

**Psalm 18:20–30**

Listen to audio of this lesson at [bit.ly/210519psa18](https://bit.ly/210519psa18) (or scan the QR code)



- |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>20 The LORD rewarded me according to my righteousness;<br/>According to the cleanness of my hands<br/>He has recompensed me.</p> <p>21 For I have kept the ways of the LORD,<br/>And have not wickedly departed from my God.</p> <p>22 For all His judgments were before me,<br/>And I did not put away His statutes from me.</p> <p>23 I was also blameless before Him,<br/>And I kept myself from my iniquity.</p> <p>24 Therefore the LORD has recompensed me according to my<br/>righteousness,<br/>According to the cleanness of my hands in His sight.</p> | <p>25 With the merciful You will show Yourself merciful;<br/>With a blameless man You will show Yourself blameless;</p> <p>26 With the pure You will show Yourself pure;<br/>And with the devious You will show Yourself shrewd.</p> <p>27 For You will save the humble people,<br/>But will bring down haughty looks.</p> <p>28 For You will light my lamp;<br/>The LORD my God will enlighten my darkness.</p> <p>29 For by You I can run against a troop,<br/>By my God I can leap over a wall.</p> <p>30 As for God, His way is perfect;<br/>The word of the LORD is proven;<br/>He is a shield to all who trust in Him.</p> |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

**He rewards us according to our righteousness, v20–24.**

There are three ways that this is true for David and for us.

First and foremost, it is true of Christ Himself. He was, of course, also rewarded according to our sin (2Cor 5:21a). But when He had wiped out all of our guilt, there was still His spotless righteousness! And He was rewarded in kind (v20a, 24a)

His hands were perfectly clean (v20b–c, 24b), never having been moved by anything less than full love for God, and never in anything less than perfect accordance with God’s law.

He perfectly kept the ways of Yahweh (v21), which for Him included the demand that He suffer and die, and on the third day rise again.

He preferred God’s Word to bread, so that it was always there to direct His action as a statute (v22).

He lived out His blamelessness not only before men, but especially for the eyes of His Father (v23a). As the Lamb to be sacrificed and the Priest Who would offer the sacrifice, He kept spotless all His life (v23b)

Second, Christ Himself is our righteousness; not the righteousness of a mere man, as if He had deposited just enough into each of our accounts, but the righteousness of God Himself (2Cor 5:31b), perfectly expressed in each of His natures in the way appropriate to that nature. So, when the Lord considers us, He does so according to Christ.

Third, as the Spirit conforms us to Christ’s image, the reality of our union to Him is more and more displayed, and the justness of God’s rewarding us is more and more displayed. Though the reward for our deeds is always by grace, for Christ’s sake, and not merited by the deeds themselves; yet, there is an accord between what He is working in us, and what Christ has worked for us, so that God’s justice in blessing us is glorified by the accord that it has with our good works.

**So we trust Him according to His perfect justness, v25–30.**

All three ways above apply to our being merciful, blameless, pure, or humble. But it is the justness of God that is on display here. For, it notes that He is also shrewd with the devious (v26a), and brings down haughty looks (v27b).

The wondrously mighty God of the first 19 verses has guaranteed us His favorable response! Since we know that He has provided for us a perfect righteousness, and we know that He Himself is perfectly just, we may have complete confidence, regardless of what He gives us to do:

“You will light my lamp” (v28). David was often under threat to have his lamp put out, and sometimes in literal near-darkness while on the run. But, he was confident that Yahweh would do as He promised.

“By You I can run through a troop” (v29a). It didn’t matter who was against him, if Yahweh was for him.

“By my God I can leap over a wall” (v29b). We do not know of a literal time that David did this, but we must not be quick to call this (or v34b, etc.) poetic hyperbole. If those were the ways that the Lord decided to deliver David, then David could have done those things.

v30a pulls God’s justness of vv25–27 forward.

v30b reminds us that this God has made promises that cannot fail.

v30c affirms for all of us what vv28–29 expressed for David: the Lord is a sure shield for all who trust in Him.

