

Vindication From God

March 24, 2019

Psalm 24:1-6

1 The earth is the LORD's and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it; 2 for he has founded it on the seas, and established it on the rivers. 3 Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD? And who shall stand in his holy place? 4 Those who have clean hands and pure hearts, who do not lift up their souls to what is false, and do not swear deceitfully. 5 They will receive blessing from the LORD, and vindication from the God of their salvation. 6 Such is the company of those who seek him, who seek the face of the God of Jacob.

I was reading the Bible and I came across this text where the psalmist says "vindication from the God of their salvation." I thought what a wonderful concept coming from the Old Testament because virtually what the New Testament is all about is vindication from God. There is a dominant thread that is woven throughout the Bible. There is one God who is the creator of heavens and the earth and, as such, is the creator of all life. This God is a God of love, is pleased with the creation, protects the people, and gives us salvation.

The theme of Psalm 24 is that the earth belongs to God. We have to give credit where credit is due the whole world belongs to God. Not only that, but everything that is in it. All of the people, plants, minerals, and animals belong to God. I want to make sure we get this...all of the people belong to God. Absolutely everything belongs to God. The reason is simple. God created it, the whole world, and everything in it.

The reality is that everything we have is from God. Since everything is a gift to us from God, then everything that we have is borrowed from God. Now, let's say you borrowed something from a friend. This is someone you respect and care about. Out of your love and respect for the other person you make sure that you take very good care of the property.

A long time ago I was with some friends and one of them borrowed something from the other. The person lending it said "Treat it like it is yours." I questioned that and said "Wouldn't you treat it like it is not yours, treat like it belongs to someone else." The person lending it disagreed and adamantly protested "No! You treat it like it's yours." I didn't argue my point but I understand that when you treat it like it belongs to someone else it means you take more care of it because you value the other person. Most of us, if not all of us, take extra care of something when we borrow it. We want to make sure it comes back undamaged.

When I was in the service we were out in the field and a friend of mine had a small, handheld, portable, propane stove. I borrowed it but found that it wasn't burning correctly. So, I tried to fix it and ended up breaking it. I felt bad about it and apologized deeply. I still feel bad about it today. I wish I had another stove so that I could have given it to him. If it belonged to me, it would have been forgotten, thrown away with no worries. The point is we care more about the property of others because we care about them.

The contemporary lesson for us addresses how much you value God. Once we understand that everything belongs to the Lord. When we understand what all God has given to us, then we realize that our relationship with the Lord is extremely valuable. The Lord deserves our respect. The Lord deserves our love. The Lord deserves our very best care for the Lord's property. The point that I made, up until now, is that when you value other people you take care of what you borrow. Now, consider how valuable our relationship with God is. You should care that much more care for that which belongs to God.

As I mentioned before, the reality is that everything - absolutely everything - we have is a gift from God. Everything is borrowed. Out of our love and respect for God, as the almighty

creator, we owe a tremendous thanks to God for creating life and the resources to sustain it. Out of our love and respect for God, as the one who gives abundantly to us, we owe a tremendous thanks to God for the earth and its resources; animals, plants, and people. Out of our love and respect for God, as the one who gives us love, we owe a tremendous thanks to God for the very best gift ever - Jesus! There is no way around it, God deserves our very best! God deserves our very best care, our very best worship, and our very best offering.

Now we get to the part that everybody wants. What's in it for me? The Psalmist asks who gets to stand with God. The Psalmist answers the ones that are honest, with clean hands and pure hearts. They will receive a blessing from the LORD. They will receive vindication from God. That's the good part. What we receive is a blessing from God. Again I ask you to think about how much more we should appreciate God. We can't help but worship, celebrate, be thankful, praise, and give our very best offering. Our greatest care goes to that which we value the most. We owe our thanks to God for everything.

We have the best case scenario. We have almighty God, the all powerful creator, offering reconciliation to us. We have a savior who is no stranger to our pain and suffering. When we go through the most difficult that life can throw at us - and life will throw the worst at us - we can appeal to the suffering savior who is no stranger to pain. I have preached this before and I am preaching it again because I think it is important to grasp this. We get distracted by challenges and frustrations but when we are faced with the worst of the worst, we can appeal to the suffering savior. God deserves our very best. We have received a blessing from the LORD; vindication from the God of our salvation.