

# Psalm 101: How To Cultivate A Perfect Heart

We would be remiss to elevate King David as just royalty—a man of rank and rule—and not consider that he was a follower of God just like you and I. Yes, I have to tell you that David was as human and subject to sin as any man—perhaps more-so, having committed sins of adultery and murder. Nonetheless, the Scriptures describe our faith-determined king as “a man after God’s own heart” (1 Samuel 13:14; Acts 13:22).

Psalm 101 is only eight verses but is packed with the godly wisdom and resolve of a humble king surrendered to the grace of God. As we lay aside who David was within the Christ-centric grand lineage of Israel’s reigning kings—his day job if you will—we may find common ground and wisdom from the heart of a lover of God that could impact our spiritual walk today.

I believe that each of the eight verses in Psalm 101 give us great insight and instruction as to how to cultivate a perfect, blameless heart before the Lord. What we find may surprise you.

## **Psalms 101:1**

*(KJV) A Psalm of David. I will sing of mercy and judgment: unto thee, O LORD, will I sing.  
(NIV) Of David. A psalm. I will sing of your love and justice; to you, LORD, I will sing praise.*

In God’s economy, divine ministry happens in all seasons of life:

## **Ecclesiastes 3:1**

*To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven.*

## **2Timothy 4:2**

*Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction.*

David understood this because he had experienced God in the good, bad, and ugly seasons of his own life. Therefore, he chose as his theme song here in Psalm 101:1 a praise to God—for His Lord’s steadfast love when he needed to be comforted and strengthened; and for God’s justice when David himself needed correction and chastisement (Hebrews 12:6)—however painful—or his enemies threatened to overtake him. In any and every situation David found himself, He could sing praises to the God whom he found to be a very present help when he was in trouble:

## **Psalm 46:1-3** *To the chief Musician for the sons of Korah, A Song upon Alamoth.*

*God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah.*

We as believers today will do well to consider all the attributes of God revealed in the whole counsel of God, so that our circumstances—in all seasons of our lives—become opportunities for God to show Himself able (Ephesians 3:20) as we seek Him in prayer at all times (1 Thessalonians 5:17).

\*QUESTION FOR MEDITATION: How important to you—or perhaps not—has it been to survey all of God’s Word when studying out a specific subject, in order to get a clear understanding of it? Have you in the past been taught to consult the whole breadth of Holy Scripture in study, or to just find a few verses that support your presuppositions?

\*STUDY POINT: Take a few weeks and conduct a personal Bible study called “The Attributes Of God According To His Word” and include ten singular characteristics of God. Support each of your claims with at least six verses and/or passages of Scripture from both the Old Testament and the New Testament. This longer-term study will certainly deepen your understanding of the harmony of the whole counsel of God while strengthening your faith in your Heavenly Father!

One of most raw and revealing tests of our trust and faith in God is not when we are prospering and experiencing blessings, but when we are suffering and all around us is spiritually desolate. Indeed, in the midst of storms of adversity is where we grow the most and learn to praise God as Job did:

**Job 1:20-22**

*Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped, And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD. In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.*

As Habakkuk did:

**Habakkuk 3:17-19**

*Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The LORD God is my strength, and he will make my feet like hind's feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places. To the chief singer on my stringed instruments.*

And as David did in Psalm 101:1:

*I will sing of mercy and judgment: unto thee, O LORD, will I sing.*

**Psalms 101:2**

*(KJV) I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way. O when wilt thou come unto me? I will walk within my house with a perfect heart.*

*(NIV) I will be careful to lead a blameless life— when will you come to me? I will conduct the affairs of my house with a blameless heart.*

David, the individual believer in God, was like you and I in the sense that his personal holiness was tested best in private—when he was alone or at home with family—not parading pious religiosity before the saints and the world. Brethren, ours is to be a sincere faith, a quiet faith, a humble faith, not proud and ostentatious as the Pharisees that Jesus condemned:

**Matthew 23:5**

*But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments.*

Read all of Matthew 23 for the scathing rebuke Jesus had for the outwardly religious and inwardly cold-as-ice hearted Pharisees. The take away from that chapter is that we don't want to be found in that cover-up camp, but rather cultivate hearts like this:

**Matthew 6:5-15**

*And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him. After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen. For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.*

A perfect way? David is aiming at something important here—to be blameless before His Lord. Not perfect—as we know all too well he, nor any of us, has or will achieve sinless perfection in this life—but blameless. As has been said—if we don't aim at anything, we will invariably hit it! Therefore, in our daily walk with God It is wise to know our own specific weaknesses and besetting sins and set boundaries by the Word of God so our flesh has no means to express what evil our hearts conceive (James 1:14-15; Jeremiah 17:9) and what our minds plan and rehearse (2 Corinthians 10:5).

To begin with, we need to guard our hearts with diligence from anything corrupt or wicked. In other words, love what our holy God loves, and hate what He hates:

**Proverbs 4:23**

*Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.*

We also need to understand that our carnal hearts can deceive us:

**Jeremiah 17:9**

*The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?*

So, we need to allow God to search our hearts daily and make us aware of corruption that may reside there, so we can repent and have Him wash our hearts clean:

**Psalm 139:23-24**

*Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.*

**Psalm 51:2**

*Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.*

When the heart does conceive evil (and it will!) we need to take captive those thoughts and ideas that result from an evil heart—that come against the truth of God’s Word—and cast them down, and replace them with God’s truth:

**2Corinthians 10:5**

*Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.*

As long as we live on this earth—in these bodies—the spirit and the flesh will battle it out (Galatians 5:17). So this setting of personal holiness boundaries—based on what we know of our sin tendencies—is a daily process. And our obedience to the Word of God, through the power of the Holy Ghost is central to our ongoing victory in Christ.

I am reminded at this point of Apostle Paul’s words:

**Romans 7:24-25**

*O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.*

Paul gives us a reality check in Romans 7 that there is no way to battle our flesh and win (see our previous series Battle Sin and Win, also on our You Tube channel)—we need God and His Holy Ghost power! David admits as much here in Psalm 101:2: “when will you come to me?” And ultimately, Jesus tells us that we will not achieve anything of personal holiness—let alone eternal, kingdom significance—apart from Him!

**John 15:5**

*I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing*

Next week on the Teaching Room, we continue through Psalm 101 as David shares with us more of his godly resolve to cultivate a perfect heart.

~ Reverend Darren McClelland