

I. Review

We have been working our way through the book of Psalms over the past couple of months. Not only is there so much that deals with the prophetic doctrinal side of things with Christ's return, but Psalms is a goldmine of practical applications. I think you are going to see today how this will help you with your walk with the Lord.

We finished chapter three in Psalms and last week I did an add-on message on dealing with David's mighty men out of the book of 2 Samuel 23. We looked at four-character qualities.

We looked at Psalms 3 and the adversity that David was going through at that time in his life. Inspirationally this will be a picture for us and the adversity that we face when we take our stand for the word of God. From a practical point we learned some great principles of that study.

A.) **You will be Hated for the Truth – Thus Saith the Lord**

Last week we saw how people will hate you for the truth that you stand for. Not just the world, but God's people also. We also saw those who hold the word of God will be a remnant today, just like Israel was in the past.

I always try to get you to learn from history because history is repetitive. I showed you that Israel at the first coming of Christ was a nation in apostacy. And Christianity at the second coming of Christ will also be in apostacy. Then we looked at the Old Testament prophets. Men who were sent from God to hold Israel accountable. When these prophets came, Israel was in a real mess. They created false religions, so God sends the prophets to them to try and bring them back to God. There are Major Prophets like Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel and then you will have the Minor Prophets like Hosea and Micah. Many people think that the Minor Prophets have less to say, but that is not true. They are just smaller books, so that is why they are called Minor Prophets. For example, Jeremiah has fifty-two chapters, where some of the Minor Prophets might only have two or three chapters.

The way you could tell if a prophet was of God would be before he spoke, he would always say these words, "**Thus saith the Lord**". That was the proof text that what he was about to say was from God. Today we don't get up and say that because we have the book that is God's word. And when you preach from the word of God, you are doing the same thing the prophets did in the Old Testament.

B.) **God's People Will Pay the Price for the Truth – Standing for the Word of God**

Next, we saw how the life of the Old Testament prophets were severely persecuted (Hebrews 11:34-39) likewise, God's people today will also pay the price for standing for the truth.

C.) God will Sustain You Through the Adversity

But through it all God will sustain us with his blessings and taking care of us.

D.) It Takes a Special Kind of Christian to Stand in the Face of Adversity

We talked about how it will take a special kind of Christian to stand in the face of adversity today. That was the whole concept of David's mighty men of valor. That is why in 2 Samuel 23 you will find the four key areas that are needed in our lives to be everything God wants us to be.

II. Christianity Today – Complicated? Not Really!

We live in a fast-paced world today. I remember TV shows in the 60's & 70's was very laid back. They showed a life that was fun, but simple. You never saw people getting divorced in those TV shows. They were good family oriented, wholesome shows that showed you what a good family should be.

Today it has gotten complicated. The truth of the matter is that it only seems that it is complicated. But it doesn't have to be that way. In reality, it is the issues that we bring into our own lives that complicates things due to our disobedience in making bad decisions. The greatest example of this would be with Adam and Eve back in Genesis 1 and 2. Life was so simple. But you know as well as I do that in Genesis 3 it got very complicated, and everything changed. So goes the world now. The world seems to be the most complicated mess you could ever get into. Every time we try to do something on a national scale that you think should be easy and simple, it's another story. And yet so goes the Christian life. The truth of the matter is life on planet earth is not complicated. Life is about the basics of life and when we get outside of that, then life will get complicated.

A.) The Vanity of Man

The book of Ecclesiastes is written by Solomon who is the wisest man that ever lived. He goes through in his twelve chapters every issue in life. He examines everything that man is going to get into, and he says everyone of those is vanity. Because they only lend to a complexity of life that is unbearable. Yet his answer to the basics in Ecclesiastes 12:13 is this:

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this [is] the whole [duty] of man.

