You are the sort of man I need. Come and dwell with me.” He hears of another poor man, over yonder, who has been ridiculed because he stood up for Jehovah, the God of Israel, when others were inclined to worship some false god. “Come up to Jerusalem,” he says, “come live with me. You are my sort of company, for you are one of the faithful ones.” Now, *that* is what the Lord Jesus Christ says to us! He calls us as sinners, but He communes with us as saints! He washes us when we are guilty, but after we are washed and He has made us upright in His sight, then He takes us to dwell with Him! He delights in opening His heart to us and in permitting us to open our heart to Him!

Now, if any of you are not faithful to Christ, I can tell you that you will not be able to commune with Him. If you have done a wrong thing in business, or if you have held your tongue and not been faithful in testifying for Christ. When you go on your knees at night you will not be able to find yourself so led out in prayer as you were, before, when you were true to Him. And when you turn to the Scriptures, instead of finding them speaking to you, they will seem as if they were dumb—no voice of comfort will come from them. But if you have been faithful and true, and out and out for Christ, then you shall dwell with Him—you shall abide in Him and His Word will abide in you!

Then it is added, “He shall serve Me.” *The faithful shall be Christ’s servants*. I do not know which is the greater privilege, “He shall dwell with Me,” or, “He shall serve Me.” Perhaps the second is the higher. Have you ever thought, Beloved Friend, what an honor it is to be permitted to do anything for God? For God to bless us is great condescension on His part, but for Him to permit us to be of any use to Him—this is a wonderful honor from His right hand! I believe that there is more honor in being allowed, for the Glory of God, to teach a little Sunday school child the way of salvation than there would be in ruling the whole German Empire if it were done for the glorification of self! The honor does not lie in the *act* so much as in the *motive*—and if the motive is, “I did it unto the Lord,” then I stand in the same rank with angels, yes, in a line with those wonderful living creatures that John saw in the Revelation who reveal the Glory of God and continually do Him service!

The Lord will not have you as His servant if you are not faithful, if you do not give yourself up to His Truth and to be true, through and through! It is not God’s way to send forth His Truth by untruthful men. If there is a lie in your left hand, the Truth of God in your right hand will seem to have lost at least half its power. Like the hoard of Achan hidden away in the tent which robbed all Israel of the victory at the gates of Ai, so will you find that anything which is untrue, hidden away in your life or your conduct, will deprive you of victory when you go out in the service of God. “He shall serve Me,” says Christ. And He will not accept the service of those who are not true to Him.

III. Thus I have spoken of a very necessary practical Truth of God, and I am going to close by trying to answer one more question—HOW MAY WE GET AMONG THESE FAITHFUL ONES?

Perhaps we can truly say, God helping us, we hope that we are among them. If so, as we read a little while ago, “it is He that has made us, and not we, ourselves.” If there is any faithfulness, if there is any uprightness, unto God be the glory of it all! Pray, dear Brothers and Sisters, that you may never lose your faithfulness, but that you may be kept even unto the end! Remember that passage in Jude’s Epistle, “Now unto Him that is able to guard you from stumbling”? So it is in the Revised Version and it is an improvement and nearer to the original than our old text, for while it is a great mercy to be kept from falling, it is a still greater favor to be guarded from *stumbling*, so as to walk with careful, steady progress in uprightness before God all your life! Let it be your constant prayer that you may be thus kept faithful even unto death.

But now I speak to others who are not as yet faithful. You say, “How are we to get among the faithful?” Well, I should say, first, so far as you may be, and so far as your light goes, be faithful *tonight—be honest in confessing sin*. Before you sleep, put yourself before God just as you are. Have you neglected religion? Confess it. Or have you pretended to possess religion when there was no truth in your profession? Confess it. What has been your sin? Confess it. Kneel by your bedside and there, God, alone, seeing you, unveil your heart before Him. You say that He knows all about you. That is true and *that is a reason* why you should be the more explicit in your confession to Him. Speak freely to God and make Him, as you ought to make Him, your only “Father Confessor.” Tell Him that you are lost. Tell Him that you are hard-hearted. Tell Him that you are unfeeling. Tell Him that you desire to be converted, but that it is only a faint desire as yet. Tell him all about yourself. In a word, begin to deal with God on the straight. If you have not done so, already, I pray God that you may do so, tonight, and I beseech you to go as far as you can in this matter. Reveal your poverty, your filthiness, your sin, your nakedness, your deserving of Hell—only do all honestly as in the sight of God. What an amazing thing it is that men do not like to act thus, yet, when the Grace of God enables them to do it, they are already on the road to salvation! When the man comes before God with a rope round his neck, confessing that he deserves to die, then there is this blessed text to comfort him—“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” God grant that you may find it to be so tonight!

