

“Asking God For Guidance”

INTRODUCTION: Psalm 25 is a unique Psalm. Yet it is tied to other Psalms in both structure and content.

1. First: *Psalm 25 is the second **acrostic** Psalm in the Psalter*
 - a) Psalm 9-10 was the first acrostic Psalm (B. Peterson)
 - b) *acrostic*: the first words of the Hebrew lines (*strophes*) begin with the successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet.
 - aleph
 - bet
 - gimel
 - dalet, etc., etc.
 - c) Hence: 22 lines because the Hebrew alphabet has 22 letters.
 - d) But ... Psalm 25 is an imperfect acrostic with 4 or 5 small variations.
2. Second: *Psalm 25 is structured like Psalm 18*
 - a) Psalm 18 – part prayer alternating with part confession of faith/ trust
 - b) petitions of prayer at the beginning and end of the Psalm with confession of faith in the center of the Psalm
 - c) Speaking to God, speaking about God, speaking to God.
3. Third: *Psalm 25 grows out of Psalm 1; both are wisdom Psalms.*
 - a) Pss. 1 and 25 have the same theme: *Trust in God’s Word to Guide Us.*
 - b) The Way of Wisdom and Righteousness.
4. Fourth: *Psalm 25 has the same circumstances as Psalm 3.*
 - a) *O Lord, how many are my foes!
Many are rising against me;
many are saying of my soul,
there is no salvation for him in God. Selah (Ps. 3:1-2)*
 - b) *Consider how many are my foes,
and with what violent hatred they hate me. (Ps. 25:19)*
5. Finally: *Psalm 25 is the first Psalm to use the word **sin**.*
 - a) *Remember not the sins of my youth or my transgressions;
according to your steadfast love remember me,
for the sake of your goodness, O Lord! (Ps. 25:7)*
 - b) Other Psalms *allude* to personal sin and guilt.

c) But Psalm 25:7 is the first overt reference to **sin**.

6. Psalm 25 may be titled “*A Prayer for Guidance*”

a) **Michael Wilcock**: *The Message of Psalm 1-72: BST*; p. 91

I shall not be the only preacher to have based sermons on the subject of guidance on texts taken from Psalm 25. It has a good deal to say about guiding and showing, about paths and ways, and specifically about God showing his ways to me. Preacher and hearers alike may have in mind a particular kind of situation: namely the facing of some personal choice which warrants a special pointer from God. The pointer is needed, they feel, when an important decision has to be made, and both possibilities seem equally good but neither seems obviously right. I believe that in fact such situations are rare, and are in any case not what Psalm 25 is about. When we set its ‘guidance’ texts in the context of the whole psalm, and read that, in its turn, against the background of Psalm 1, a different picture emerges. For it is out of Psalm 1 that Psalm 25 grows.

b) i.e., not guidance in an *emergency* or in a *special* situation (e.g., guidance in a crisis situation)

c) rather: guidance for every-day life (e.g., whom to marry, how to spend one’s money; taking a new job, etc.)

d) **Michael Wilcock** – p. 91.

And when we pray in the words of Psalm 25 Show me your ways ... teach me your paths ... guide me in your truth (vv. 4-5), we mean the ways, the paths, and the truth that God has already made known once and for all in the pages of Scripture.

7. **Note**: Unlike Psalm 24 (liturgical/ congregational/ antiphonal), Psalm 25 is a *purely personal* prayer, full of “I... me... my... mine.”

8. Situation? None. David appears to write a Prayer not connected to any specific event in his life.

9. **Alexander Maclaren**: *Psalms: Vol. 1*; p. 242

Such alternation of petition and contemplation is like the heart’s beat of the religious life, now expanding in desire, now closing in possession. The psalm has no marks of occasion or period. It deals with the permanent elements in a devout man’s relation to God.

10. This prayer has an **introduction** and a **postscript**

a) The **first stanza** sets forth its twin themes (Introduction)

(1) Petition for Guidance and Grace

(2) Trust in God and His Wisdom (Word)

b) *To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.*

O my God, in you I trust;

let me not be put to shame;

let not my enemies exult over me.