That is the basics. God's original plan for man was a garden in Genesis 1 and 2. It was a physical garden back then because God was establishing the kingdom of heaven. Today, in Christianity it is also a garden if you look at Song of Solomon. God's idea of simplicity in the Old Testament under a physical kingdom was a garden which got destroyed. God's concept of a relationship with you and me as the body of Christ today is a garden. But it is spiritually the kingdom of God. Yet it gets corrupted in both places.

Christianity seems to be really complicated. But in both cases man makes it so hard in his pursuit to get away from the real truth, **they try to make God some benign higher power.** There was a time when you went to alcoholics anonymous, and they actually talked about the

power of God in your life and the word of God. This was over thirty or forty years ago. Today, God is out the window. Now it is your higher power and that can be whatever you want it to be. Where before it was designated the Lord Jesus Christ and the word of God. We have gotten away from that. They made God some unattainable being. It's like Acts 17:23 when Paul looked at those people in that city that had a big statue that had a sign on it that said, "To the unknown God". **Today, God is unapproachable to most Christians.** They think God has to be some great majesty that is untouchable, and you can't have a relationship with Him. And they think of us down here like a bunch of little mice in a maze trying to find the cheese at the end of life.

They do the same thing with the word of God. They make God unattainable, and the word of God also. They tell you if you want a relationship with God and the Bible that you got to get it through the Greek and Hebrew. You got to go to a seminary, Bible college or university. They will tell you that higher education is the key to God and his word and you having a relationship with him. Men will boast about their degrees. I have seen churches that are looking for a pastor and they never ask the candidate what his views are, how is he going to teach people. Or how will he bring families together. The only question they ask him is about his degree and where he has been to school. Like that makes you spiritual with God. These institutions have nothing to do with learning the Bible or with being spiritual.

B.) Where is your Loyalty to the Word of God?

I like to stay up with current events, because it is so prevalent to the day and age we live in. I watched over the last couple of weeks the nation of Israel go into the battle with Hamas. Initially America was standing behind Israel. But it didn't take long for the colleges of this country to stand up and be okay with somebody saying, "from the river to the sea". That is a saying that means genocide for the Jews. To kill everyone of them. You saw sweeping across the colleges of this country and the leaders of these colleges being okay with the Palestinian groups hating Israel and putting forward a second Holocaust. Wipe out the Jews from the river to the sea.

Last week Congress brought these college presidents before Congress and grilled them all day trying to get them to say their school is against genocide of the Jews. Not one of those presidents would say that. It's no secret to anyone that they get millions of dollars from the Middle East, and they won't take that stand. Now there is a great call for them all to resign. One reigned yesterday. Now they say that all these ivy league college presidents should resign. I agree!

Yet forty or fifty years ago Bible colleges did the exact same thing when they threw out the word of God. Everybody was okay with that! Confusing times-- for some people. Spirit of falsehood. **I find that men today become more loyal to their school than they do the word of God.**

Now we have churches today that have become big mega churches of complexity. You go there and it is utter confusion, and you are not sure what is going on. Everything has changed from what the Bible says it should be. Yet in 1 Corinthians 14:33 he says that God is not the author of confusion. **Now instead of sustaining God's people, they are entertaining them.** And it is all very confusing.

There is a large church in Kansas City that has a full-time counselor so that if you leave a fundamental Bible believing church and go to this church, they have a counselling program that will debunk all the so-called heresy that you were taught in believing the Bible was the word of God. It's hard to believe, isn't it! I know this guy personally. I sat down with him once and he said you know Bob; we aren't that far apart. You believe the Bible is absolute truth and I believe the Bible is true, but I don't believe the Bible is all truth. He was bringing in psychology and stuff that he had learned in school that told him the Bible was not absolute truth. So now he's got a job that if you want to leave this church and go to his church; they have a counselor on staff that will deprogram you from believing the Bible is the absolute true word of God. In truth Christianity is not complicated, man just makes it that way.

