

Feeling Comfortable in the Presence of God Psalm 15

Introduction:

1. Have you ever been a guest in somebody's home and felt uncomfortable? Not a good feeling, is it?
2. Have you ever been in the presence of another person that you **should** feel comfortable with, but because of your own actions, you feel very awkward?
 - **Illustration:** My kids have done wrong and they act weird in my presence. As a dad, I can tell that something is wrong.
3. I think sometimes we are this way with our heavenly Father. We don't enter into His holy presence in prayer because we feel uncomfortable in God's presence.
4. Please understand, we don't have to **earn** the right to pray to God and enter into His presence. If you are saved, Jesus Christ has provided you complete unfailing access to the Father. **Ephesians 2:18, 3:12**
 - **Illustration:** My boys have total access to me simply because they are my sons - we have a relationship. But whether they are comfortable in my presence and use that access is another issue.
5. Notice how this psalm begins in verse 1.
 - Both "*tabernacle*" and "*holy hill*" are references to God's presence; the place where God dwells.
 - The words "*abide*" and " *dwell*" carry the idea of residing and permanently staying.
6. So, David is saying, "Who is the person that abides and dwells in God's presence?"
7. Many of the principles that David brings out in answering that question are directly tied to Israel's Old Testament Law when people did not have complete and total access into God's presence as believers do today.
8. While we are not under that law system, I think there are some vital principles that we can derive from this psalm that, if applied, will help us to be more comfortable in God's presence when we pray to Him.

First, by living a righteous life. vs. 2a

1. God declares us eternally righteous at the very moment of salvation. It is a gift of God's grace and is given to us solely through our faith in Jesus Christ. The moment we trust Christ, God takes Christ's righteousness and imputes it unto us.
2. Christ's imputed righteousness gives us total access to pray to the Father and enter into His very presence in heaven with our requests.
3. But here is the reality. If you are living in sin, rebellion, and defiance of God's **principles** of righteousness, you will not desire to pray. vs. 1-2
4. Even though God loves you with an unconditional love, your sin will take away the sweet fellowship that you **could** enjoy with your heavenly Father.
 - **Illustration:** I love my kids unconditionally and they know that, but if they are continually defying me and disobeying my commands, it will hinder our fellowship.

5. We are not saved by works of righteousness (**Titus 3:5**), nor do we **earn** the right to enter into God's presence in prayer by our righteous works. We stand in grace.
Romans 5:2
6. But God **has** given to us righteous precepts for this age of grace that we live in and He expects us to obey those righteous commands. **1 Corinthians 15:34;**
1 Thessalonians 4:1
 - The grace of God has set us free to live righteously. **Titus 2:11-12**
7. But when we choose to disregard God's admonitions and commands, we will not desire God's fellowship nor will we feel comfortable in His presence.

Second, by keeping an honest heart. vs. 2b

1. The person who abides in God's presence is the person who speaks the truth in his heart. God sees beyond your words straight to your heart. God desires that your entire inner man be established in truth. God is a lover of truth. **John 4:24**
2. **1 John 1:6** - If you are living and doing things that pertain to the darkness and you say, "I'm in sweet fellowship with God," John says that you are lying and not being truthful.
3. You cannot grow in your relationship with Christ if you are not truthful (**Ephesians 4:15**). Be honest with God about your life and what is going on in your heart. If you are living a lie, you will not desire God's fellowship and company.
4. When you do wrong, admit your sin. Don't try to cover it and act like its not there. Be truthful and honest. If not, you will give place to Satan in your life.
Ephesians 6:13-14

Third, by maintaining a right relationship with others. vs. 3

1. When your earthly, human relationships are out of sorts, it will affect your fellowship with God. Unresolved conflict with others will hinder your fellowship with God.
 - Jesus taught this principle to Israel. **Matthew 5:23-24**
 - Paul warned that unresolved conflict gives place to the devil.
Ephesians 4:26-27; 2 Corinthians 2:10-11
 - John and Peter taught this principle. **1 John 4:20; 1 Peter 3:7**
2. **Psalm 15:3** lists three ways that we can hurt our relationship with others:
 - Backbiting with our tongue - another word for this is "gossip."
Proverbs 16:28; 17:9
 - Doing evil to our neighbor. There is never an excuse for this.
Romans 12:19-21
 - Reproaching our neighbor. This carries the idea of shaming someone and making him look bad. We are to edify, not tear down. **Ephesians 4:29;**
Romans 14:19
3. Unresolved conflict with others will greatly ill affect your fellowship with Christ. You don't need this in your life. Get it right today. It will feel like a dark cloud has been lifted.

Fourth, by living a life of integrity. vs. 4-5

1. The word "integrity" carries the idea of wholeness and soundness. Integrity could be defined as a one-to-one correlation between my Bible, my beliefs, and my behavior.
2. Integrity is a sound wholeness in which your walk matches your talk, grounded on the belief system of your life. It carries the idea of being complete and undivided.
3. The opposite of a life of integrity would be a life of hypocrisy. In verses 4-5, we get some valuable insight into this and see that a person of integrity:
 - Reproves the vile person. vs. 4a; **cf. Romans 12:9; Ephesians 5:11**
 - Respects the godly person (even though the world may mock him).
1 Thessalonians 5:12-13
 - Remembers his promises (vs. 4c), even if it costs you something, you change not.
 - Refuses to be driven by money (vs. 5). The honest person makes a living, but does so honestly and uprightly.
4. When our lives lack integrity, we aren't comfortable in God's presence. Have you ever felt like a hypocrite? Did it make you want to spend time with God? No. We avoid God's fellowship when our life is one of hypocrisy.

In Conclusion:

1. David ends this psalm by saying, "*He that doeth these things shall never be moved.*"
2. The person that practices the principles in this psalm can tarry in God's presence in prayer and feel completely comfortable, enjoying the sweet fellowship of God.