

The Heart of Worship

Session 2

January 26, 2025

The Inspiration for Worship

Session Passages: Psalm 25:4-15

Psalm 25:4-7

Connection to the Point. When we consider the compassion and faithful love of God, we are moved to worship Him.

Background for Psalm 25. According to the superscription, Psalm 25 is “of David.” “Of” has a wide variety of possible meanings—“belonging to,” “for,” “about,” “on behalf of,” “to,” or “by.” It also can indicate a psalm is messianic. Most all of the psalms in Book 1 (Pss. 1–41) carry this designation. No further historical background is indicated, and the contents of the psalm are general enough to reflect any number of times in David’s life. This is one of nine acrostic psalms (9; 10; 25; 34; 37; 111; 112; 119; 145) that follow the order of the Hebrew alphabet.

Make your ways known to me Show me your ways Shew me thy ways (v. 4). Similar to the prayer of Moses in Exodus 33:13, David repeated that plea but with his own personal emphasis in verses 4-5—*”makeshowshew me . . . teach me . . . guidelead me.”*

Your Thy ways . . . your thy paths (v. 4). David desperately desired to learn God’s *ways* and *paths*. These words often occur in the wisdom literature and refer to God’s will and instruction for life. *Way(s)* occurs repeatedly in verses 4,8,9, and 12.

Make . . . known Show Shew (v. 4). This is one of four terms David used concerning the Lord’s instruction and guidance. Each appears two or more times in the psalm, indicating the intensity of David’s need for the Lord’s guidance.

Lord (v. 4). The covenant name for God—Yahweh.

Teach me (v. 4.) The second term David used concerning the Lord’s ways. As *make . . . knownshowshew*, *teach me* is an imperative, indicating the urgency of his petition. The request is for more than conceptual knowledge; it is a plea for instruction that affects life.

GuideLead me (v. 5). The third verb concerning the Lord’s ways, it is related to the noun *ways* (v. 4). It too is an imperative and suggests a forward direction. It occurs again in verse 9 (“leadsguide”). God makes known His ways to give us guidance. In David’s case, He not only needed to know God’s ways (v. 4), he needed guidance to walk in them (v. 5).

In your thy truth (v. 5). David desired to know and live by God’s ways, first because they are *truth*. The Hebrew word was used of reliability and faithfulness, but also refers to truth in the objective sense—God’s instruction, laws, decrees, and commandments—as in Psalm 19:9.

You are Thou art the God of my salvation You are God my Savior (v. 5). The second reason David desired to know and live by God’s ways—God was his Savior. The salvation or deliverance David referred to could have been a physical deliverance from enemies or a spiritual experience—or both. Either way, it was not only a past experience for David, it was a present and future anticipation.

I wait for you My hope is in you On thee do I wait (v. 5). David's third reason to know and live by God's ways. In verse 3 he stated, "No one who waits for you will be disgraced No one who hopes in you will ever be put to shame Let none that wait on thee be ashamed." or put to shame.

Remember (v. 6). *Remember* does not merely refer to recollection, but to action—David wanted God to act in accordance with His "compassion mercy mercies" and "faithful love loving kindnesses." David used *remember* twice in making positive requests to the Lord (vv. 6, 7b).

Compassion Mercy Mercies (v. 6). This term carries the thought of tender feelings for a helpless or dependent person and is related to the Hebrew word for "womb," implying maternal instincts. It is also used of the feelings for brothers from the same mother, the same womb. This Hebrew word can also be rendered "mercy compassion."

Faithful love Love Loving kindness (v. 6). This phraseword represents the important Hebrew term *hesed*, with so many shades of meaning no one English word adequately expresses its variety—"loving kindness," "steadfast love," "mercy," "grace," "loyalty," "loyal love," and "love" to list a few. Most importantly, *hesed* is used to describe God's nature. *Hesed* goes to the heart of God's character. In Exodus 34:6-7 God reveals His nature to Moses and the Israelites. This noun is used in reference to the inexhaustible quality of the Lord's faithfulness to His covenant and His covenant people. Repeatedly Scripture states the *hesed* of the Lord never ceases (Lam. 3:22) or that His *hesed* endures forever (1 Chron. 16:34; 2 Chron. 20:21; Ezra 3:11). Indeed, in Psalm 136 the second line of all twenty-six verses affirms this truth over and over again. It occurs 129 times in 127 verses in Psalms. In Daniel's great prayer he affirmed the Lord keeps His covenant *hesed* with those who love Him and observe His commandments (Dan. 9:4). When God promised David his descendant would reign on an eternal throne, God's promise was that He would never remove His *hesed* (2 Sam. 7:12-15). No wonder David appealed repeatedly to the Lord's *hesed* in Psalm 25 (vv. 6, 7, 10). David prayed for God's *faithful love loving kindnesses* because he knew this is the type of God the Lord is. *Compassion Mercy Mercies* and *faithful love loving kindnesses* are in the plural, thus implying both an abundance of these qualities and that they are demonstrated repeatedly.

