

“The Sheep of His Pasture”

Psalm 100

March 13, 2005 by C.W. Powell

1. Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands.
2. Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing.
3. Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.
4. Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.
5. For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations. (Ps 100:1-5 AV)

There are several things about this great Psalm of worship that are for our edification and joy. The Psalm addresses the people of God, who are called the sheep of His pasture, but the call is to the whole world. The voice is a voice of command, but it is a gracious, loving, and a patient shepherd who calls.

- I. All the world is called to worship the Lord. The true worship of God had never been intended to apply only to the nation of Israel, but that the church would be planted in all parts of the world and that people of every kindred, tribe, and nation would worship and serve the true God.
 - A. The worship of the Lord is to be performed with joy and gladness and singing. It is to be simple and without complication.
 - B. The figure is the temple at Jerusalem, enter into His gates and His courts: but the true temple is in the hearts of God’s people and in the church that He purchased with His own blood.
 - C. We are to come with the offerings of thanksgiving and praise. These are the offerings themselves and the focus is to be on God himself; not upon the gifts of God, as the Pharisee that we saw a few weeks ago. God is our exceeding great rewards and the glory of His presence and His kindness and mercy to us far exceeds His gifts and blessings.
 - D. Before His presence means the place that He has put the tokens of His presence
 1. In Israel it was the service in the Temple after the order of Moses. All the ceremonies and trappings of sacrifices, washings, incense, etc
 2. Today it is in the church where God’s presence in several manners:
 - a. Most important is the preaching of the Word.
 - b. Exercise of the offices of elder and deacon
 - c. Prayers and devotion of His people.
 - d. Sacraments
 - e. Discipline, so that those who deny the faith by crimes against the doctrine or crimes against the morals of the Gospel are shut away from the supper.
 3. Yet, even though it be in church, God is not worshipped by ceremonies, as Calvin said, but by the true devotion of the heart. His worship must be in spirit and in truth. The most that ceremonies can do is to direct the heart to the worship of God. There is no magic in them.

- II. Those who worship ignorantly are exhorted to learn of the true God. Vs. 3. Not everything that is true of God is set forth here, but some very important and basic things are. It is amazing that those who go to worship do not ask the most important question of all: does the god I worship truly exist?
- A. Jehovah is God. Who is God? He is Jehovah. God is not whatever you or I think He is. The only God there is is the God who spoke to Moses and Abraham and Isaac and Jacob. He is the One who made promises of grace to Adam and his race, to Noah at the time of the flood.
 - B. God cannot be worshipped without true knowledge, for faith in something that is false is a contradiction. Faith in that which has not been promised by God is vanity and a lie. In spite of all the shallowness of the modern age and the desire man has to be God, it is not true that you can make something so because you believe it strong enough to make it so. Pigs don't fly and monkeys don't build computers no matter how much you dream dreams.
 - C. Jesus put it this way: "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." (Joh 17:3 AV)
 - D. This is the reason that faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. The word of God does not come by faith, and no amount of believing can make so what isn't so. You cannot make something biblical that isn't biblical, and you cannot bind the consciences of God's people by that which is not biblical. Those who follow deaf, blind, dumb and dead gods are themselves deaf, blind, dumb and dead.
 - E. People of all religions do not worship the same God. It is ridiculous on the face of it. Not even all who name themselves as Christians are followers of the same God. I do not worship the same God as Benny Hinn. He preaches another religion from the religion of the Bible. He serves the gods of gold and silver. Who ever he listens to that he calls God, is not the God of the Bible. The only way that you can say that all people worship the same God is to use the word God in an empty way. You might as well say that everybody in the world worshipped Lord Schlamman. "Who is Lord Schlamman?" you say? Exactly.
 - F. Who is this Jehovah God that we are called to worship.
 - 1. He is the creator of the world and of the church. He called the worlds into existence out of nothing. But mostly this verse refers to the creation of the church. As Paul put it:
"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. 10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." (Eph 2:8-10 AV)
 - 2. We are His people.
 - a. All people are God's people in that He created them. The devil doesn't own anything, even himself, for he is also the creature of God. God created the devil for His Own purpose and will accomplish His perfect will in the devil. We do not mean that God created evil, but He created that great a powerful being who fell into sin and pulled many of the angels with him into depravity and eternal damnation. But none of this took God by surprise or compelling Him to adjust His eternal and gracious decree.

