

DSC Community Group
Sermon Summary, 03/25/2012

Title: "All Rise! Court is Now in Session"
Series: "Pour Out Your Heart to Him: A Study Through the Psalms"

Text: Psalm 50
Preacher: Ryan Kelly

Throughout the Bible, God is pictured in numerous ways: as light, a husband, a mother hen, a farmer, a warrior, etc. In Psalm 50 God is pictured as a judge holding court. This Psalm makes clear that our view of God makes the difference for every part of our life which bears out whether we truly know Him as He is. For the Christian, worshiping and serving God is about trusting and receiving, not giving and supplying.

1. God is the Judge (1-6)

- God is the one final judge. In our day, we have a pattern of paying honor and majesty to our President and to judges when they enter a room. How much more the President and Judge of the earth?
- When God enters His courtroom in Psalm 50, he enters with glory and threat. He calls on all of creation as His witness, not to substantiate His case but to see his righteous judgments.
- Notice who He gathers; "my faithful ones, who made a covenant with me." You would think he would have his sights on the nations, but not so here. The language here in verse 7 reminds us of Deuteronomy 6:4-7, a text that served as something of a slogan for Israel. All of this affirms 1 Peter 4:17, that "judgment [begins] at the household of God."

2. He Condemns Ritualism (7-15)

- The Old Testament had plenty of rituals, but repeatedly condemned ritualism. They were faithful in sacrificing but had a wrong view of what they were doing. God doesn't want empty sacrifices/obedience/worship. This reminds us of Isaiah 1:11-14.
- God doesn't want sacrifices as part of a barter system. He needs nothing (50:9-13; Acts 17:24-25). Ancient Near Eastern idols were made and served by humans (Ps. 115; Isa. 44, 46). God is the very opposite. In worship we don't give to God, but we get from God.
- Notice that God is angry in 50:15 because we have not leaned on Him. That is, God's disposition is that of love, and care, and giving, and gracious condescension to us. He is offended when we live like we don't need Him but he needs us. That God is eager to help is seen in Jer. 32:41 and Psa. 147:10-11. And, of course, the fullness of this is seen in the gospel where God helps us all the way to the cross. Nothing can be added to that, and attempting to do more than receive and trust nullifies its work.

3. He Hates Hypocrisy (16-20)

- 50:16-20 refers to a second group of people. The first group (50:7-15) seemed sincere but mistaken. The second group doesn't seem to care. They are "the wicked" (Isa. 29:13). They hate disciplined dismiss God's words, rejoice in evil, and gossip with their mouths.

4. There are Only Two Paths (21-23)

- This is the climax of the Psalm with a warning in 50:21-22 (See also 2 Peter 3:4-12) and hope given in 50:23. 50:23 can actually sound like works salvation, but it indicates that our approach to what we give God (sacrifices/obedience/worship) indicates something much deeper: how we view God; what we believe He expects; how we view salvation.

Sample Questions

- Psalm 50 teaches us about the meaning of the rituals/rules God gave his people - to show their need for Him. In sin, we tend to invert the meaning of what God requires as if God needs something from us, be it our obedience or our praise or our service. How can this tendency show up in our lives? In our parenting? In our church? (e.g. a fixation on a certain worship form, or a particular rule or rules that we elevate in importance over the heart of the matter; pride in obedience or service of any kind).
- Psalm 50:16-20 exposes the problem of hypocrisy. In as much as we "forget God" (50:22) in our service or obedience, we are hypocrites. Do we hate discipline? Dismiss God's Word, perhaps selectively? Rejoice in evil? Do we gossip and slander?