Psalm 15 (ASV) HAPPY NEW YEAR!

1 Jehovah, who shall sojourn in thy tabernacle?
Who shall dwell in thy holy hill?
2 He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness,
And speaketh truth in his heart;
3 He that slandereth not with his tongue,
Nor doeth evil to his friend,
Nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbor;
4 In whose eyes a reprobate is despised,
But who honoreth them that fear Jehovah;
He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not;
5 He that putteth not out his money to interest,
Nor taketh reward against the innocent.
He that doeth these things shall never be moved.

Study the Psalm and fill in the categories as Scripture reveals.

God will allow <u>who</u> and <u>where</u>:

Describe those people from Psalm 15—what will they do or not do?

Prayer

Father God,
I know that I am not righteous without the blood of Jesus, who covers my sins. I pray that You will fill my heart with Your Holy Spirit, who will direct my ways and help me be an obedient servant for Your kingdom. Seal my mouth shut when I desire to speak harmful words and give me the courage to voice Your truth to all who need to hear it. In this new, upcoming year, light brilliantly the path You have set before me and let Your will be done in my life. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Reflection

Define *slander*: (Merriam Webster dictionary)

Define *reprobate*: (1828 Webster's Dictionary)

<u>The new year is in three days, so it's a great time to reflect</u>. Let's apply this passage to our lives. Do we count ourselves as righteous and blameless? Are there changes we need to make?

Response

This is a hard passage. I'm not blameless or righteous on my own, but because I claim Jesus as the Lord of my life, I know His blood covers my sins. I repent almost daily (it should be every day). Though a sinner, I'm a follower of Jesus and a blameless believer before God.

Sometimes I say things I later regret, because the Holy Spirit convicts my heart. James 3:4-6 (NIV), "Or take ships as an example…., they are steered by a very small rudder wherever the pilot wants to go….Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole body, sets the whole course of one's life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell." *Hmmm. Lord, help me. I need You. Change my heart from a pit of pettiness into a garden of grace.* Colossians 4:6 (NIV) "Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone".

Another part of Psalm 15 that is difficult for me is verse 4, "In whose eyes a reprobate is despised…" I looked up reprobate and realized that I know people like this; I've been one. What does it mean to despise a reprobate? I know that God loves everyone (John 3:16, Romans 5:8). I've always heard, "Hate the sin, love the sinner."

I studied at length about this. My conclusion (until I can find something to support a different idea) is that believers should also love everyone. But *love* is sometimes confused with enabling, ignoring, or justifying the sin of those we care about. Additionally, if someone has hardened their heart against God (rejected Him), committed themselves to a sinful life, and will not repent, we must consider this verse in those instances. Jesus interacted with sinners not to celebrate, encourage, or participate in sin, but to share life-changing truth with them in love. We should do likewise.

I welcome any responses that can be supported with Scripture and that are communicated lovingly.

~Lisa Pritchard

Guest Response

When I read Psalm 15, I'm struck by its simplicity and its depth. It opens with a question that reaches straight to the heart:

"Lord, who may dwell in your sacred tent?
Who may live on your holy mountain?"

In other words: Who gets to live close to God? The answer doesn't mention wealth, success, or social standing. Instead, it says it's the one whose walk is blameless, who does what is right, and who speaks the truth from the heart.

That verse makes me pause. It reminds me that God's measure of a good life isn't about what we've achieved, but about how we live and the choices we make. When I think about my years working for AT&T, I ask myself: Did I always do what was best for my customers? Did I serve them with honesty and care, or was I ever tempted by what was easier or more profitable? I hope I did. Integrity in our daily work and the right decisions that others may not notice are what God sees most clearly.

Later, as an educator, I wanted my students and colleagues to feel respected, encouraged, and cared for. Looking back, I know I didn't always get it perfect, but I can say I worked with integrity and commitment. Even so, I still ask myself: What if I had kept God even more at the center of every moment?

Now, as a writer, I see my new purpose emerging. My stories are more than words; they are ways to share God's message, to remind others that faith, hope, and perseverance can carry us through even the hardest storms.

Psalm 15 ends with this beautiful promise: "Whoever does these things will never be shaken." Life will test us. Circumstances will be challenging. But when God is at the forefront of our lives, we stand firm.

Karen Prescott

Karen Walczyk Prescott retired from careers in business and education before beginning her work as a writer and speaker. Born and raised in central New York as one of six children, she grew up surrounded by the strength of her mother and grandmother, whose devotion to faith, family, and Polish traditions shaped her life.

Their example of self-sacrifice and steadfast love inspired Karen's debut novel, *Polish Mother*, a tribute to the resilience of women who pass down faith and heritage through generations. Through her writing, Karen seeks to weave stories that honor everyday experiences, illuminate the beauty of motherhood, and remind readers of God's enduring presence in family life.

Reminder

I would love to hear from you! Use the "Contact" page under "More" to submit your response about how God moved you in this passage. If you grant permission in your response, I may post it on the website's main page for the following week. If you don't want it posted, that's okay too. I will keep it private. Thank you, and I pray you are blessed in amazing ways.