

Psalm 115:1–8

The Only Living, True, Seeing, Strong, Sovereign God

**Tuesday, March 12, 2024 • Read Psalm 115:1–8**

Questions from the from the Scripture text: How does v1a emphasize the point that it's making? To what does the psalmist desire that the glory would go instead (v1b)? For what two attributes of His (v1c–d)? What are the nations currently saying—to which this glory would put a stop (v2)? Why are they wrong to say this—where is God (v3a)? What does He do (v3b)? How do their trust and hope and purpose compare (v4)? By what basic inability do v4–7 make this point? Who are just as bad off as these idols (v8)?

**Why are believers brought low?** Psalm 115:1–8 prepares us for the opening portion of public worship on the Lord's Day. In these eight verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **when believers are brought low, it is for the glory of God.**

The occasion for this psalm is that God's people have been brought low enough that the nations are saying, "where is their God?" (v2). What a happy question this is! Whether it is others asking it, or even doubt creeping into our own hearts and asking it, the answer snaps us right back to ultimate reality: "Our God is in heaven" (v3a)! And v3b goes on to ask the next question: then what is He doing, in the midst of our low times? Answer: "whatever He pleases!" He is good and wise, so He is doing that good and wise thing that pleases Him.

Men then (and now!) tended to think that what you could see and hear and smell and touch is more real than the invisible and spiritual. But nothing could be further than the truth. The nations could see their idols, but that just meant that their idols were creatures—and utterly powerless ones at that. The sing-songy nature of v4–7 rightly mocks them. And v8 puts the nail in the coffin: those who do not perceive the living God are just as pointless in their knowledge and powerless in their actions as their idols are. The Creator, Who is the original knower and communicator and actor, is invisible! Visible things only have these characteristics because He has given them to us.

So, when the God Who has bound Himself to us in covenant love (v1c) and covenant faithfulness (v1d) brings us low, let us remember why: it is for His glory. He will surely glorify Himself by helping us and blessing us (v9–18, next week). So when we are brought low, let our minds be conformed to His in Psalm 115. And, in the same spirit as the first three petitions of the Lord's Prayer, let our hearts cry out in prayer and song, "Not unto us, O YHWH, not unto us, but to Your Name give glory!"

**What (Who!) is most real? Who is the most powerful? Whom must all knowledge "know" and all actions serve?**

*Sample prayer: Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to Your Name give glory. Glorify Your covenant love! Glorify Your covenant faithfulness! We praise You, O God of heaven, who do whatever You please. You are good and wise and righteous. Whatever You are pleased to do is good and wise and right. You know all things, see all things, and hear all things. You uphold all things by Your almighty hand. There is no true knowledge apart from You. There is no true ability except in dependence upon You. So, come and help us in our worshiping You, and be glorified in that worship, we ask, through Christ, AMEN!*

**Suggested songs: ARP115A "Not unto Us, LORD" or TPH115A "Not to Us, LORD, Not to Us"**

**(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via [hopewellarp.org](http://hopewellarp.org))**

Psalm 115, verses 1 through 8. These are God's words. Not unto us, so Yahweh not unto us. But to your name, give glory. Because of your mercy because of your truth. Why should the Gentiles say? So, where is their God?

But our God is in heaven, he does whatever he pleases. Their idols are silver and gold. The work of men's hands. They have mouths but they do not speak. Always they have. But they do not see. They have ears, but they do not hear. Noses, they have but they do not smell.

They have hands, but they do not handle feet, they have but They do not walk. Nor do they mutter through their throat? Those who make them are like them. So is everyone who trusts in.

So far, the reading of gods inspired. And Aaron twerked.

You can make a Great mistake about suffering or present humiliation and present low condition. I'm thinking that this. Representative, we think of Believers.

By thinking that. This is representative of. What their God is like or what it is like to belong to him.

Those of the world. When they see. Christians suffering or persecuted. In a low condition. They? Uh, well. So, where is their got? Because just as, with the old idolatry of Fashioning wood or stone? In this case, silver or gold in verse 4. Uh, and being impressed with that, which you can Uh, see and touch and handle.

And so the invisible God the god of whom there were no images. Uh, was thought to be imaginary or inferior. Uh, imaginary and Inferior because you couldn't see him. And yet just the opposite is true, wasn't it? The gods of the Nations that you could see. Well. Congratulations. You can see then they can't see you.

You can see their eyes, their eyes can't see anything. You can see their ears, their ears can't hear anything. You can see their mouths. But you can't hear their mouths because their mouths, don't say anything. Uh, and so forth. And so, there is a great glory in having, The true and living invisible God.

The one who communicates. Himself, the one who observes all things. There is nothing that can be seen that, he does not see. There's nothing that can be heard that he does not hear. He's the one of who upholds All Things by the word of his power. There's nothing that happens except by his sustaining Providence.

No hand has ever moved. Except. Uh, by the mercy of God. Continuing to extend to the that hand, the ability to exist. Let alone move And so all of these things now that we experience in a physical and sensory manner, Are just the lightest Whispers of ultimate and great realities that are in God.

