

TRUE WORSHIP

John 4:19-26

Intro: Worship is a very important Bible word. It first appears in the book of Genesis, and you will find it many times in the book of The Revelation – although it is not in every book of the Bible. It is one of the most important words in Scripture because it represents the highest possible activity of the people of God. But it is never actually defined. We learn what it means from the way it is used in both the OT and the NT. As far as individual passages of Scripture are concerned, it is used more times in John 4 than in any other single passage in all of the Bible. You can see that from verse 20 through 24 this word is used in one form or another *ten times!*

It was the Samaritan woman who brought up the subject. Back in verse 9 of this chapter, John 4, we see that she recognized that the Lord Jesus was a Jew. That may have been the reason, after saying that she perceived that He was a prophet, that she raised the different ideas that the Jews and the Samaritans had about *the place to worship*. (Read vv. 19 and 20.) She felt that anyone who could tell her about herself after just meeting her must have had some supernatural powers.

However, it is clear from the earlier verses in the chapter that she was not a believer. She was not saved. But she felt that she was capable of worshipping God. And like so many people who don't know the Lord, she felt that going to a place of worship and doing what she was told to do, was worship. There are many people today who associate worship with going to church, or going to the synagogue, or whatever "place of worship" (in quotes) they might attend. But the Lord seem to indicate that a time was not far away when it would not be possible to attend a "worship service" either in the mountain of Samaria, or in Jerusalem. And so He was indicating that being in a so-called "place of worship" did not necessarily mean that the people who went there were worshipping.

We speak of our services as "worship services." But even that does not necessarily mean that we are worshipping the Lord. Worship is an individual matter. It is impossible for an unbeliever to worship God wherever he or she might be. Only those who know Christ as Savior can worship God, and yet it is probably true that many who know the Lord have never really worshiped the Lord. Even the leadership of the so-called worship teams in contemporary churches bear no resemblance to the worship that we

read about in the Word of God. As our Lord said to the Samaritan woman, God is seeking worshipers, but seeking those individuals who will worship Him “in Spirit and in truth.”

I have said that we can only understand the true meaning of worship if we examine the verses where the word “worship” is used, or where we have words which are the equivalent of the word “worship.”

I. THE MEANING OF THE WORD “WORSHIP.”

The words for “worship” in the OT are, of course, different from the words for “worship” in the NT because the OT was originally written in Hebrew, but the NT in Greek. But the meaning of the words in both languages are practically the same.

A. Worship is humbling ourselves before God.

We can say this because the word actually suggests prostrating ourselves before the Lord. This seems to indicate that the position of our bodies in worship is important. For example, when Moses faced two hundred and fifty of the princes of Israel who accused him and Aaron of assuming too much authority over the people, we read in Num. 16:4 that “when Moses heard it, he fell upon his face.” The word “worship” is not used there, but that is basically what *worship* is, *a falling on our faces before the Lord*.

This does not mean that we have to assume this position to be worshipping the Lord. We certainly can if it is in our hearts to do so, but the main idea is that we *humble ourselves before the Lord*. In spite of what the princes of Israel said about Moses and Aaron, we read in Num. 12:3, after he was criticized by Miriam and Aaron for having married an Ethiopian woman, it is said of Moses, “Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.”

Do you remember the account in the life of Joshua when, just before the Israelites entered and destroyed the city of Jericho, that we read this?

13 And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries?

14 And he said, Nay; but as captain of the host of the LORD am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did

worship, and said unto him, What saith my lord unto his servant?
15 And the captain of the LORD's host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so (Joshua 5:13-15).

So if we are going to worship the Lord, there must be a true humbling of ourselves before the Lord.

And this usually includes the confession of our sins. David was certainly worshipping the Lord in Psalm 51 when he confessed his sin to the Lord. Look at his words in Psa. 51:16 and 17, because here are words expressing his desire to worship the Lord:

16 For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering.

17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise (Psa. 51:16-17).

And then he added two verses later:

19 Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar (Psa. 51:19).

Let me give you a NT reference to support this idea of humbling ourselves before the Lord in worship. The Apostle Paul was contrasting speaking in tongues with prophesying, or preaching. And this is what he said to those who felt even in those days that everyone should speak in tongues. These verses are found in 1 Cor. 14:23-25:

23 If therefore the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those that are unlearned, or unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad?

24 But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all:

25 And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so falling down on his face he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth.

Here is evidence that this particular man is really saved – he falls “down on his face,” and worships God.

But there is another point that we need to remember as we think of worshipping the Lord.

