

A CALL TO WORSHIP

Psalm 29

Related Scriptures: 2 Chronicles 16:29; Psalm 96:8

Intro: The first thing that we notice about this Psalm, is that it was “A Psalm of David.” Almost one half of the one hundred and fifty Psalms carry this superscription. Much study and discussion has gone into the meaning of this expression, but there is little doubt but that David was the author of seventy-three of them. He was not only a musician, but a poet, and it seems from the title given to him, “the sweet singer of Israel,” that he had a beautiful singing voice. We know that he made the musical instruments that were to be used by the people as they worshiped the Lord.

It is interesting to note that Moses, another great leader in Israel, composed music. At least this seems to be the indication at the beginning of Exodus. Even in Revelation 15:3 we read about those who sing the song of Moses and the Lamb. Singing is primarily a form of worshipping God. It is to be a joyful expression of that which people of all ages have found in the Lord. Along with the depravity of human beings, music has suffered from that depravity, but the fact that there is music is traceable to God Himself. Nine times throughout the Bible we read about “a new song.” Even David himself said in Psalm 40:3, speaking of the Lord,

3 And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord.

People have been drawn to Christ through the music of Israel and the Church.

Lucille’s family on her Dad’s side were all Catholics. One of her aunts, her Dad’s sister, the sister for whom Lucille was named, somehow married a Baptist. He wanted her to go to church with him. So Lucille’s Aunt Lucille, went to the priest to get permission to go to church with her husband. The priest approved, but he told her not to listen to the message, but plan a meal, or prepare to make a dress, while the sermon was being preached. *But he did not tell her not to listen to the music!* Aunt Lucille was a musician, and it was through the hymns that she heard the Gospel, and was saved. I am sure that all of us could testify to the blessings we have received by singing, or listening to, the great hymns of the Church. That is what David said in Psalm 40:3 that would happen through hearing the words which the people of God sing: “Many shall see

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it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord.” This is one thing many churches are missing these days when hymns are no longer sung, or are relegated to a minor role in the ministry of the church.

The longest book in the Bible is the book of Psalms. That fact should carry a lot of weight with all of us who know the Lord. Our hymn books should never replace our Bibles, but they definitely should supplement and emphasize the great truths that we have in the Word of God.

Now I have chosen this twenty-ninth Psalm for my message this morning because of one expression in it. I believe it is at the heart of what David had in mind when he wrote this Psalm. Verses 1 and 2 give us the theme of this Psalm, and the last part of verse 2 gives us David’s burden for the people of God then in all of time down to the end of time. He wanted the people over whom he was King to “worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.” I have a marginal note in my Bible which suggests the translation, “in holy attire.” The NASB renders it, “in holy array.” The word “array” means the way you are dressed. Undoubtedly it has reference to what they wore when they came to worship the Lord, but it had an even deeper meaning. It had to do with the condition of their hearts, and the way they were living. It is what we should do as we prepare to observe the Lord’s Supper tonight. We need to search our own hearts to make as sure as we can that there is nothing in our lives that is displeasing to the Lord. As Dr. A. W. Tozer brings out so beautifully in his book on worship, *God created us to worship Him!* Regardless of what place we have in the Church, the Body of Christ, we are all to be worshipers!

So we as Christians, as members of the Church, need to be careful about the clothes that we wear (and not follow the trends of the world), but we are to be sure that we are holy in our character, and in the lives we live.

Do you remember how in Ephesians and Colossians especially the Apostle Paul tells us what we are to “put off” and what we are to “put on”? And the Apostle Peter tells us in 1 Peter 5:5 that we are to be “clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble.”

Take your concordance and look up what we are told in the NT that we need to put on. It takes both, putting off and putting on, putting off the old life, and putting on the new.

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Now let us look at this Psalm.

To whom is this Psalm addressed? The KJV has, “O ye mighty.” The NASB has “sons of the mighty.” But the Hebrew text simply has “sons.” David was addressing those who are members of the family of God. My Hebrew dictionary suggests that this word “sons” carries with it the thought that *a son is one who has the responsibility of upholding the family name.*

Now those of us who know the Lord are members of the family of God. We have our life from God. We are born of God. This is a truth that is emphasized more in the NT than it is in the OT. But here is the truth in the OT. Now we are to live in such a way that other members of God’s family recognize us as a family member, and people who are not in the family of God will be able to see that there is something that is very different about us, and that we are different in the way we live. And perhaps the translators of this Psalm have used the word mighty because as the sons (and daughters) of God, the children of God, we are endued with the power of God by which we can live as the children of God should live.

Moses was raised as a son of Pharaoh, but as he got older he realized that being Pharaoh’s son (even by adoption) was nothing compared with being a son of God by faith. I was always pleased when people said about me that I looked like my Dad. I wanted to be like my Dad. But as great as my Dad was, he would be the first to say that being a child of God was the best a person could ever be.

So Psalm 29 is a Psalm that is addressed to all of us who are in the family of God by the miracle of the new birth.

Now let me point out a second thing about this Psalm. Anyone who reads it carefully is going to be impressed with the fact that in these eleven verses, “the Lord” is referred to by name *seventeen times!* You have it four times in the first two verses. (Read verses 1 and 2, and then read the rest of the Psalm.)

