

Further Teaching on the Basis of Our Worship of God

We've been looking at Psalm 33, seeking to gain a biblically informed view of the crucial importance of God's people gathering together to worship him. In verses 1-3 we saw that our worship will be pleasing in God's sight as we seek to follow his beautiful plan for worship given in his word. Following this we saw that there's a basis for our worship. Beginning in verses 4-5 we saw that we worship because he's faithful in his word and work. Last time from verses 6-9 we noted that we should be overwhelmed with reverence and awe as we ponder God's creating and sustaining power over all the heavens and the earth. The next basis for our worship of God found in this Psalm is that, God not only controls the heavens and the earth he also controls the nations. "The LORD brings the counsel of the nations to nothing; he frustrates the plans of the peoples" (vs. 10). Far too often, people have fallen into a state of unhealthy fear because it may sometimes seem that wicked leaders are in control. But let's never forget that God is the only one who's truly in control.

"The king is not saved by his great army; a warrior is not delivered by his great strength. The war horse is a false hope for salvation (deliverance), and by its great might it cannot rescue" (16-17). This portion of the Psalm is a helpful reminder for us to place our ultimate trust in God alone and not in governments, armies, Supreme Court justices or any of the political leaders in our nation or any nation. The government has an important role and responsibility in the lives of its citizens; it is ordained by God for the public good, for the protection of its citizens as well as for the encouragement of those who do good and the punishment of evildoers (Romans 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13-14). But we must always keep in mind that, although governments make and enforce laws, it's never God's plan to bring about the genuine change that's needed in our world through governments.

True and lasting change will come, according to God's plan, through the Church as the gospel is regularly proclaimed and, by God's grace alone, hearts are changed. Christians have an ongoing responsibility to gather corporately under the word of God preached and taught so that we'll be equipped for the work of ministry (Ephesians 4:11-16). As we're growing in knowledge and spiritual maturity, we continue to go out to the places, relationships, vocations, etc., to be salt and light to those whom God blesses us with the opportunity to minister to. Our lives are not merely to be lived for ourselves but rather, we're to live sacrificially for the good of others. Presbyterian pastor and author Dr. George Grant writes: "The heroes of the faith have always sacrificed their lives, fortunes, and reputations for the sake of the gospel."

One other basis given in this Psalm for the worship of God is that God knows and sees everything. Notice verses 13-15 as well as verse 18; "The LORD looks down from heaven; he sees all of the children of man...He looks out on all the inhabitants of the earth....and observes all their deeds." There's an obvious repetition of the word "all" in these verses. No one can escape the all-seeing, all-knowing God of heaven and earth who'll one day judge the wicked. But, he will also bring salvation for those whose hope is in him. "Behold the eye of the LORD is on those

who fear him, on those who hope in his steadfast love, that he may deliver their soul from death and keep them alive in famine” (18-19). God will save those who turn to him by faith and they will know the blessings of his love, care and compassion both in this life and the life to come. It may seem, at times, as if everything in our world is out of control but we can rest assured that God is sovereign over all; over all nations and all people. We have every reason to run joyfully to worship him each and every Lord’s Day!

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