

Unto Thy Name Give Glory

by

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November 12, 2011

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The 115th Psalm is a wonderful passage of scripture, which we offer for your enjoyment and study today. It is inspiring. It contrasts the power of God's ways with the vanity of the world. It promises help, protection and blessing from God if we will trust Him and walk in His ways. It concludes with praise.

Let us go step-by-step through this psalm. We find within it aids to living our Christian lives under the New Testament, as well as comparisons between the obstacles they faced then and what we face in the world today. And so this Old Testament psalm still gives us valuable lessons that we can apply under the New.

Psa. 115:1 introduces the psalm with praise, focusing our minds immediately upon our God. *"Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake."*

God is what is important in our lives. We need to remember that every day when we first get up, and focus on Him all day. He is number one. We need to honor and serve Him always.

Even under the New Testament we need to be sure to praise and glorify Him. In the 14th chapter of Acts, when the people wanted to honor Paul and Barnabas as gods, they put an immediate stop to it, and tried to turn the people to the true God. Acts 14:14-15, *"Which when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of, they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out, And saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein."* Likewise the angels serving God instruct us to praise and worship only Him. Rev. 22:8-9, *"And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God."*

Our works as well as our words should be to God's glory, not our own. In Matt. 5:14-16, Jesus said, *"Ye are the light of the*

world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

But notice that the author in Psa. 115 was not just dedicating his own life to God's glory instead of his own. He was specifically asking God to glorify His own name. "...unto thy name give glory." And in John 12:27-28, when Jesus asked God for the same thing, God assured us that He has glorified His Name, and will continue to do so. "Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again."

The last part of Psa. 115:1 gives two reasons for God to glorify His Name: "...for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake." Mercy and truth are not values in conflict. They work together, need each other, and are found together constantly in scripture. Psa. 85:10 reads, "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other." Likewise today the New Testament scriptures instruct us to use them both. They are not at odds. Heb. 12:14, "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:". James 3:18, "And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace."

The rest of the psalm details many reasons why glory belongs to God.

The next section contrasts the power of God with the vanity of the world. Note that our specific struggles are different today. Their struggles were with idolatry. Our biggest battles today are with those who do not believe in God, or who want to worship Him their own way instead of His. But our solution is the same as theirs – to trust in the true and living God.

Psa. 115:2-9, "Wherefore should the heathen say, Where is now their God? But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased. Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they, but they see not: They have ears, but they hear not: noses have they, but they smell not: They have hands, but they handle not: feet have they, but they walk not: neither speak they through their throat.

They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them. O Israel, trust thou in the LORD: he is their help and their shield."

Today, instead of those worshipping idols, one of the loudest groups raging against God is atheists. I can't look at any part of God's creation without being awestruck at the incredible design. Design requires a Designer. It is as simple and true as that. Heb. 3:4, "*For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God.*" Those who choose to not believe that plain truth do so mainly because they don't want to follow His rules. Psa. 14:1, "*The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good.*"

Believing in God our Creator and Lord, why would we worship and serve God any way but the way He directs? Yet it happens all around us. Jesus asked this question in Luke 6:46, "*And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?*"

Like Israel in those days, today we overcome through trusting in the Lord, 2 Tim. 1:12, "*For the which cause (preaching the gospel, verse 11) I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.*"

The next section of our study continues this thought of trusting in God, and gives us several reasons to trust in Him. Psa. 115:10-16, "*O house of Aaron, trust in the LORD: he is their help and their shield. Ye that fear the LORD, trust in the LORD: he is their help and their shield. The LORD hath been mindful of us: he will bless us; he will bless the house of Israel; he will bless the house of Aaron. He will bless them that fear the LORD, both small and great. The LORD shall increase you more and more, you and your children. Ye are blessed of the LORD which made heaven and earth. The heaven, even the heavens, are the LORD's: but the earth hath he given to the children of men.*" Let's note a few things out of this passage.

First, when we read about the house of Israel here, understand that the church is the Israel of today. Rom. 2:28-29, "*For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and*

circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.”

We have good reason to fear the Lord, as directed here. Jesus said in Matt. 10:28, *“And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.”*

But our writer also pointed out that our God with this great power is working on our behalf. Three times in verses 9-11 of Psa. 115, he pointed out that God is our help and shield. Verse 11 reads, *“Ye that fear the Lord, trust in the Lord: he is their help and their shield.”* He goes on to say that God has blessed us, is blessing us, and will continue to bless us. Likewise we continue to read of His great blessings in the New Testament scriptures. Phil. 4:19, *“But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”*

God is all-powerful, and is on our side. Repeating the beautiful thought of Psa.115:15, *“Ye are blessed of the Lord which made heaven and earth.”*

The last two verses of Psa. 115 tell us that even though some don't praise the Lord, we will. Psa. 115:17-18, *“The dead praise not the LORD, neither any that go down into silence. But we will bless the LORD from this time forth and for evermore. Praise the LORD.”*

I'm reminded of the song “We're Marching to Zion”. Sure, there are those who refuse to sing, and that's sad because they truly are dead. But let them refuse if they want. Don't let their refusal or even their persecution stop us from singing God's praise. Heb. 13:15, *“By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.”*

I hope this study has been beneficial to all. This wonderful psalm shows us God's power and help, so that we should trust in Him and not let this world bring us down. Let's close by re-reading the first and last verses of the psalm.

Psalms 115:1, *“Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake.”* Psalms 115:18. *“But we will bless the LORD from this time forth and for evermore. Praise the LORD.”*

In Christian love,
Bro. Terry Warford