B. True worship acknowledges the holiness of God.

W. E. Vine in his *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, IV, p. 236, said that although worship includes praise, yet “it is not confined to praise; broadly it may be regarded as the direct acknowledgment of God, of His nature, [His] ways, [His] ways, and [His] claims . . .” It is only when we realize the majesty of God, His infinite glory even in a limited way, that we can truly worship God. A person who knows the Lord does not have to know all of the attributes of God, but he must remember that he is approaching the living God!

There are two verses in Psalm 99 which bring this out very forcibly. The first is in verse 5:

5 Exalt ye the LORD our God, and worship at his footstool; for he is holy.

The second says essentially the same thing in verse 9:

9 Exalt the LORD our God, and worship at his holy hill; for the LORD our God is holy.

When you hear people refer to the Lord as “the Man upstairs,” or some similarly blasphemous expression, you know that they do not know God. And the same goes for those very familiar expressions that are so characteristic of our generation. God is God! God is a holy God. If no man can see Him and live, then we need to come to worship Him with a sense of His absolute holiness, and of our unworthiness to approach Him except for the fact that we are clothed in the righteousness of Christ.

When Satan was tempting our Lord, and said that if He would fall down and worship him, do you remember how the Lord answered him. We read in Matt.4:10:

10 Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

In the book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ we read this in Rev.4:10-11:

10 The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying,
11 Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.

The word “worship” does not appear in many passages where the theme is clearly that of worship. For example, the familiar one hundredth Psalm:
1 Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands.

2 Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing.

3 Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

4 Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.

5 For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations (Psalm 100:1-5).

We worship the Lord for many other reasons. We worship Him because we are motivated to do so when we understand His love for us. We worship the Lord to acknowledge His many blessings upon us – spiritually, materially, and physically. We praise Him for His infinite goodness to us. We worship the Lord also because we know that He seeks our worship, and is glorified when we come because we delight ourselves in Him.

But now let us turn again to our text, where the Lord spoke to the Samaritan woman about worship. What can we learn from His words to her?

II. THE LORD'S TEACHING ABOUT WORSHIP (John 4:19-26).

The first thing that the Lord emphasized was that:

A. Worship is not limited to a certain place (John 4:20-21).

I hope that when we come to our services here, we come to worship. But this is not the only place we can worship God. I feel that our best worship, wherever we might be is when we are where we can give our attention totally to worshiping God. We can worship driving our cars, or walking down the street, or when we are work at home or in the workplace. But when we are alone at home, or worshiping the Lord with our families, that is when we can forget everything else and just concentrate on worshiping the Lord. But let us make it a habit when we are in church to direct our thoughts to the Lord so that we can be worshiping as we sing, or as we pray together, or as the Word is being proclaimed. *But actually worship is what we can do anywhere!*

B. We learn to worship from the Word of God (John 4:22).

The Lord was not insulting the woman when He spoke the words that we

have in verse 22, but He was declaring the truth.

When the Apostle Paul in writing the book of Romans was showing that Jews and Gentiles alike were sinners, and that there was only one way of salvation for both Jews and Gentiles, then he raised the question that doubtless he had been asked many times you will find it in Rom. 3:1:

What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision?

And then he answered his own question in verse 2:

Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God.

That is what the Lord was telling the Samaritan woman. God had given His Word to the Jews. But He did not give it to them to keep for themselves. They were to spread the message contained in that Word to all of the nations of the earth. There is only one Word of God which tells of only one way of salvation and of only one Savior, our Lord Jesus Christ. And that is why the Lord was speaking to her, to tell her the truth about worshiping God, and all that it required.

Implied in this statement also is another important fact about worship.

C. Only those who are saved can worship God.

The fact that people go through a lot of ceremonies, repeated prepared prayers, bow down to images of Christ, or of His mother, or of any of the saints – this is not worship! Because people can do all of that and never trust in Christ for the forgiveness of their sins. We are not saved because we worship, but we worship because we are saved. Salvation comes first, and worship follows.

And then the Lord gave those words which are well known to every Christian who reads his Bible. Let me point out three things from the words of the Lord as I close.

D. “True worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth” (John 4:23, 24).

What did the Lord mean by this – “in spirit and in truth”?

The Greek does not show us what words should be capitalized, and what words should not be capitalize. So it often is up to the translator or the one expounding the Scriptures to determine what words should be capi-

talized.

