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Singing a Believing Prayer to God; Psalm 25
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Introduction - Psalm 25 is a prayer-song. It is a “believing” prayer because it is saturated in faith, faith statements about God and seeking God by faith. Faithful truth claims and exercising faith by appealing to God based on what we know to be true about Him. It is a prayer prayed about the faith. It is a prayer prayed by faith. And that is indeed the essence of prayer.

But it is not only a prayer, it is a song, a prayer-song. David means to sing this prayer to God. I think this is such a rich point for us to grasp today. When Christians sing to God, it is a means of affirmation. We sing it because we deeply believe it. Christian singing is a delighting in what we know to be true about God and appealing to God based on what we know to be true about Him. Christian singing is singing about the faith and singing by faith. Lyrics are important; they are meant to teach the faith!

I. Relying on God and His Grace (vv1-5)

A) What is interesting to note in this section is how David connects the nature of God with the grace of God. He beseeches grace from God based on what he knows about God. He pleads by faith for grace based on the content of our faith. And that is a massive lesson on prayer for us. God’s character is always the fountainhead of God’s actions. God’s actions spring from God’s character. VV1-3 is a prayer for right to prevail. VV4-5 is a prayer for David to persevere.

B) “To You, O Lord, I lift up my soul. O my God, in You I trust” is David’s confession of faith. May we follow his example and not place our trust in ourselves, our resources, our strengths, or our fellow man, but in the Lord. Let us not lift our souls to anything or anyone but the Lord. Let us square our full allegiance with the Lord and totally rely upon Him.

1. Then comes his plea to not be put to shame by his enemies gaining the final victory. He is trusting in God, relying on God, for truth and good and right to ultimately prevail.

2. Now notice that he bases that prayer on a universal faith statement: “Indeed, none who wait for you shall be put to shame; they shall be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous”, that is, who decidedly determine not to trust in You and not to live for You.

3. In other words, David pleads for truth and good and right to prevail in his individual circumstance based on the universal truth of how God upholds His Word.

4. Dear believer, never give heed to the lie of Satan that how God deals with others is not how God deals with you, that God's promises stand true for others, but not for you. If God has promised it, if God has revealed it, then it is true and applicable for you as His child.

C) Then in vv4-5 David prays for his own perseverance in salvation based on the truth that God is his Savior. Listen to his pleas. "Make me know Your ways." "teach me Your paths" "Lead me in Your truth" "teach me" - make me, lead me, teach me - What is he expressing here?

1. David is saying, "I know You are with me. I know You have a good purpose in this. I know You have a plan for me. But my enemies seem to be prevailing, I'm in the midst and fog of this battle, and I can't see Your way, and I can't walk in Your way - but dear Lord, I so desire to do so. So please make me, lead me, teach me."

2. ill. children learning to walk

II. Requesting a Merciful Memory (vv6-7)

A) V6 - read - once again, David is praying for mercy and steadfast love for himself based on God's universal reputation for being a merciful and steadfast loving God.

B) In v7, he is specifically praying for mercy and steadfast love in light of his past and present sins, and he grounds his prayer for God's forgiveness in the goodness of God, not in his own merit.

C) The heart of this portion of David's prayer is confession. In vv1-5 he professes faith in God. In vv6-7 he confesses his sins. What is David saying here?

D) David is saying my troubles are not just my enemies and my present situation. My troubles are also my own sins. He is acknowledging that he does not deserve anything. The difference between a sinning sinner and sinning saint is that the sinning saint prays to God for mercy.

1. David here is the tax collector praying at the temple in Luke 18, "God, be merciful to me a sinner."

III. Praising the Lord for His Goodness (vv8-10)

A) David is once again establishing his prayer and his faith upon the doctrine of God, vv8-10 being a restatement of all the previous verses.

B) Note where David begins, where he lays his foundation, to what does he build his faith and his prayer upon? That God is good and upright.

The goodness of God and the righteousness of God guarantees that God will act in certain ways toward His people, therefore there are certain things we can certainly know about God and there are certain things we can certainly pray to God.

C) To grasp this point firmly, look with me at therefore in v8. God is this way, therefore He acts this way. Now if we read the verse backwards and change the word therefore to because, David's connection from the character of God to the actions of God is even more crystalized.

1. God instructs sinners in the way BECAUSE He is good and upright! God leads the humble in what is right and teaches the humble His way BECAUSE God is good and upright.

2. All the paths of the Lord are steadfast love and faithfulness for those who keep His covenant and His testimonies BECAUSE He is good and upright.

a. "all the paths" dear believer, "all the paths" are steadfast love and faithfulness. What path do you tread today? Where has the Lord led you to walk? You may not be able to figure out the path, but because the Lord is good and upright, you can believe with all faith in God that He is being loving and faithful to you.

IV. Appealing to the Glory of God (vv11-15)

A) To ground our faith and our prayers in the glory of God is to ground our faith and our prayers in the will of God. "For your name's sake, O Lord, pardon my guilt, for it is great." God is greatly glorified when He pardons great sinners!

1. God pardons great sinners; He doesn't pardon little sinners. And it's not that some of us are little sinners and some of us are great sinners. It's that some look upon their sin as little and some look upon their sin as great. The truth is that we are all great sinners because sin is a great offense to our great God. Jesus said, "I didn't come to call the whole, but to call the sick. I didn't come to call the righteous, but the unrighteous."

a. May God give us eyes to see that we are great sinners and that the only thing greater than our sin is His grace! And when He bestows grace upon the guilty, His name will be forever praised!!

B) Now vv12-15 outline that grace for us.

V. Pleading for Help from Without and Within (vv16-21)

A) Within – vv16-18

B) Without – v19

C) Within – vv20-21

D) The relation between troubles without and within.

Conclusion - Then David does something truly remarkable in v22. He turns from personal petition to corporate intercession. His entire prayer has been focused on his external and internal troubles, but now he opens up his focus to all of Israel as if to say, this is not just a prayer for me - this is a prayer for us all. This is not just my prayer; this is your prayer. Because if you are in Christ, God is not just my God, He is your God too. And just like He has done for me, He will do for you - He will deliver us out of all our troubles, external and internal.