III. Four Character Qualities of Christ & for Us as Christians

Christianity is based on the same four principals that I gave you last week. It will be based on **our determination for God, our loyalty to the things of God, our courage for God and are we honorable when it comes to God.** Like everything else in life and Christianity, Paul was afraid of this when he wrote in 2 Corinthians 11:3 when he said:

But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

Christianity is not complicated, but when man gets his hands on it, he makes it complicated. The importance of those four basic character qualities is in fact (this is where it all ties together) the four basic qualities that Christ has. By spirit and truth as you apply these four aspects you become Christ-like. Which we are admonished to be like Christ. Real spirituality will not be based on you holding to some non-biblical spiritual life like the Pharisees did. You see that a lot today. **But real spirituality will be based on putting these four-character qualities in your life.** I don't care how much you sit around and pray or talk about spirituality. If you don't have the same four-character qualities in your life that Christ had in his, you are deceiving yourself. Not only do I see how they fit into our own Christian life, but how they fit into our ministry here.

1.) Christ's Character Quality - Determination

a.) Christ and his determination to do the work of the father.

His plan at the first coming of Christ, was to do the work of the father. He was determined to face all the opposition. He faced it from the people that were supposed to be God's people. He faced the opposition from the Jews who had been corrupted from the priests who had been corrupted from the Sadducees and the Pharisees. All the groups that held themselves up to a greater height of spirituality than Jesus himself. The Pharisees didn't die out in the first century, I guarantee you. **But real spirituality will be putting these four characteristics in your life.**

b.) Christ and his determination in my salvation.

The Bible says that God is not willing that any should perish, 2 Peter 3:9 he wants every man to come to repentance.

The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

Till the day you die, God's holy Spirit will try to woo you, touch you, win you to bring you to Christ. You know why? He was determined. And the only thing that will deter that is your rejection of God's determination to bring you into the family of God.

c.) God and his determination with Israel.

Romans chapter 9, or chapter 11. There is coming a time when all Israel shall be saved. It looks like right now that God is against the nation of Israel, and he is not. The Bible is very clear about what he is doing with Israel right now. The one word that would put it all together for us is "determined". **God is determined to get Israel back to him.**

I see in my own ministry; I am determined to finish my course and to keep the faith that God has delivered unto me. To finish what God started in my life. I am determined to take any man or woman, any young couple or individual who wants to find the truth of God, and to be everything God wants them to be. I am determined to get you there.

2.) Christ's Character Quality - Loyalty

I showed you last week there was a dual loyalty between David and his men. Christ and his loyalty. No where is loyalty more defined than God to me and you. Understanding God's loyalty to me is such a great lesson to me personally. He stays loyal to me when I don't stay loyal to him. He will never leave me or forsake me, even when I leave and forsake him. He abides with me when I don't abide with him anymore. His loyalty to me and us as his children surpasses anything you could ever find in this world.

And it shows me personally three key things:

- 1.) My loyalty to the word of God.
- 2.) My loyalty to the work of God
- 3.) My loyalty to the people of God.

The ministry is giving of yourself unconditionally, helping people in their struggles. Being there for people when they can't be there for themselves. Helping them through the tough times in life. Many times, those same people in the course of life in the ministry, will turn against you and throw you under the bus. That is not a criticism, that is a fact of the ministry. Welcome to the ministry!

You don't take it personal! It does not mean you don't hold people accountable. You stay loyal to the principals of the word of God. You never allow anger or bitterness to take hold. You never close the door on anybody. You must be loyal to the word of God first and through that you see the principals that you must be loyal to the people of God.

Years ago, I had a guy in my ministry, and he got his nose out of joint and started hanging out with the wrong crowd. He left my ministry, and he said a lot of dumb things about me that were not true. Maybe a year or two later, he saw that he was wrong and called me on the phone and

wanted to meet with me. He apologized to me, and he said “I was dead wrong in what I said and did. I am so sorry about that”. I said it’s okay. He looked at me and said “Bob, I don’t understand how you can take that approach after what I did?” I said, it’s easy! Because if I didn’t it would make me like you, and that is not Christian. Welcome to the ministry!

