

## **“I Love the House Where You Live, O LORD”**

(Psalm 26)(4.11.2021)

Psalm 26 (NIV84) Of David.

<sup>1</sup> Vindicate me, O Lord,  
for I have led a blameless life;  
I have trusted in the Lord  
without wavering.

<sup>2</sup> Test me, O Lord, and try me,  
examine my heart and my mind;

<sup>3</sup> for your love is ever before me,  
and I walk continually in your truth.

<sup>4</sup> I do not sit with deceitful men,  
nor do I consort with hypocrites;

<sup>5</sup> I abhor the assembly of evildoers  
and refuse to sit with the wicked.

<sup>6</sup> I wash my hands in innocence,  
and go about your altar, O Lord,

<sup>7</sup> proclaiming aloud your praise  
and telling of all your wonderful deeds.

<sup>8</sup> I love the house where you live, O Lord,  
the place where your glory dwells.

<sup>9</sup> Do not take away my soul along with sinners,  
my life with bloodthirsty men,

<sup>10</sup> in whose hands are wicked schemes,  
whose right hands are full of bribes.

<sup>11</sup> But I lead a blameless life;  
redeem me and be merciful to me.

<sup>12</sup> My feet stand on level ground;  
in the great assembly I will praise the Lord.

**The word of God for the people of God.**

LET US PRAY.

Title: **“I Love the House Where You Live, O LORD”**

INTRODUCTION:

If David has led a blameless life, why does he need vindication? If David has led a blameless life, why does he need to be redeemed? Why does he need mercy? Of course, a central concept here is that every person must come before God and be judged. How we walk in our daily lives is important. The exercise of our faith equips us for dealing with the world.

While the House to which King David refers is most obviously the Holy Temple of God in Jerusalem, it also metaphorically has other implications. Then when Jesus came, the Temple of God, the House of God, dramatically gets reframed. We must be careful to be true to King David’s meaning. At the same time, God the Holy Spirit, who inspired David’s writing, knows that a new dispensation is coming. That simply means that Jesus is the “game changer;” when the LORD reveals the New Covenant.

Can we say that we love the house where the Lord lives? Do we really want to stand in the great assembly? Words like love and truth are important, but our culture has degraded them. Are we standing on level ground?

BODY:

King David opens and closes this praise song to God by asserting his own blameless life. It may be that David is facing accusations, so he takes the issue before the LORD. You know me better than anyone

LORD; take my case; uphold me; defend me. Trusting God, is a big part of what our faith is about. David declares that he has had an undivided heart that has stayed on the straight and narrow path.

The reason that David still needs redemption is recognition that the LORD's standards are on a higher plane than human standards. It is not enough that our actions are right; so must our hearts and minds. The Lord Jesus and the Apostle Paul tell us that none are good and all have fallen short of the glory of God. This is why we need the redemptive work of the Christ.

King David's desire, as ours should be, is to be cleansed and to be found worthy. Often we fall victim to self-deception and think of ourselves as better than we truly are. The Lord sees the motivations of our heart and every thought is exposed to Him. It is in the testing and trying by God that self-knowledge will come to light.

What beacon beckons David forward? God's love is ever before him. Other translations say, steadfast love, or lovingkindness. Hosea 11:4 (NIV84)

I led them with cords of human kindness,  
with ties of love;  
I lifted the yoke from their neck  
and bent down to feed them.

When David speaks about walking in the truth of God, he means living out his life in compliance with the scriptures. These include the facts of biblical history; the promises of our Covenant God; the commandments for living – think of Psalm 119; and, the prophecy of things to come. All of these provide the structure of David's worldview and daily living. **There are no competing truths for his heart and mind.**

David makes it clear that he separates himself from those who do evil and he does not participate in their evil. In fact, he abhors their ways. They are deceitful, hypocritical, wicked, bloodthirsty, scheming, and they take bribes. In general they are evildoers and sinners.

1 Corinthians 15:33 (NIV84) Do not be misled: "Bad company corrupts good character." 1 Thessalonians 5:22 (NIV84) Avoid every kind of evil. 1 John 2:15 (NIV84) Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

In what ways do we violate this premise today? What company do we keep? "Oh, we don't do that pastor," You might think. No? Maybe it is unintentional. The people we do business with is important. What businesses do you support with your purchases? Our entertainment should be God honoring. We should avoid bawdy jokes and humor that demeans other people. Is it a good idea to sit at bars and gambling tables? I could go on and on.

Let me give you a few personal examples. Years ago, I investigated buying a business. One of the major reasons for not purchasing it was a large percentage of the income came from cigarette sales and lottery ticket sales. This week, I started sanitizing my Facebook feed. Every time a suggested video or advertisement has sexual or violent content, I tell Facebook to hide it. You probably know that your online activity is monitored and you are targeted for advertising purposes and who knows what other purposes.

Not only does King David buffer himself from the influence and contamination of evil, he practices ritual cleansing. He publicly professes his faith. At the altar of God he offers a sacrifice of praise. He joyfully announces the wonderful deeds of the LORD. Then David declares, "I love the house where you live, O Lord, the place where your glory dwells."

The predecessor of the Jerusalem Temple was the Tabernacle. The LORD directed Moses in Exodus 25:8–9 (NIV84) <sup>8</sup> "Then have them make a sanctuary for me, and I will dwell among them. <sup>9</sup> Make this tabernacle and all its furnishings exactly like the pattern I will show you." Yahweh initiated its construction, its purpose, and very detailed specifications.