Well, then, dear Friend, next, *be anxious to have a new heart and a right spirit*. May God make you thus anxious tonight! Remember that there is evil in us by nature. “All have sinned and come short of the Glory of God.” “The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked.” And before we can be faithful, we must be born again. No man will ever be true until the God of Truth has truly renewed him. Our tendency is to lean either this way or that—to stand upright is a gift of Divine Grace and none but the Holy Spirit can bestow it upon us! Oh, that we might have a deep anxiety to undergo that wondrous change, that radical and total change of heart which the Savior described when He said to Nicodemus, “You must be born again”! Go to the Lord with David’s prayer, “Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.” Plead that Old Testament promise, “A new heart, also, will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.”

Then, supposing that you have come thus far, I earnestly entreat you, if you would be found among the faithful of the land, *be sincere in all your dealings with the living God*. If you mean to pray, pray! If you believe in Jesus, do not simply *say* that you believe, but believe! If you repent, do not merely *talk* of repentance, but repent! Let everything be thorough and downright. May the Spirit of God save you from getting the *imitation* of spirituality which will damn you! And may He give you the reality of spiritual life which will effectually save you! I believe that there are many who are very much injured by being led to profess religion when they do not possess it. There is a revival meeting. There is a room for converts—they get in there—they are pressed, they are exhorted, they are entreated! They think that they are sincere—in a certain measure they are—but there is no sense of guilt, no loathing of sin, no true repentance, no wounding and, therefore, no healing, no stripping and, therefore, no clothing! The whole thing is but a mere sham! And they go away and are, themselves, deceived and afterwards return to their old sins and are worse than they were before! If you have not eternal life, do not *pretend* that you have it. I charge you before God, who shall judge the quick and the dead, in the day of His appearing, *never* cheat yourself in this matter, for you are the only person that you can really cheat for long! God, Himself, you will never deceive. Make clear, clean, sharp, distinct, decided work of this matter, or rather, may God the Holy Spirit work this miracle of mercy in you, for Christ’s name’s sake!

Lastly, dear Friend, if you would be among the faithful of the land, *depend continually upon the Lord Jesus and His Word to make and keep you faithful*. Every day wait upon Him for fresh anointing and renewed power. And daily live unto Him and for Him, laying yourself out to honor Him who has redeemed you. Your only hope is in His precious blood! Then let the objective of your existence be to glorify Him, alone. If this is so, you shall be among the faithful of the land and you shall dwell with the King, even with the King of Kings, and you shall serve Him forever and ever!

Are you not glad to hear this, you great sinners? Jesus is as able to pardon you, now, as He was to save the dying thief! And you who have hard hearts, He is able to give you new ones, today, as He gave them to those of old. And oh, you children of God, I pray you, do not act as if *David* had a great God, and *you* have a little God! Do not act as if, in the trials of the olden times, God made bare His arm, but that now He will hardly put out His little finger! Do not treat Him as if it could be so. God still hears prayer! If He does not work miracles, He does the same thing in some other way which is even better! He still delivers us! He still feeds us! He still leads us! He still guards us! He is the same as He always was! Oh if you would but trust Him! Abraham's God is your God and He can help you in the day of battle. Joshua's God is your God and He says to you as He did to Joshua, "I will not fail you, nor forsake you." Oh, believe it! Jesus Christ—my grandfather's Jesus Christ, my father's Jesus Christ—is *my* Jesus Christ! Look back on all the godly people you have ever known and think of what the Lord did for them—and then remember that His arm is not shortened, His ear is not heavy, His love is not diminished, His wisdom is not turned to foolishness! He is still able and willing to bless you, as in all the ages that have gone by. Trust Him, you saints! Trust Him, you sinners—and the Lord bless you all, for Jesus Christ's sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON:
PSALM 100; 101.

May the Spirit of God, by whose Inspiration David penned these Psalms, bless them to us as we read them!

Psalm 100. This is entitled "a Psalm of Praise." Note, here, that this is the only Psalm which bears that title. There are others which have titles very much like it, but this one is singled out from all the rest to be, in a very special sense, "a Psalm of Praise." Martin Luther was very fond of it and it has even been said that he composed the tune which we have just sung, and which is commonly called, "the Old Hundredth"—though other attribute it to a German named Franc.