So what can we say about this Psalm? We can say that it was written to all of us who know the Lord, but it was written primarily about Him, about the Lord!

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But now let me point out another feature about this Psalm. In the first two verses we are told what we are to give to the Lord; in the last verse, verse 11, we are told what the Lord will give us. (Read.) And there has to be a connection between the two. If we don't give to the Lord what He wants us to give to Him, then we will not receive the blessings that are promised to us in verse 11. Now if there are two blessings that you and I must have, they are the blessing of "strength" and the blessing of "peace." We need "strength" every day to face our trials and to lay hold of our blessings, and we need "peace" to live in a world where the Devil is always at work to make things difficult for us.

But now how do we give the Lord "glory and strength"? His glory has to do with all of His glorious attributes. His "strength" obviously has to do not just with his power, but with His *sovereign* power by which He not only made our universe, but the same *sovereign* power by which He secures its operation. All of the glory for all of this belongs to God alone, and to the extent to which we recognize this will be receive strength and peace (v. 11) from Him day by day living in His world.

Now we need to look at the main body of the Psalm, and it goes from verse 3 through 10. In these verses we are reminded of how the glory of God is displayed in the operation of the universe.

What is the main emphasis in these verses? As you read through them you find another repetition. This time it is on "the voice of the Lord." It is found seven times here in Psalm 29 – once in verse 3, twice in verse 4, once in verse 5, once in verse 7, once in verse 8, and once in verse 9.

Now if anyone ever asks you if you have ever heard "the voice of the Lord" speaking to you, I hope you will respond by saying, "Yes!" Oh, we haven't heard the Lord's voice like Moses did when the Lord spoke to him out of the burning bush. Nor have we heard the voice of the Lord like Isaiah did when the Lord spoke to him "in the year that King Uzziah died." We haven't heard the voice of the Lord like the multitudes did when the Lord Jesus was here on earth, and "He opened His mouth and taught them, saying . . ." But the Lord has given those of us who are His children the ability to hear the voice of the Lord when the world remains deaf and blind.

We know that it was by the word of the Lord that the whole universe was brought into existence. In Genesis 1 over and over we read about what

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happened on the six days of creation, and the record of each days work began with the words, “And God said . . .” In Psalm 33:6 we read,

6 By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the hose of them by the breath of His mouth.

And then in verses 8 and 9 of the same chapter we read these words:

8 Let all the earth fear the Lord: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him.

9 For He spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast.

Now all of that which had to do with creation is history, true history, sacred history. But the Lord Who created the heavens and the earth has been speaking ever since in the operation of His universe, and all that God is saying now in the operation His world, His universe, is designed to cause us as Psalm 33:8 tells us, to “let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him.”

In verse 3 we read that “the voice of the Lord is upon the waters.” This has to do with the seas of all the world. They are not silent, but continually we hear the sound of the waves as evidence of God’s continual message of His power over the waves. In Jeremiah 5:22 we have a very interesting verse in this connection. This is what it says:

22 Fear ye not me? saith the Lord: will ye not tremble at my presence, which have placed the sand for the bound of the sea by a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass it: and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, yet can they not pass over it? (Jer. 5:22).

And this control is exercised by God on every shore the world around.

Thunder is the voice of God, causing us to marvel even more at His power which is often devastating power. As verse 4 God’s control over all creation is powerful and majestic.

We know how lightning splits trees, even the trees of Lebanon. Verse 6 speaks of how God has defended His people by causing earthquakes, lightning, and storms of various kinds to devastate the areas around Israel as evidence of His care for His people. “Hinds” are female deer, and the hand of the Lord directs in the birth of their calves, an indication that the Lord does this in all animal life. Even in the temple of the Lord where people speak of His glory, this is evidence of the voice of the Lord.

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In these few verses David, led by the Holy Spirit traces just some of the miraculous activity that is to be seen throughout all the earth and the heavens, and traces it all to the voice of the Lord. And in verse 10 we have a summarizing statement to recognize the sovereign power of God everywhere throughout the universe, and indicates that these are evidences that will continue as long as the world last. God is active and in total control over everything that happens in His creation – both with that which is destructive, and that which is productive. The Lord is Lord of all “forever”!

Concl: Now let us go back to the main exhortation of the Psalm which we have in verse 2: “Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.”

What are we doing when we worship the Lord?

First, we have made ourselves familiar with the absolute perfection of holiness, power, wisdom and grace of God by seeking to know God by His Word and through the revelation that we have of God in Christ. This cannot be done overnight, and in a sense we will all be growing always in our understanding and knowledge of God, of His greatness and His glory. Then we will stand in awe of Him.

Second, we humble ourselves continuously and increasingly, acknowledging our unworthiness of the least of His mercies.

Third, we delight ourselves with the Lord, and count our greatest joy to be alone with Him, not seeking His blessings primarily, but seeking Him.

Psalm 29 is one of the many Psalms to which we can go where the Spirit of God will teach us more and more about true worship, worshiping God “in Spirit and in truth.” This is what the Lord seeks primarily from all of us.