



**MATT BLACK**, Sun, August 12, 2018  
livinghopechurch.net

# 5 | PSALM 5

## GOD FIRST: THE MORNING WATCH

### **Outline**

*God's Presence in the Middle of the Tribes*

#### **1. THE PRIORITY OF GOD'S PRESENCE (5:1-6)**

An Example of a Covenant Relationship with God

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*David's Sovereign (5:2)*

*David's Sacrifice (5:3)*

Application: Putting God First

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2. *Get up in time to meet with God.*

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What If I Don't have a Covenant Relationship with God?

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*The Day (5:5)*

*The Destruction (5:6)*

#### **2. THE PURSUIT OF GOD'S PRESENCE (5:7-10)**

Lead me Lord

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*Focus on Worship (5:7b)*

*Focus on Following (5:8)*

Those Not Lead by God Go to Destruction

*A Depraved Heart Leads to Destruction (5:9)*

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#### **3. THE PROTECTION OF GOD'S PRESENCE (5:11-12)**

God's Presence is our Fortress (5:11)

God's Presence Brings Favor (5:12)

## **Announcements**

1. Welcome visitors!
2. This Saturday is Men's Prayer Breakfast, 8am
3. A week from Friday, on Fri Aug 24, 7pm, we have Ladies' Quarterly Fellowship at the Reid's home.

## ***Title***

Open your Bible if you will to **Psalm 5**. The title of our study this morning is: "God's Presence." We are continuing a series through the Psalms called "Shadow of the Almighty." The goal of this series is to teach us how to pray and how to walk with God.

## ***God's Presence in the Middle of the Tribes***

When the children of Israel were in the wilderness, their camp was divided by the twelve tribes and the Tabernacle was in the middle of them. At the center was the ark of the covenant with the manifest, visible presence of God. The same happened in the land of Israel in Jerusalem. The point of that arrangement is they needed the presence of God. That's what we need today.

Where ever the children of God travelled, God was manifested by the glory cloud. That glory cloud cast deep darkness over his enemies and gave light to his people.

We don't have the glory cloud externally any more, but we have it internally through the Holy Spirit. And there is a battle for your heart and mind every day. According to the Psalm 5 we are about to read, that battle begins in the morning. David teaches us an important truth about prayer: **The battle for each day can only be won by the presence of God in your life.** That's why we need to put God first every morning.

## ***Scripture Reading***

Let's stand and read our passage today, Psalm 5,

Give ear to my words, O Lord;  
consider my groaning.

<sup>2</sup> Give attention to the sound of my cry,  
my King and my God,  
for to you do I pray.

<sup>3</sup> O Lord, in the morning you hear my voice;  
in the morning I prepare a sacrifice for you and watch.

<sup>4</sup> For you are not a God who delights in wickedness;  
evil may not dwell with you.

<sup>5</sup> The boastful shall not stand before your eyes;  
you hate all evildoers.

<sup>6</sup> You destroy those who speak lies;  
the Lord abhors the bloodthirsty and deceitful man.

<sup>7</sup> But I, through the abundance of your steadfast love,  
will enter your house.

I will bow down toward your holy temple  
in the fear of you.

<sup>8</sup> Lead me, O Lord, in your righteousness  
 because of my enemies;  
 make your way straight before me.

<sup>9</sup> For there is no truth in their mouth;  
 their inmost self is destruction;  
 their throat is an open grave;  
 they flatter with their tongue.

<sup>10</sup> **Make them bear their guilt**, O God;  
 let them fall by their own counsels;  
 because of the abundance of their transgressions cast them out,  
 for they have rebelled against you.

<sup>11</sup> But let all who take refuge in you rejoice;  
 let them ever sing for joy,  
 and spread your protection over them,  
 that those who love your name may exult in you.

<sup>12</sup> For you bless the righteous, O Lord;  
 you cover him with favor as with a shield.

*This is God's Word.*

**Outline**

1. The **Priority** of God's Presence (5:1-6)
2. The **Pursuit** to God's Presence (5:7-10)
3. The **Protection** of God's Presence (5:11-12)

**1. THE PRIORITY OF GOD'S PRESENCE (5:1-6)**

**AN EXAMPLE OF A COVENANT RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD**

In verses 1-3, we see a wonderful example of David putting God first. He has a covenant relationship with God. David is born again. He is anointed with the Holy Spirit. He demonstrates a habit of prayer that every Christian should have.

Christians come to God as our "Father in heaven." This is how David saw the **LORD**. David approaches the presence of God. He calls him, **LORD** or "I Am." This is God's fatherly covenant name. It is the equivalent of saying, "our heavenly Father" or "Abba, Father." What we will see this morning is: The point is: **The battle for each day can only be won by the presence of God in your life.** David begins:

<sup>1</sup> Give ear to my words, O LORD;  
 consider my groaning.