Verse 1. *Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all you lands.* Do you notice the missionary spirit here? The Jews looked upon God as the God of Israel and they had but very faint desires for the conversion of other nations. But the Holy Spirit speaks more by David than David, himself, may have known—"Make a joyful noise unto Jehovah, all you lands." We ought to express the praise of God, not merely to feel it, and to express it by what is called, here, "a joyful noise." All our songs to God should have in them a measure of joyfulness. The gods of the heathen were worshipped with dolorous noises, with sorrowful sounds and cries of misery—but the God of Heaven is to be worshipped with a joyful noise! "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all you lands." Oh, that the day were come when China, India and all Asia, Africa, America and Europe would take up the gladsome note of praise to Jehovah!

2. *Serve the LORD with gladness.* What a text that is! "Serve the Lord." Obey Him, yield to Him your homage, but serve Him, "with gladness." He wants not slaves to Grace His Throne! He loves willing worship, happy worship, for He is "the happy God." "Serve the Lord with gladness."

2. *Come before His Presence with singing.* Singing is delightful, but singing in God's Presence is heavenly! Do not the spirits that are made pure and holy come before His Presence and come before it with singing? I wish that whenever we sing, we would sing as in the Presence of God. I am afraid that we sometimes go through the tune mechanically and the words languish on our lips. "Come before His Presence with singing."

3. *Know you that the LORD, He is God.* One says, "Man, know yourself," and another says, "The proper study of mankind is man." Not so! Man, know *your God*! The proper study of mankind is *God*! He who knows God knows himself, that is, he knows himself to be *nothing*. "Know you that Jehovah, He is God." There is but one God—it is the same God in the Old Testament as in the New—Jehovah, the God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob—the God and Father of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

3. *It is He that has made us, and not we, ourselves.* Note the negative, as if to deny that we had any hand in our own making, and this is also worthy of notice *spiritually*. It is the Lord who has made us Christians, not we, ourselves. He has created us in Christ Jesus. There are some who lay such stress upon the human will and I know not what, besides, in man, that it is necessary to put in the negative as well as the positive. “It is He that has made us, and not we, ourselves.”

3. *We are His people and the sheep of His pasture.* Praise Him, then! Praise Him because He is your Maker! Praise Him more sweetly because He is your Shepherd. If we are His people, here is His electing love, here is His effectual calling, here is the Grace of His Spirit that made us so. “We are His people and the sheep of His pasture.” He leads us, He feeds us, He protects us, He has bought us with His precious blood. Truly, this is good reason why we should make a joyful noise unto God and serve Him with gladness! “We are His people and the sheep of His pasture.” Are you His people? O my dear Hearer, ask yourself—are you one of the sheep of His pasture?

4. *Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise: be thankful unto Him, and bless His name.* Gratitude is that oil which makes the wheels of life easily revolve. And if anybody ought to be grateful, surely *we* are the men and women for whom the Lord has done so much! “Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise.”

5. *For the LORD is good.* Should we not praise so good a God?

5. *His mercy is everlasting; and His Truth endures to all generations.* “His Truth”—that is to say, His truthfulness, His faithfulness to His people. This is a blessed Psalm and it seems to me to reach the highest point of praise when it tells us, “The Lord is good; His mercy is everlasting; and His Truth endures to all generations.”

Psalm 101. The last Psalm was a Hymn of Thanksgiving, this one is a Psalm of Thanksgiving. I suppose it to have been written by David just when he assumed the throne, when he was about to become king over all Israel and Judah. Its title is, “A Psalm of David.” This is what he said to himself—

Verse 1. *I will sing*—That is right, David. In the 100th Psalm, he had exhorted other people to sing. Now, in the 101st he declares what he, himself, will do. “I will sing”—

1. *Of mercy and judgement.* It is a mingled theme. There are the treble and the bass notes—“mercy and judgment.” There are some dear friends who, if they sing at all, will have to sing this way, for they have a heavy sorrow on their heart and yet great mercy is mixed with it. Oh, you who are troubled and bow your head in grief, say, “I will sing of mercy and judgment.” Mix the two together!