Indeed, none who wait for you shall be put to shame;

they shall be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous. (Ps. 25:1-3)

c) **Prayer**: *To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul;*

Trust: *O, my God, in you (do) I trust*

Prayer: *Let me not be put to shame;
let not my enemy exult over me.*

Trust: *Indeed, none who wait for you shall be
put to shame; they shall be ashamed who
are wantonly treacherous.*

d) The **last verse** acts as an extended “Amen” (a Postscript)

- (1) *Redeem Israel, O God,
out of all his troubles. (Ps. 25:22)*
- (2) not part of the Acrostic (which ends in v. 21)
- (3) making it possible to use the personal prayer of Psalm 25 in congregational worship.
- (4) *Israel* (community) replaces the “I” (individual)
- (5) Allows the Church to rise above personal problems in order to pray for Community needs.

I. UNDERSTANDING PSALM 25

A. The Prayer for God’s Guidance (Ps. 25:4-7)

1. *Indeed, none who wait for you shall be put to shame;
they shall be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous.
Make me to know your ways, O Lord;
teach me your paths.
Lead me in your truth and teach me,
for you are the God of my salvation;
for you I wait all the day long.
Remember your mercy, O Lord, and your steadfast love,
for they have been from of old.
Remember not the sins of my youth or my transgressions;
according to your steadfast love remember me,
for the sake of your goodness, O Lord! (Ps. 25:3-7)*
2. Here in the **second stanza** is the first prayer, asking God for two gifts:
 - a) Guidance for life
 - b) Remembrance of the Covenant
3. First: *Guidance for Life* (25:4-5)
 - a) *Make me to know your ways, O Lord;
teach me your paths.
Lead me in your truth and teach me,
for you are the God of my salvation;
for you I wait all the day long. (Ps. 25:4-5)*

- b) key concepts: *make me to know ... teach me ... lead me ...*
- c) David is obviously asking God for **guidance**
- d) And that Guidance is **not** direct or specific; it comes from God's Word (Scriptures)

(1) *Your ways ... your paths ... your truths ...*

(2) *Blessed is the man*

*who walks not in the counsel of the wicked,
nor stands in the way of sinners,
nor sits in the seat of scoffers;
but his delight is in the law of the Lord,
and on his law he meditates day and night. (Ps. 1:1-2)*

(3) *Teach me your way, O Lord,*

*and lead me on a level path
because of my enemies. (Ps. 27:11)*

(4) *Teach me your way, O Lord,*

*that I may walk in your truth;
unite my heart to fear your name. (Ps. 86:11)*

(5) *Your word is a lamp to my feet*

and a light to my path. (Ps. 119:105)

(6) *Teach me, O Lord, the way of your statutes;*

*and I will keep it to the end.
Give me understanding, that I may keep your law
and observe it with my whole heart.
Lead me in the path of your commandments,
for I delight in it. (Ps. 119:33-35)*

(7) *Let me hear in the morning of your steadfast love,
for in you I trust.*

*Make me know the way I should go,
for to you I lift up my soul.
Teach me to do your will,
for you are my God!
Let your good Spirit lead me
on level ground! (Ps. 143:8,10)*

- e) This is a common way of speaking about God's way of salvation, blessing, and wise guidance.

Search me, O God, and know my heart!

Try me and know my thoughts!

And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting! (Ps. 139:23-24)

- 4. Paul often wrote (spoke) about the Christian "walk." In fact, Christianity was originally known as "The Way." Why?

- a) Because Jesus did not call us to a static, Greek idea of faith; salvation by cognition (doctrine). His call was this – *“Follow Me”*
- b) Christianity is not a resting in grace alone but in a grace that leads to a lifestyle of godliness.

“Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few. (Matt. 7:13-14)

- c) In verse 5 *“the God of salvation”* is the God who

- (1) *makes us to know His ways of living*
- (2) *teaches us His path through life*
- (3) *leads us into His revealed truth*

- d) David is praying for a “faith with good works”

(1) *For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. (Eph. 2:8-10)*

(2) *What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, be warmed and filled,” without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. But someone will say, “You have faith and I have works.” Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder! Do you want to be shown, you foolish person, that faith apart from works is useless? Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar? You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by his works; and the Scripture was fulfilled that says, “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness”—and he was called a friend of God. You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone. And in the same way was not also Rahab the prostitute justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way? For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead. (James 2:14-26)*

- 5. **Grace should not paralyze us so that following Christ, learning God’s ways, pursuing truth for living, or walking on the path of salvation become labeled as “moralism,” “dead works,” or “legalism.”**
- 6. God Said, *“If you love Me you will keep My commandments.”* But we first must be guided by God’s Word before we can walk in God’s way.