From Ever antiquity of old (v. 6). Or "from of old." This possibly refers to God's revelation in the Mosaic covenant since that episode seems to be in the background of David's thoughts. Or it could mean "from everlasting," stressing God's eternal existence (Pss. 90:2; 93:2). By appealing to the Lord's antiquity *antiquity*, David was appealing to His unchangeableness (Mal. 3:6).

Do not rRemember not (v. 7). In verses 6 and 7b David petitioned God to *remember*. Here he asked God to not remember! David did not want God to remember "the sins of my youth." David had petitioned the Lord to direct him in the Lord's ways (vv. 4-5), but he acknowledged he had not always followed those ways. David thus confessed his past failures and prayed for forgiveness.

Sins (v. 7). Meaning "missing the mark," it refers to human frailty, falling short, or failing to measure up. David did not state what his sins were. Though he did not identify or describe them, their memory, and the guilt he carried from them, weighed heavily on his heart.

My youth (v. 7). David contrasted his *youth* with God's "from ever antiquity of old" (v. 6). David's sins as a youth were perhaps before he knew better—that's why he referred to them as "missing the mark" as opposed to his later adult "rebellion rebellious way transgressions" (v. 7) and "iniquity" (v. 11). Yet David carried with him the memory of such early misdeeds from long ago.

Acts of rebellion**Rebellious ways****Transgressions** (v. 7). That is, deliberate offenses, much more serious sins than those of David's youth. For these adult sins of aggression for which there was no excuse, David also needed forgiveness. David referred to his failures as being of the past, implying he had turned from them and desired to live according to the Lord's way and not follow a sinful path.

In keeping with your faithful love . . . your goodness**According to your love . . . you . . . are good****According to thy mercy . . . thy goodness' sake** (v. 7). As in verses 6 and 10, David based his request for forgiveness on God's *hesed* (see commentary on "Faithful love Love Loving kindness," v. 6) and now also on His being *goodness*. Goodness here is an attribute of God. Again David perhaps had in mind the episode of Moses on the mountain. When Moses asked to see God's glory, he was given a revelation of God's goodness (Ex. 33:18-19; Ps. 27:13).

Remember thou me (v. 7). At the beginning of the verse David asked God not to remember his sins; now he asked God to *remember* him, the sinner. As in verse 6, David asked the Lord to remember him in a positive way, here *in keeping with your faithful love* and because of *your goodness according to your love* and because *you . . . are good according to thy mercy* and because of *thy goodness' sake*.

Psalm 25:8-11

Connection to the Point. When we consider the goodness and forgiveness of God, we are moved to worship Him.

Good and upright (v. 8). *Good* refers to the Lord's essence—it is what He is in and of Himself. The Lord's goodness is because he is *upright*. *Upright* also relates to the Lord's essence. Ironically, it is because David was not upright that he recognized and appealed to God's uprightness to forgive his own lack of uprightness! Because God is *upright*, He could not ignore David's sins, but because He is *good*, He could forgive David's sins.

Therefore he shows sinners the way he instructs sinners in his ways will he teach sinners in the way (v. 8). Since the Lord is *good and upright*, therefore *the his ways* that He *shows instructs will . . . teach sinners* will be the same—good and upright. *Shows Instructs Will . . . teach*, or "instructs," is the fourth term David used concerning the Lord's ways (see vv. 4-5 for the first three). From this verb comes the word *torah*, meaning instruction and frequently applied to the first five books of the Old Testament. This phrase pictures not only God as the teacher (v. 10) but *sinners* as students. David repeats the thought in verse 12 and in Psalm 32:8.

The humble meek (v. 9). The word may also be rendered "the meek humble." They are those who experience help, guidance, and forgiveness from the Lord. The word derives from a root meaning to bend or bow down, and indicates those who have been bent over by affliction. *The humble meek* often are contrasted with the proud, mockers, and oppressors in the prophets and in the wisdom literature (see, for example, Prov. 3:34). This is why the Bible constantly urges people to humble themselves before the Lord. When one is humble, it is easier to be open to listen to God. The humble will allow Him to guide them (Prov. 15:33).

What is right In judgment (v. 9). This refers to what is right in itself. The Lord leads those who will travel life in His paths to make right decisions and correct judgments and act accordingly.

All the Lord's ways All the ways paths of the Lord (v. 10). *All* stresses that David did not have in mind just some of them.

Keep (v. 10). Literally to guard or keep watch, thus follow or live by. Those who claim to believe in the Lord need to live by His revealed truth, the total covenant obligations and requirements He imposes on them.

Covenant and decrees**Demands of his covenant****Covenant and . . . testimonies** (v. 10). David has been using covenant language—*hesed* (vv. 6,7,10)—but now he twice mentions the *covenant* directly (vv. 10,14) and God’s *decrees**demandstestimonies*. These are the *decrees**demandstestimonies* laid out in God’s *covenant*. This recalls Exodus 34:6-10.

For the sake of your name**For thy name’s sake** (v. 11). David asked God’s forgiveness not based on anything in him, but in light of God’s own reputation—His *name’s sake* (Ezek. 20:9,14,22)—in light of God’s own self-interest, and in accord with God’s own nature.

