Sons Of God
Psalm 82

Objective: Encourage people to behave like children of God.
Reading: Psalm 82.
Memory: Psalm 82:6, “I said, ‘You are “gods”; you are all sons of the Most High.’

Introduction:
1. Have you ever wondered why there is so much evil in the world? Why so much tragedy? So much injustice?
2. I am sure there are many reasons, having to do with spiritual warfare and the presence of satanic forces, but Psalm 82 presents a clear concept that God is looking to see how we will react. (Almighty God is addressing “gods” – I submit that reference is NOT to multiple gods of lesser power than God, but really to “man” who is made in the image of God and supposed to be acting and behaving like their heavenly father, and who can and should anticipate immortality that is, eternal life, as children of God.)
3. When people see these sorts of things, they very often react by saying where is God?” or “There must be no God!”. They are looking for God to do something when in fact, it is our job! It is up to us to do something. God is sitting in judgment to see if we will acts like gods, if we will just grumble and complain, or perhaps even join or endorse the evil!

We should behave like children of God. (WHY?)
Religion is life. Life is religion. Our life / religion is supposed to be about the needs of people. Do you stand for truth the way God does? Do you love the way god does? What is inside us, our character, our nature, who and what we are is reflected in our interactions with and for other people. Whenever we see evil, injustice we are supposed to be moved to a godly response. This Psalm reveals some of the ways in which our interactions with others ought to reflect our nature as children of God.

For instance, if we carry the nature of the heavenly Father, it will be evident in that we

I. Refuse to show partiality to the wicked.

A. Judge truth and justice honestly.
   1. Psalm 82:2, “How long will you defend the unjust and show partiality to the wicked?”
   2. Deuteronomy 1:17, “Do not show partiality in judging; hear both small and great alike. Do not be afraid of any man, for judgment belongs to God.” Does money speak powerfully in your judgments, or do you honestly look at truth?
3. Don’t let the fact that a guy is your boss and can fire you influence your concept of truth and justice! What is right is still right and what is wrong is still wrong!
   a. It is NOT okay to work crooked business deals because the boss says so.
   b. It is NOT okay to lie about insurance claims or to cover up corruptions because the boss could fire you.
   c. Don’t let their power or prestige or nice clothes or high position influence your judgment of truth and justice.
4. Don’t let threats or intimidation influence your judgment of truth and justice.
   a. Because the guy is a bully does not make him right. Someone needs to stand for truth, and the one who knows and trusts God, who stands in the character of God will stand for truth.
   b. Intimidation can come in the form of a bribe. If I don’t side with them, I will lose money or position. Refuse to be bribed!
   c. Refuse to be bribed even politically. Sometimes we vote for someone because they promise us more retirement benefits, better health coverage, and we overlook their immoral positions on gay marriage or abortion. We overlook that some of their agenda is taking advantage of others. Don’t be bribed! Don’t judge on the basis of your own advantage.
5. Don’t let your personal love for an individual distort your concept of truth and justice.
   a. Because one is your daughter and the other is an unknown, you still need to find truth in the situation.
   b. It is not right to side with your child against their spouse; you are to side with truth and lovingly point out the error wherever it is.
6. When we are intimidated by those who seem to have power, by those who threaten us, or by those who have the power to favor us, we pervert justice. Children of God judge justly!

B. God hates partiality and injustice.
   1. James 2:1-4, “My brothers, as believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ, don’t show favoritism. Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in shabby clothes also comes in. If you show special attention to the man wearing fine clothes and say, “Here’s a good seat for you,” but say to the poor man, “You stand there” or “Sit on the floor by my feet,” have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts? And down to James 2:8-9, “If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, “Love your neighbor as yourself,” you are doing right. But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers.”
   2. It is not godly behavior to take advantage of others. You cannot take advantage of the poor, ignorant or disadvantaged and think you are godly.
   3. If we love our neighbor as our self, we take care of them, not take advantage of them.
   4. God is saying that godly people don’t do such things! He is also saying, godly people don’t allow such things to go on at the hands of others!

If we are godly, if we carry the nature of the heavenly Father, it will be evident in that we

II. Defend the weak and oppressed.
   A. This is the nature God expects in His offspring.
      1. Psalm 82, 3-4, “Defend the cause of the weak and fatherless; maintain the rights of the poor and oppressed. Rescue the weak and needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked.”
      2. James 1:27, “Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.”
      3. This is how Job defended himself against accusations of ungodliness; Job 29:12-17, “Whoever heard me spoke well of me, and those who saw me commended me, because I rescued the poor who cried for help, and the fatherless who had none to assist him. The man who was dying blessed me; I made the widow’s heart sing. I put on righteousness as my clothing; justice was my robe and my turban. I was eyes to the blind and feet to the lame. I was a father to the needy; I took up the case of the stranger. I broke the fangs of the wicked and snatched the victims from their teeth.”
         a. He is saying he had a godly character / nature that he is sure was representative of his Heavenly Father and pleasing to Him.
         b. He is saying there is nothing here to be ashamed of. He is not “guilty”, these things are right and appropriate!
      4. One who created all of mankind cares for all of them. His children do the same.