7. The **Proof** that David is not advocating a works righteousness or a salvation by good deeds is the second part of his first petition –

a) *Remember your mercy, O Lord, and your steadfast love, for they have been from of old. Remember not the sins of my youth or my transgressions; according to your steadfast love remember me, for the sake of your goodness, O Lord! (Ps. 25:6-7)*

b) **Remember ... Remember not ...**

(1) Do remember, O Lord, your mercy or steadfast love

(2) *Chesed*: covenant love and loyalty

(3) God's covenant of grace ...

“Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.” (Jer. 31:31-34)

c) Do not remember, O Lord, all my sins and transgressions

(1) especially those of my *youth*

(2) when I did not know all your ways

(3) before Grace produced in my godly maturity.

d) *according to your steadfast love remember me, for the sake of your goodness, O Lord! (Ps. 25:7b)*

(1) *according to your covenant love and loyalty*

(2) *for the sake of your goodness*

(3) God's **two motives** for everything He does.

e) God **always** keeps His covenant promises

f) God **always** acts out of His innate goodness.

8. **Louis Berkhof**: *Systematic Theology*; p. 70

a) *We speak of something as good, when it answers in all parts to the ideal. Hence in our ascription of goodness to God the fundamental idea is that He is in every way all that He as God should be, and therefore answers perfectly to the ideal expressed in the word*

“God.” But since God is good in Himself, He is also good for His creatures, and may therefore be called the fons omnium bonorum. He is the fountain of all good. And not only that, but God is also the summum bonum, the highest good, for all His creatures, though in different degrees and according to the measure in which they answer to the purpose of their existence. The goodness of God towards his creatures in general may be defined as that perfection of God which prompts Him to deal bountifully and kindly with all His creatures.

- b) God is *perfectly and completely* good.
- c) God is the *fountain* of all goodness
- d) God is the *greatest good* for all creation
- e) God is *good and gracious* to all creatures.
- f) *The Lord is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.
The Lord is good to all,
and his mercy is over all that he has made. (Ps. 145:8-9)*

9. **Hear this:** Because of God’s perfect goodness and His covenant graciousness ...

- a) He will forgive people of their sins.
- b) He will save people from damnation.
- c) He will enter into a Covenant of Grace with believers.
- d) He will show us His **good way**.
- e) He will help us to follow His righteous path.

10. *Because God is perfectly good His Word, His ways, His statutes, His laws, His instruction, His truth, His precepts and His guidance are perfectly good, and good for us!*

11. The truly **wise** person does not have to think about if he/she will follow God’s Word; they need help only to discover *how* they might follow God’s Word.

*Teach me, O Lord, the way of your statutes;
and I will keep it to the end.
Give me understanding, that I may keep your law
and observe it with my whole heart.
Lead me in the path of your commandments,
for I delight in it.
Incline my heart to your testimonies,
and not to selfish gain!
Turn my eyes from looking at worthless things;
and give me life in your ways.
Confirm to your servant your promise,
that you may be feared.
Turn away the reproach that I dread,
for your rules are good.*

*Behold, I long for your precepts;
in your righteousness give me life! (Ps. 119:33-40)*

12. The godly man's *faith* in God sustains his pursuit of God's guidance.

B. The Confession of God's Goodness (Ps. 25:8-11)

1. *Good and upright is the Lord;*

therefore he instructs sinners in the way.

He leads the humble in what is right,

and teaches the humble his way.

*All the paths of the Lord are steadfast love and faithfulness,
for those who keep his covenant and his testimonies.*

For your name's sake, O Lord,

pardon my guilt, for it is great. (Ps. 25:8-11)

2. This **third stanza** is a confession of faith/trust in the goodness of God.

a) "*Good and upright in the Lord, therefore ...*"

b) "*therefore*" – God's goodness is going to result in good things.

c) **Three** good gifts, to be exact

d) **First:** God will teach and lead His saint in the good way.

(1) *Good and upright is the Lord;*

therefore he instructs sinners in the way.

He leads the humble in what is right, and teaches the humble his way. (Ps. 25:8-9)

(2) **Note:** only the *humble* receive such guidance

(3) *Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble." Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you. (1 Peter 5:5-7)*

e) **Second:** God will surround those who obey His Word with His goodness.

