

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION
Psalms: Living By Faith In God
XXVI. Handling A Deep Revulsion Of Evil
(Psalm 26:1-12)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

When we face the growth of evil today, one's sense of revulsion at it can seem almost overwhelming:

(1) This occurred in the aftermath of the recent Uvalde, Texas school shooting: the May 27, 2022, Republican-American editorial, "With spring comes violence," p. 6A, complained that "hours after the May 24 massacre," President Biden "disgracefully" obstructed "people and their leaders from exploring possible solutions" to such tragedies by "wielding the actions of shooters as partisan political attacks against Republicans." In keeping with the president's comment but more toxic, a letter by Joanne Nelson of Southbury claimed that "today's Republican Party is an enabler of murder" for not having joined Democrats to enact alleged "sensible gun legislation." (Ibid.)

Ramesh Ponnuru's piece, "Break away from gun control ritual" (Ibid.) refuted these claims, stating, "The mainstream gun-control agenda of the last 30 years would have negligible effects even if enacted. When the Justice Department looked at the assault-weapons ban in effect from 1994 to 2004, it concluded a renewal's 'effects on gun violence are likely to be small at best and perhaps too small for reliable measurement.' Expanding background checks likewise would achieve little: Most mass shooters already have passed them. Second: Polls find considerable skepticism about the effects of such laws . . . Third: More ambitious gun-control proposals are nonstarters" as a "rigorously enforced ban on the civilian possession of handguns . . . has only 19% of the public backing."

Instead, Mr. Ponnuru suggested that "authorities need better ways to identify individuals who pose a serious threat of lethal violence" since "many mass shooters offered warning signs before committing their atrocities." (Ibid.)

(2) Many people have become increasingly appalled at the delayed response of the police to the Uvalde school shooter: "Multiple videos circulating on social media show parents pleading with police to do something as they wait outside the building." (Josephine Harvey, "Uvalde Mom Says She Was Handcuffed While Begging Cops To Enter School," May 26, 2022; huffpost.com)

(3) One can also be upset over the increasing sinfulness of the leaders of the largest Protestant denomination in America: Deepa Bharath's piece, "Southern Baptists plan to release secret list of sex abusers" (Ibid., p. 3B) reported, "Top administrative leaders for the Southern Baptist Convention . . . said . . . that they will release a secret list of hundreds of pastors and other church-affiliated personnel accused of sexual abuse."

This decision only makes a bad situation worse: Former SBC leaders kept a secret list of hundreds of accused pastors and church leaders for years without having prosecuted these cases, and now current SBC leaders want to make that list public before dealing with the charges, potentially ruining the reputations of some leaders who may have been falsely accused! This can only undermine the credibility of many churches before the world and possibly ruin the reputations of some pastors and leaders who are actually innocent!

Need: *So, we ask, "How should we handle our deep sense of revulsion at the enhancement of evil today?!"*

- I. Just like many believers in Christ today, David sensed deep revulsion at the sin that was around him:**
- A. Where today's believers in Christ are permanently indwelt by God the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 3:16), David in the dispensation of the Law had the Holy Spirit come upon him in power for the rest of his life starting with his anointing by Samuel to become Israel's next king, 1 Samuel 16:1, 13.
 - B. When we believers in Christ today rely on the Holy Spirit for thought and behavior control (Galatians 5:16, 22-23), we sense a deep revulsion at sin all around us (Galatians 5:16-17), the experience David had that led him to compose Psalm 26:1-12.
- II. Thus, the way David HANDLED the Holy Spirit's influence to be deeply opposed to the sin around him is expressed in Psalm 26:1-12, and it examples for us how we can handle our revulsion at sin today:**
- A. David strongly asserted his innocence before God that contrasted with the evils around him, Psalm 26:1-8:
 - 1. Appalled at sin around him, David asked God to test his heart to see that he was innocent, Ps. 26:1-2 ESV.
 - 2. David then explained his claim to innocence of the sin that was all around him, Psalm 26:3-8:
 - a. He reported that he always focused on God's loyal love and that he ordered his life in God's faithfulness, meaning that he relied on the Lord's unmerited favor and faithfulness in a life of faith in God, Psalm 26:3.
 - b. David added that he did not fellowship or associate with people who were given to falsehoods or hypocrisy, that he despised the assemblies of evildoers, Psalm 26:4-5 ESV.