---

**(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording referenced above)**

---

Psalm 18 you remember. Last week we had the first 19 verses and the marvelous response of almighty God in heaven when we cry out to him. And how our cries go all the way up. And He has ordained to move his hand by our voice it's.

Quite marvelous. So we come to the next 11 verses verses 20 through 30 this evening and the first four verses which you can see in the left hand column if you picked up one of the sheets is especially about the Lord rewarding us according to our righteousness. And then the last seven verses sorry the first five verses in the last six the last six verses.

Are pointing out the just-ness how just God is. And how because he has given us a perfect righteousness that this gives us perfect confidence in him so your doctrine of justification is very important for understanding these 11 verses on confidence in prayer which means doctrine just means teaching or when we say doctrine we usually mean theology.

And justification is right standing with God righteous or right standing with God. Who says verses 20 through 30. He always rewarded me according to my righteousness. According to the cleanness of my hands he is recompensed to me. For I have kept the ways of Yahweh and have not wickedly departed from my God for all his judgments were before me and I did not put away his statutes from me.

I was also blameless before him. And I kept myself from iniquity from my iniquity. Therefore you always recommend to me according to my righteousness. According to the cleanness of my hands and his sight. With the merciful, you will show yourself merciful. With a blameless man, you will show yourself blameless.

With the pure, you will show yourself pure. The devious. You will show yourself shrewd. For you will save the humble people. But will bring down what he looks. For you will like my lamp. Yahweh my God will enlighten my darkness. For by you I can run against a troop.

By my God, I can leap over a wall. As for God his way is perfect. The Word of Yahweh is proven. He is a shield. To all who trust in him. So far the reading of God's Word. So in the first five verses there Yahweh rewarded me according to my righteousness according to the cleanness of my hands at the beginning and then at the end therefore you always recompense to me, according to my righteousness according to the cleanness of my hands in his sight and so by saying the same thing at the beginning of the section and at the end of the section it's one of the ways that Hebrew poetry and sometimes even Hebrew narrative her Hebrew history.

Lets you know that you have a full unit that that section is meant to be taken all together by beginning and ending it the same way and it often hints at. What's called a key asm but I'm not sure that we have one here it's best not to force those things in Hebrew poetry.

You'll notice this sometimes is that the beading beginning in the end of a section it'll make kind of the introductory point and the concluding point but then the next point you'll also have second to last or some similarity between the two of them and you may have two or three or even more levels, but then right.

In the middle you'll have the main thing and so it'll build from that an introduction to the main thing in the middle and then it'll build back from the main thing to the conclusion. The danger for 21st century English speakers is to come to Hebrew poetry into see something at the beginning and at the end and decide that everything is as according to that structure.

It's safer to to win its clearly that way to take that strongly and when it's not clearly that way then not to. Try to make. A big deal out of whatever happens to be that middle that midpoint between the beginning and the end.

So here he begins and ends with the only rewarded me according to my righteousness according to the cleanness of my hands who would want to be paid back? According to their righteousness or according to the cleanness of their hands. I mean think about what we have just read about David doing in second.

Samuel chapters, 11 and 12. And think about God's telling David that because he's a man of war in a man of blood he's literally got blood on his hands and most of it justly.

Would any of us want to be rewarded according to the cleanness of our hands? Well, there is one. Who is glad to be rewarded according to his righteousness and the cleanness of his hands, whom do you think that is children? It's the Lord Jesus isn't it perfectly righteous perfectly clean hands.

And so as usual with many of this homes and sometimes the Lord Jesus had to learn the Psalms in union with us thinking of himself as as our High Priest and our representative because he had no sin of his own and a lot of the Psalms talk about how sin is dealt with and so he would have to understand those Psalm.