I heard Dr Ruckman preach years ago at camp on the whole armor of God. He said, “kids if you decide to stand for God, to make that book the number one thing in your life and make your stand for God; the battles that you are going to get into is going to make all the battlefields of this world look like kids’ playground time.” I was just a young guy, and I didn’t understand all of that, just like some of you today don’t either. But after some fifty years in the ministry, I understand it now! Welcome to the ministry!

It isn’t all what you think it is. All that glitters is not gold and there are things we have to learn. **In Christianity you can’t hold bitterness, you can’t get upset and not be able to forgive people.** You must accept the fact that it isn’t about me and you, it is about that book. And I stand for the book! I am in Christ! The day I got saved he put me in Christ. You want to attack me, you got to attack Christ first because I am already in him. It isn’t complicated, but men like to make it complicated.

3.) Christ’s Character Quality – Courage

a.) Christ’s courage in the face of rejection.

Christ had the courage about him that is an incredible model for all of us. In the first coming of Christ, he faces the opposition of his own Nation. He came unto his own and his own received him not. He faced the scribes and the high priests. He faced the Roman government. He faced Pilate and the Sadducees and the Pharisees. Then he faced the cross himself.

One of the things that has helped me in times when I felt like I was overwhelmed is in the book of Isaiah 50:6-7. If there was any place in the Bible that will bolster your courage it will be this passage. He says in verse 6:

I gave my back to the smiters and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting” (talking about the crucifixion).

Verse seven, “***For the Lord God will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed”.*** **That is courage!**

Set your face like a flint against the opposition when you stand for the truth. Through your determination and your loyalty to the word of God, nothing stops you. Right now, you are basically protected from it all as you grow, but there is coming a time when you are going to have to face it, just like Christ did. **It is going to take determination, and loyalty. It’s going to take courage.** Welcome to the ministry!

b.) Christ's courage and how it applies to me.

He is strong for me when I can't be strong for myself. This is the book of Psalms. When you and I are strong, when the word of God is what we have, then you are going to encounter people who are going through some tough times.

This is where Romans 15:1 says ye that are spiritual, you need to be strong for those that are weak. You need to be there for others; where your strength wraps around their weakness.

Romans 15:1 We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.

We get that from what Christ has given to us. You don't have it just because you are that kind of person. You have it because God's strength has infected you and your courage is there for others.

You are going to find that in the ministry when dealing with people there will be some real tragedies out there among God's people. You would think that God's people wouldn't have the same problems that the world does, but they do.

There are husbands who will leave their wives and their family and just walk out on them. They will find some other gal or find something else that they want to do, and they will just leave. They will leave their wife and kids because it is all about them. They never stop and look at the damage. All they see is what they want to do and what they want out of life. They don't look back and see the collateral damage that happens to your kids, your wife, and the people that looked up to you. The kids sometimes bear those scars for a long time. They don't know how to handle the anger, so it turns to bitterness. Many times, they don't get what they need. And as much as they hate the kind of father they had; they wind up marrying somebody just like their father. **When they don't have the courage to stand for themselves, you stand with them.**

I have seen wives that have lost their husband or husbands that have lost their wives, even the death of a child. **There are things in this life no matter how much we love God and believe in the word of God; the devil knows the weakness of every one of us. He will use something to sap the strength out of the strongest child of God and that is where you that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak and not to please ourselves.** It is just that simple. The hard times of life. Welcome to the ministry!

4.) Christ's Character Quality – Honor

This is so important! **The greatest characteristic that Christ had is his honor and that should be our greatest characteristic.** In its simplest form, Christ is a man of his word. You got a book in front of you today that is his word, and he is a man of that word. The Bible says in Titus 1:2:

"In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began".

