

FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD IN TIME

One of the most important Psalms in the Word of God is Psalm 15 because the question is asked of the Lord, by David, in verse 1, "Lord, who shall abide in Thy tabernacle? Who shall dwell in Thy Holy hill?" In other words, who is it that can have fellowship with the Lord? Of course we know we cannot have fellowship with God unless we have accepted Christ as our personal Saviour. But, we find here several statements that the Lord told David, and I believe it would be beneficial for all believers to know them.

First is having the right attitude toward the Lord. Verse 2, "He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the Truth in his heart." A MAN'S HEART HAS TO BE RIGHT. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he," Proverbs 23:7. We know the references to the heart in Scripture are the mind, the mentality of the soul.

he actual life of a man reveals the condition of his heart, mind. If you want to know whether or not a man is true in heart or whether he is dependable, look at his life. If his heart is right, then his life will be right. If his life is not right, his heart cannot be right. You cannot divide the two. His lips and his legs must match. A man's life is the expression of the true condition of his heart. A man's actions are motivated by his thoughts.

If you are going to have fellowship with God, the first thing we find here is that our hearts have to be right with the Lord. If we are born again and make mistakes, which we all do, we should confess our sins to the Lord. He will forgive us and cleanse us from all unrighteousness and restore us to fellowship. That is what is meant by walking uprightly. Confessing our sins from the heart shows that our hearts are right and we are true. 1 John 1:9, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Second, a man's attitude toward his neighbor must be right. Verse 3, "He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbor, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbor." One's attitude toward man cannot be right if he gossips about others. If we gossip about our neighbors, we can't be right with God because we are not right with man. It does seem strange that there are some people always ready to criticize others and so quick to put wrong motives to a person's acts.

We should not judge other people's motives. If we do, we are saying that we know more than God. The man that does that, the man that is so quick to slander and gossip about people, the man so ready to belittle people and point up their mistakes, does not have a right attitude toward man. If your attitude toward man is not right, your attitude toward God cannot be right, and you can't have fellowship with Him. You must be right with the Lord before you can be right with anyone else.

We find here, "Lord, who shall abide in Thy tabernacle? Who shall dwell in Thy holy hill?" "He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbor, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbor," or receiveth reproach against his neighbor. If you listen to gossip, you are just as bad as the man talking. We cannot be right with the Head, Christ is the Head of the Church, if we are not right with those in the Church. That is only good common sense.

Third, we find a man cannot have fellowship with the ungodly and fellowship with the Lord. Verse 4, "In whose eyes a vile person is contemned; but He honoureth them that fear the Lord. He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not." A person who does not have fellowship with the ungodly, unsaved, has fellowship with the Lord. A man that withdraws himself from ungodly people has fellowship with the Lord, but a man who

seeks fellowship with the unbeliever will not have fellowship with the Lord. Separate yourselves from them who walk ungodly.

Fourth, one must not try to profit by his relationship with Christians. Verse 5, "He that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these things shall never be moved." If we find another believer in need and we help him and then ask for interest, we cannot have fellowship with the Lord. Isn't it strange that some people lend money to the Church and then want it back with interest when God tells us not to take usury for a reward, or don't take increase. Those people feel that they receive interest when they loan money to others, so they should receive interest when they loan it to a Church. The reason we should not do that is that our Lord tells us not to. The word "usury" means addition. You should not expect any more back than you gave. In fact, the Lord tells us if we lend, we should not expect any of it back, but, of course, we do.

Now, let's briefly review the thoughts, the Divine Viewpoint of Psalm 15, and these five verses on fellowship with the Lord.

- 1. Our attitude toward God must be right.
- 2. Our attitude toward man must be right.
- 3. We are not to mix with the unbelievers.
- 4. We are not to take usury or try to profit by our relationship with other believers.

It is very plain and very simple and very gracious. These indicate that you are out of fellowship with the Lord. In order to have fellowship with the Lord we must "confess our sins, for He is faithful and just to forgive us of our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness," 1 John 1:9.

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