

CS - 7/10/66 am.

Taney men - 9/11/66 am.
Wash. D.C.

INTRO TO PSA. 103 - A CALL TO WORSHIP

PSA. 103:1, 2

Intro: The Psalms are hymns, the hymns of ancient Israel. They come to us from a period of approx. 1,000 years.

Probably no book ^{in the Bible} has had the impact on the people of God that the book of Psalms has had.

Undoubtedly one great reason for the great popularity of the Psalms is that they bring into harmonious relationships the great doctrines of Scripture and the practical experiences of daily life.

As one of our men ^{to me} said recently, "Somehow when there is trouble, you find the Psalms!"

Children, young people, adults - all love the Psalms.

Bishop Taylor, one who has written on the Psalms, tells us that in the early church no man could be "ordained unless, among other requirements, he could recite the Psalter by heart." (Fleming, Notes on the Book of Psalms, p. 1, unpublished, italics mine).

What a wealth of truth is here! Think of the doctrines that are included. And who has failed to find his own experience tucked away somewhere in one of the 150!

IT IS MY PURPOSE DURING THE SUNDAY MORNINGS REMAINING BETWEEN NOW AND

LABOR DAY TO CONSIDER WITH YOU JUST ONE OF THESE: PSALM 103!

Most of the time when we study the Word we seem to be in a hurry to get through. I believe it is possible to go too slowly, but more often we touch lightly on many truths without really taking the time to drink deeply of any.

With the blessing and teaching of the Holy Spirit, I want us to drink deeply from the Psalm.

Let us go to it to discover what is here, to seek a greater understanding of its truth which we may already know, until we are brought powerfully under the influence of its truth.

NO ONE OF US SHOULD BE ABLE TO SPEND THE TIME THAT WE ARE GOING TO SPEND IN IT WITHOUT HAVING ^{HIS} ~~OUR~~ OWN LIVES ~~PROFOUNDLY~~ CHANGED.

May I even ask you to memorize it? The benefit of memorizing it will be yours because in doing it you will be forced to go over and over it again and again.

Now, to begin with, let me read it for you.

And, as I read, will you try to discover the main emphasis in the Psalm.

Is the Psalmist in any particular trouble? Who is he talking to?

What are we told to do in the Psalm?

What does the Psalm tell us about the Lord?

In other words, as I read it let us all think about what we are reading.

I. The theme stated.

One thing that may have impressed most of you as I read this Psalm this morning is that it ends as it begins: "BLESS THE LORD" (7x in 5 vv.).

If ~~you~~^{you} were to read and re-read the Psalm I believe you would become more and more impressed that the main object of the Psalmist is to issue A CALL TO WORSHIP.

← "Bless the Lord, O my soul..."

~~How similar this is to~~

*lit. text
or
text* This emphasis is established if you will note also that there is only one other thing in the Psalm which the Psalmist says must be done.

You will find it in v. 2: "and forget not all His benefits."

NO OTHER PRACTICAL EXHORTATION IS MADE IN THE ENTIRE PSALM.

"Bless the Lord ... and forget not."

But a little thought will prove to us that these two are actually one. You can hardly do one without the other. If you are blessing the Lord it is because you are remembering His benefits, and, on the other hand, if you are remembering His benefits, you are going to be blessing the Lord.

How like Eph. 1:3-14 this Psalm is! maybe you could call Eph. 1 the NT version of Psa. 103.

Paul is reminding us in Eph. 1

of the blessings of the Lord with just one object in mind: WORSHIP!
"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings..." and then he proceeds to remind us what these blessings are!

This is what David is doing in Ps. 103.

If you have known the Lord very long you recognize, I'm sure, that you have experienced these benefits.

The trouble is, we forget so easily!

This is why reading the Word is so important because it keeps our memories strong - we are kept reminded of what the Lord has done and continues to do for us.

As "benefits" they are both unearned and undeserved.

II. The worshipper.

Who is David talking to?

not primarily to Israel.

not primarily to us.

Oh, he gets around to all of God's creatures, heavenly and earthly, in the last three verses of the Psalm, but who is he talking to at the beginning?

Maybe we shouldn't mention this.

Some will say now we have proof that David wrote this when he was an old man. Why? BECAUSE HE IS TALKING TO HIMSELF!

And don't be too quick to write this

off to David's advancing years.
Do you ever talk to yourself? You may not do it audibly all of the time, but you talk to yourself. You tell yourself you should do certain things, go certain places, etc.
DO YOU EVER TALK TO YOURSELF ABOUT THE THINGS OF THE LORD?

Some of you are here this morning because you talked yourself into coming!

Others - who aren't here - weren't as convincing in their arguments as you were.

You talk to yourself about church.
" " " " " giving
your money.

You talk ^{to yourself} about serving the Lord.

DO YOU EVER TALK JUST ABOUT WORSHIPPING THE LORD? I don't mean that these other things are excluded from worship, but you can do them without necessarily worshipping.

THIS IS OUR GREATEST NEED.
But why did David talk to himself about this?

Because this is where worship must begin - with us. Not until I become a worshipper do I have any right to expect others to become ~~to~~ worshippers.

David wanted the nation Israel to become worshippers, wanted all of God's creatures to be worshippers - SO BEFORE HE TALKED TO THEM (VV. 20-22), HE TALKED TO HIMSELF ABOUT WORSHIP.

Do you see the need for this in other lives, father, S.S. teacher, leader? Then be sure you do some talking to yourself.

But I want you to see a couple of other things before we leave these two verses.

III. THE ORIGIN OR SOURCE OF TRUE WORSHIP:

"all that is within me."

Worship is not primarily a matter of the place where you are.

nor is it of the posture you take.

nor is it even the words you use.

WORSHIP, TRUE WORSHIP INVOLVES NOT JUST WHAT IS ON YOUR OUTSIDE, BUT WHAT IS ON YOUR INSIDE!

What is within you?

The Lord Jesus answered the question when He said,

"and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength" (Mk 12:30, quoting Deut. 6:5).

Where is your heart, your soul, your mind, your strength? THEY ARE WITHIN YOU!

By this David meant it had to be genuine, real - not just in outward motions.

Remember how the Lord lamented over Judah?

"This people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me" (Isa. 29:13).

Outward worship? Yes. Worship with all that was within them? NO!

The people of Judah needed to talk to themselves like David had done.

and may I say that we will miss the real blessing of this Psalm unless we start where David did.

But one other thing -

IV. THE OBJECT OF WORSHIP.

Here again we can be so wrong. A youth leader once said, "We can be devoted to devotions without being devoted to the Lord."

What did David say?

"Bless the Lord, O my soul, + all that is within me, bless His holy name."

^{is in His}
What name?

It is JEHOVAH.

(1) From the Heb. verb, to be. The One who is - ETERNAL.

(2) He is ever the same - UNCHANGING.

(3) A name related to His faithfulness with regard to His promises - COVENANT-KEEPING.

It is "His holy name" that is to inspire our worship.

Concl: We have only started in this great Psalm. But may I ask, are we with David in this, saying these tremendous words to ourselves so that all that follows are words which come from within in worship of Him alone who is worthy of our worship.