

***Psalm 103 - Core Worship - Devotions Monday, January 9***

Opening thought - why is trying to "worship God more authentically" harder to achieve or improve than connecting with God's people or impacting God's kingdom?

Read - Psalm 103:1-12

Why is David starting his Psalm with a charge to his own soul to delight in God, to see God as worthy of being blessed and to recount God's many benefits?

Can you identify with David in his beginning of this Psalm? How?

Pastor Jerry commented that at times we can come to worship half-heartedly or with the wrong object for worship (ourselves, God of our own making). We want to share glory with God, to compete with Him, or to have control over our lives, in some way.

- How is this true for you? How do you see this in Matthew 15:7-9 or Deut. 8:17-19?

Pastor Jerry stated that "***Worship of the Lord is to be an intentional act of the will whereby we respond to God out of a strong, positive affection.***" Thus worship is a response of love toward God!

- How do verses 2-12 work to stimulate this intentional act of the will?

Reflect - Pastor Jerry emphasized that singing is not automatically worship, but rather an instrument of grace whereby the Spirit can stir up our souls so that we genuinely worship God. And the same thing can happen in prayer - it can be stirred up to genuine worship or it can be dry and routine and not worship at all. And therefore by extension in all of life and in all things you set your hand to can become an act of worship unto God.

- How does this apply to your life right now? Take time to pray, like David, and ask the Lord to stir up your soul so that genuine worship flows into every part of your day today!

## **Tuesday, January 10**

Opening thought - why is remembering important things in life so difficult? What do you easily find yourself drawn to thinking about?

Read - Psalm 103:6-19

- What "word pictures" does David give us in this Psalm to make the invisible God visible?

- Take a moment and reflect on 1 or 2 of these for your own life and turn to God in prayer with thanksgiving and gratitude for how He has showered you with his kindness & love.

Pastor Jerry spoke about the reality that remembering is key to stirring up our affections for God that can lead to genuine worship. This is shown in a quote by Jonathan Edwards: "The soul either views things with approval, with pleasure, and with acceptance, or it views things with opposition, with disapproval, with displeasure, and with rejection... true religion consists largely of the affections." (Religious Affections)

- How does the reality of our fallen nature and our continuing struggle with indwelling sins lead us away from cultivating our "religious affections?"

- How are you cultivating time to remember God and rehearse his goodness toward you?

Reflect - John Piper likes to remind people that the ultimate aspect of our salvation is that we gain God Himself. That all the actions of Christ on our behalf to bring us salvation are ultimately for the purpose of gaining personal access to God himself. That we may be called children of God. Thank God this morning for all He has done for you. Ask him to renew in you an affection for Him above all else!

## **Wednesday, January 11**

Opening thought - how have your affections changed since becoming a believer in Christ?

Where would you like to see more affections for God that leads to true worship in all of your life?

Read - Psalm 103:1-22

Write below anything that the Spirit of God quickened in your soul while reading this psalm.

Pastor Jerry asked that all our Covenant Groups take time to answer this question:

- "At one time in my life \_\_\_\_\_, but then God \_\_\_\_\_ and now \_\_\_\_\_."

How would you answer this?

Thank God for all you have written about and reflected on this morning.

**Psalm 103 - Core Worship**

CPC's Church Vision

We exist to develop followers of Christ who **worship** God passionately, **connect** with God's people and **impact** God's kingdom.

The vision answers all these questions:

- why are we here?
- What do we do?
- How can we become mature?
- How do we organize our ministries, departments and budget?

Worship, Jerry thinks, is much harder part of our vision than all the others. Impact and Connect are more tangible and touchable than worship.

Psalms 103 - 4th book of Psalms; in this section only 2 psalms are written by David. And is is one of them.

#### Worship:

Corporate worship (Sunday)

Individual worship (Monday thru Saturday)

- Psalm 103 addresses these aspects of worship

#### I. Systemic Obstacles in our Worship Vs. 1-2

David is preaching to himself and his soul

Our natural tendency is to come to worship half heartedly

- Matt. 15:7-9 (vain worship, hearts far from God); our tendency is to worship the wrong object (ourselves, God of our own making). We want to share glory with God, to compete with Him. To have control over our lives, in some way. And thus our worship can easily become corrupted (God + \_\_\_\_\_). This is the drift of our being.
- Deut. 8:17-19 (stinkin thinkin); I see myself as "more" than I ought and see God as "less" than I ought.
  - 2 Chron. 32:25 - example of Hezekiah
- When this happens our worship becomes *halfhearted*; we seek after what "I want" (emotional, intellectual) or worship becomes *consumeristic* in nature. (I need something, so I will seek God). Or our worship can be too connected to circumstance (how I feel, like or dislike the worship song selection).
- These are *indicators* of worship gone awry.
- Thus David is preaching to himself and reminding himself of truth so he sees and knows God rightly.

*The soul either views things with approval, with pleasure, and with acceptance, or it view things with opposition, with disapproval, with displeasure, and with rejection...*

*true religion consists largely of the affections. (Jonathan Edwards, Religious Affections)*

***Worship of the Lord is to be an intentional act of the will whereby we respond to God out of a strong, positive affection.***

- worship is a response of love toward God!
- Singing is not automatically worship, but rather an instrument of grace whereby the Spirit can stir up our souls so that we genuinely worship God (key point)
- The same thing can happen in prayer - it can be stirred up to genuine worship or it can be dry and routine and not worship at all
- Again, the same would be true for being "in the Word"
- And by extension in all of life and in all things that you set your hand to can become an act of worship unto God (read verses 1-2 again)

## II. Reasons for Motivating our Worship

God is the most worthy object of all worship, of all creation for all time - for from Him and through Him and to Him are all things.

Verse 2 - actively remembering how God has been at work (motivates us)

- Psalm 16:9-11
  - A living real hope we have
- Isaiah 40:28-31
  - Remembering how God has been at work in my life, sustaining, guiding, blessing, leading, forgiving, etc!

## III. The Infinite Worthiness of God in our Worship

The object of our worship is God himself! Biblical worship must be something outside of ourselves. God.

Yet it is hard to comprehend God because I cannot see Him. He is not seeable or perceptible by the senses. Yet the word worship comes from the Old English "worth ship"

Verses 6-19

Word pictures given throughout these verses as to who God is and how He has acted.

- justification picture: removing our sin as far as the east is from the west; he sees us thru the lens of forgiveness and reconciliation and not judgment and wrath.
- Verse 13-14 - loving, compassionate, good, good Father; oh how this should stir us to genuine worship
- Verses 17-19 - God who is large, in charge and will bring it all to completion (Phil. 1:6)

## IV. The Universal Involvement of Creation in Worship

Verse 20 - all creation and what has been made are to BLESS THE LORD!

Final reminder goes to David himself - "bless the Lord O my soul!"

Phrase to discuss in Covenant Groups:

(1) "At one time in my life \_\_\_\_\_, but then God \_\_\_\_\_ and now \_\_\_\_\_."