<sup>2</sup> Give attention to the sound of my cry,  
 my King and my God,  
 for to you do I pray.

<sup>3</sup> O LORD, in the morning you hear my voice;  
 in the morning I prepare a sacrifice for you and watch.

*David's Sighing (5:1)*

We notice that David can bring his inexpressible requests to God. “**Consider my groaning**” he says. Sometimes life on this earth is so broken and messy, we can only groan. David has such a personal relationship with God, that he can ask God to go beyond his mere words and **consider his groanings**.

*David's Sovereign (5:2)*

But David he is not helpless. He knows who his Father in heaven is. He's also King of kings and God of all. But also, “**my God**” and “**my King**.” David says, “To you do I pray” because God is sovereign over all things and can do anything. There's nothing too hard for the Lord.

*David's Sacrifice (5:3)*

David seeks God “**in the morning**.” He says he will “**prepare a sacrifice**” for the LORD, “**and watch**.” What is David watching for? What is he waiting for? Even in the midst of his enemies, in the midst of the storms of life, he needs to feel and experience “the abundance of” God's “steadfast love” (5:7).

**APPLICATION: PUTTING GOD FIRST**

How vital it is to put your relationship with God first. David says, “**in the morning**” when I rise, *Give me Jesus*. Jesus said, “Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you” (Mt 6:33). There are so many things vying for our attention. You know as well as I do, your day is off course if you don't seek God at the beginning of your day.

*1. Get to bed early.*

If you want to meet with God early, putting him first starts the night before. Don't be surprised if you can't have a quality time with God in the morning if you stay up late every night.

*2. Get up in time to meet with God.*

The history of the church is filled with men and women who put “first things first” through going Godward to start their day. This shouldn't be that surprising given that it's recorded of our great King himself that “rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he departed and went out to a desolate place, and there he prayed” (Mk 1:35).

*3. Putting God first is an act of Faith.*

Getting up early and worshipping God is saying, “God, I know I am weak and helpless. Without you, I can do nothing.” Martin Luther said, “I have so much to do in a day, I have to pray first for two hours.” You may not be able to dedicate that much time to God, but realize the amount of time you dedicate to truly quality time with God is related to the amount of things that matter in life you accomplish.

## WHAT IF I DON'T HAVE A COVENANT RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD?

### *The Distinction (5:4)*

<sup>4</sup>For you are not a God who delights in wickedness; evil may not dwell with you.

God is completely unlike the majority of humanity on this earth “**who delight in wickedness**.” You see God’s character is such that “**evil may not dwell**” in his presence. Indeed “**God is light, and in him is no darkness at all**” (1 Jn 5:5).

There is a distinction between God and the world, and there is a distinction between God’s people and the world. Holiness marks God’s people, just as it marks God.

### *The Day (5:5)*

Those who don’t have a walk with God are **boastful**, and they shall never “**stand before**” God’s “**eyes**.”

<sup>5</sup>The **boastful** shall not stand before your eyes; you hate all evildoers.

David goes forward in his mind to the Day of Judgment. That day is dreadful for God’s enemies. God **hates all evildoers**. God’s **hatred** of evil isn’t emotional; it’s judicial, an expression of his holiness.

There comes a day, when God says, “Enough is enough.” The **boasting** of the wicked will stop on that day. Can I just say that your daily walk determines your destination? Those who do evil **will not stand** in confidence, accepted before the living God, but are destined for hell forever. John tells us on the Day of Judgment: “**If anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire**” (**Rev 20:15**).

### *The Destruction (5:6)*

Here David is looking at the world from an eternal perspective. He moves to that Day of Judgment in Psalm 5:6, in our text. His words are a merciful warning.

<sup>6</sup>You destroy those who speak lies; the LORD abhors the bloodthirsty and deceitful man.

Those who die in their sins are damned forever. Their fate is sealed. They die as God’s enemies. One day the sheep and the goats are gathered before the Lord. The sheep go on to God’s eternal love, but the wicked, the goats, go on to God’s everlasting hatred. God “**hates all evildoers**” (5:5).

This may sound strange, since we know that God loves the world of lost sinners (Jn 3:16) and sent his only Son “**to be the Savior of the world**” (1 Jn 4:14). He would have “**all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth**” (1 Tim 2:3-4) and “**is not willing that any should perish**” (2 Pet 3:9). Jesus died on the cross for the sins of the world to propitiate the wrath of God (1 Jn 2:1-2), and his invitation to salvation is says, “Come unto me all who are weary and burdened by their sin” and find rest in him (Mt 11:28-30; Rev 22:17).

But the glorious truth of God’s love doesn’t change the fact that God hates sin and punishes sinners. Listen to these truths together in that famous passage in John 3.

