

Psalm 36 – Bible Study Notes Overcoming Sin by Seeking God’s Glory

Primary Focus: Contrasting man’s sin with God’s righteousness

Background Info: Unknown

Basic structure:

- I. Man’s sinfulness described (vv. 1-4)
 - A. Man’s attitude and submission to sin (vv. 1-2)
 - B. Man’s acts of sin (vv. 3-4)
- II. God’s righteousness described (vv. 5-9)
 - A. God’s unending, unfathomable, imminent glory (vv. 5-6)
 - B. God’s intimate care and interaction with His people (vv. 7-9)
- III. Petitioning God to defeat the sinfulness (vv. 10-12)
 - A. Seeking God’s intervention to defeat man’s sin (vv. 10-11)
 - B. Confidence in God’s victory (v. 12)

Verses 1-4 – Man’s sin described

Verse 1 – Our flesh listens to sinfulness.

Literally “oracle of transgression.”

An oracle offers advice and guidance.

Man listens to the oracle of transgression.

We desire to sin.

We do not respect God or fear His judgment.

Romans 3:18 – Paul quotes this verse.

Romans 3 discusses man’s sinfulness in more detail.

Verse 2 – Because we listen to sin’s counsel, we are unable to see our own sinfulness.

We believe we are not sinful.

We are blinded by sin.

Verse 3 – We speak in sin and reject God’s righteousness.

The “words” reflect all we say and do (cf. James 3:1-12).

Words express our thoughts, desires, and emotions.

Our mouths reflect our own actions.

We reject God’s righteousness.

Phrase “cease to be wise” expresses a rejection of goodness.

We reject both righteous thoughts (“be wise”) and actions (“do good”).

Verse 4 – Our sinfulness infects our whole person

... our thoughts (v. 4a);

... our wills (v. 4b);

... our feelings (v. 4c).

It elaborates the idea in verse 3 regarding the “words” more specifically.

Life Questions

Describe a time you acted in a sinful manner.

Verses 5-9 – God’s righteousness described

Verses 5-6 – God’s perfect righteousness is beyond man’s understanding.

It is limitless.

It is unlimited.

It is absolutely perfect.

Verses 7-9 – God shelters and protects those who seek Him from the sin.

“Precious” in verse 7 expresses how valuable God’s care is to man.

He takes an active and intimate role in our lives.

“Shadow of Your wings” – shows salvation as both humbling and reassuring.

“Abundance of Your house” – refers to either experiences of David in 1 Sam. 26 and 2 Sam. 17:27ff or to the Temple (if written after the building of the Temple).

“River of Your delights” – refers to Eden and the rivers flowing from it.

“Fountain of life” – expression of God as the giver of life (Ezek. 47 elaborates on the idea of life-giving water more fully).

“Your light” – refers to either joy, God’s goodness, or both.

Life Questions

Describe a time God helped you turn from sin and live righteously in Him. How had God revealed His perfect righteousness to you?

Verses 10-12 – Petitioning God to defeat the sinfulness

Verses 10-11 – We should seek God’s provision and protection.

Verse 10 petitions God’s provision.

God provides His loyalty and love to those who seek Him.

God will bless with righteousness those who depend on Him.

Verse 11 petitions God’s protection.

We should seek God’s protection against sinful desires in ourselves.

We should seek God’s protection from outside temptations to sin.

Verse 12 – We can be confident that God has already defeated sin.

The “doers” is less about others than the psalmist himself.

We can be confident our sinfulness has already be defeated.

Life Questions

Why is it important to overcome sin? How can you overcome sin in your own life?