- c. Instead, David proclaimed his innocence from such evil associations in claiming that he loved to worship the Lord in His temple, there thanking God and testifying of all of His wonderful deeds, Psalm 26:6-8.
- B. Accordingly, David asked God to deliver him from the divine punishment that would come upon the wicked, men who were murderous and manipulative in furthering their own agendas by evil works, Psalm 26:9-10.
- C. David expressed confidence that God would answer his request to deliver him from the fate of the wicked, that in living in his personal integrity, God would graciously deliver him from divine punishment and that David would stand in security in the great assembly of the righteous at the temple and praise God, Psalm 26:11-12.

Lesson: *David knew that he was upright in that he loved the Lord and His righteousness and abhorred the evils of the wicked by his own attitude and actions, so he voiced his request for the Lord thoroughly to examine him and vindicate him that he might be all the more assured that he would be blessed and not disciplined by the Lord.*

Application: *(1) May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God's gift of eternal life, John 3:16; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11. (2) May we believers (a) rely by faith in God the indwelling Holy Spirit for thought and behavior control (Galatians 5:16, 22-23) and (b) accept our resulting sense of deep intolerance for sinful acts and associations as the work of God the Holy Spirit in us (Galatians 5:17). (b) May we then anticipate God's deliverance of us from divine punishment for living righteously and not in sin.*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

To **vindicate** the sense of revulsion at sin in the issues mentioned in our sermon introduction, we note Scripture passages that were written under the Holy Spirit's inspiration (2 Peter 1:20-21) that clarify the issues of righteousness and sin involved in each one (as follows):

(1) On the pressure for more gun control laws, (a) God never charges weapons with sin, but sinners who misuse weapons to commit crimes! Laws need to be made and enforced in checking sinners! (b) However, heavily arming oneself is unwise, for Christ in Matthew 26:52 KJV said that "all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." Stockpiling weapons and ammunition only attracts negative attention from law enforcement officials and tempts other troubled parties who learn of the weapons stash to use them to harm others! We need to be cautious and sensible in owning and using weapons. (c) In the end, as Psalm 127:1 teaches, we must trust God for our protection.

(2) On the delay of the police at the Texas elementary school that possibly cost more lives, (a) in Genesis 14:14 when Abraham learned that his nephew Lot and family had been kidnapped by invaders, since there was no federal or local police force available in his day, Abraham quickly led his own elite force of trained 318 fighters to pursue the enemy, destroying it with a surprise night attack and rescuing his relatives. Thus, righteousness demands that an armed intruder of defenseless people be quickly overcome, meaning that if a believer faces a crisis where police are unavailable or they fail to act to save life, I believe that a Christian should act fast and forcefully on his own to save life. (b) However, acting on our own in life-threatening conflicts takes good preplanning, exemplified in Abraham's having trained his own elite force! Similarly, Jesus in Luke 14:31-32 taught that one must evaluate whether he has the resources to defeat his foe before he enters into conflict with him. One must then quickly size up the crisis he faces and decide on a plan of action that will succeed before he counters his lethal foe.

(3) On the plan by current Southern Baptist Convention officials to release the list of hundreds of pastors and church leaders who have been accused of sexual abuse, 1 Timothy 5:19 commands that no accusation against a Church elder should be tolerated unless it comes from two or three witnesses. Then, once an elder is found to be guilty of the charge, he is to be publicly rebuked before the entire congregation to cause others to be afraid of committing the same sin. (1 Timothy 5:20). If the elder is found guilty of sexual abuse, his reputation is also permanently ruined, so he must then be permanently dismissed from office according to 1 Timothy 3:2a.

Thus, the right path for the Southern Baptist Convention leaders to take is **not** to make the list of charged pastors and church officials **public** lest they harm the reputations of innocent men, but **privately** to **examine** the **credibility** of the **charges**. Those defendants who are found guilty need to be rebuked before the congregations in which they sinned and removed from office, **never** again being allowed to serve in leadership in **any** church. In this way, the reputations of churches and innocent pastors and church leaders are protected, the testimony of the churches involved will be better protected before the onlooking world and sinful abusers will be kept from harming others!

May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God's gift of eternal life. May we then rely on God the indwelling Holy Spirit for thought and behavior control, realizing that the abhorrence we sense for wickedness around us is caused by the Holy Spirit so that we ACCEPT the sense of revulsion for evil that we have and be even more devoted to avoiding sin and practicing righteousness.