

Encouraged By God

Introduction. It is easy to become discouraged by wicked people and their influence. However, God has encouraging words for us. In Psalm 36, David implores God, out of His goodness, to deliver the upright from the pride and malice of the wicked. Like any truly righteous man, David marvels that some can be so wicked and unconcerned about God's will. He also praises God for His worthy traits. He then ends the psalm by offering a prayer for the righteous, recognizing that we all stray and must be reminded that we need God's mercy.

I. ***The Depravity Of The Wicked (Psalm 36:1-4)***

A. The root of wickedness.

1. Contempt of God.

a) Those who do evil do it without any awe of His majesty or dread of His wrath. Paul showed the depravity of mankind and its need of a Savior in Romans 3:18.

b) When we understand what an insult sin is to God, then hating sin is healthy and necessary, especially our own sin (Psalm 119:97-104). Most people do not hate sin, only the consequences in terms of loss, shame, or imprisonment.

2. Conceit of themselves.

a) Sinners destroy themselves by flattering themselves. They think they are above the laws of God and they are proud they have gotten away with something.

b) Iniquity is an abomination to God. On the day of judgment, the wicked will learn the horribleness of sin. In contrast, the humble at heart have always been the ones to do His will (Isaiah 66:2).

B. The fruit of wickedness.

1. There is no conscience. It is no wonder that those who deceive themselves will try to deceive others. Can anyone who has a false soul be true to others (2 Peter 2:18-19)?

2. There is no virtue. What little good is left in this person is gone. David says that those who leave off goodness leave off wisdom (Proverbs 12:18; 24:2).

3. The wicked heart orchestrates evil.

a) It is bad to do evil, but it is worse to devise it (Micah 2:1; cf. Psalm 1:2).

b) Omissions always introduce commissions. When people leave the way of the Lord, the devil easily makes them his servants. He devours them (1 Peter 5:8).

4. The wicked perseveres and takes pleasure in their wickedness.
 - a) Having the conscience seared, the wicked holds nothing back in their wicked desire. There is only joy at the accomplishment of evil.
 - b) It is sad to see people who are bent on doing evil in the face of good. They are a complete abomination to God and what is good (Jeremiah 18:12; Amos 5:15).

II. ***The Dependability Of God (Psalm 36:5-9)***

A. The perfection of divine nature.

1. He is a God of inexhaustible goodness.
 - a) On the earth, there is disquiet and discontent; in heaven there is perfection and satisfaction (Revelation 21:1-4).
 - b) We should be in awe of the patience of God, who bears so much with those who provoke and reject Him (Hosea 11:9).
2. He is a God of absolute truth.
 - a) God will always be faithful to His threatenings against sin. There will come a day when He will reckon to men what they have done (Jeremiah 17:10).
 - b) God's faithfulness does not react and change like man's (Daniel 4:37). His faithfulness toward His truth is steadfast.
3. He is a God of unsearchable wisdom.
 - a) As His power is sovereign, so His methods are mysterious to us (Daniel 2:20-22).
 - b) All God's plans and purposes, even though hidden from man, are flawless (Isaiah 64:4).
4. He is a God of incontestable justice.
 - a) The Lord is righteous in all His ways (Genesis 18:25).
 - b) He never has and never will do wrong to any of His creatures (Psalm 97:1-2).

B. The protection of divine providence.

1. The animals of the earth, though not capable of knowing and praising God, are graciously cared for (Acts 14:17).
2. God will always provide well for good men (Psalm 148:7-11; Jeremiah 14:22; Matthew 5:45; 6:31-32).

C. The description of divine subjects.

1. Our character.
 - a) We should celebrate the lovingkindness (faithful, steadfast love) of God. It should cause us to put our full confidence in God.
 - b) With God, we can be as safe as chicks under God's wing (Ruth 2:12; Psalm 17:8; Matthew 23:37).

2. Our privilege.
 - a) Life and light will be our portion. The God of nature is the fountainhead of all physical life (Acts 17:28) and spiritual life (John 7:37-38).
 - b) The divine light which shines is the light of God's truth (1 Corinthians 13:12). The translation of this light to man is the objective of the gospel (John 1:4-9). God did not cause the sin, but He provided its remedy.

III. ***The Desire Of The Godly (Psalm 36:10-12)***

- A. A continuation of God's blessing.
 1. Because the godly live by God's unfailing love and righteousness, the psalmist prays that the qualities of God's wisdom may continue toward the "upright in heart," i.e., those who "know" the Lord.
 2. In short, the godly desire to be like God. He prays that they persevere in the knowledge of God. This requires trust in and fidelity to the Lord (Job 17:9; Proverbs 4:18).
- B. A preservation from evil.
 1. David prays that those who fight against God will not prevail over those who desire to cleave to God (Psalm 123:3-4).
 2. Christians who have truly experienced the pleasures of communion with God will want to continue in them. Could this lack of communion explain the delinquency of some Christians?
- C. A desire for evil's ultimate destruction.
 1. We should not rejoice when any particular enemy of ours falls (Zechariah 7:7-10; Matthew 7:12).
 2. We are to rejoice in and pray for the final overthrow of all the workers of iniquity and the everlasting triumph of good and righteousness (Revelation 18:1-2).

Conclusion. Our world is a lot like David's, in that we must daily deal with men who hate our God and His ways and hold us in contempt for having faith. Yet we are satisfied with God's protection and promise. If you desire to come to God this morning and rejoice in righteousness, truth, and justice, obey the gospel and your soul will be saved.