— So was our Lord talking about the Holy Spirit, or was He referring to the human spirit? Some expositors take one position, and others take the other. Actually you can't go wrong with either. There is no question but that the Holy Spirit plays a major role in all worship. Actually we are dependent upon the Holy Spirit to enable us to do anything that is pleasing to God. But it may be also that the Lord was saying the true worship is spiritual! That it is when our spirits, perhaps you could say, our new natures, are worshiping God, that this is true worship. The Greek actually says, "in spirit and truth," combining those two words. Our worship has to come from our hearts. It has to be spiritual as opposed to that which is external. It has to be genuine, not something that we do for show, or because other people are doing it. It must be real. It must come from our hearts. It is not something that we do because others make us do it. We do it because we love God, and we delight in worshiping Him.

Be sure that you pay attention to the word "must."

But notice also that:

— **E. The Father is seeking worshipers (John 4:23).**

How could the Lord say in a clearer way that the Father is delighted when we truly worship Him. Hypocrites are an abomination to Him, but true worshipers are His delight. And you and I will find if we are truly walking with the Lord, in fellowship with the Father, that more and more He will be bringing us to the place where we delight in what brings pleasure to Him. This means that the Lord will be working with us and in us to make us real worshipers, true worshipers.

Then we will know in our hearts the meaning of the words of that hymn which tells us,

O the pure delight of a single hour
That before Thy throne I spend,
When I kneel in prayer, and with Thee, My God,
I commune as friend with Friend.

— And then let me emphasize a final point that I have referred to before.

F. Worship is a personal matter.

The Lord is seeking worshipers, but He seeks them one by one, just as He seeks and saves those who are lost – one by one! The Lord may not have touched the hearts of those who are nearest and dearest to you to draw them into worship. But don't wait for them. Respond today as the Lord may be dealing with you, and your joy in worshiping the Lord may be the very thing that the Lord will use in the lives of others to make them want to genuinely worship the Lord "in spirit and truth."

Concl: There is nothing closer to the heart of our heavenly Father that we can do than to worship Him. But we must do it His way, and for His glory. But we soon learn that what glorifies the Lord, is what brings the greatest blessing to us, and to those whose lives we are able to touch.

1 O come, let us sing unto the LORD: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.

2 Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms.

3 For the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods.

4 In his hand are the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills is his also.

5 The sea is his, and he made it: and his hands formed the dry land.

6 O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker.

7 For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand (Psa. 95:1-7a).

PRAISING THE LORD

Psalm 136

Intro: I am sure that those of you who have know the Lord for any time, and have faithfully read your Bible, have recognized in reading the OT the recurrence of a verse like we find in Psalm 136:1:

O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.

After an initial “praise the Lord,” you will find it in Psa. 106:1. It appears at the beginning of Psalm 107 just as it is here in Psalm 136. And the same is true of Psalm 118:1. And then at the end of Psalm 118, verse 29, we have the same verse again.

In our present memory work for the Sunday School hour, we have this same verse in Psalm 16:34:

O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.

Then there are some variations of it found in several verses. Not long ago we studied 2 Chron. 6 where we are told that Solomon’s temple was completed. At that point in time Solomon prepared to bring the ark of the covenant into the temple. He assembled the elders of Israel, all the heads of the tribes, and those who were called “the chief fathers of the children of Israel. The Levites and the priests brought the ark into the most holy place. Just as soon as they came out, the Levite singers, arrayed in white linen, with cymbals, psalteries, and harps stood at the east end of the altar. With them were one hundred and twenty priests, each of whom had trumpets. Then we read this in verses 13 and 14 of 2 Chron. 5:

13 It came even to pass, as the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the LORD; and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of musick, and praised the LORD, saying, For he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever: that then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the LORD;
14 So that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud: for the glory of the LORD had filled the house of God (2 Chron 5:13-14).

And then in 2 Chron. 7 we have another occurrence of this verse in part. It is found in verse 3, but so you can see the situation at the time I am

going to read verses 1 and 2 with it. Solomon had just finished his great prayer dedicating the temple to the Lord, and then we read this:

1 Now when Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the LORD filled the house.

2 And the priests could not enter into the house of the LORD, because the glory of the LORD had filled the LORD's house.

3 And when all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down, and the glory of the LORD upon the house, they bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement, and worshipped, and praised the LORD, saying, For he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever (2 Chron. 7:1-3).

Then when the temple was being rebuilt in the days of Ezra, we read this:

10 And when the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the LORD, they set the priests in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites the sons of Asaph with cymbals, to praise the LORD, after the ordinance of David king of Israel.

11 And they sang together by course in praising and giving thanks unto the LORD; because he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever toward Israel. And all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid (Ezra 3:10-11).

