

PSALM 10: Our Great Big God of justice

Big Idea: God does see and hear the desires of the humble and will strengthen them by doing justice.

How are you guys doing? How are you feeling?
How would you rate your emotional state at the
moment?

These are questions that strike fear in me? I'm
not sure how it makes you feel?

You may know by now I am not very good at
expressing myself, expressing what I am feeling
or thinking.

Partly because I am not that kind of person, I'm
quite shy and don't like drawing attention to
myself.

But mainly because I am not aware of my emotions for the most part.

My mind works like this, something happens good or bad my mind processes it really fast and then I move on intellectually.

I hear my close friend has just lost his job, he has a family to support and he has been treated unfairly.

My mind processes that it is unfair, I feel sad and I feel angry, but then in my mind I move on. I know practically I will be there to help and God is faithful.

But emotionally I am not ok. My mind drifts around like a helium balloon some little kid let go by accident.

I can't focus and I don't understand why. I go home and I tell Charissa I really struggled to focus today.

She is much smarter than I am and says well what happened today think about some of the issues you faced.

I then stop and process my day and realise I am still sad and angry and then have to focus on what happened and deal with it.

I don't really know what to say, it frustrates me because I can't solve it, but chatting to Charissa helps me through.

She seems to know what to say, she understands how I feel and so it is a super slow process, but I get there, with lots of help from my wife.

How about you? How are you with expressing
how you feel?

Are you able to understand your feelings and
recognize your need for help to work through
things?

Or are you more like me? You cry every time you
see a family come on TV, even in the
adverts...and you have no clue why.

All because you haven't expressed your feelings,
or known that you were feeling emotional.

Tonight and for the next few weeks we turn our
attention to the book of Psalms.

We will be working through this truly great book
which will connect with us intellectually, but
largely emotionally.

The book of Psalms is a great book, you will know this if you have read it before.

If you haven't or if you haven't recently I strongly urge you to do so.

The book Psalms is a book of poetry, a book of Hebrew poetry to be more exact.

Hebrew poetry isn't about rhyming, it's major stand out is it's parallelism. One line either builds on, repeats or contrasts the previous line.

This helps build emphasis. The book of Psalms is not just a book of emotions. It is one of the most well put together books in God's word.

The book of Psalms has structure, it has an intro and an ending. It is broken up into five books.

The 150 Psalms we have today have been collected and packaged together throughout Israel's history.

There is a Psalm Moses wrote, there are lots of Psalms David wrote, there are Psalms written during Israel's exile.

What the Psalms do is they help us and remind us of the very real relationship we have with God.

The Psalms are known as Israel's book of praise, they are songs and prayers of people interacting with the world around them.

The Psalmists give us the right perspective, they help us to see the world in the right way.

They don't hide away from the real issues, they engage with them and grapple with them.

At times the Psalmist may seem disrespectful, they may use harsh language towards God.

But the Psalmist teaches us how to speak to God, and gives us the words we often can't find ourselves.

In the same way I need help dealing with and expressing my emotions, the Psalms help us to make sense of the world around us.

To feel what we need to feel and to acknowledge the real emotion we have and then relate that back to God.

Often we can preach a prosperity gospel to ourselves. We can tell ourselves that we should be happy.

We hide our feelings from each other when we gather and deny our sadnesses and weaknesses.

Church gatherings are filled with 'good' people.

How are doing? I'm good thanks and you? I'm good thanks. That's the standard here on Sundays.

Already we are only tuning in intellectually and leaving our emotions at the door. The Psalms helps us to see that we need both.

That as God's people we can and should be real with God and that when we do that we will be real with each other.

We see this in our Psalm tonight. Have a look at Psalm 10 with me. **[Pray]** The Psalmist starts us off with a great question.

A question many of us have asked before, maybe not directly to God, but we have definitely thought it.

1. The Question

Have a look at v 1 with me...