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. <sup>17</sup> For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. <sup>18</sup> Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God (Jn 3:16-18).

God has **no pleasure** in the **wicked**. His wrath abides on them, and he will not permit unforgiven sinners to dwell with him (5:4). They will not stand before him in the Judgment (5:5; cf 1:5-6). The lost have no hope without Christ. God abhors their murderous, hateful, and deceitful ways. Without Christ they are left to their own destruction. That's exactly what David says in verse 6:

<sup>6</sup> You **destroy** those who speak lies; the LORD abhors the bloodthirsty and deceitful man.

J.G. Vos, the son of that eminent theologian Geerhardus Vos, once said, "Christ's Kingdom is not advanced without Satan's kingdom being destroyed." We meet with God in the morning, and we put him first as Christians, because we know that our walk today determines our destiny. Those who are born again bear the fruit of eternity, but the wicked live for today. Sadly, in the end, God will destroy them.

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## 2. THE PURSUIT OF GOD'S PRESENCE (5:7-10)

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### LEAD ME LORD

Remember what we are learning: **The battle for each day can only be won by the presence of God in your life.** That's why we must pursue the presence of God each morning. We need to pursue his leadership in our lives.

Here is the climax of the Psalm in verse 8. David prays: "Lead me, O LORD, in your righteousness because of my enemies." There is a battle in this world. Sometimes you will wake up feeling that the whole world is against you, and in a way it's true. There is a cosmic battle of spiritual warfare.

How different David's experience is than the wicked he just described. Forgiven sinners can enter God's presence. We must conscientiously pursue God's presence, or we will be lead astray by our own heart. Listen to how David pursues the presence of God.

*Focus on God's Covenant Love (5:7a)*

We find one of the most important words in the Bible here: steadfast love.

<sup>7a</sup> But I, through the abundance of your steadfast love, will enter your house.

It's the Hebrew word *hesed*, and it means God's covenanted unrelenting love. He promises to perpetually come after you and rescue you and save you. He'll leave the ninety and nine and rescue the one! This is what you need to focus on to have victory every morning.

*Focus on Worship (5:7b)*

Here we find another focus: a holy **fear** of God.

<sup>7b</sup> I will bow down toward your holy temple  
in the fear of you.

David faces God's holy temple, the Tabernacle, in Jerusalem. David could see the Tabernacle on Mount Moriah from his palace. I was there in January of this year, and I stood on the top of David's palace. You can see the Temple Mount so clearly from David's home. I'm sure David could see the flaming glorious presence of God coming from the Tabernacle there, and he was delighted with a holy fear of the Lord. Fear of our heavenly Father is in no way servile. It's not a fear of condemnation. It's really a holy joy that makes us tremble at such privilege. "**Fear of the LORD**" is a holy awe of a righteous God that is our heavenly Father and is therefore the source of all our security and love. Are you in awe of God's love? That awe of God's love is the beginning of wisdom. It's how you should start every day. Worship him in the "beauty of holiness."

*Focus on Following (5:8)*

I don't know about you, but when I begin the day, I don't have the wisdom I need. That's why, in verse 8, we see the climax, the mountaintop, of this Psalm. David wants to be lead in God's righteousness, his "right path" of holy, joy filled living. Isn't that what we were all made for? David focuses on God's leadership in his life. "**Lead me, O Lord,**" I want to follow you.

<sup>8</sup> Lead me, O LORD, in your righteousness  
because of my enemies;  
make your way straight before me.

David wants to follow the Lord's leading. He says, "**Lead me...because of my enemies**" (5:8). The enemies of God want to take us off course. The world, the flesh, and the devil are constantly harassing us. That's why this morning prayer is so important. The world wants to tangle us up, to make our way crooked. That's why David prays, "**Make your way straight before me.**" That's a powerful prayer to pray. "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him" (**Jas 1:5**).

*Saying No to God's Enemies*

Following Christ means saying "no" to the enemies of God. That means no to self, no to the world, and no to the devil. Say no to the enemies of God.

Say no to the **devil**. The devil may put thoughts in your mind that are accusatory. He is the accuser of the brethren. Say no to that. Say yes to what God says about you.

Say no to **self**. There are so many emotions we can be controlled by. Self wants to be controlled by anger, fear, or worldly temptation. Say no!

Say no to the **world**. The world will try to tempt you by getting you to turn off your mind, turn off your walk with God. The world will numb you to sin. Don't allow it. Say no!

And say YES to God. Say yes to his leadership. Keep in step with the Holy Spirit. Follow Jesus. Let him be Master, King, and God of your life.

### **THOSE NOT LEAD BY GOD GO TO DESTRUCTION**

Consider the alternative to following God.

