
Sermon Notes

November 25, 2018

First Congregational Church of Pomfret

Come Authentically

Psalm 26:1-12

A Double Life

- ❖ Clarence King (1842-1901)
- ❖ Given the Bible's many warnings about the natural inclination of our hearts, it is likely that all of us live with some level of duplicity
- ❖ In Psalm 26, David tells us about what it takes to live an "authentic" life, a life of integrity

The Importance of Integrity

- ❖ Be real, honest and open in your relationship with God and with others
 - holiness, purity, faithfulness
 - let your life match your words
 - ask the Holy Spirit to make you consistently faithful and true
- ❖ David's request for God's "vindication" (v. 1)
 - how can anyone pray what David prays with "a straight face"?

- in fact, look at what David prays for in Psalm 25:21
- ❖ Psalm 26 may be a testimony of how God has answered David's prayer over time
 - anything in David's life that might possibly be labeled as "blameless" is because of God
 - if David is standing and walking on level ground, it is because of God
- ❖ How do **we** grow in integrity?
 - integrity is not possible in and of ourselves
 - we are sinful and prone to being deceived and deceiving others
 - we need Christ to make us people of integrity
 - we can only grow in integrity through the redeeming grace of God
- ❖ **VINDICATE?**
 - most often, when we use the word "vindicate" we are concerned about being shown to be right over and against other people
 - David is more concerned about his reputation in God's eyes than his reputation in front of others
 - moreover, David is preeminently concerned about God's reputation
 - "God show that your way is the best way... put Yourself on display through my life."
- ❖ **Prove me... try me, test my heart and my mind** (v. 2)
[compare with Psalm 139:23-24]

"I'm Gonna Keep Walkin'"

- ❖ "Walking in God's way" is a thread of thought that David uses to tie Psalm 26 together (vv. 1, 3, 11)
 - there's a "right" direction and a "wrong" direction in which to walk
 - *men of falsehood* (v. 4) *in whose hands are evil devices and whose right hands are full of bribes* (vv. 9-10)
 - David knows he needs to keep himself in the company of God's people
 - 1 Corinthians 15:33, *bad company ruins good morals*
- ❖ David knows he needs God's help to keep walking in the right direction
 - *redeem me, and be gracious to me* (v. 11)
 - the grace of Jesus is the starting place for all of this
 - the grace of Jesus is what we need to keep on with this
- ❖ *I'm gonna keep walkin' and keep talkin' and keep singin' in Jesus' name ...*
- ❖ Receiving God's grace to keep walking in God's way leads naturally to giving testimony, praise and thanksgiving
 - *proclaiming thanksgiving aloud* (v. 7)
 - God's people don't keep what God does in their lives to themselves)

Level Ground

- ❖ David uses level ground as a metaphor for personal stability and a right relationship with the Lord
- ❖ David is not "self-confident", David is "God-confident"
 - David knows this is all a gift of God's grace
 - living without wavering, wobbling, or shaking

Personal Application

1. Are you aware of any ways in which your life does not match your words or areas in which you are falling down on issues of holiness, purity and/or faithfulness? What will you do about that?
2. Are you more concerned about your reputation or God's reputation?
3. There's a right and a wrong direction in which to walk. Which way are you walking? How do you know this to be so? What do you need to pray about and ask God for His help in changing in your life so that you can work more consistently in the right direction?
4. Can you say with David in v. 12 that you are standing on level ground? Why or why not? Ask God to do whatever needs done in and for you so that you can live without wavering, wobbling and/or shaking?