**¹ LORD, why do you stand so far away?
Why do you hide in times of trouble?**

Does that sound familiar? When we look at the world around us. When we see all the corruption in our society don't we ask this question?

When innocent people are hurt, harmed, or dealt with unjustly, don't our hearts cry out what the Psalmist asks?

It's a valid question, a question we are free to ask our God and we will see why as we continue through the Psalm.

For now let's move on to the next section...

2. The Reason

Have a look from v2 with me...

**² In arrogance the wicked relentlessly pursue their victims;
let them be caught in the schemes they have devised.**

**³ For the wicked one boasts about his own cravings;
the one who is greedy curses and despises the LORD.**

**⁴ In all his scheming,
the wicked person arrogantly thinks,
"There's no accountability,
since there's no God."**

**⁵ His ways are always secure;
your lofty judgments have no effect on him;
he scoffs at all his adversaries.**

**⁶ He says to himself, “I will never be moved—
from generation to generation without
calamity.”**

**⁷ Cursing, deceit, and violence fill his mouth;
trouble and malice are under his tongue.**

**⁸ He waits in ambush near settlements;
he kills the innocent in secret places.**

His eyes are on the lookout for the helpless;

⁹ he lurks in secret like a lion in a thicket.

He lurks in order to seize a victim;

he seizes a victim and drags him in his net.

**¹⁰ So he is oppressed and beaten down;
helpless people fall because of the wicked one’s
strength.**

**¹¹ He says to himself, “God has forgotten;
he hides his face and will never see.”**

Now we can see why this question was raised in the first place. Very simply the wicked don’t care about God and seem to be winning.

As we unpack, the characteristics of the wicked I want to challenge you to build a picture of what they are like.

I want you to allow the emotion you feel to come up. It's ok if it makes you feel angry or sad or maybe even guilty. Embrace it.

Remember the Psalms are there to challenge our feelings as well as our intellect. It is poetry, it calls us to imagination and expression.

The wicked are marked by their relentless pursuit of their victims. They are not satisfied with catching a few.

They want as many as they can get and if someone seems to be escaping, they will chase after them.

Knocking someone down once isn't good enough for them and so they will give wave after wave of attack on their victims.

Their goal is to crush people, to crush their hopes and dreams and to dominate others with their power.

That's what the wicked scheme about that's what they devise. How can I elevate myself and increase myself and make others lose out and smaller than me.

They are fuelled by greed, they are never satisfied, they already have so much, but they want more.

Not because they need it but because they can have it and they want it.

They don't care what people think about them, they scoff at their enemies, they smirk at those opposed to them.

They have all the power why should they care about people who are meaningless to them.

People who are just objects they use, abuse and trap in their schemes and pursuit to gain more.

It's no wonder that the desires of their hearts and minds gushes out of their mouths. They don't hide their wealth and power.

They aren't ashamed of their wickedness rather they boast in it. Their speech is marked with horrible language, lies, violence, trouble and malice.

They seek the harm of others and it is expressed in their speech.

The wicked true to their nature also wait in ambush and lurk around like a lion stalking it's prey.

They don't mind waiting for their helpless victims to be caught in their schemes and to be oppressed and beaten down.

It would be really great if we could project our mental images at this point...although some of the images may be terrifying.

The wicked are despicable people, they should get us upset and make us feel angry.

As the Psalmist reflects on the wicked the reason it's so easy for us to relate is because the wicked are still around today.

We know people like this, some of us may even have experienced people like this. Why are they like this.

It's right there in our section. They are arrogant. They are driven by their own pride.

Pride is a terrible thing. The reason sin entered the world was through humanities pride.

Adam and Eve, our representatives had a choice...listen to God and submit to his rule...or reject God's rule and listen to yourself.

Pride ultimately is a rejection of God, it is a rejection of God's rule. And so it's no surprise that the wicked despise God.

The wicked don't care about God, they curse God. They say things like there is no God and therefore there is no accountability.

