

Psalm 5 — Lead Me in Your Righteousness

What is the very first thing you reach for in the morning?

For many of us it is coffee and technology — the phone or iPad almost instinctively. Within seconds the day begins rushing toward us:

- News headlines
- Emails and messages
- Calendars and weather
- Social media and sport

Before we have even got out of bed, the world has already started telling us what matters and what we should worry about.

Psalm 5 shows us something very different.

David lived under enormous pressure — enemies, political uncertainty, family conflict, and national instability. Yet notice where he turns first:

“O Lord, in the morning You hear my voice; in the morning I prepare a sacrifice for You and watch.”

Before the noise of the world comes rushing in, David deliberately turns toward God.

Psalm 5 continues themes already introduced in the opening Psalms:

- the contrast between the righteous and the wicked
- the believer crying out in distress
- confidence in God’s protection
- resting securely because the Lord sustains His people

Now Psalm 5 takes us from night into morning.

1. The God Who Hears (vv. 1–3)

“Give ear to my words, O Lord... My King and my God...”

- Lord (Yahweh) — the covenant God who keeps His promises
- King — the true ruler and judge over all the earth

- My God — personal relationship and belonging

David is groaning, crying out, pleading. Yet he prays because he believes God hears.

Psalm 65 describes God as: “O You who hear prayer.”

Psalm 5 reminds us that God hears His people.

“In the morning You hear my voice; in the morning I prepare a sacrifice for You and watch.”

This is intentional prayer — not casual spirituality.

David deliberately orients his heart toward God before everything else tries to orient it somewhere else.

Then he says: “I watch.”

That is faith — not merely speaking prayers, but expecting God to act.

Application

- Remember who we pray to
- Bring your real self to prayer
- Be intentional in prayer
- Bring concerns early
- Pray expectantly

2. The God Who Is Holy (vv. 4–6)

“For You are not a God who delights in wickedness; evil may not dwell with You.”

God is utterly holy. In Isaiah 6 the angels cry:

“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts.”

When we see God’s holiness clearly, we also see our own sin more clearly.

David piles up descriptions of evil:

- wickedness
- lies
- deceit
- pride
- bloodshed

God's holiness is not passive neutrality toward sin. He opposes evil.

Psalm 5 forces us to ask:

How can sinful people possibly enter the presence of a holy God?

3. The God of Steadfast Love (v. 7)

Then comes the crux of the Psalm. "But I, through the abundance of Your steadfast love, will enter Your house."

The wicked cannot stand before God — yet David enters.

Not because David was morally superior. David knew his own sin well.

David enters God's presence because of God's steadfast love.

The Hebrew word is *chesed* — God's covenant love and mercy toward undeserving people.

This is the Gospel already foreshadowed in the Psalms:

Sinners enter God's presence because of God's mercy, not human merit.

Hebrews 4 says: "Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace."

Hebrews 10 says: "We have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus."

Jesus is the truly righteous One of this Psalm:

- perfectly holy
- perfectly righteous
- perfectly obedient

Yet at the cross, the righteous One was condemned so condemned sinners could be welcomed.

We do not enter because we are clean enough.

We enter because Christ is gracious enough.

4. The God of Righteousness (vv. 8–10)

"Lead me, O Lord, in Your righteousness... make Your way straight before me."

Christians today still face pressures:

- compromise conviction
- soften biblical truth
- conform to the spirit of the age

But Psalm 5 reminds us that our greatest struggle is not only outside us, but within us.

Jesus says: “I am the way.” Christ Himself becomes the straight path David longed for.

Christians must continually seek God in prayer and Scripture because the world is constantly trying to reshape us.

5. Refuge and Joy (vv. 11–12)

“Let all who take refuge in You rejoice.”

Many years ago I was hiking in Lamington National Park during terrible weather. Eventually we found Rat-a-Tat Hut hidden in the forest — little more than a tin roof and rough walls — but it felt like heaven.

Only then did I understand what shelter really means.

Psalm 5 reminds us that God Himself becomes refuge for His people.

Storms come.
Enemies surround.
Fear and anxiety threaten faith.

But God shelters His people.

“You bless the righteous, O Lord; You cover him with favor as with a shield.”

The Psalm begins with groaning and ends with singing.

What changes everything is the steadfast love of God. For Christians, that steadfast love now has a name:

Jesus Christ.

He is the righteous King.
He is the Holy One.

He is the sacrifice and the refuge.

We do not enter God's presence because we are worthy enough, but because Christ is merciful enough.

"The Lord is my strength and my shield; in Him my heart trusts." (Psalm 28:7)