This passage seems to indicate that King David was the one who was responsible for this call to praise the Lord.

Let me give you one more reference. It is found in the prophecy of Jeremiah where he was predicting the restoration of Israel and of Judah. And he had this message from the Lord:

10 Thus saith the LORD; Again there shall be heard in this place, which ye say shall be desolate without man and without beast, even in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, that are desolate, without man, and without inhabitant, and without beast,
11 The voice of joy, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the voice of them that shall say, Praise the LORD of hosts: for the LORD is good; for his mercy endureth for ever; and of them that shall bring the sacrifice of praise into the house of the LORD. For I will cause to return the captivity of the land, as at the first, saith the LORD (Jer. 33: 10-11).

Notice that this is called “the sacrifice of praise.” The only other time this expression is used in the Bible is in 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. So I think that this can mean that we, too, need to be responsive to this verse which was extremely important to the children of Israel. Every child of God should “give thanks unto the Lord” for the same two reasons that this verse gives us:

- 1) “For He is good.”
- 2) “For His mercy endureth forever.”

Now let us go back to Psalm 136. It is very clear that this Psalm is built upon verse 1 because all through the Psalm we have repeated in each verse, “For His mercy endureth forever.”

In addition to that you can see the repetition of the expression, “O give thanks in verses 1, 2, 3, and 26. So let us begin with that part of verse 1.

I. “O GIVE THANKS UNTO THE LORD” (Psa. 136:1).

Note first that this is a commandment. Every child of God in Israel was responsible to “give thanks to the Lord.” Isn’t it amazing that they had to be told to do this? And isn’t it just as amazing that you and I who are in the church, have to be told to “give thanks to the Lord”? Paul not only taught that we are to be thankful to the Lord, but we have been learning on Tuesday mornings that he prayed that the Colossian believers would be thankful – thankful for their salvation! He indicated that thanksgiving would be the result of knowing the Word, and then walking so as to please God in all things.

But let me remind you that since this is a command which is repeated many times in both the OT and the NT, *not to do what the Lord tells us to do, is sin!* Maybe we are like the Pharisee that the Lord told about who had not done a lot of the things that other people had done, but neither had he done what he as a Pharisee should have done.

The passages in the Bible, OT and NT, which speak of praising the Lord, tell us what we should be thankful for. And I encourage you to notice what the Scriptures tell us when you come across this subject in your reading of your Bible. We have all kinds of blessings, more than we can

count, and every single one of our blessings is from the Lord. It is a very spiritually healthy thing to do, to cultivate an attitude of thanksgiving for all that the Lord has given us and all that the Lord has done for us.

But notice also that we are not just to be thankful, as many people are, but we are to be thankful “unto the LORD.” This is Jehovah. In verse 2 we are to be thankful “unto the God of gods.” This is an abbreviated form of Elohim. And in verse 3 it is “to the Lord of lords.” This is Adonai. Then down to verse 26 we have “the God of heaven.” This is El.

Here we have a fourfold revelation of our God. As Jehovah He is the living God, and yet not just living, but ever-living, the One Who had no beginning, and will never end, and, as such He is unchanging. What He was in the days of the Psalmist, He still is today. The spelling, all in caps, is used to indicate in the KJV (and I think other versions follow the same plan) the name Jehovah, or Yaweh which is preferred by many modern scholars.

As Elohim we have the suggestion of the Trinity. This is how God is often referred to in connection with creation and providence. And the El which we have in verse 26 brings to the title God the idea of power which of course was essential in creation and continues to be exercised by God in His providential dealings with all of creation.

“Lord,” with a capital L, and lower case o-r-d, represents the Hebrew word, Adonai. This means master, lord, or even owner. These are what we should understand when we speak of God as the Lord. He is our Master, our Lord, the One Who owns us because He created us, but even more, because He has purchased us with the blood of His Son.

And then GOD in verse 26, is El, speaking of is often used in Hebrew poetry, and refers to the omnipotence of God.

Our God has seen fit to reveal Himself through the names or titles such as we have here in Psalm 136, and it is for recognize that our God possesses all of the attributes that are indicated in

So we bring our thanks to our God Who sovereignly created us, Who cares for us, Who leads us and provides for us, and Who has the power that is sufficient to meet every need that we can possibly have. It is to

this great and glorious God that we bring our thanks. How this should humble us, that such a God as we have in the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, is the God Who daily loads us with His benefits, His blessing. Cf. Psalms 68:19 where David was giving thanks to the Lord for His daily blessings:

Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation (Psa. 68:19).