They are secure in themselves, they are god to themselves and believe nothing can shake them or move them.

They tell themselves God has forgotten that God hides his face and won't see what they are doing. They justify themselves.

The wicked do what they want, when they want and how they want.

They don't care about God and therefore it shouldn't surprise us that they don't care about people.

How can God allow this? Where is God while these things are happening? Why doesn't God care?

Well let's move on to...

3. The Conclusion

Follow with me as I read the from verse 12...

¹² Rise up, LORD God! Lift up your hand.

Do not forget the oppressed.

**¹³ Why has the wicked person despised God?
He says to himself, “You will not demand an
account.”**

**¹⁴ But you yourself have seen trouble and grief,
observing it in order to take the matter into
your hands.**

**The helpless one entrusts himself to you;
you are a helper of the fatherless.**

**¹⁵ Break the arm of the wicked, evil person,
until you look for his wickedness,
but it can't be found.**

**¹⁶ The LORD is King forever and ever;
the nations will perish from his land.**

**¹⁷ LORD, you have heard the desire of the
humble;
you will strengthen their hearts.**

You will listen carefully,

**¹⁸ doing justice for the fatherless and the
oppressed**

**so that mere humans from the earth may terrify
them no more.**

This is where the Psalmist teaches us a great
lesson as God's children.

The Psalmist has real pain, real emotions, real
struggle with the way the wicked seems to go
through life doing whatever they want seemingly
unscathed.

But the Psalmist doesn't let his emotion override
his theology. The answer, the conclusion, lies in
his relationship with God.

He knows that our great big God is a God of
justice. That's why in v12 he confidently calls on
God to rise up.

The Psalmist reminds us that despite the wicked despising God and saying to himself he won't be held accountable in v13...God has seen the trouble and heard the desire of the humble.

The Psalmist calls on God in v15 to break the arm of the wicked until his wickedness can no longer be found.

The Psalmist helps us to see our God is very big. He is much bigger than the wicked. We may feel helpless and lost.

We may look at the world around us and see all the wicked people are doing to each other.

All the exploitation, racism, murder, rape, bullying, theft, abuse and hatred. We may see all this and ask the same question the Psalmist asked at the start.

God why do you stand so far away? Why do you
hide in these times of trouble?

But the reality, the truth is the wicked are
nothing compared to our great big God. There is
no comparison.

Our God is much bigger than their wickedness.
This is the where the structure of the Psalms is so
helpful.

Psalm 1 and 2 act as an introduction. Psalm 1
tells us that the blessed are those who don't
hang out with the wicked, instead they delight in
the Lord.

That the wicked are like chaff that will face God's
judgment. Psalm 2 says that the nations will
reject God's king.

They will puff themselves up, but those who turn to God's king will be safe, while those opposed to him will face his wrath.

This is exactly what the Psalmist holds to be true.

The Psalmist may feel overwhelmed by his circumstances but he knows God is in control.

The Psalmist knows our great big God is the God of justice. That's why we see in v14 that the helpless one entrusts themselves to God.

God is king forever and ever and not only has God seen the trouble in v14 he has also heard the desire of the humble v17.

God will listen carefully and v18 he will do justice for the fatherless and oppressed so that mere humans from the earth, from the dust will terrify them no more.

That's the right perspective, no matter how great we may think we are. No matter how many amazing discoveries we make, we don't compare to our great big God.

We are the dust of the earth but he is the almighty creator. Our greatest most complex achievements don't compare to God.

They don't even come close. At the start the Psalmist seemed to have the wrong perspective.

God seemed to small and far away. But now we see God is not only very big he is also very close.

The language the Psalmist uses brings God right to us and our situation. God sees the problems, he sees all the wicked acts.

More than that he hears us, he listens carefully to us. It's like a picture of a father who sees their child struggling through his day.

He sees his child fall off their bike, get teased at school, get overlooked for the sports team because they aren't part of the cool crowd.