1. *Unto You, O LORD, will I sing.* A second time the Psalmist says, “I will sing.” It is well to make this firm resolve. “Unto You, O Lord, will I sing.” Winter or summer, “I will sing.” Poverty or riches, “I will sing.” Sickness or health, “I will sing.” Life or death, “I will sing”—

*“I will love You in life, I will love You in death
And praise You as long as You lend me breath.”*

“I will sing of mercy and judgment: unto you, O Lord, will I sing.”

2. *I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way.* This was a good resolve, but David did not carry it out to the fullest. There were evil times when he was *not* wise and there were sad times when he was far from perfect. Still, it is well to make such a resolve as this declaration of David when he came to the throne, especially when you are newly married, or just opening a business. Oh, that every young man and young woman would commence life with such a holy resolution as this—“I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way.” But notice the prayer that follows the resolve—

2. *O when will You come unto me?* For I shall be neither wise nor holy without You. “O when will You come unto me?”

2. *I will walk within my house with a perfect heart.* There is a great deal in the way in which a man walks in his house. It will not do to be a saint abroad and a devil at home! There are some of that kind. They are wonderfully sweet at a Prayer Meeting, but they are dreadfully sour to their wives and children. This will never do! Every genuine Believer should say, and mean it, “I will walk within my house with a perfect heart.” It is in the *home* that we get the truest proof of godliness. “What sort of a man is he?” said one to George Whitefield, and Whitefield answered, “I cannot say, for I never lived with him.” That is the way to test a man—to live with him.

3. *I will set no wicked thing before my eyes.* “I will not look at it, for if I do, I may long for it.” It is the tendency of things that are gazed at to get through the eyes into the mind and the *heart*. Therefore is it wise to say with the Psalmist, “I will set no wicked thing before my eyes.”

3. *I hate the work of them that turn aside.* He means all those who practice dodges—the “policy” people—those who never go straight. Kings usually like such people as these. Do not men say that an ambassador is a gentleman who is paid to live abroad and to lie for the benefit of his country? I suppose that is what diplomats in David’s day generally did, but David resolved that he would have none of that sort of folk about him. “I hate the work of them that turn aside.”

3. *It shall not cleave to me.* “If I touch it, by His Grace, I will not let it stick to me. Pitch defiles, so I will keep clear of it and if any man tries to practice a trick for my advantage, I will have nothing to do with him.”

4. *A forward heart shall depart from me: I will not know a wicked person.* “For, if I come to know him, one of these days I may be known, myself, to be a wicked person.” “Evil communications corrupt good manners.” No man or woman can afford to be the friend of a man who is not a friend of God! If he does not love God, quit his company, for he will do you no good. Say with David, “I will not know a wicked person.”

5. *Whoever privately slanders his neighbor, him will I cut off.* David was a king and he meant to study the peace of his people by putting down slander. Oh, what mischief is worked by backbiting tittle tattle! If we could have a race of men—and for the matter of that, of women, too—with no tongues, it might be an advantage, for there are some who use their tongues for very sorry purposes. David says, “Whoever privately slanders his neighbor, him will I cut off.”

5. *Him that has an high look and a proud heart will not I suffer.* High looks and proud hearts are generally the characteristics of cruel, tyrannical, domineering persons—and King David would not have any such near him.

6. *My eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me.* Oh, that masters had more of an eye to the piety of their servants than they often have! They want “clever fellows.” Whether they are honest or not is generally a secondary question. So long as they are profitable to their masters, they will not mind what they are to their customers. But David would not have servants of that sort.

6, 7. *He that walks in a perfect way, he shall serve me. He that works deceit shall not dwell within my house: he that tells lies shall not tarry in my sight.* He was a king and he could choose his company—and he meant to select the truthful and upright. Now mark this! If David would not let a man who lies tarry in his sight, you must not expect that God will let such tarry in His sight. “All liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone,” says the Scripture. God grant us to have clean, truthful tongues!

8. *I will early destroy all the wicked of the land; that I may cut off all wicked doers from the city of the LORD.* What a practical Psalm this is! I have heard of a prince of Saxe-Gotha, years ago, who, whenever he thought that one of his ministers or judges was not what he ought to be, used always to send him the 101st Psalm to read. It was commonly said of such a man, “He will get the 101st Psalm before long.” And, after reading it, if he did not mend his manners, the prince sent him his dismissal and he had to go about his business. Oh, that all who profess and call themselves Christians would act according to the tenor of this straight Psalm which is like a line drawn by the hand of God, without a crook or a turn in it!

HYMNS FROM “OUR OWN HYMN BOOK”—100 (VERSION II), 15, 123.

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