He is a man of his word. He has honor and there is no greater concept of honor than being honest in your dealings when you give your word to people. He will always have your back. **He will always be there for you when you can't be there for yourself. His word is his bond.**

Last week I showed you that honor is simply the adherence to what is right. **Our honor like Christ's should be built on the absolute principles of the word of God.** The honor of his word and the honor of our word. Not picking and choosing out of the Bible what we want to accomplish. Not what our private personal agenda is, but your word is your bond. That honor will define your character, it will define your honor and it will define who you really are. Standing behind what you say just like Christ does. Not hiding behind what you said. **Know this, all deception will be the absence of honor.** It is no wonder God's people's kids are the way they are today. As the saying goes, the apple never falls far from the tree. **Honor is the key.**

IV. Psalms 4:1-3

There will be a number of things in Psalms 4 that we can learn here and build into what I just said. This is important both doctrinally and inspirationally.

Psalms 4:1 Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness: thou hast enlarged me [when I was] in distress; have mercy upon me, and hear my prayer.

Verse 2 *O ye sons of men, how long [will ye turn] my glory into shame? [how long] will ye love vanity, [and] seek after leasing? Selah.*

Verse 3 *But know that the LORD hath set apart him that is godly for himself: the LORD will hear when I call unto him.*

I want to show you some things doctrinally first. This is another Psalm of David doctrinally. If you want to put a note by Psalms 4 it will fit in with 2 Thessalonians 2:3-12 and Matthew 24. It will deal with the abomination of desolations (Daniel chapter 8 and 11). It's a time when the antichrist begins to pivot and go after the nation of Israel, typified by David and Absalom (type of antichrist).

1.) Old Testament Salvation Verses New Testament Salvation

The next thing I want you to see (this will require a trained eye) is the **difference between salvation in the Old Testament and salvation in the New Testament**. Notice in verse 1 he is saying "*Hear me when I call O God of my righteousness*". David is calling on God on behalf of his own righteousness. Yet the Bible says in Isaiah 64:6 that all our righteousness is as filthy rags in the sight of God. How could he do that? **There isn't a man or a woman in the church age that can call upon God in your own righteousness.** Because our righteousness is filthy rags in the sight of God.

Isaiah 64:6 But we are all as an unclean [thing], and all our righteousnesses [are] as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

When I got saved God gave me his righteousness (Romans chapters 4-6) and then he keeps it for me. But in the Old Testament a man had to keep the law to keep his own righteousness.

You will see this in Ezekiel 3:20 and Ezekiel 18:21. You will see it in Habakkuk 2:4 how a man in the Old Testament could have righteousness and then lose that righteousness. In the Old Testament it is very clear that a man has to maintain his own righteousness by the law of God.

In Romans 1:17 where Paul says, “the just shall live by faith”. Go back to Habakkuk 2:4 and it says “the just shall live by his faith the man’s faith. It’s the difference between God dealing with the Old Testament Jew without grace and God dealing with the church with grace. That is why in Revelation 14:12 they are told to keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus Christ. It takes both and that is just the way it works.

2.) When in Distress - God Will Enlarge You Spiritually

The next thing in verse one that I want you to see is when you are in distress and your enemies are after you God will enlarge you. That means he will enlarge you spiritually. He will make you better, not bigger. Your enemies go after you, they persecute you, but God sustains you. How does he sustain you? Through his blessings. How does he bless you? He enlarges you; he makes you better through a growth experience. Like I showed you last week in Hebrews 5, he exercises your senses through what you go through. He will enlarge you when you go to the word of God and learn how to handle yourself with what you are going through. He will enlarge you through the blessings of God that he will give you to offset the adversity. So many times, we get so focused on the adversity that we miss the enlarging part.