(1) *All the paths of the Lord are steadfast love and faithfulness,
for those who keep his covenant and his testimonies. (Ps. 25:10)*

(2) *All the paths of the Lord* – God's many precepts lead to the same thing.

(3) *Steadfast love and faithfulness:* a doubling of terms (*chesed*): covenant + truthfulness.

f) **Third:** God repeatedly forgives His saints when they sin for the sake of His good name.

(1) *For your name's sake, O Lord,*

pardon my guilt, for it is great. (Ps. 25:11)

(2) even when our sin and guilt are *great*

(3) "*Grace that is greater than all my sin*"

3. Here is the **confidence** in God’s good grace that enables and encourages us to follow Christ – even if we sin, we are forgiven and surrounded by God’s covenant Blessings! **We really cannot fail!**

C. The Confession of God’s Generosity (Ps. 25:12-15)

1. *Who is the man who fears the Lord?*

Him will he instruct in the way that he should choose.

*His soul shall abide in well-being,
and his offspring shall inherit the land.*

*The friendship of the Lord is for those who fear him,
and he makes known to them his covenant.*

My eyes are ever toward the Lord,

for he will pluck my feet out of the net. (Ps. 25:12-15)

2. Here is the **Fourth stanza**. To be honest I had a difficult time placing a label or summary word on these four verses.
3. I decided on *God’s generosity* because of the richness of these truths.
4. David is still confessing his faith/trust in God, and he states “*Who is the man who fears (reveres) the Lord?*” Then he states all the rich blessings this person of reverent faith will receive –
- a) *Instruction* from God concerning his life – choices
 - b) *Well-being* in which to abide (live)
 - c) *Godly inheritance* (legacy) for one’s children
 - d) *Secret council* from God as a Friend.
 - (1) *The friendship of the Lord is for those who fear him, (Ps. 25:14a)*
 - (2) *The secret of the Lord is for those who fear Him, (Ps. 25:14a NASB)*
 - (3) *The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law. (Deut. 29:29)*
 - e) An including in *God’s Covenant of Grace*
 - f) *Deliverance* in times of danger ...

My eyes are ever toward the Lord,

for he will pluck my feet out of the net. (Ps. 25:12-15)

5. **God is good to those who love Him.** He is the perfectly good Friend!

- a) and good friends always share their hearts with one another ...

(1) *and the Scripture was fulfilled that says, “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness”—and he was called a friend of God. (James 2:23)*

(2) *The Lord said, “Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do, seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of*

the earth shall be blessed in him? For I have chosen him, that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord by doing righteousness and justice, so that the Lord may bring to Abraham what he has promised him.” (Gen. 18:17-19)

- (3) *Thus the Lord used to speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend. When Moses turned again into the camp, his assistant Joshua the son of Nun, a young man, would not depart from the tent. (Ex. 33:11)*
- (4) *No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you. (John 15:15)*

6. God’s gracious, good and generous guidance is the signal proof that He is our Divine Friend!

D. The Prayer for God’s Graciousness (Ps. 25:18-21)

1. *Consider my affliction and my trouble,
and forgive all my sins.
Consider how many are my foes,
and with what violent hatred they hate me.
Oh, guard my soul, and deliver me!
Let me not be put to shame, for I take refuge in you.
May integrity and uprightness preserve me,
for I wait for you. (Ps. 25:18-21)*
2. Convinced of God’s friendship, David now “opens up” and shares his soul (heart) with the Lord, in words of incredible transparency and vulnerability.
3. He tells God, his Friend, that he is troubled by **seven problems**:
 - a) *Lonely and afflicted*
 - b) *troubled in heart and distressed*
 - c) *afflicted by his own sins*
 - d) *beset by many foes (enemies)*
 - e) *subject to violent hatred*
 - f) *in fear of being put to shame*
 - g) *in need of preservation*
4. Here is the litany of evil that surrounds each one of us, as we step out into the world every day – and *increasingly* so, over time, as our fallen world and dying American culture becomes more and more godless. We feel ...
 - a) *lonely* in this fallen world,
 - b) *troubled* in heart over the state of our nation,
 - c) *afflicted* by our own besetting sins,
 - d) *beset* (surrounded) by an increasing number of spiritual foes,