While the scriptures tell us that God is omnipresent, present everywhere, He manifests His presence in a special and particular way in Holy places. Wherever the Hebrew people went, they carried the

Tabernacle with them. King David's son, Solomon, was given the honor of building God's Temple in Jerusalem. It too was designed exactly by the Lord and designated to be a Holy place of the Lord's presence, His glory.

But, the Temple was destroyed in 70 AD. The Roman Army mercilessly crushed the Jewish rebellion. Not only was there great suffering and loss of life, the capitol city of Jerusalem was decimated. The Holy Temple could not be used for sacrifice. The Holy Temple could not be used for worship. Jesus prophesied this very thing.

Luke 21:5–6 (NIV84)

<sup>5</sup> Some of his disciples were remarking about how the temple was adorned with beautiful stones and with gifts dedicated to God. But Jesus said, <sup>6</sup> "As for what you see here, the time will come when not one stone will be left on another; every one of them will be thrown down."

But also, Jesus foretells a dramatic shift: John 2:19–21 (NIV84)

<sup>19</sup> Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days."

<sup>20</sup> The Jews replied, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and you are going to raise it in three days?" <sup>21</sup> But the temple he had spoken of was his body.

Hear a hymn from 1854: "We Love the Place, O Lord"

by *W. Bullock*

"We love the place, O Lord,  
Wherein Thine honour dwells;  
The joy of Thy abode  
All other joy excels.

"We love the house of prayer,  
Wherein Thy servants meet;  
For Thou, O Lord, art there,  
Thy chosen ones to greet.

"We love the sacred font  
Wherein the Holy Dove  
Pours out, as He is wont,  
The effluence from above.

"We love our Father's board,  
Its altar steps are dear;  
For there in faith adored,  
We find Thy Presence near.

"We love Thy saints who come  
Thy mercy to proclaim,  
To call the wanderers home,  
And magnify Thy name.

"Our first and latest love  
To Zion shall be given—  
The House of God above,  
On earth the Gate of Heav'n."

Of course Jesus says He will connect heaven and earth in John 1:51 (NIV84) He then added, "I tell you the truth, you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man."

King David closes Psalm 26, "in the great assembly I will praise the LORD." In some other English translations it says in the great congregation. The only other place in the Old Testament where this word is used is Psalm 68:26 (NIV84) Praise God in the great congregation; praise the Lord in the assembly of Israel.

You may remember that the Septuagint is the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible made by 70 Jewish scholars of Greek. They did this because Greek was widely spoken and Hebrew was not. The Greek word for “great assembly” or “great congregation” is “ekklesia.” This is where we get the word Church in English.

The Church is also called the Body of Christ. We just read in the Gospel of John that Jesus is suggesting His raised Body will take the place of the Temple. We are redeemed because Jesus was the final and perfect sacrifice, so the Temple was no longer needed. Our sin debt was paid in full by Jesus.

Paul tells us in Ephesians 1:22–23 (NIV84)

<sup>22</sup> And God placed all things under [Jesus’] feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, <sup>23</sup> which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

Peter tells us in 1 Peter 2:4–5 (NIV84)

<sup>4</sup> As you come to him [Jesus], the living Stone—rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to him— <sup>5</sup> you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

Does the Glory of God inhabit this particular house of God? Currently, I am helping to teach the Boy Scouts for their God and Church Emblem. This week we read Acts chapter two about Pentecost and the formation of the Church, I explained that without God the Holy Spirit, there is NO Church. The gathering can be a lot of things, a social-club, a civic do-gooders club, an entertainment center, but it would not be the Body of Christ without the literal presence of God. As God breathed life into Adam, the Holy Spirit is the source of life in the Church.

Do we love the house where our Lord lives? If we love God then we should love His house. We should love those that make up the spiritual house of God. We love this house because we pray together, read God’s word together, hear God’s word preached together, and worship together. We are a community. We love being here because of the pardon, guidance, comfort, and joy that comes from being part of the great congregation. Do you love being part of the Body of Christ?

CONCLUSION:

**Morning, May 6**                      *Devotional by Charles Spurgeon.*

*“We dwell in him.”—1 John 4:13*

Do you want a house for your soul? Do you ask, “What is the purchase?” It is something less than proud human nature will like to give. It is without money and without price. Ah! you would like to pay a respectable rent! You would love to do something to win Christ? Then you cannot have the house, for it is “without price.”

Will you take my Master’s house on a lease for all eternity, with nothing to pay for it, nothing but the ground-rent of loving and serving him for ever? Will you take Jesus and “dwell in him?” See, this house is furnished with all you want, it is filled with riches more than you will spend as long as you live.

Here you can have intimate communion with Christ and feast on his love; here are tables well-stored with food for you to live on for ever; in it, when weary, you can find rest with Jesus; and from it you can look out and see heaven itself.

Will you have the house? Ah! if you are houseless, you will say, “I should like to have the house; but may I have it?” Yes; there is the key—the key is, “Come to Jesus.” “But,” you say, “I am too shabby for such a house.” Never mind; there are garments inside. If you feel guilty and condemned, come; and though the house is too good for you, Christ will make you good enough for the house by-and-by. He will wash you and cleanse you, and you will yet be able to sing, “We dwell in him.”

Believer: thrice happy art thou to have such a dwelling-place! Greatly privileged thou art, for thou hast a “strong habitation” in which thou art ever safe. And “dwelling in him,” thou hast not only a perfect and secure house, but an *everlasting* one. When this world shall have melted like a dream, our house shall live, and stand more imperishable than marble, more solid than granite, self-existent as God, for it is God himself—“We dwell in him.”

Amen and amen. Let us pray.