

Sunday Night Message

July 12, 2015

Psalm 96

Series – The Psalms

Text – Psalm 96

Introduction

This psalm is found also in 1 Chronicles 16:23 – 33. 1 Chronicles 16 is a combination of psalms 105 (vs. 1 – 15), 96, and 106 (vs. 35 – 36). The context of 1 Chronicles 16 is when David brought the ark of God back to Jerusalem.

Some have stated that Psalm 96 was written from 1 Chronicles 16 for the dedication of the Temple when the Israelites returned to Jerusalem from the Babylon (and Persia) after the captivity.

It is also believed that this psalm has the Millennial Kingdom in view.

There are two things that are abundantly clear in this psalm:

1 God's people are to express their praise, worship, and devotion to the Lord.

2 God's people are also to publically express their praise, worship, devotion, and appreciation for the Lord in the presence of the lost. We are not to be ashamed of the Lord in the presence of this world.

"Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels." (Mark 8:38)

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." (Romans 1:16)

"For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed." (Romans 10:11)

I Sing Praise to the Lord (vs. 1 – 5)

Singing is an expression of praise. In the psalms, singing is always associated with praise.

Notice in v. 1 that we are to sing a new song. The phrase “new song” is found six times in the psalms, once in Isaiah, and twice in Revelation. Some say that this “new song” is the song of redemption. However, “new” could mean “fresh”. Our faith needs to be fresh. We need to constantly be growing, learning, overcoming new hurdles, and winning new victories for the Lord. His mercies are new each morning, and His Word is an infinite well of new truth. We need to constantly be learning, growing, and expressing new things about the Lord.

Notice in v. 2 that we are to “shew forth his salvation”, which means that our lives and our words need to express the fact that we are saved. We are not to be just like everybody else in the world. Christians are to be different.

"In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works." (1 Timothy 2:9-10)

"Not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things." (Titus 2:10)

Ask yourself, “how is my life adorning the doctrine of God?” Or, “How is my life [shewing] forth his salvation from day to day?”.

This is to be done both inside and outside of the church house – “among the heathen”

Notice the reason the psalmist gives in vs. 4 & 5 for singing praises to the Lord in front of the lost world; it is because He is superior to all “gods”. The idols are the works of men’s hands, and even the devils that are the spiritual force behind these idols are merely created beings. But, God created all things. Everything in the universe was created by Him and for Him according to Colossians 1:16.

II Give Worship to the Lord (vs. 6 – 9)

Verses 6 – 9 are expressions of worship. We praise the Lord for what He has done, and we worship the Lord for who He is.

Notice we are to worship the Lord in “the beauty of holiness”. If this is referring to the holiness of the worshipper, then it can only be a reference to

the imputed holiness or righteousness that a believer receives when they are saved. (See Romans 4)

"But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:" (Romans 3:21-22)

Just as singing is an expression of praise, giving is an expression of worship. Notice in v. 8, an offering was to be brought to the "courts" of the Temple as an expression of worship.

In the Old Testament an offering was different from the tithe. The tithe was mandatory and each member of the congregation of Israel was to give tithes proportionate to what the Lord increased him with.

"And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the LORD'S: it is holy unto the LORD. ... And concerning the tithe of the herd, or of the flock, even of whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the LORD." (Leviticus 27:30, 32)

An offering, on the other hand, was given as a free-will gesture, and was an expression of worship to the Lord.

In this New Testament Church time, we often call whatever we give to the Lord "an offering". I still believe in tithing as a starting place for New Testament giving, but I also believe that we should voluntarily give offerings over and above the tithe.

Paul stated in 2 Corinthians 8:1 – 15 that the offering proved the sincerity of the love that the Corinthians had, not only for God, but also for God's people and for God's work.

My advice to new Christians is to tithe, and I explain to them that the tithe goes to the storehouse – the local church. The tithe pays for the expenses of the building; it is used to meet the needs of the pastor and his family; it buys gospel tracts, Bibles, and Sunday School curriculum; it puts fuel in the bus and van so that we can pick up people who need a ride to church.

The offerings are over and above the tithe and go to other needs and special projects; many of which are outside of the local church, such as missions.

"Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts. And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the LORD of hosts." (Malachi 3:8-12)

The tithe is commanded, but the offerings are voluntary. You give offerings as God directs you, but you are under no obligation to give them. You do what you can do, and what God tells you to do.

III Speak Boldly About the Lord (vs. 10 - 13)

As God's people, we are to declare the righteousness of the Lord among the heathen. We are not to back down and cower in this godless culture. We are to be compassionate and kind, but we are also to be salt and light to this world. God does indeed reign, and the whole world will someday know that. It is very important that we boldly declare that we are on the Lord's side now, before He comes to judge the earth.

We need to boldly declare the gospel of salvation to lost sinners, and we also need to boldly declare God's principles to a world that is increasingly becoming godless.

Illustration

I can't help thinking of the old woman who started out when the war commenced with a poker in her hand. When asked what she was going to do with it she said: "I can't do much with it, but I can show what side I'm on." My friends, even if you can't do much, show to which side you belong. (D. L. Moody)