- e) *subjected* to growing hatred, violence and persecution,
 - f) *fearful* about being put to shame in what we believe,
 - g) and in great need of *preservation*. Life is dangerous for the believer in this world!
5. **Remember:** This petition and its litany of *evils* is prayed in the shadow of the litany of God's *blessings*:
- a) *Who is the man who fears the Lord?
Him will he instruct in the way that he should choose.
His soul shall abide in well-being,
and his offspring shall inherit the land.
The friendship of the Lord is for those who fear him,
and he makes known to them his covenant.
My eyes are ever toward the Lord,
for he will pluck my feet out of the net. (Ps. 25:12-15)*
 - b) Are we lonely in this world? *God is our Friend.*
 - c) Are we troubled in heart? *Our souls will abide in God's well-being.*
 - d) Are we afflicted by our own sins? *God will pardon our guilt.*
 - e) Are we beset by many enemies? *God will pluck our feet out of the net.*
 - f) Are we subject to violent hatred? *God loves us and our children.*
 - g) Are we in fear of being ashamed? *God has made known to us His covenant.*
 - h) Are we in need of preservation? *God will guide us in the good way.*
6. So ... we pray with this in mind: "... *I wait for you (God)*" (v. 21)
7. Postscript: And what is true for you or me is also true for us; for the corporate Church, the Community of God –

*Redeem Israel, O God,
out of all his troubles. (Ps. 25:22)*

II. PRAYING PSALM 25

A. Psalm 25 Helps us Face the Reality of Daily Life

1. **Peter C. Craigie:** *Psalms 1-50: WBC; Vol. 19; p. 222*

Ps 1 could be misleading; it might be taken to imply that the essence of life was simply choosing the right road – once the choice had been made, all would be well. But in Ps 25, the wisdom themes reappear, though now in a context of prayer. The prayer is that of a person who has made the choice and is walking the road of the righteous; but the dispassionate wisdom has been transformed to passionate petition, for the right road is not an easy one on which to walk. It is lined with enemies who would like nothing better than to put the walker to shame; and the traveler on the road is also plagued with internal doubts, as he recalls in his mind previous wanderings from the path and former sins. The essence of the road of the righteous is this: it is a road too difficult to walk without the companionship and friendship of God. The psalmist, troubled from without and within, has stopped for a moment in the way; he knows he cannot turn back, but scarcely knows how to continue. And so

he prays that God would show him the road and make him walk in it. He knows that he does not deserve such guidance and strength, but as one forgiven of sin, he is confident that God will show him the road again.

2. Life with God is **not** learned in a Book – not even in the Bible. It is learned through living, suffering, sinning and forgiving; the Word of God and the Ways of Wisdom, in the midst of these great realities
 - a) **Failure** of my own sins,
 - b) **Foes** all around me,
 - c) **Friendship** with God through Jesus Christ.

3. **Martin Luther** summarized his “new evangelical theology” in a message he gave, known as “*The Heidelberg Disputation*”
 - a) He said there were two kinds of priests (saints)
 - (1) *Theologians of Glory*: those who lived for success, glory and a self-righteousness rooted in one’s performance.
 - (2) *Theologians of the Cross*: those who lived by faith, embraced the Cross, and experienced God’s grace.
 - b) Luther called us to become *theologians of the Cross* – people who live by faith in Christ.
 - c) He set forth 28 Theses, in a logical argument. Here are his most famous theses (#19 and #20)
 - (1) *Thesis 19. That person does not deserve to be called a theologian who looks upon the invisible things of God as though they were clearly perceptible in those things that have actually happened (or have been made, created).*
 - (2) *Thesis 20. That person deserves to be called a theologian, however, who comprehends the visible and manifest things of God through suffering and the cross.*
 - d) And here is how he explained these two ideas – *This is clear: He who does not know Christ does not know God hidden in suffering. Therefore he prefers works to suffering, glory to the cross, strength to weakness, wisdom to folly, and, in general, good to evil. These are the people whom the Apostle calls “enemies of the cross of Christ” (Phil. 3:18), for they hate the cross and suffering and love works and the glory of works. Thus they call the good of the cross evil and the evil of a deed good. God can be found only in suffering and the cross, as has already been said. Therefore the friends of the cross say that the cross is good and works are evil, for through the cross works are dethroned and the Old Adam, who is especially edified by works, is crucified. It is impossible for a person not to be puffed by his good works unless he has first been deflated and destroyed by suffering and evil until he knows that he is worthless and that his works are not his but God’s.*

4. Psalm 25 does not find God (Christ) in success, looking good, easy circumstances, proper performance or the esteem of others.

