

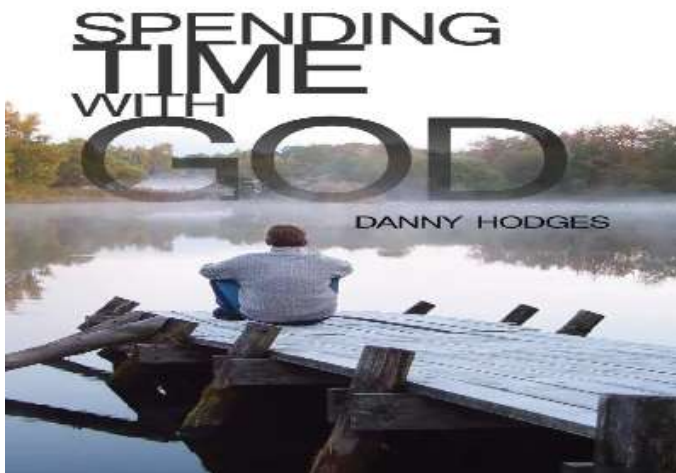
THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE GODLY (PSALM 15) OGUMOR, SUNNY (BISHOP)

This is a Psalm of David. In it, David meditates over the character of the man who can be received into the presence of God.

The Character of those who may dwell with the Lord. We see such a person as a godly man, someone who desires and strives to follow the will of God. He aligns his thoughts, words, and actions with God's Word. This does not necessarily mean that he is perfect, rather, he tries his best to live an upright life. It is only by learning and practicing spiritual disciplines can one become a godly person.

A godly man puts God first in his life, above anything or anyone else. It is the most important characteristic of a person who lives for the Lord. Putting God first involves seeking to live morally, even if it is not comfortable. For example, it can help a person set aside selfish desires which can lead to sinning.

Moreover, a godly person asks God for wisdom and guidance in everything he does. Before starting his day, he prays and spends time reading the Bible. Then, for the rest of the day, he dedicates everything he does to the Lord.



Psalm 15: Is sacred words that focus on showing the right way to worship God.

To understand what David is saying, we must know that not every Old Testament Jew had total freedom to enter the place where God dwelt, the Tabernacle. Only the priests could do it and only the high priest could enter the holiest place in the Tabernacle, called the holy of holy place, and that only once a year, and after fulfilling an elaborate ritual. This place Christ entered once for us. **Heb 9:12,25.**

Who is qualified to dwell with the Lord? Psalm 15:1

Here is a very serious question concerning the character of a citizen of the Kingdom of God. It is the happiness of saints, that they dwell in the presents of God, they will be at home there for ever. This concerns us to make sure that we have a place there.

If we go by the word “No sinner is a Christian” then who is qualified to be with the Lord, to serve in the house of the Lord. **Jn 4:23** *But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.*

If you must dine with the elders, you must wash your hands clean. So also, if you want to make heaven, you must be holy. Here we are encouraged to walk in that way.

Character of those who should be with the Lord is key. Basically, when character is positive (good) the person is friendly and attractive but when the character is negative (bad) the person is repulsive and scaring. With bad character you think that somebody is witch-hunting you, but no, it is your character that puts your reputation at stake. That is what is campaigning against you. Lord let our character campaign for us and not against us.

Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? Who shall dwell in thy holy hill?

Thy "tabernacle" and thy "holy hill". These are figurative expressions, pointing to the Divine presence and favour of who God shall accept and permit to dwell in his present. Paul said some persons will be shut out from the presence of God. **2 Thessalonians 1:9 (NIV):** *They “will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might”.*

Isaiah 33:15-16 (NLT): *The ones who can live here are those who are honest and fair, who reject making a profit by fraud, who stay far away from bribes, who refuse to listen to those who plot murder, who shut their eyes to all enticement to do wrong. These are the ones who will dwell on high. The rocks of the mountains will be their fortress of*

safety. Food will be supplied to them, and they will have water in abundance. Only a holy God can do this to his child.

The upright and righteous: Psalm 15:2

He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness is godly. Here the psalmist is looking at two essentials. An upright walk is the first requisite, that is very essential. Up right walk means to be proud of your religious activities, some persons are very learned they can preach the word but when it comes to indifferences with their neighbor, they are champions of no equal. What did God tell Abraham? **Genesis 17:1 (NLT)** *When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to him and said, "I am God Almighty; serve me faithfully and live a blameless life.* John wrote: If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth (**1 John 1:6**).

To walk with God involves the doing of righteousness, with a sincere intention, having a good conscience towards God. **Rm. 4:9** says that faith was credited to Abraham for righteousness. In all you do pertaining to godliness faith is essential. Peter said **1 Pt 3:21** water baptism that now saves you also is not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a clear conscience toward God. To have good conscience towards God you need to have good conscience towards his creation who you see around and deal with every day. Remember that God created man in his own image and likeness. We speak every day to our neighbor the things that we stored in our hearts, do we speak the truth each time. This is not a mere speech but something in the heart, here we are pointing to the internal truthfulness that is in the hidden chamber of the soul that holds no parley with false hood. Out of the abundance of the heart a man speaks.

Gossipers beware Psalm 15:3

He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour. Is a godly man. Not those with negative virtue.