And in Psalm 103:2 we read, "Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits." And in Psalms 116:12 the Psalmist expressed a sense of futility in trying to remember all of God's blessings. And so he said, "What shall I render unto the LORD for all his benefits toward me?"

Secondly, in Psalm 136:1 we are given:

II. TWO REASONS WHY WE SHOULD ALWAYS GIVE THANKS UNTO THE LORD.

As I have already said, and you can readily see it, the first reason is:

A. "For He is good."

This is the Hebrew word טוֹב, which means that He is morally good. He is absolute perfection. He is never bad, never evil. And He does good things. It means that He is kind. He seeks to benefit us in every way, not only in a physical and material way, but especially spiritually.

David said in Psalms 34:8,

O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him.

In that short but great one hundredth Psalm we have these familiar words:

4 Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.

5 For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations (Psalms 100:4-5).

That sounds a lot like our text, doesn't it? David also tells us in Psalm 145:8-9,

8 The LORD is gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy.

9 The LORD is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works.

He doesn't give us all that we want, but He has promised to supply all of our needs. Cf. Phil. 4:19. And He works all things together for good to them that love Him. Cf. Rom. 8:28. When we were discussing the goodness of God on a recent Sunday night in connection with "the fruit of the Spirit," I referred to Nahum 1:7,

The LORD is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him.

We would not be saved if it were not for the goodness of the Lord. And the blessings that you and I enjoy every moment of every day are not just traceable to the LORD, but to the goodness of the Lord. David said that he would have fainted if it were not that he could count on seeing the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living. Cf. Psa. 27:13.

Just to be able to say, "The Lord is good," is in itself a commentary on every one of our lives.

But there is another reason why we should give thanks to the Lord day after day. And it is the last statement in our text:

B. "For His mercy endureth forever."

Asaph has given us a number of the Psalms that we have in our Bible, but in one of them in particular he had been going through a very difficult time in his life, and it even troubled him to think about God. And he asked some questions that probably have occurred to most of us, but we don't like to think about them, and hardly ever do we discuss such questions among themselves. This what he wrote in Psa. 77:6-9:

6 I call to remembrance my song in the night: I commune with mine own heart: and my spirit made diligent search.

7 Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favourable no more?

8 Is his mercy clean gone for ever? doth his promise fail for evermore?

9 Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?

Sometimes in the trials of our lives it seems this way. But then Asaph began to think about what the Lord had done. He meditated on the work of the Lord, and he talked to others about the Lord's doings. And then he asked a question of an entirely different nature. This was His question:

“Who is so great a God as our God?” (Psa. 77:13b).

It would be terrible, wouldn't it, if we had to face the possibility that God's mercy was exhausted, that we could not look to Him any more for mercy?

Yesterday in our prayer meeting I spoke to the Lord about Jeremiah's book, The Lamentations, which was our Bible reading for a couple of days. It is a very heavy book. In many ways it is a spiritual description of our country. God's judgment had fallen very heavily upon His people because of their sins. There are five chapters in Lamentations, and right in the middle of chapter 3, which would be in the middle of the book also, we have some of the most wonderful words found in all of the Bible. Let me read them to you. They have to do with God's mercy. Here is what Jeremiah said:

22 It is of the LORD's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not.

23 They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.

24 The LORD is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him.

25 The LORD is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him.

26 It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD (Lam. 3:22-26).

Have the Lord's mercies been exhausted? Is He compassionate no longer? No, Jeremiah said, “They are new every morning.” This means that although the Lord's people from the beginning of time have been drawing heavily every day upon the mercies of God, each morning when we get up the supply is completely replenished, and it is as though no one has ever drawn upon the mercies of God! What could be better than that?

What does Psalm 136 tell us? Count them! Twenty-six times we are told, “For His mercy endureth forever!” If anyone were reading this Psalm for the first time, what can you be sure they would remember? “For His mercy endureth forever.” How long is that? It's forever – to the end of time, and for all eternity! God's mercies can *never* be exhausted!

Concl: Isn't this reason enough to “give thanks unto the Lord.” And when you add to this that other great word in our text, “For the Lord is good,” with those two great truths secured for us, we could well

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spent all of our days *giving thanks to the Lord, our living, unchanging Lord, our God Who made us and who directs and controls every detail of our lives, the One Who owns us because He loves us, our Lord and our Master, our Almighty God – Who is good, and all that He does is good – teaching us, correcting us, encouraging us, as He through His goodness and His mercy is gradually making us more like He is. Let us give ourselves to worshiping Him, and to thanking Him, for all that He is, and for His blessings which He loads upon us every day. And to Him be all of the glory!*