By thinking about us. But more often than that, we have to understand the Psalms by thinking about him because there are a lot of things at the Psalm say about us that could only be true because they're true of Christ and if you have faith in him Christ is yours and the the way this all is true for Christ then becomes a great encouragement for you.

So this was true about Christ. His righteousness to cleanness of his hands his keeping the ways of the Lord not departing wickedly. From from God keeping God's judgments always before him never putting away God's statutes being blameless before him and keeping himself from

iniquity. The Lord Jesus really was rewarded according to his righteousness.

In fact, even after on the cross when he was rewarded according to our guilt right that's what he was receiving the the response to on the cross and yet he absorbed it all and he.Wiped out our guilt and he wiped out the penalty that was against our sin and when he was done with that there was still has spotless righteousness and he was rewarded according to his perfect righteousness and we will be rewarded according to that righteousness too.

His hands were perfectly cleaned several times now. I trust you can remember me pointing out from Deuteronomy 6 that God said about his word that one of the things that,You're supposed to do with his law was bind it to your hand. That didn't mean that he was starting a fashion trend that would find its climax in the Pharisees.

It was it was saying that God's word should be always what moves your hands. Well that was perfectly true of Jesus wasn't it. His hands always always moved out of full love unto God. His hands always always moved and perfect.Accordance with the law of God. And he is the one of clean hands in verse 20 and verse 24.

He perfectly kept the ways of Yahweh verse 21 which meant for him that he would suffer and die and on the third day rise again several times in the Gospels when Jesus had just finished telling his disciples about the way that they would have to go and that it would sometimes be hard and that it would include things like taking up your cross every day.

Many times immediately upon telling that to them, what did he say about himself?He would go on to tell them that they're going up to Jerusalem where he is going to suffer many things at the hands of the elders and then he will be crucified and on the third day rise again.

And so the Lord Jesus knew not only the law of God, which is the perfect way, but he had a particular way that was appointed to him. He came to suffer and die. And I was one of the things in his temptations wasn't it that the that the devil tried to tempt him not to.

He said you can have all the kingdoms of this world and they're glory not by dying on the cross, but just by bowing for a second. You don't even have to do it in your heart just do it with your body just. Just one, you know, Flex at the waist and.

That wasn't the way that the Lord had appointed for him and so he kept the ways of y'all, in fact he refused verse 22 to put the Lord's statutes away from him. He always kept the Lord's judgments before him. So in another one of his temptations remember all alone in the wilderness, no one there to see the sign and the the displays of Jesus' miraculous power were to be signs that he is the Christ.

But there's no one there but him and the devil in stones and the devil said turn these stones into bread.And what did Jesus say? He said,Man shall not live I've read alone but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God. I don't need to turn the stones into bread to show myself that I am the son of God or that or to show that my father really does love me despite this knowing pain in my tummy from not having eaten for 40 days.

Some of you boys get the knowing pain when you have indeed eaten for 40 minutes.And yet Jesus kept the words of God always before him and he said because the word of God is more food to me, even than bread is you can't trick me into using my power just to satisfy myself.

I know that these are displays for God's people to see that. I am the Christ and to to believe in me both on account of my words and my works.And so Jesus is the perfect example of verse 20 of Jesus is the first perfect example of verse 21 Jesus is the perfect example of verse 22 Jesus is the perfect example of verse 23, I was also blameless before him and I kept myself from my iniquity one of the marvelous things in the first commandment and the Lord preserving us to one another one of these years will have to study the law of God together, but you shall have no other gods before me that righteousness is first.

And foremost for the eyes of God himself, that's a frightening thing for us because it's much easier to appear blameless before men than it is to be blameless before God in fact for everyone but Christ since Adam it's utterly impossible. Adam had the opportunity but for for all of his children.

And says one of the reasons why Christ had to be his own Adam and born of a virgin so he would start a new race we are Adam's children and it's impossible for us to be blameless before God and and yet Christ was blameless even before God he lived not not particularly for the eyes of men, in fact he told us to do what to do our giving in secret to do our our praying.