#### *A Depraved Heart Leads to Destruction (5:9)*

Outside of the transformed heart that comes from knowing God, we have only our own depraved hearts to guide us. The saint of God is no longer depraved. He has a new nature. But that's not true for the lost. Look at how David describes them here:

<sup>9</sup> For there is no truth in their mouth;  
 their inmost self is **destruction**;  
 their throat is an open grave;  
 they flatter with their tongue.

The pathway of our own hearts will always lead us to our own **destruction**. The problem is what David calls the "inmost self." That control center of every person is inwardly bent and does not listen to God. It leads to "destruction." Remember the words of Jeremiah 17:9, NLT, "The human heart is the most deceitful of all things, and desperately [and incurably] wicked. Who really knows how bad it is?"

When you get up in the morning, you can't trust your perception of the day. You might feel it is the worst day ever, and it turns out to be the best day ever. You must never trust your emotions or your perceptions.

<sup>5</sup> Trust in the Lord with all your heart,  
 and do not lean on your own understanding.  
<sup>6</sup> In all your ways acknowledge him,  
 and he will make straight your paths (Prov 3:5-6).

The **wicked flatter with their tongue**. Their **throat** is an **open grave**. But the child of God uses his or her tongue for praise! We know without the leading of the Lord, there is only destruction. The lost will not only be led by their heart to their own destruction, but they will also bear their own guilt and be condemned.

#### *A Depraved Heart Leads to Condemnation (5:10)*

We say with joy in Romans 8:1, "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." Amen! But without Christ, there is only guilt and condemnation.

<sup>10</sup> **Make them bear their guilt**, O God;  
 let them fall by their own counsels;  
 because of the abundance of their transgressions cast them out,  
 for they have rebelled against you.

Contrast David who enters God's presence with the "abundance of God's steadfast love" (5:7) to the lost who are cast out "because of the abundance of their transgressions" (5:10).



The point is: The battle for each day can only be won by the presence of God in your life. You can't trust your heart.

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### 3. THE PROTECTION OF GOD'S PRESENCE (5:11-12)

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#### GOD'S PRESENCE IS OUR FORTRESS (5:11)

David begins:

<sup>11</sup> But let all who take refuge in you rejoice;  
let them ever sing for joy,  
and spread your protection over them,  
that those who love your name may exult in you.

God promises us: “No weapon that is formed against you will prosper” (Isa 54:17). God is our **refuge**, our fortress. This brings us joy. Everything that happens to us turns out for our good and for God's glory. “All things work together for good” (Rom 8:28) because we are “predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son” (Rom 8:29).

God's presence is like a fortress, a refuge. When we are in Christ, he will “spread his protection over them” – all those in Christ Jesus are safe!

Do you feel frightened at the beginning of the day? Overwhelmed? Focus on this: Jesus is your refuge. Break through the fear. Break through the business. “Be still and know,” says the Lord, “that I am God” (Psa 46:10).

#### GOD'S PRESENCE BRINGS FAVOR (5:12)

Remember, no matter what you are going through, as God's child you have God's favor upon your life.

<sup>12</sup> For you bless the righteous, O Lord;  
you cover him with favor as with a shield.

You remember the story of Joseph, one of the two youngest sons of Jacob, that whether he was in the pit or the prison or the palace, God's hand was upon Joseph. As God's child, no matter what you are going through, God has a purpose in it, and you cannot be harmed, for God's **blessing** is **upon you**. God **covers** you with his **favor** as with a great and mighty divine **shield**.

What are you going through? God's got you! He's put you in his hand. Jesus says, “I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand” (Jn 10:28).

#### Conclusion

When I was a young man of 14 I got a job sweeping floors at the Landmark Aviation for \$2.65 an hour.

One day, the boss, Mr. John Davis told me to come outside. His good friend had pulled up in a restored World War II fighter plane. Mr. Davis asked me “Do you want a ride?” The pilot took me high into the sky. He asked me do you want to “roll”? I had just seen

the movie Top Gun, and of course I said YES!!! There I was flying upside down, suspended in the air above New Orleans.

He let me take the controls for a minute. What an experience! But I'm glad after a minute the pilot took the controls back. You see, I have no idea how to fly a plane! It would be disastrous!

Imagine how disastrous it would have been for me to fly that plane without the pilot there. And yet there are days in our life when we begin our days without God at the controls of our heart. No human being can be trusted with guiding his or her own life. We are all broken, mortal human beings – sinners in need of God's guidance.

I challenge you as God's people to always put God first. The morning watch will transform your life. Are you losing battles? Put God first. Are you dry or backsliding – I challenge you to get up before the day begins and seek God. Pursue his presence. And this is God's promise to you: his **favor** will surround you and cover you as a shield. Amen!