

THANKSGIVING—THE KEY TO HIS PRESENCE

PSALM 100

Introduction:

The psalmist wrote this familiar psalm to be sung when the worshippers came to offer a thank offering to the Lord. Along with the offering that would be presented to the Lord, they sang these words of worship. The psalm indicates that the key to entering the presence of the Lord is thanksgiving. Actually the psalmist uses several words to describe this grateful entrance into the Lord's presence—praise, bless, sing, and give thanks, express joy.

The lesson of this psalm is clear—when you feel shut out of the presence of the Lord--approach him with thanksgiving. Interestingly the psalm does not focus just on something God has done for us as a basis for thanksgiving but includes who He is. You find in these thankful words a fairly good summary of the Old Testament understanding of God. When you come into such an understanding of who He is, it should provoke a joyful, glad response of thanksgiving. Then as you give this expression of thanksgiving, you will find yourself in the uplifting and healing presence of the Lord.

I. THANKFUL FOR WHO HE IS.

Thanksgiving begins with who God is—what we have come to know about Him through the revelation that He has made to us. The names used for God in the text sums up whom He is.

1. His name is Yahweh.

“Know that the LORD, He is God.” When LORD occurs with each letter capitalized it indicates that it is the Hebrew name Yahweh, or Jehovah. This is the covenant name of God that was revealed to Moses at the burning bush. It is built on the verb “to be”. He is the self-existent One who entered into covenant with Israel at Mount Sinai, and into covenant with us at Mount Calvary.

The name found its way into the name of Jesus which means Yahweh saves. Whenever you realize that God is the source of all salvation, and the covenant God, surely your heart will respond with warm and triumphant gratitude. It will surely put the right words on your lips as you enter His awesome and holy presence.

2. He alone is God.

Elohim is the other Hebrew name for God that should provoke praise.

“Know that the LORD, He is God.” Elohim is the name of the Eternal One, the powerful God of creation. He is the One who has all power and sovereignty. Besides Him there is none other.

II. THANKFUL FOR WHAT HE HAS DONE.

Once you realize Who He is, you will develop an awareness of what He has done. Understanding what He has done will surely stir your heart with gratitude.

1. He has made us individually.

“It is He who has made us.” This verb occurs in the record of Creation in Genesis 1. It is not the word translated “created” in verse one, but the verb that occurs later as God continues to take some of the preexisting material that he has created and to mould them into separated species of the natural order.

None of us can claim to be self-made persons. When conception took place in the womb of our mother, we had nothing to do with it. It was God that caused the conception. As we developed our own unique personality, it was God that worked through circumstances to develop. God made us what we are. He gave us our unique talents and gifts. He determined our temperament, and our inclinations. He made each of us a unique person. To Him honor and praise must be offered.

The result of this is that we are His!

2. He has made us corporately.

“We are His people.” He made the nation of Israel just like He made us individually.

He made the church—apart from His sovereign work neither Israel as a nation or the church as the holy nation come into existence.

3. He has sustained us.

“We are His people, and the sheep of His pasture.” We enjoy a special relationship Him because of His work, but then we too are under His care like sheep are under the care of a shepherd. He looks after us like Shepherds look after sheep.

III. THANKFUL FOR WHAT HE IS.

1. He is good.

“For the Lord is good.”

2. He is love.

“Mercy is everlasting.”

3. He is faithful

“And His truth endures to all generations.”