A.) God Enlarges Job thru his Adversity

God will sustain us through enlarging us spiritually speaking. Job 42:10 is a great picture of this. We all know that Job went through tremendous times. He experienced in seven days what nobody will ever experience in a lifetime. He loses everything he has. He loses his health, his family, everything. He should have lost his wife, but he didn’t. She looks at him in a time of his greatest need and her answer was curse God and die. Everybody turned against him. Did you ever notice that at the end of his life, he got back double everything that he lost? **Do you know what God did through the adversity? God enlarged him. Job was a better man after what he went through than he was before.** Why? Because God enlarged him. In the midst of your trouble as God sustains you, he will enlarge you.

B.) How God Enlarges Us thru our Adversity

In Psalms 119:32 it says **God will enlarge your heart.** That means as you go through something he gives you understanding. He allows you to see what is really going on and he will use that to enlarge your heart, to get you closer to him.

In 1 Samuel 2:1 it says that **God will enlarge your mouth.** Not only will he enlarge your heart and give you understanding and make you closer to him, but he will enlarge your mouth. He will tell you what to say to your adversaries.

In 2 Samuel 22:37 it says **God will enlarge your steps.** Not only will he enlarge your heart to give you understanding and get you closer to him; he will enlarge your mouth so that you know what to say, and he will also enlarge your steps. That is insight and perspective, so you don’t get

snared in something. The Bible says the steps of a good man are ordered from the Lord. The Bible says the word of God shall be a light unto my path and he'll direct you everywhere you go.

In 2 Corinthians 6:13 it says **God will enlarge your family**. Your kids need to know how to deal with their own adversity by watching how you deal with yours. The problem is that most parents cause so much adversity in their own families with their kids, that the kids don't see anything but the parents' stupidity. That is a shame because the Bible says that he will enlarge your family. When you lead by example, not only in the ministry but in your family, your family learns and grows through the adversity that you all go through. When a dad leaves the family and finds some little chick someplace and just dumps the wife and kids. The kids can become very angry and bitter. I understand that and rightly so.

But bitterness has no place in a child of God's life. Bitterness comes because we don't know how to handle what we are going through. Many times, when you are in the ministry you are going to get clobbered at some point. If you have kids old enough to understand, they see what happens to mom and dad. If mom and dad don't handle it the right way, they grow up being bitter toward the ministry. You miss the fact that God wants to enlarge your family. He wants them to learn through the experience of adversity just like he wants us to learn through the experience of adversity.

As you grow through all of this, God enlarges your heart and enlarges your mouth, then enlarges your steps, and then he enlarges your family.

2 Corinthians 10:15 says **God uses you to enlarge others**. You take what you have learned by what you go through to help other people get through what they must go through.

As you grow through this (2 Corinthians 10:5) **you help enlarge others to make them better**. You help them see things that they couldn't see before. Whether it's their own personal life or their marriage or their kids. Whether its their standing on the threshold of being used of God. And once you are through the sustaining power of God, once God enlarges your heart and enlarges your mouth, enlarges your steps, enlarges your family, then you enlarge others. As the old worldly expression says, you become bigger than life. Because God has enlarged you.

V. Psalms 4:2

Psalms 4:2 *O ye sons of men, how long [will ye turn] my glory into shame? [how long] will ye love vanity, [and] seek after leasing? Selah.*

When they come after you **there are three things** that you need to know from a practical standpoint.

1.) People Will Discredit What God is Doing in Your Life

The first thing he says "*O ye sons of men, how long will ye turn my glory into shame?*" What does that mean? It means there are people out there that want to make you look bad to make themselves look good. They will discredit what God has done in your life or within your ministry or within your family because God has done absolutely nothing with them. People can't

stand not being used of God because they want the notoriety that they think comes with it. But they don't want to pay the price to get it. So, they are always stealing it from somebody else.

2.) Men Love Vanity

The second thing is they love vanity. *"how long will yet love vanity"*. We got the idea today that getting a degree makes you smarter or better. Let me clarify that. On your job it may require you to have a degree. If you are a doctor you need to go to a medical school.