The child feels lost and alone, no clue their father is watching over them. Then when they get home broken after their rough day.

A day they wish their dad was there.

There dad is waiting for them with some treats arms wide open and is ready to listen to all their hurt and pain.

Where is God while the wicked seem to prosper?
Our great big God is right there with us, he sees
what's going on he hears our pain.

Our great big God is not far away, he is not
hiding. God will bring justice.

How can the Psalmist be so sure? The answer is
our relationship with God.

God has the greatest track record, he keeps his
promises.

He says that he will protect his children and that
the wicked are just chaff that will blow away. We
can trust him, we can depend on him.

God also promises he will never leave us nor
forsake that.

As we look at God acting in history in the true account in our Old Testament we see he always comes through.

Our God is a great big God. Our circumstances can't stop him from rescuing us and doing justice.

Finally something the Psalmist never had that we do, is Jesus God's King. The Psalmist looks forward to the coming of the King who will bring justice.

Jesus has already come, he has brought salvation, he has rescued the helpless and the humble.

Jesus is God's King, Jesus is God and acts exactly like God who is described in this Psalm.

Jesus comes to meet us in our pain and suffering and oppression. Jesus, God in the flesh comes and lives amongst us.

Where he can see all that we are facing and all that we go through. Where he can hear and listen carefully to our pain and needs.

Jesus, God the Son lives with us and takes the imagery the Psalmist makes a step further.

Jesus is God incarnate, the second person of the trinity and he experiences life, all of life as we do.

Jesus eats, drinks, sleeps, laughs, cries, get's angry, feels pain both emotionally and physically.

Jesus as God's great big King, doesn't stand far off or hide away in trouble. He is in the trenches with us.

In fact Jesus becomes the helpless for us. Jesus becomes the oppressed for us. Jesus becomes the humble for us.

The great big Jesus, God the Son does all of that for us. Jesus does that to break the arm of the wicked.

Jesus has his eyes set on defeating wickedness more than just the wicked.

Jesus get's abandoned, rejected by those closest to him, including his Father in Heaven.

Jesus get's beaten, mocked and killed by his creation. Jesus who is completely innocent faces the full wrath of God's judgement.

Yet on a day where it seemed wickedness won, we see that our great big God won.

We see that wickedness was defeated once and for all.

That day Jesus seemed helpless, oppressed and weak. Everything that happened to him happened because of the wicked.

It seemed unjust, it seemed unfair...because it was, and that's the point.

That's how our great big God acted to rescue us and to save us from the wicked once and for all.

Jesus who deserved none of what came his way knowingly endured all of that for you and for me.

We may face a lot of what Jesus faced, mocking, abandonment, rejection, beatings and even death.

The great news is that Jesus sees our pain, he hears and listens carefully to us and he understands it.

Jesus knows what emotions we feel, he felt them too, he understands our pain. No other religion has a God like ours, because there is only one God.

But there are two things Jesus faced that we will never have to if we follow him and live our lives for him.

One is death, we will all die, but our death is a lot more like falling asleep and therefore we have nothing to fear.

Secondly we will never feel the pain, agony and suffering of facing God's wrath.

We won't feel God's righteous judgment on us for our sins, because Jesus has faced that for us and therefore in God's grace we won't.

Brothers and sisters, we serve a great big God. Our world is not always easy, we will face struggles and pain.

Psalm 10 helps us to see that it's ok to feel that pain, it's ok to have emotions that are grumpy with what we experience.

It's ok to cry out to God and share our pain and struggles with him. In fact it's a good thing.

That is my challenge for all of us, to start being real with God. To share how we feel, good or bad.

That helps us keep perspective.

That is what real relationships are all about.
Sharing our joys, asking for things, but also
sharing our struggles and pain.

As we share let's remember that God does see
and hear the desires of the humble and will
strengthen them by doing justice.

That is great news. Let's pray.