

Doctrinal Mastery: Psalm 24:3–4

“Who Shall Stand in His Holy Place?”

Through the psalmist, the Lord taught us to become clean and pure in order to prepare to enter His temple and, eventually, His presence.

Possible Learning Activities

Know the doctrine

When was the last time that you were very muddy or dirty?

Ponder why you would love to be in the Lord’s house. How would it feel to be there right now?

How would you feel if you were invited to enter the temple while you were very muddy or dirty?

The book of Psalms is a collection of sacred songs, poems, and prayers. In addition to offering up praises to God, the text of many of the Psalms can provide insights into our relationship with God and how we can become closer to Him.

Read Psalm 24:3–4, looking for how the teachings in these verses relate to being in the temple. “The hill of the Lord” and “his holy place” (verse 3) can refer to both the temple and the presence of the Lord.

What truths can we learn from Psalm 24:3–4?

One truth you may have identified from Psalm 24:3–4 is that **when we have clean hands and a pure heart, we can worship Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ in the temple and eventually dwell in Their presence.**

Imagine you are writing an entry in the Guide to the Scriptures for the phrases “clean hands” and “a pure heart.”

Write a one- or two-sentence definition for each phrase in your study journal. You may want to use scriptures to help with your definition. (For example, Mosiah 5:2 could be used to help define the meaning of “a pure heart.”)

Why do you think clean hands and a pure heart are required to enter the temple and to dwell in the Lord’s presence?

Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained how we can have clean hands and a pure heart.

You may want to watch the video “[Clean Hands and a Pure Heart](#),” located on ChurchofJesusChrist.org, from time code 7:48 to 8:54, or read the following statement:

Please notice that both clean hands and a pure heart are required to ascend into the hill of the Lord and to stand in His holy place.

Let me suggest that hands are made clean through the process of putting off the natural man and by overcoming sin and the evil influences in our lives through the Savior’s Atonement. Hearts are purified as we receive His strengthening power to do good and become better. All of our worthy desires and good works, as necessary as they are, can never produce clean hands and a pure heart. It is the Atonement of Jesus Christ that provides both a *cleansing and redeeming power* that helps us to

overcome sin and a *sanctifying and strengthening power* that helps us to become better than we ever could by relying only upon our own strength. (David A. Bednar, “Clean Hands and a Pure Heart,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2007, 82)

From Elder Bednar’s statement, what do you learn about the Savior’s role in our having clean hands and a pure heart?

What would it be like to meet the Savior knowing that you are clean and pure like He is?

How are you preparing to be clean and pure when you meet the Savior again?

Practice application

What are the principles of acquiring spiritual knowledge that we have discussed in seminary?

What experiences have you had where one or more of these principles helped you?

What did you learn about the principles of acquiring spiritual knowledge?

Consider how you can use what you have learned and apply your knowledge and experience with these principles in the following scenario:

Dillon is excited to go to the temple and is preparing for his temple recommend interview. As he reviews the questions before his interview, he pauses on one of them, realizing that he has not been living that standard. Dillon wants to attend the temple to feel closer to Christ but is unsure whether he should bring up the problem when he visits with his bishop.

Segment 1. This segment will focus on using divinely appointed sources.

Spend a few minutes looking for sources that you think might help Dillon. You could use the scriptures, the Gospel Library app, or ChurchofJesusChrist.org. Find something that could help Dillon understand why he needs to be clean and pure to enter the house of the Lord.

Share at least one scripture, statement, or other source you found that could help Dillon.

Segment 2. This segment will focus on examining concepts and questions with an eternal perspective and acting in faith.

What are some eternal truths you know about Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ that could help Dillon prepare to enter the temple?

How could you use these truths about Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ as well as Psalm 24:3–4 to invite Dillon to act in faith as he prepares to enter the temple?

Memorize the reference and key scripture phrase

Choose a few simple hand gestures or signs that would help you remember the key scripture phrase for Psalm 24:3–4: “Who shall stand in His holy place? He that hath clean hands and a pure heart.” Then practice reciting the doctrinal mastery passage and key scripture phrase by using only the hand gestures or signs.

Review activity

Commentary and Background Information

Worthiness to enter the temple

President Russell M. Nelson taught about being worthy to enter the temple:

I would like to speak to our youth. We encourage you to qualify for limited-use temple recommends. You will be asked only those questions applicable to you in your preparation for the ordinances of proxy baptism and confirmation. We are very grateful for your worthiness and willingness to participate in that sacred temple work. We thank you!

Individual worthiness to enter the Lord’s house requires much individual spiritual preparation. But with the Lord’s help, nothing is impossible. In some respects, it is easier to build a temple than it is to build a people prepared for a temple. Individual worthiness requires a total conversion of mind and heart to be more like the Lord, to be an honest citizen, to be a better example, and to be a holier person. (Russell M. Nelson, “Closing Remarks,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2019, 121–22)

What is the bishop’s role in helping members prepare to worthily attend the temple?

The bishop has the responsibility of making inquiries into our personal worthiness. This interview is of great importance to you as a member of the Church, for it is an occasion to explore with an ordained servant of the Lord the pattern of your life. If anything is amiss [inappropriate or out of place] in your life, the bishop will be able to help you resolve it. Through this procedure, as you counsel with the common judge in Israel, you can declare or can be helped to establish your worthiness to enter the temple with the Lord’s approval. (*Preparing to Enter the Holy Temple* [booklet, 2002], 3)

How do we resolve our mistakes?

Elder C. Scott Grow of the Quorum of the Seventy spoke about how to determine when an act should be confessed to the bishop:

Most of the mistakes people make can be resolved through personal prayer and sincere repentance. Some mistakes, especially those regarding immorality, require confession to the bishop before you can receive the Lord’s forgiveness.

As you think about mistakes you have made, you may be feeling guilty, unsettled, unhappy, or even miserable. If you are experiencing any of those feelings, then you probably need to talk with your bishop about those mistakes. (C. Scott Grow, “Why and What Do I Need to Confess to My Bishop?” *New Era*, Oct. 2013, 29)

What does the Lord require us to confess to a bishop as part of the repentance process?

Serious sins, such as moral transgressions, abuse of family members, affiliation with apostate groups or practices, or serious violations of the laws of the land, must be confessed to the bishop or branch president If a person’s conscience, which is the Light of Christ given to all people, raises a question in the person’s mind about whether something should be discussed with the bishop or branch president, it should probably be discussed. (*Endowed from on High: Temple Preparation Seminar Teacher’s Manual* [2003], 11)