5. Psalm 25 points us to God on the cross: sins needing forgiveness, enemies to be protected from,

confusion needing guidance, doubt needing assurance, pain needing comfort, loneliness needing the Friendship of God.

6. *Psalm 25 may be the “most authentic/real” of all the 150 Psalms!*

B. Psalm 25 Points us to God our Friend

1. God has stated, several times, that He is the “Friend of sinners” who trust in Him and who attempt to follow His ways – Abraham, Moses, Us (John 15).
2. Here is the measure of a **true friend**: *They love you not for what you do for them, but for what they can do for you. They love you when you do well, or when you fail, and especially when you need them!*
3. Again, **Marin Luther** and his *Heidelberg Disputation*; this time in his thesis #28 (with explanation)
 - a) *Thesis 28. The love of God does not first discover but creates what is pleasing to it. The love of man comes into being through attraction to what pleases it.*
 - b) *The first part [of the thesis] is clear because the love of God that lives in man loves sinners, evil persons, fools, and weaklings in order to make them righteous, good, wise, and strong. Rather than seeking its own good, the love of God flows forth and bestows good. Therefore sinners are attractive because they are loved; they are not loved because they are attractive.*
 - c) *This is the love of the cross, born of the cross, which turns in the direction where it does not find good that it may enjoy, but where it may confer good upon the bad and needy person.*
4. If you’re like me, you feel more “worthy” to pray when you’ve “done well.” Don’t be like me; be like David – a true theologian of the Cross – and pray Psalm 25 when you’ve failed, sinned or been unfaithful to God.
5. **Personally**, I am never more honored, more pleased and more touched by family and friends than when they come to me and say, “*I don’t deserve this but I need your help and support.*”
6. **God is like that too. The Perfect Friend honored when we come to Him in need, in prayer and in trust that He loves us.**
7. Learn to see God as your Best Friend.

C. Psalm 25 Reminds Me that God’s Guidance is Dynamic

1. Meaning: *I cannot treat the Bible as a textbook, or manual, or even a Systematic Theology. The Bible is a story – the great **story**, the grand narrative, the true meta-narrative – which helps us enter into “God’s Story,” and be blessed by doing so.*
2. Hence: God’s guidance is less about knowing the right thing to do (i.e., getting the right answer) then it is about heading the *right way*.
3. Jesus has invited us into a **Life with God**: “*I came that they might have life and have it abundantly*” (John 10:10)
4. Ever notice the difference between a knowledgeable Christian and a wise one?
 - a) The Knowledgeable Christian: He’s read the books, knows all the right answers, appears

to have it “together.” But deep down he’s truly proud, insecure and censorious.

- b) *Now concerning food offered to idols: we know that “all of us possess knowledge.” This “knowledge” puffs up, but love builds up. (1 Cor. 8:1)*
 - (1) Knowledge – Right answer – Puffed up in Pride
 - (2) Love – Right way to live – Building up others
 - c) The Wise Person: She’s concerned about loving God, loving others, and growing closer to Christ. Deep down she’s focused on living with God more than knowing the right answer. She is secure in Christ and caring toward others.
5. True knowledge of God leads to following God, which develops wisdom in God’s ways that
- a) Please Him and strengthen one’s Friendship with God,
 - b) Loves other people and helps them to know God’s love,
 - c) Develops faith and obedience, leading to the assurance of holiness.
6. Evangelicalism, the PCA and Christ Covenant Church have too many people who are *knowledgeable* about God but *static* in faith and *stymied* in Love.
7. We need more men and women who’ll focus on *following Christ* into the narrow way of grace, godliness and goodness. These folks are willing to take the *dynamic* and *divine* way of the Lord, toward a blessed life ...

*Good and upright is the Lord;
therefore he instructs sinners in the way.
He leads the humble in what is right,
and teaches the humble his way.
All the paths of the Lord are steadfast love and faithfulness,
for those who keep his covenant and his testimonies. (Ps. 25:8-10)*