

Psalm 36:1-10

Transgression speaks to the wicked

deep in his heart;

there is no fear of God

before his eyes.

²For he flatters himself in his own eyes

that his iniquity cannot be found out and hated.

³The words of his mouth are trouble and deceit;

he has ceased to act wisely and do good.

⁴He plots trouble while on his bed;

he sets himself in a way that is not good;

he does not reject evil.

⁵Your steadfast love, O LORD, extends to the heavens,

your faithfulness to the clouds.

⁶Your righteousness is like the mountains of God;

your judgments are like the great deep;

man and beast you save, O LORD.

⁷How precious is your steadfast love, O God!

The children of mankind take refuge in the shadow of your wings.

⁸They feast on the abundance of your house,

and you give them drink from the river of your delights.

⁹For with you is the fountain of life;

in your light do we see light.

¹⁰Oh, continue your steadfast love to those who know you,

and your righteousness to the upright of heart!

God Our Difference-Maker

At times when we hear about evil that surrounds our lives, we're left wondering "what are these people thinking?" When reading a headline, or hearing a story in the news, we wonder, "how can a person act so wickedly?" These are good honest questions to ask, but what makes the difference between us and the wicked man we hear about on TV? Let's look at Psalm 36 to see what we can learn.

1. Read Psalm 36:1-4 and circle every reference to the **wicked** including (*his, he, himself*).

Reflect: What do you learn about the wicked man? What does this psalm tell you about his thoughts, words, actions, and attitudes?

Reflect: What do you learn about his relationship to God?

2. Read Psalm 36:5-10 and underline every reference to the **children of mankind** including pronouns and the synonymous terms in verse 10.

Reflect: What do you learn about the children of mankind? What is their relationship to God?

Reflect: What makes them different from the wicked man?

As we read this passage, we can't help but notice the distinct differences between the two types of men. One has no fear of God, and the other knows God. One plots trouble on his bed while the other is safe and takes refuge in the shadow of the Lord's wings. One listens to the voice of transgression while the other asks the Lord to continue His steadfast love and righteousness in his life. Next time we wonder "how can someone act that way?" we can think of this psalm and instead ask "who makes me different from the evil man?"