

MADRID CHURCH OF CHRIST

Sunday, 09/17/17

2017 ANNUAL THEME:

PUTTING ON THE FULL ARMOR OF GOD



EPHESIANS 6:10-20

"Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil" (Ephesians 6:11).

WHO MAY DWELL WITH THE LORD?

By Steven C. Harper

The Psalmist asks in Psalm 15, "Lord, who may abide in Your tabernacle? Who may dwell in Your holy hills?" This is a question it would be good for us to consider today. Who can dwell with God? And who may be worthy to enter the house of God? While David wrote asking who might be worthy of entrance into the literal tabernacle of God, we should realize the qualifications of entrance into the spiritual tabernacle of God are no different than those of this Psalm. If we could meet the standard here, we would be pleasing to God and be able to enter and dwell with God in His house — the church.

Let's take a brief look at Psalm 15 and consider whether we meet the qualifications of entrance into God's house. Let us strive to meet those

qualifications, if we do not already, and fight to live steadfastly in them, if so.

The One Who is An Example to All. (v. 2) The description of the acceptable one in this verse basically tells us that he is one who walks in the righteousness of God, does those things which please God, and is one whose life is served from the heart — not superficially. Living righteously means a lot more than just practicing righteousness [though that is certainly required]; it also means departing from that which is evil (Prov. 16:17). One cannot practice righteousness and unrighteousness and be accepted by God.

This man stands as an example to all others because he lives righteously, but also because that righteousness is not merely a superficial, outward righteousness. Let us not forget that Jesus said, “Unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven” (Matt. 5:20). If our righteousness is merely outward, God knows [though men may not] and He will not accept us. Remember also that God condemned those who honored Him with their lips while their hearts were far from Him (cf. Matt. 15:8, 9).

The One Who Can Be Trusted By All. (v. 3) The acceptable one is also one who is known for how he treats his neighbor. As he is described here, he controls his tongue, he genuinely loves his neighbor, and he is one who will treat others fairly; he will not speak words or even listen to words that make slanderous accusations against a friend. Because of his steadfast refusal to engage in these destructive efforts, others will gladly trust him as one who will not stab them in the back when it is advantageous to him, or even for his own self-preservation.

More disciples of Jesus Christ need to make great efforts in living as this man, for our world is ever becoming a place where a man’s word means nothing, there is always someone ready to “dish the dirt” on someone they once considered a close friend [or even family], and many people think nothing of doing evil to their neighbor simply because they think that, if they don’t, their neighbor will do it to them. [Get them before they get me!] We need to be people of integrity and trust because, as we

go out into the world to try to save the lost, if they cannot trust us because of our behavior, it is fairly certain they will not trust that we are speaking the truth, either — even if we are.

The One Who Puts God Above All. (v. 4) This man also stands out from the rest of the world [and, thus, acceptable to God] because he makes a clear distinction between the person of vile character and the one who fears the Lord, and is one who keeps his word, even if it means he is the one who will suffer for it, doing so because he understands that is what the Lord expects of him (cf. Prov. 20:25; Eccl. 5:4, 5). He is truly “a man of his word”!

This man is accepted by God, also, because he will not make himself friends with those of the world (cf. Jas. 4:4) simply because of the possibility of personal gain or favor, or because of the evil man’s standing in the world. He truly hates evil and loves good (Prov. 8:13) and he is not afraid to call evil “evil” and good “good” — no matter what the current society’s standards are. For the same reason, he will vocally and openly welcome and praise those who fear the Lord and who likewise seek to do good and live righteously, though society may frown on those who so live, or even vilify and mock them and their ways. He chooses to stand with the righteous, and is a true friend of the righteous.

The One Who Is A Friend to All. (v. 5) God also looks favorably on this man because he is not living life to get the most out of everyone else for the sake of his own comfort and pleasure, and he does not seek to gain advantage over others unfairly. He, again, is a man of integrity and one who may be trusted to help in time of need, not one who is looking for another way to gouge the needy and take them for everything they have. When he helps others, it is simply to help them — not a means of enriching himself materially and/or financially. His integrity is solid and he cannot be persuaded to “look the other way” in matters of justice, but will consider only the facts and render judgments with equity and with a desire to do right in all things. It may not win him favor with the evil or the wealthy or the powerful, but he will be blessed by God.

Does this psalm describe us? If not, what are we going to do about it?

VISITORS: THANKS FOR COMING TODAY!

If you are visiting with us and have any questions about what you have seen or heard today, please fill out a visitor's card or contact us using the information below. We would be happy to schedule a time to sit down with you and to answer your questions from God's word. If there is anything we can do to help you spiritually, please let us know. We are here to serve!

Call or text Jason @ 412-999-4837 or email him @
preacher@madridchurch.com

Upcoming Events:

- 10/01 - Prayer/Song Service
- 10/29 - Next Invite Sunday – *The Best Possible News: Jesus Will Return*
- 11/12 Shed Party/Potluck After Services - Soup & A Movie

If there is an event you are planning that you want in the bulletin, let Jason know.

Daily Reading:

- 09/18 – John 9-10; Psalm 107
- 09/19 – John 11-12; Psalm 108
- 09/20 – John 13-15; Psalm 109
- 09/21 – John 16-18; Psalm 110
- 09/22 – John 19-21; Psalm 111
- 09/23 – Luke 1; Psalm 112
- 09/24 – Luke 2-3; Psalm 113



"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."

-Psalm 119:105