- b. But primarily, God is speaking of His special people: the elect of God who were not only created the same way all things were created, but who are new creatures in Christ through the operations of grace. God is the creator of the church and the flock of God.
 - c. Because of this the church is the temple of God and every man is cautioned on how to conduct himself in the church. He that defiles the temple of God, him shall God destroy, the apostle wrote. We do not belong to ourselves but belong to God Himself, who has told us in His word how we are to conduct ourselves. You must be very careful how you monkey around with God's people. Remember the words of the Lord Jesus to Saul of Tarsus: "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?"
3. We are the sheep of his pasture. The world and the church belong to God, to the Lord Jesus Christ. The figure of sheep and shepherd is a common one in the holy scriptures. As our shepherd He defends and feeds and seeks us when we stray.
- a. What a humbling figure. God's people are not wolves, or lions, or tigers, or even dogs and cats. We are sheep. This is good advice: value yourself as highly as God values you, but no higher. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.
 - b. What a blessed figure, that speaks of our dependence upon the Lord. You know, when you think of sheep you don't think of things that make things happen. We don't call kings sheep. Sheep are non-aggressive, non-threatening. As a boy I remember running from a bull, and pigs scared the daylights out of me. But I was never afraid of a sheep. Sheep are not mascots for sports teams. No, they are called tigers, or eagles, or falcons, or broncos. Can you imagine a team called the Atlanta sheep? Sheep are animals that have things happen to them. They are not the movers and shakers of the animal kingdom. This designation is for the purpose of emphasizing our dependence upon the Lord for all things and our peaceful relationship with all of God's people.

III. The character of the Lord.

- A. He is good. No harm will come to you from following the Lord. Satan would have you think that you will miss out on something good or that you will have harm come to you from following the Lord, but nothing could be farther from the truth.
 - 1. He has good intentions toward His people because of the righteousness of Christ.
 - 2. He is longsuffering and patient. Patience is the crowing glory of the power of God. He has control over Himself and will postpone judgment until His purposes of grace are fully implemented.
 - 3. We lack patience because we think that it is all up to us to get it done. Everything needs to be done today.
 - a. David, anointed king. Saul seeking his life. Outlaws and debtors coming to David and making up his six hundred men. How could the promise of God be fulfilled by this ragtag bunch of losers and outlaws.\
 - b. Who would have thought that the day would come that David's son Solomon would sit upon a great ivory throne and that a great temple would arise in

Jerusalem which would be famous throughout the world for the worship of the One God.

- c. We are the servants of the Lord, the sheep of His pasture. It is God who has made us and not we ourselves. God calls his church together just as He called the rag tag bunch that made up David's band of mighty men. They were not mighty men when they came to David, but they learned to be mighty men as they endured the harshness of the wilderness hiding from Saul.
 - d. 2Ti 2:24 "And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient," The servants of the Lord must have something of the character of the Lord Jesus, to be a good shepherd of the flock, being able to teach, and having the patience to give the teaching time to soak in.
- B. His mercy is everlasting: There are not starting and stopping places in the mercy of God. Not toward His people, for the righteousness of his sheep is an everlasting righteousness, the righteousness of Christ Himself. He doesn't run out of patience with us or cast us off because of our sins and failures. As we have received mercy, let us show mercy toward one another, showing the character of our Shepherd.
- C. His truth endureth to all generations. As someone has said, "We can do nothing against the truth. We can only bear witness of the truth." The truth existed long before we were born, and it will exist long after we are born.
- 1. It is the truth that God created the heavens and the earth in six days.
 - 2. It is the truth that God is the one true and living God, the father of our Lord Jesus Christ.
 - 3. It is the truth that salvation comes only by faith in Jesus Christ, who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. We are Christians because He has had mercy on us. It is He that hath made us and not we ourselves.
 - 4. It is the truth that God cannot be worshipped with men's hands, but is truly worshipped only on the altar of our hearts, from whence we offer spiritual sacrifices of love, praise, and thanksgiving.
 - 5. It is the truth that we are called to serve and love one another for the glory of God and the good of one another.

May God bless you.