

Psalm 145 – The Goodness of God

A psalm of praise. Of David.

- ¹ I will exalt you, my God the King;
I will praise your name for ever and ever.
- ² Every day I will praise you
and extol your name for ever and ever.
- ³ Great is the LORD and most worthy of praise;
his greatness no one can fathom.
- ⁴ One generation commends your works to another;
they tell of your mighty acts.
- ⁵ They speak of the glorious splendour of your majesty—
and I will meditate on your wonderful works.^[b]
- ⁶ They tell of the power of your awesome works—
and I will proclaim your great deeds.
- ⁷ They celebrate your abundant goodness
and joyfully sing of your righteousness.
- ⁸ The LORD is gracious and compassionate,
slow to anger and rich in love.
- ⁹ The LORD is good to all;
he has compassion on all he has made.
- ¹⁰ All your works praise you, LORD;
your faithful people extol you.
- ¹¹ They tell of the glory of your kingdom
and speak of your might,
- ¹² so that all people may know of your mighty acts
and the glorious splendour of your kingdom.
- ¹³ Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,
and your dominion endures through all generations.
The LORD is trustworthy in all he promises
and faithful in all he does.^[c]
- ¹⁴ The LORD upholds all who fall
and lifts up all who are bowed down.
- ¹⁵ The eyes of all look to you,
and you give them their food at the proper time.
- ¹⁶ You open your hand
and satisfy the desires of every living thing.
- ¹⁷ The LORD is righteous in all his ways
and faithful in all he does.
- ¹⁸ The LORD is near to all who call on him,
to all who call on him in truth.
- ¹⁹ He fulfils the desires of those who fear him;
he hears their cry and saves them.
- ²⁰ The LORD watches over all who love him,
but all the wicked he will destroy.
- ²¹ My mouth will speak in praise of the LORD.
Let every creature praise his holy name
for ever and ever.

Introduction

Lots of Psalms begin with raw emotion – a problem or a crisis in which we see the writer really struggling – and then arguing or following a train of thought that leads them to find a new place in their thinking where they are reaffirmed and comforted by the reality of their relationship with God the most High. But we are starting our series by looking at a Psalm that has no real self-reflection or angst – it is completely dominated by a continuous exaltation of the glory, goodness and greatness of God.

Why would we start here? We believe strongly that the anchor of our soul is having a true view of God's greatness.

Intention

There is a very clear intention at the start of this Psalm – a determination where the writer declare 'I will extoll... I will bless you ... my mouth will speak!' From beginning to the end of this Psalm we have a single intention. The Psalm is acrostic meaning that in the original Hebrew every line would have started with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet. This is significant because the psalmist is declaring the whole alphabet of a determination to focus on God's greatness.

This isn't a might extol you, or I will sometimes extol you God – it is a determination, a clear decision to give Him all the praise He is due every day. God is worthy of this response from us.

Where do we land on that determination and intention every day to exalt God for who he is ? We can be determined about lots of things - we can make time to do many things – but the question is do we understand the value of determining daily to worship God or do we just try to squeeze it in when we can ?

Expression

Our Psalm continues with the fact that God is great and the fulness of His greatness is unsearchable. The Psalmist is hinting that this searching for the greatness of God is like a treasure hunt. This Christmas I have been taking my children on treasure hunts where they have a map and clues and they excitedly go out to find the prize at the end of the trail. As we go on our treasure chest with the map of the word of God we will find two main methods of expressing what we find: words and descriptions.

Words expressing our understanding of His greatness – Our Psalmist doesn't stumble across the first clue and stop. He is determined to do his very best to push in using a progression of words – through extolling, declaring, speaking, pouring out the fame of God. Its not a little dribble – it's a gushing torrent of praise.

At Christmas my daughter asked us, after a meal, to close our eyes. (Peeping) we let her go off to the conservatory where she prepared a picture for us – as a present – the picture was covered in great splattering's of paint from loads of tubes of bright paint. Our psalmist is like that – he is using very possible force of expression and words like a colourful mosaic of expression.

I don't know about you but my worship can be a bit black and white – unlike the psalmist who is worshipping in High Definition, 4K colour range. The way we express our worship reflects the depth of our experience of God greatness.

Descriptions of God- We see the Psalmist use words like God is King, a great Lord, he declares His mighty acts – His awesome deeds. He also quotes from Exodus 34:6 The Lord is gracious and merciful. This seems to be a pole in the ground, like a maypole, which the other stands wrap around.

We cannot sing of things we have not seen nor experienced. If I asked a child to describe a place they frequent – we would get a pretty good reflection. But if I asked that child to describe the Victoria falls just from a picture – they would have no idea of the roaring thunder of the actual place. Our own expression of God comes out of us experiencing the thunder and power of God.

Attention

Where does our attention to God come from? First upon God and then secondly towards His Kingdom and then thirdly because His attention is on us.

To God -The Psalmists attention is not upon self-circumstances. His attention is firmly, constantly on God, and he calls everybody else to do the same. He is not self-seeking but God-seeking. He is constantly entreating us to look at Him.

How well do we do this? We can be attention seekers – but is this towards God or ourselves ?

Many of the Psalms are a thought journey from the difficulty of a psalmists own circumstances overwhelming their emotions – to moving to a place where they understand that the greatness of God and his love for them puts everything into a correct perspective.

Towards God's kingdom – the psalmist also extolls the glorious splendour of God's kingdom. We can spend a lot of time concentrating on our own kingdoms at the expense of God's. HE loves us more than we can express – He is primarily offering us the peace and joy of being firmly affixed in the centre and reality of that kingdom. Colossians says we have been delivered from the tyranny of darkness and bought into the kingdom of light. When we move from self-focus to God focus we are releasing the deep spiritual benefits of being part of God's kingdom. Focus on the glorious splendour of God's kingdom and our position as sons and daughters , royal priests, within it can remove the feeling of frustration, and perhaps indignation, at the restrictions and pain caused by the COVID-19 virus.

This focus requires both our heart and minds to be set on things above.

Gods attention is on us – our attention can be greater focused on God if we are firm in the confidence that God's attention is on us. How amazing this is ! The unsearchable wonder of God is aware and accepting of every detail of our life. He gives us our food and satisfies or our desires with good things – if we move our attention away from difficulty and self to a place of revelry in His kingdom. He knows your needs and preserves us. How wonderful that He preserves us ?

Imagine a child just learning to walk – from that child's perspective they would be tentatively clinging on to their fathers' hand – but the reality is the father has a an even stronger and former grip on the child. That can sometimes be our reaction to tough circumstances that we are just about hanging on – but He has everything covered. God is holding firmly onto you.

Gods got a grip on you.

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