Not to be seen by men not to try and look like we're fasting when we're fasting so that our father who sees and secret will reward us and so whether it's the first commandment or Psalm 18 verse 23 a Jesus is the perfect example and it's a reminder to us to offer our hearts and our righteousness first and foremost unto God now this keeping himself from iniquity, this is not only so that he can.

Be righteous in the eyes of God and a Jew would have understood especially the necessity to keep yourself from iniquity in order to be consecrated for the next time you gather for worship, but Jesus had the greatest worship offering ever to make.Because he had to be the spotless land remember when you brought a lamb for sacrifice, it had to be without blemish why because the blemishless.

Baby sheep was actually anticipating the iniquity less lamb of God who would take away the sin of the world and so in all of Jesus's keeping himself for sin from sin it was of course in order to please God it was of course to be that righteousness that we would need but there was always in view his cross where he would be that sacrifice and he was keeping himself spotless in order to be our sacrifice and also in order.

To be our priest all of the rules that priests had to follow to stay ceremonially clean so they could be qualified in order to offer a sacrifice those also anticipated the spotlessness and the holiness of our Lord Jesus as he was not only the Lamb of God who takes away this end of the world but also he offered up himself he was the great high priest who offered that sacrifice and so.

In these in these five verses verses 20 through 24, we have especially a picture of the Lord Jesus and his righteousness. But if you've got your doctrine of justification, you're teaching your Bible teaching about how you have a right standing with God in mind, it's not just his righteousness is it?

For second Corinthians five verse 21 says that God made him who knew no sin to be sin so that we might become if there is no verse 31 there's a typo there on your sheet so that we might become the righteousness of God in him you see if Christ himself is your righteousness, you don't receive the righteousness of a mere man.

As if Christ has deposited just enough obedience into each of our accounts to get us by to earn our heaven no Christ's righteousness is the righteousness of God as a person he's one divine person and it's expressed perfectly in each of his natures so even when he's being righteously obedient as a man it's God's righteousness being expressed in human obedience.

Because he is one person not to it's very important that Jesus is one person not to and that he have to complete natures not one and that way we have not just the righteousness of a man but the righteousness of the living God that's something you can perhaps point out to anyone who says well the Bible doesn't say Jesus is God well that's nonsense, of course, it says it all over the place in so many different ways, but here's one.

That if you believe in Jesus, you don't get credited with the righteousness of a man. You get credited with the righteousness of God himself and so all of these things verses 20 through 24 you could pray and sing this Psalm without fear because Jesus is your righteousness if you believe in him and then in the third place it does show us what God is making us to be like doesn't it who is God making you to be like if you trust in Jesus?

He's making you to be like Jesus and so the picture that you have in these six verses is a picture of what he's making you like and the more he works love in your heart so that it always moves your hands the more he makes you love his law and not forget it and live according to it the more you can see and accord a similarity or resemblance between what God is doing in you what God has done for you in Jesus and what God will do for you and, The perfect blessedness that you receive so.

The reality as the spirit conforms us to Christ's image the reality of our unit of our union to him is more and more displayed and the justness of God's rewarding us is more and more displayed though the reward for our deeds is always by grace. It's never measured out according to the level of obedience that you have shown there is real reward for good deeds, the Bible says that in many places and it will not do to try and theologize in a way that contradicts the Bible though the reward for our deeds is always by grace which means it's for Christ's sake not merited or earned by our deeds.

Jesus is the one who has earned it yet. Since he makes everyone who has Jesus to be more and more like Jesus there is a real accord between what he is working in us and what Christ has worked for us so that God's blessing us is glorified as just the more that we walk as Christ walked this ought to be a desire of your heart.