If you are a nurse, yes, I don't want you putting a tube down my throat if you don't know what you are doing. But when it comes to God, forget it.

I listened to a message a while back. This guy must have said three or four times throughout his message telling everybody how many degrees he had and how smart he was.

In Psalms 62:9 it says *Surely men of low degree [are] vanity, [and] men of high degree [are] a lie: to be laid in the balance, they [are] altogether [lighter] than vanity.*

In other words, they are worthless. A low degree somebody says I'm going to Bible college to get my associate or my bachelor's degree. Somebody said I am going to seminary to become a doctor a PhD. The Bible tells you that men of low degree are vanity and men of high degree are a lie. You know what they do with that? They find a translation that doesn't say it that way.

There is nothing about you when it comes to God and your relationship with Him that higher education (past sixth grade English) is going to cut you any slack with God. But that is the world we live in today. Men love vanity and they love saying I got this degree and that degree. It gives you the impression that they really know more about the Bible than you do. Yet I would put any one of you up against those guys.

3.) Men "Seek After Leasing"

The third thing he says, "and seek after leasing?" Leasing is an old English word that means lying. We all encounter liars. We've all lied at some point in our life. People lie for three reasons. When you deal with people you will see this.

1. People lie because they are scared.
2. People lie to set up a deception for their own benefit.
3. People lie to slander or hurt someone because of their own wickedness.

In all three cases you will not find any honor anywhere.

VI. Psalms 4:3

Verse 3 *But know that the LORD hath set apart him that is godly for himself: the LORD will hear when I call unto him.*

If you didn't hear anything else that I said today, then don't go home without this concept. The doctrine of sanctification means that when you got saved God set us apart from the world. You are a new creature in Christ Jesus, old things have passed away all things now become new. But

this is something different. This is how God looks at us as individuals not as a body or a group in Christianity. This verse says that **God has set each of us apart for himself**. This is the personal relationship that we hear so much about, but most never have it. God setting me apart because he has something just for me to do. So, he sets me apart from the world. That happened at salvation. He sets me apart for himself.

The greatest verse I could give you on this to show you this in action would be Romans 1:1 where Paul says:

Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called [to be] an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God,

You want to **see three things in this verse**. Here lies the answer to our being set apart unto him. God set Paul apart for himself. Paul says a servant of Jesus Christ called to be an apostle separated unto the gospel of God. Here is how it works for you and me with these three things.

1.) Called to be a Servant - My Attitude Toward God, WOG and Ministry

Notice the word “servant”. You are told in Ephesians 3:1 that you are a prisoner of Jesus Christ if you are a Christian. You are told in 1 Corinthians 6:20 that you have been bought with a price. So, you are basically a bond slave. Has anybody ever seen a bond slave in any part of history that had a PhD or a doctor’s degree? You are a slave; you have no rights or privileges. As a servant of Jesus Christ, he controls every aspect of your life. But your attitude is one of a servant.

2.) Called to be an apostle.

Where servant is your attitude, called to be an apostle is your purpose in life with God. For me, my calling is to Pastor. Your calling will come in time. Once you develop the attitude of a servant and you get in a New Testament church that understands building people; in time God will give you the right calling. But there is no calling outside his church (book of Ephesians).

3.) Separated unto the gospel of God.

When you got saved you got separated from the world. As you grow, you become a servant, then God reveals to you his calling (1 Samuel 3). It is the Lord that sets you apart. You get your attitude of a servant; you get your calling and then he separates you unto himself. It is an incredible concept, separated from something to something. God will separate you to something, the gospel. Life of a Christian is simple, separated from something (world) and then separated to something (gospel) the rest of your life. Paul is a great example. God separated Paul unto himself. God gave Paul things that he never gave anybody else in all the Bible. Paul was called to carry the gospel to the world. The gospel of the grace of God. He was separated unto God for that calling.