The physical is not more real. The visible. Is not more real. God is more real. The spiritual. Is. More real. And so, when God's people are brought low, And our flesh is tempted. To. That maybe our God or belonging to him. Is failing at the moment. And certainly the world.

Enjoy saying. Where is their God? He's not real or if he is, he's failing. Our first response. Is not even. That we would be lifted up out of our low estate, that we would be exalted that we would have Glory. Our first response. Must be. That God would glorify himself to us that he would overcome our flesh and our doubt.

And remind our hearts again. That he is the one true and living God from Everlasting to Everlasting that he is the god, who is that. He has all existence in himself and all knowledge in himself and all power in himself. And so, when we are brought low and we are tempted towards Unbelief.

Then it needs to be our response at that point not unto us. So Yahweh not unto us but to your name give glory. And particularly now in connection with his people, Because of his Covenant love and his Covenant faithfulness, which has translated here, mercy and Truth because of your mercy because of your truth.

In other words, because you have covenanted. With us in Covenant, love and Covenant faithfulness. And because you Lord have tied, the glory of your name, to what happens with this people. This people who are dirt, this people who are sinful, There's people who need Grace just that we might be forgiven and have blessing

instead of curse.

These people who need Grace just so we might continue to function and strengthen the place of our weakness. Because you have identified yourself with us. Oh God. Help us. To bring glory to your name. And so, when they ask the question, where is their God in verse 2? And when the psalmist thinks about the unbelievers asking that question, the Nations asking, that question.

Where is there? God in verse 2. Praise God. It's like a catechism answer. It's like a children's. Catechism question and answer. Where is God? Our God is in heaven. Well, what is he doing? Whatever he wants to. So that we start to receive his Providence, not. As inferior because we don't understand it.

Or because we're having difficulty functioning or because it's painful for us in the moment. We start receiving his Providence. Not we, we start looking at his Providence, not from what it's like on our receiving end, but what it's like on his ordaining end. She says. He's doing whatever he pleases.

Well, what is he? He is good and he gets wise and he's powerful. Well then his Providence must be good. And his Providence must be wise. And as Providence must be powerful. Now, the Nations might think. We believe in what we could touch. You know, those who Rather than taking science as something in Humble submission to God grateful that he made the world.

To function a particular way and that he is faithful Faithfully upholding it. So that things are repeatable and observable and learnable and rather than in, they make a religion out of all. I only believe the things that I can see. Well, you just use the word believe and you can't see believe.

I mean the irrationality Of being what we call a pure materialist only material things exist. You know, you may be able to see your idol. But the very fact that you can Means that it's useless. And, If you are trusting in What you can make? Then you are useless too.

You're not really seeing you're not really hearing. Because if you could really see, you would see in the things that are made, that there was a maker who made them. If you could really hear, You would not just hear the sounds that are going on or what humans communicate to us.

You'd understand the message that God tells about himself in the things that are made and then especially in his word that he gives by special revelation. If you were really acting, You wouldn't act in service of yourself and in service of your pleasures and in service. Um, of mere Flash and in service of devils, as there are many, who do You would act in service of the Living God because it is his will and his power that is going to be accomplished at the last Anything that is not done in service of him is done in futility.

And so those who worship Idols really are like them. They have the appearance of seeing and hearing and speaking and acting and so forth. But, They're ultimately useless and futile and impotent. And so, it's helpful for us to have Uh, this To sing and to pray. About how God has covenanted for otherwise, impotent creatures.

To be the objects of his crested. And his Emmett. Because he is glorifying himself. By Saving Those whom he has bound to himself in that Everlasting electing love. And when we are in trouble, then and Our first reflexes to say help, which is fine. Ask God for help. But may his Spirit also bring to your mind, bring to your heart.

That this is an opportunity to remember that your God is in the heavens. And he's doing all that he pleases. And that when he does help because he will When he delivers you and glorifies you, which he will. It is especially for his glory. And just like we heard in the Lord's Prayer.

That's Psalm 115. Reshapes. How we think? We start to prioritize his glory. Not unto us. Oh yeah, but to your name. Give glory. And if it's that way on the Requesting. Than when he does help us, when he does give us success. When he does bless us with prosperity when he does give us strength or restore health, especially at the last day when he crowns us.

As the many Brethren among whom. The sun is the firstborn. Then we will say the same thing not unto us. O Lord. But unto your name, Give the glory. As they do as they are pictured as doing in glory casting down. Their crowns before him. They're given crowns by God.

Set off not unto us. To your name. Oh God. Give glory. May you grant to us to live? And such trust and such praise. Let's pray. Father, thank you for giving us. This Psalm right on the heels of Thinking about hearing about, The Lord's Prayer and we do pray that your spirit will use.

This part of your word now. For reshaping. How we think that we would prioritize Your Glory? In our hearts and as a consequence of what happens with our lives. Glorify Yourself by. Redeeming delivering. You are people whom you have set your love upon to whom you are faithful. For, we ask it in Jesus name. Amen.