God has already gonna bless you for the Lord Jesus's sake but you show more and more the, Righteousness of God and blessing you as he makes you more and more like Christ so there's some incentive to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling so that's the first column there there's first five verses that he rewards us according to our righteousness and the second half there the last six verses so we trust him according to his perfect justness.

So versus 25 through 27, those are all generally true of God being just with the merciful you show yourself merciful the blameless man, you show yourself blameless of the pure, you show yourself pure all those things say exactly what he was. Generally what he was noting about himself personally or reflecting upon personally and verses 20 through 24.

But he also does with the devious you will show yourself 26 and you will bring down haughty looks and diverse 27, so it is the justness of God that is the theme of those three verses and then he turns around and he says four you will light my lamp so he goes from the general in verses 25 to 27 to the specific and the personal he appropriate.

For himself. If you help those who have a righteousness that is perfect and we've just finished thinking about how Jesus is our perfect righteousness and verses 20 through 24 then we can know God will light our lamp even if we are as it were in darkness. Yahweh my God will enlighten my darkness there are many ways when many times when, David was under threat of having his lamp put out which is another way of saying that he would be killed.

And sometimes hiding in caves and so forth and near literal darkness while on the run but he was confident that the Lord would do as he had promised him and David had been anointed King after all then he says and I.

I'm guilty of in the second half of verse 29 having thought of it as being an exaggeration a hyperbole by my God. I can leap over a wall, but then I got to thinking for by you. I can run through a troop or against a troop. That's the kind of thing that we actually see David or his mighty men doing we don't know if he ever leaped over a wall in a single bound but we do know that if God had decided that that's how he was going to save.

David then David could have done it he's the almighty God that we saw in the first 19 verses of this psalm and David is reasoning from things like the creation. And the display of God at Sinai and the division of the Red Sea. A. Now that is not the ordinary way that God God works but that is the level of confidence and so I don't think hyperbole or exaggeration is exactly the right thing to say about this.

He's he's reasoning from the power of God and the righteousness that God has given him before him to what God would enable him to do. Now this helps us not because we're ever in a position where we have to run against troops or leap over walls. But we're often in situations where it feels impossible to us.

Obedying God. In whatever situation he has put you in is never impossible. Because you do it independence upon him. He is perfectly just and he has given you perfect righteousness, which means he bears he employs all of that power that we've seen already in this. Psalm going back to last week.

Completely for you. It's the version it's a Psalm 18 version of if God is for us. Who can be against us. What obstacle is there? Even something so hard as being content both in plenty and in little. Of which we hear the apostles say I can do all things through Christ you strengthens me.

So by you I can run against a troop by my God. I can leap over a wall. By you I can be content even when I have very little. That's the primary application of that particular text in Philippians chapter 4 and then he just reminds us of what he has said so far.

As for God his way is perfect the word of Yahweh is proven. He's made promises to us that our pure there is no mixture whatsoever every time they have been tested. They have been shown to be 24 karat as it were. That's less than less pure than with the Bible calls sometimes transparent gold because of the greatness of its of its purity.

His promises are absolutely certain because he has taken his perfect righteousness to always reward justly within the one hand and then he's taken his perfect righteousness that he has given us in Jesus and the other hand and He must. Always bless us. And he set those things before us in the Scripture you can have such confidence.

The doctrine biblical doctrine of justification by faith in Christ therefore. He is not just a shield to David. And you might have you might have heard everything we've said so far and said well. It's good and well for Jesus. He's perfect and as good and well for David this psalm was actually sung and prayed by him.

Is it true for me? Well in that what he says at the end of verse 30. He is a shield to all who trust in him. He says I went from the general in 25 to 27 to the particular and personal. I owned it for myself versus 28 and 29 he says every one of you who put your trust in God.

We know that means to put your trust in God through Jesus Christ. You too should take what David says in this psalm in appropriating owning for himself. What is said of Christ here because Christ is his and you take that and you do that for yourself. Because Christ is yours.

He is a shield to all. Who trust in Him. Well as a marvelous Psalm.