

LISTENING TO THE HEART OF GOD

PSALM 81

I. THE DESIRE OF GOD—AN EXCLUSIVE RELATIONSHIP.

God takes us back to the First Commandment: “There will be no foreign gods among you.” God wants a people just for Himself. He does not want to share our love and devotion with another.

1. The relationship is based on His redemptive work.

“I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt.” His saving work gives Him a basis to claim this exclusive relationship.

2. The relationship is expressed through worship.

“Nor shall you worship any foreign God.” This Psalm lifts worship to a new level. Worship is a way of gratefully acknowledging what God has done—“I removed his shoulder from the burden; His hands were freed from baskets. You called in trouble, and I delivered you.”

Worship is expressed in public acts of joyful singing before the Lord. “Sing aloud to God our Strength; Make a joyful shout to the God of Jacob.” The imperative verbs are plural. We need the congregation to express this worship.

II. THE DELIGHT OF GOD—TO SATISFY OUR NEEDS.

If you would know the heart of God, you must understand what He enjoys doing. He is not that different from any good father—He delights in meeting our needs.

1. He delights in being generous with us.

“Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it.” Is it not interesting to lay this alongside the invitations of Jesus, “If anyone thirsts, let him come unto Me and drink.”

2. He delights in defending us.

“I would soon subdue their enemies, and turn my hand against their adversaries.”

3. He delights in satisfying us.

“He would have fed them also with the finest of wheat; and with honey from the rock I would satisfy you.”

III. THE DISAPPOINTMENT OF GOD—OUR REFUSAL TO LISTEN AND BE BLESSED.

1. He is disappointed with our refusal of His love.

“But My people would not heed My voice, and Israel would have none of Me.”

2. He is disappointed with our release to our own ways.

“So I gave them over to their own stubborn heart, to walk in their own counsels.”