   B. Is there evidence of your godliness here?
      1. Does your heart go out to others in legitimate distress?
      2. Have you ever stepped up in the school cafeteria to side with someone being bullied?
      3. Do you avoid geeks and nerds, or do you befriend them?
      4. How about those being oppressed in Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya? What is the role of sons of God in that area?
      5. When you see someone down and out on the street, homeless? Are you simply hardened against them, disgusted with them, afraid of them, or does your heart somehow go out to them?
      6. We have a benevolent committee to stir us up and care for folks who are hurting, but do you do it on your own?
      7. How does this enter your political agendas? Do you vote for your own advantage or do you vote to help others?

If we are godly, if we carry the nature of the heavenly Father, it will be evident in that we

III. Furnish people with knowledge and understanding.
   A. Acquire knowledge and truth.
1. Psalm 82:5, “They know nothing, they understand nothing. They walk about in darkness; all the foundations of the earth are shaken.”

2. People are not right with God because they are lost in darkness. Romans 3:10, “There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God.”

3. We, if we are like God, if we are His children, are supposed to seek that essential and important knowledge!
   a. It comes from intentional study of God’s Word!
   b. It comes from attention to His Spirit.
   c. It comes from interaction of what we learn, with real life – applying what we learn in our own lives and in the lives of others. Put it into practice and learn from it!

B. Share knowledge and truth with others.
1. Romans 1:18, “The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness,”
3. In spite of what schools and Hollywood advocate, teach them that practicing homosexuals will not get to heaven. Neither will swindlers or revilers.
4. Teach folks wherever you are and wherever you can. At work, at football games.
5. It is godly to shed light on darkness and confusion and misunderstandings.

C. Take a stand for knowledge and truth.
1. Even when it is detrimental to yourself. When you have been in the wrong and need to confess,
2. When the truth is unpopular, take a stand anyway. When you have to stand alone as Christ did.
3. Even when others are hurtful or unfaithful.
4. When it standing for truth means being faithful even unto death

D. Demonstrate knowledge of godliness in your life.
1. Things like; “love your enemy”. How do you represent yourself in regard to those who oppose you? In regard to foreign political powers? In regard to those who give you a hard time at work? Are you merely human, or do you demonstrate the very nature of God?
2. Things like “forgiveness”? Ephesians 4:31-32, “Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. 32 Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.” BECAUSE this is what the son of God did. It is the nature of sons of God.
3. Sons of God are to be a light unto the world.

So What?
   God’s judgment is rendered in Psalm 82:6b-7, “I said, ‘You are “gods”; you are all sons of the Most High.’ But you will die like mere men; you will fall like every other ruler.”
   Are you a mere man, destined to die as all humans do? Or, are you a child of God, with a lease on eternal life, granted you by the author of life because you live and act in the name of Jesus Christ, the very Son of God?
   Today is “Easter”. It is about renewal. Newness of life. Resurrection. NOW is the time for our renewal by His power. By the power of the Holy Spirit and by the gift of the Holy Spirit that was promised at your baptism but which you need to nurture and follow in personal commitment, in reality and in truth. The appeal today is for each to become a genuine child of God.
   If you have been baptized and have been raised a new creature, then now may the Holy Spirit breathe across and into you new life, re-commitment and renewal!

Closing Prayer:
Sons Of God
Psalm 82

Reading: Psalm 82.

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Memory: Psalm 82:6

We should behave like children of God.
Ways in which our interactions with others ought to reflect our nature as children of God.

I. Refuse to show partiality to the wicked.
A. Judge truth and justice honestly.
   Psalm 82:2   Deuteronomy 1:17

B. God hates partiality and injustice.
   James 2:1-4   James 2:8-9

II. Defend the weak and oppressed.
A. This is the nature God expects in His offspring.
   Psalm 82, 3-4   James 1:27   Job 29:12-17

B. Is there evidence of your godliness here?

III. Furnish people with knowledge and understanding.
A. Acquire knowledge and truth.
   Psalm 82:5   Romans 3:10

B. Share knowledge and truth with others.
   Romans 1:18

C. Take a stand for knowledge and truth.

D. Demonstrate knowledge of godliness in your life.
   Ephesians 4:31-32

So What?
Psalm 82:6b-7
The appeal today is for each to become a genuine child of God.