God has a calling for everyone of you (if you are saved), that he wants to separate you unto him, in time. It became so real to Paul and such a ministry. Paul took the gospel of the grace of God. The gospel that God gave to every man. You know what Paul said? He called it “my gospel”. It wasn’t Paul’s gospel. How arrogant! No, he wasn’t arrogant. Paul understood that

he was separated unto that gospel, and he became one with that gospel in every sense of the word. It was God's gospel from heaven, but it was Paul's gospel on this earth. He was separated unto the gospel of God.

So, we see three areas that are in a man or woman's life: a servant, a calling and now separated from the world that will separate you to the gospel of God. God has separated the godly, you and me unto himself for what he wants us to do.

Two Separations: Separated at Salvation (from the World), Separated unto God (Gospel)

All of God's people who get saved get separated from the world. How many of them ever get separated unto God? Everything in the Bible has two parts. God gave you the Bible, but how many people read it? God saved you by the gospel, but how many people go tell somebody else about it? When you got saved you got separated from the world, but most of God's people never get separated to anything except themselves. Then life becomes about what they want to do, and they never get set apart unto God. But they are separated unto themselves, separated from the Bible in time. Now, it is no longer about God, and it ends up being all about us.

So, we are saved, but not a servant. We get the wrong attitude, we get no calling, so we do nothing. There is no warfare, no ministry unto God, no personal separation unto him, based on the general doctrine of separation the day you got saved from the world. **He didn't save us just to let us exist, he didn't save us so we could go to church whenever you wanted. He didn't save us so we could get a Bible and read it whenever we felt like it. He didn't save any of us so we could just do whatever we wanted to do.** He has something he wants you to do, and he puts you in a church that can help you accomplish that. But the decision is yours. He wants to sustain you. There is no reason to fear anything that is out there.

4.) Your Prayer Life -A Soldier's Direct Line to Your Commander

The last part of verse three. *"The Lord will hear when I call unto him"*.

Notice in this verse he is not doing what most Christians do today. They make prayer some kind of "Woo-hoo" spiritual thing!! I want you to notice that he is not asking God for anything. He is not saying, please God hear my prayer. He is not asking the Lord to hear him. **The real soldier with a right calling who are separated to God knows he has 24/7 access to God.** He doesn't ask God to do anything. He already has the promise that he knows what God is going to do.

It's not about just sitting around and singing some songs and having prayer time. It's about you understanding prayers are our open line. **The real soldier prays without ceasing** (Pray without ceasing, 1 Thessalonians 5:17). There are so many examples in the Bible of the real soldier of Christ who is in the middle of the battle, yet he and God are in constant communication. The real prayer of the real warrior is instant. Pray without ceasing. As a warrior, as a soldier with a calling that is separated unto God, you have the 24/7 access to God.

When you are really set apart unto him you know as the Bible says in 1 John 5:14-15 that this is the **confidence that we have in him** that he is going to hear my prayer and answer it. Just like

in Psalms 4, the Bible says that he hears the petitions that we desire of him. You are a warrior in the battle. You are in the middle of the fight. They are coming over the north wall. You got everything coming at you and what you do is just rely on the principles and promises that God has given you. You can call up the headquarters in the middle of the battle and get what you need. You are just that tight when you are separated unto him.

VII. Summary

These are the great lessons out of Psalms 4. This is how you keep standing. When they try to turn your glory into shame through vanity, they will attack you. When they lie about you (leasing). As I said earlier, they got to get to him before they can get to you. God sustains you and you always have the confidence that they don't have. You can build anything that God has called you to do. Because that is your calling, the calling God gave to you.

The same four-character qualities that Christ has are what we need to have in our Christian life. Everybody in your life needs to see those four-character qualities.

Hey, I love you guys and I am here for you. This church is here for you. Everything we do is built for your growth and for your family! **Welcome to the ministry!**