Forgive my**Pardon mine iniquity** (v. 11). Mentioning keeping God’s covenant requirements and decrees in verse 10 raised the question as to whether there is hope for one who had broken them. Yes, David affirmed, there is forgiveness, but only because of God’s mercy and for the *sake* of God’s name. *Forgive**Pardon* is not the usual Hebrew word for forgiveness, which is used in verse 18 and whose base meaning is to bear or carry. Here, for the first time in Psalms, this Hebrew word is used with this meaning of pardon, forgive, or spare and becomes a technical term for forgiveness. It is always used with the Lord as its subject. Forgiveness also was associated with God’s revelation to Moses in Exodus 34:7. God’s forgiveness often is referred to as based on His compassion (see Ps. 51:1 and Micah 7:18-19). It involves not only sin’s forgiveness but its removal.

Immense**Great** (v. 11). Whatever David’s iniquity that he asked God to forgive—perhaps referring to his adultery with Bathsheba and his murder of her husband, Uriah the Hittite—it was *immense**great*. This word shows David was aware of the magnitude of his past sins against the uprightness of God. Obviously, David was referring to more than his youthful sins of verse 7!

Psalm 25:12-15

Connection to the Point. When we consider the counsel and guidance of God, we are moved to worship Him.

Who is this person**Who, then, are those****What man is he** (v. 12). David asked an open-ended, rhetorical question meaning the focus now is on any person who meets the requirement.

Fearseth the Lord (v. 12). *Fearseth* does not refer to an emotion that causes one to hide in terror from the Lord. Here it is not the terror of God’s judgment. Rather, this fear derives from the Lord’s faithful love. Godly fear, or the fear of the Lord, causes one to heed His instruction. This fear involves revering and reverencing as well. David referred to it again in verse 14.

He will show him the way**He will instruct them in the ways****Him shall he teach in the way** (v. 12). *Will show**instruct**Shall . . . teach* is the same as in verse 8; and *the ways* is the same as in verses 4,8,9.

He**They should****shall choose** (v. 12). The emphasis falls on choice. The Lord will show those who fear Him the way they should choose. He will show them the best way—but they must *choose* whether to follow it or not. Some interpreters follow the Septuagint (Greek translation of the Old Testament) and understand the verse to mean the Lord will show the way He chooses for those who fear Him. This would put the choosing of the way on the Lord rather than on the forgiven sinner.

LiveSpendDwell (v. 13). Literally, “pass the night,” but here it is used in an extended sense, as in Psalm 91:1 (“dwellwill restshall abide”), and thus means “dwell” or “spend time in.”

A good lifeProsperityAt ease (v. 13). Those who choose to follow the Lord’s ways prosper—they will live a *good lifein prosperityat ease*. Literally the Hebrew reads “live in good,” thus in prosperity. From a biblical perspective, the *good life* good life is everything that enhances and enriches life, as God would have us live it.

HisTheir descendants will inherit the landHis seed shall inherit the earth (v. 13). David repeated God’s promise to Abraham in Genesis 15:7 and to Israel (Ex. 20:12; Deut. 4:1,40). The implication is not that David’s descendants would become large real estate holders, but rather that God’s goodness extends to the next generations (Ex. 34:7).

Inherit (v. 13). Also meaning “possess,” the word implies a long-term blessing. When one lives for the Lord, it can have lasting impact on future generations.

Secret counselConfides (v. 14). The term indicates close and intimate communion with God. God reveals not only His ways to those who honor Him in their lives, but He reveals His heart to them as well. God confides in them His most intimate thoughts. They become “friends” of God (see John 15:15). This is a privileged relationship. For other examples of the Lord revealing His secret counsel, see Genesis 18:17 and Amos 3:7.

ForIn those who fear himWith them that fear him (v. 14). Verse 14 is almost a repetition of verse 12. As in verse 12, *fear* goes beyond being afraid and includes reverence and adoration. Such reverential fear of the Lord involves obedience to Him.

He reveals his covenant to themHe makes his covenant known to themHe will shew them his covenant (v. 14). The verb literally is “makes them to know,” and also appears in verse 4. That God reveals *his covenant* to those who fear Him indicates they receive a fuller, deeper meaning.

MyMine eyes (v. 15). With the personal pronoun *mymine*, David resumed the use of the first person from verses 1-7. It suggests David’s personal investment in his words. He was a faithful follower of the Lord. *Eyes* refers to David’s spiritual focus, his commitment to the Lord, and to where he would look for his help and provision. David learned that keeping his eyes on the Lord would prevent him from falling into hidden traps. And as David’s eyes looked to the Lord, he wanted the Lord to look at him (vv. 16-21).

He willshall pullreleasepluck (v. 15).The same word appears in verse 17 rendered “bringfree.” David needed deliverance and here affirmed that God *willshall pullreleasepluck* him out of whatever trap or entanglement he was in—either because of his enemies or because of his own doing. David used this imagery again in Psalm 31:4 of his situation, and ironically in Psalm 9:15 of those who fall into their own trap, into the very net they had set for others.

The netsnare (v. 15). A trap for David’s **feet**. It was designed to snag the unwary and cause them to stumble.