Among the negative virtues (values that exist) let us look at the ninth commandment, probably because to err in this respect is so very common among humans, Lies and false witness. (9th commandment). Thou shall not bear false witness. This means do not tell lies. **Matthew 12:34:** *Jesus said, out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.*

Do not tell stories that are untrue about people. When you tell lies, you hurt yourself as well as others. Soon people will not trust what you say. How do you want to dwell with the Lord as a liar? The devil is a liar and the father of it. Light and darkness cannot stay together. Do not choose to be wicked, be a child of God, he that is wicked to his neighbor cannot dwell in the Lord's presence.

The Lord declared to Jeremiah tell your people. **Jeremiah 6:28**. There are hardened rebels, criminals in the land going about to slander. The only thing they like doing is corruption. **Jeremiah 9:4** *“they make ready their tongue like a bow, to shoot lies; it is not by truth that they triumph in the land. They go from one sin to another; they do not acknowledge God.”*

The bad use of our tongues does not also help matters, **James 3:5-8**. James said, the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. Like a big forest set on fire by a small match(es). He said, the tongue also is a fire of its own, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole body, sets the whole course of one’s life on fire, and by so doing sets itself on hell fire. No man can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. Who owns this type of tongue? Definitely Not a godly man who want to dwell in the Lord’s house.

He does not do evil to his neighbour; Matt 5:44.

A wise man does no evil to his neighbor but in our today society reverse is the case. Believe you me your neighbor is an asset, how?

Some persons in their fight will boast *“I will disfigure you”* There is special wickedness in injuring one with whom we are close to, sometimes it is envy. How do you like this law? **Leviticus 24:19 NIV: Anyone who injures their neighbor is to be injured in the same manner: (Tit for tat).**

He does not bring disgrace to his neighbour. The good man does not spread an ill report concerning his neighbour even when it is true but to help him find solution or prefers to keep silence, and let the report die out. **Matthew 1:19**. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly. Some people are good at spreading bad news fast. When Paul was addressing widows in **1 Timothy 5:13**. He said, some persons get into the habit of being idle and going about from house to house. And not only do they become idlers, but also busybodies who talk nonsense, saying things they ought not to. The godly person is not a busybody nor does nonsense comes out of the mount.

He does not recognize the wicked: Psalm 15:4.

In his eyes a wicked person is condemned; but he honoureth them that fear the LORD. He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not.

In his eyes a wicked person should not be recon with. A righteous man honours those who fear God, so also, he dislikes those who are wicked or worthless. He is no respecter of persons, he awards honour or dislike accordingly.

He does not oppress the Poor and the blessing of God follows him. Psalm 15:5

He that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these things shall never be moved.

Money lending is not forbidden it is a business all over the world, people borrow money to finance their projects or businesses that will earn them a living. Money is always borrowed on agreement writing or verbal on how to pay back with or without interest. While some will honor the agreement some will not. Psalm 15: 5 is telling us that a godly man does not lend out his money at **(usury)** exorbitant rate of interest. **Exodus 22:25 (NKJV)**: “If you lend money to any of My people who are poor among you, you shall not be like a moneylender to him; you shall not charge him interest.

A godly man does not take reward against the innocent; Bribery and corruption has become the order of the day government agents are everywhere monitoring to kill this ugly trend yet it is going on unabated. This type of conduct was widely practised by the Israelites in later times and Prophet Isaiah sound them a warning. **Isaiah 1:23 (NIV)** *Your rulers are rebels, partners with thieves; they all love bribes and chase after gifts. They do not defend the cause of the fatherless; the widow’s case does not come before them.* **Isaiah 5:22 -23 (NIV)**: *Woe to those who are heroes at drinking wine and champions at mixing drinks, who acquit the guilty for a bribe, but deny justice to the innocent.* It takes a godly mind to distance self from taking bribe.

V5 is telling us that a godly man does not charge exorbitant interest rate when he lends money, he does not take bribe of any kind, and concluded that; “He that behave this way shall never be moved.” The Lord counsels him all the time and this is his joy. **Psalm 16:8-9 (NIV)**: *I will praise the LORD, who counsels me; even at night my heart instructs me. I keep my eyes always on the LORD. With him at my right hand, I will not be shaken. Therefore, my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest secure.*

He shall continue steadfast, unmovable, “having God at his right hand,” as his Protector and Sustainer.

In New Testament words, we could express it like this: *And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.* **1 John 2:17.**

Conclusion:

A citizen of Heaven is sincere in his worship. He is really what he professes to be, and makes effort to stand complete in all the will of God. He is just both to God and man; and, in speaking to both man and God, he speaks the truth in his heart.

He rejects and forbids wrong doings and fraud; he cannot be a party to a bargain, which is made with a lie; He knows that anyone who wrongs his neighbour will know,

in the end, that he has injured himself as well. He is very careful not to hurt any man. He does not speak evil of people, neither does he makes jest of others' faults but makes the best of every body, and the worst of nobody.

He will not increase his estate by extortion, or by bribery. He will not, for what he will gain or hope to gain do any thing to change a righteous cause. The writer says, He that doeth these things shall not be moved for ever.

We notice that the writer of Psalm 15 (David) has a passion to be as close to God as possible. Do you have this passion. Are you keenly interested in dwelling where God dwells? May this passion be manifested in each one of us as well in Jesus' name.

May God add blessings to these words in Jesus Name, Amen.