

PSALMS OF PRAYER AND PRAISE

Psalm 26:1-12 (NASB)

- ¹ Vindicate me, O LORD, for I have walked in my integrity, And I have trusted in the LORD without wavering.
- ² Examine me, O LORD, and try me; Test my mind and my heart.
- ³ For Your lovingkindness is before my eyes, And I have walked in Your truth.
- ⁴ I do not sit with deceitful men, Nor will I go with pretenders.
- ⁵ I hate the assembly of evildoers, And I will not sit with the wicked.
- ⁶ I shall wash my hands in innocence, And I will go about Your altar, O LORD,
- ⁷ That I may proclaim with the voice of thanksgiving And declare all Your wonders.
- ⁸ O LORD, I love the habitation of Your house And the place where Your glory dwells.
- ⁹ Do not take my soul away *along* with sinners, Nor my life with men of bloodshed,
- ¹⁰ In whose hands is a wicked scheme, And whose right hand is full of bribes.
- ¹¹ But as for me, I shall walk in my integrity; Redeem me, and be gracious to me.
- ¹² My foot stands on a level place; In the congregations I shall bless the LORD.

Psalm 26: Test My Motives

The Scriptures speak of integrity in two different verses in this psalm. It says, “*I have walked in my integrity*” ([verses 1](#) and [11](#)). David was not claiming moral perfection but uprightness of heart. The dictionary explains integrity as an uncompromising adherence to a code of moral values: utter sincerity, honesty, avoidance of deception. When we understand the meaning of integrity, we understand why David prayed that the Lord be his judge. David could not justify himself against any charge of sin. Only God could judge the uprightness of his heart, his inner and unwavering trust in God.

If we trust God, we will not waver in life’s circumstances. The matter is settled. God is in charge. This is such a relief. We no longer have to be the captains of our souls. God is. Our behavior thus comes in line with His nature. He is Lord and we are not. Man looks on the outward and what appears to be, but only God knows the heart.

David, in defending his integrity, reminded the Lord of his faithfulness to Him. David took a course of action based on his trust in God. David’s life reflected God’s nature. He declared that he had walked in truth and that he had not associated with those who did not hold to faithfulness to God ([verse 5](#)). David also vowed to prepare himself against that which would be displeasing to God that he might worship God at the altar.

In order to worship rightly, sin must be confessed and forgiven ([verse 6](#)). David was not saying he was perfect and had no sin, rather he was saying he knew what to do when he did sin—confess and accept God’s forgiveness. David had consistent fellowship with God and kept accounts current. When he became aware of sin, he dealt with it and realized it separated him from God. He was then prepared to worship and declare aloud God’s wondrous works. David loved the things God loved and hated the things of the world that God hated. David trusted God with his life and declared his loyalty to God. What an example for us!

David expressed a love of God’s house. Its altar had spiritual significance to worshipers. If there is to be a real lasting love for our churches in the hearts of Christians, it must be because they are the center of Christian life where God’s Word is taught and God is honored. [Verses 9](#) and [10](#) refer to those who choose to follow sinful ways and will reap God’s judgment.

Trusting in God, the psalmist chose the way of righteousness. Our integrity is not self-righteousness. It is a work of grace in us and is marred only by our weaknesses. We must rely on the redeeming blood of Christ and God’s mercy.