

Sermon Title: Psalms: From the Heart, Part XXXI 10.4.2026

Themes: Loving goodness and despising evil, God's holiness, and our integrity. Live-streaming and sermon notes are at trinitycg.org.

Focus Question: What are you approving by not rejecting?

Introduction: Psalm 26 is a powerful Psalm of integrity. David isn't claiming perfection; he's describing what it looks like to live with a clear conscience before God while deliberately separating himself from compromise. Psalm 26 begins and ends in vs. 1 and 11-12 with **"for I have walked in my integrity"** and **"I shall walk in my integrity..."** Integrity means uprightness of purpose. To possess integrity is a noble thing. It is a bold claim to say, "I have walked in, and shall walk in, my integrity." Can *you* say that? To us it sounds like boasting. David says it, yet in the context of a dread of sin, a sense of danger, and a prayer for deliverance. He knows that all goodness is from God, and he clings to the Lord with childlike trust. These two things will always be found together: Love for God and recoiling from sin. In the eyes of the Lord, a man is held accountable for both what he hates (v. 5) and what he loves (v. 8). The company you choose is *always* a measure of your character. Where you gravitate reveals the real you. We are called to hate evil and love purity. There cannot be attachment to the Lord without detachment from sin.

Sermon Points:

1. Integrity that can withstand God's inspection. Psalm 26:1-2. David doesn't merely say, "I know I'm right." He says, essentially, "God, examine me." That's a much higher standard. Integrity isn't what we claim about ourselves; it's what remains when God searches our heart. A person walking in integrity doesn't fear God's examination because there's nothing they're intentionally hiding.

2. What fills your eyes will shape where your feet walk. Psalm 26:3. David keeps God's steadfast love in front of him, which changes how he lives. What captures our attention eventually influences our direction. Your walk follows what occupies your vision. If God's love is before your eyes, His faithfulness becomes easier to walk in.

3. Integrity requires intentional separation. Psalm 26:4-5. The issue isn't merely being around sinful people. David certainly was a leader among sinners. The issue is identification and participation. You can love people without adopting their values. Who you repeatedly sit with will eventually influence what you stand for. Sometimes holiness isn't just about what you say yes to; it's also about what you deliberately refuse to normalize.

4. Worship is the overflow of a clean walk. Psalm 26:6-8. David moves from clean hands to thankful lips to a heart that loves God's house. David's integrity produces worship, not self-congratulation. The person who genuinely loves God will increasingly love the place where God's people gather and God's name is honored. Authentic holiness doesn't merely keep you away from sin; it draws you toward the presence of God.

5. A steady life is built on an uncompromising foundation. Psalm 26:11-12. In verse 11, David looks at the wicked and says, **"But as for me,"** There's a beautiful tension in verse 11: **"I shall walk in my integrity; redeem me, and be gracious to me."** David's confidence isn't ultimately in his own goodness. He walks in integrity while still depending upon God's grace and redemption. Integrity is not perfection. Integrity is wholeness. It's an undivided heart that keeps returning to God. That's the language of personal conviction. Verse 12 says, **"My foot stands on level ground;"** Integrity gives David stability. He's not constantly looking over his shoulder, wondering which compromise will finally collapse upon him. He ends the Psalm in verse 12 with, **"in the great assembly I will bless the Lord."** When you refuse to compromise your walk, you gain stability in your life and credibility in your worship. Integrity is living the same life before God that you claim to live before people.

Several lessons from Psalm 26: 1. Integrity is a decision before it becomes a reputation. 2. Integrity may cost you something, but compromise will cost you even more. 3. Grace doesn't make integrity unnecessary; it makes integrity possible.

Psalm 26 leaves us with a simple question: Who are you when the crowd isn't watching?

Reflection: Lord, help me to utterly reject evil and not simply avoid partaking of it.