



The Heights Baptist Church

Sunday Fuels the Lifestyle • Psalm 95:1-7 • 9/26/2021

MAIN POINT

God invites His people to worship Him regularly. Our worship of Him, should not be constrained to Sundays, only. That being said, Gathering with others to worship energizes our faith and helps us to live it out!

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

What are some areas of your life where you could use more discipline?

What about worship? Do you associate a need for discipline with your worship of God?

Practicing the discipline of worship, both personal and corporate, is vital as a means of growing in Christlikeness. Just like we need discipline to eat well, spend less money, or use our time better, we also need discipline in our spiritual lives for things like prayer, going to church, and serving. God calls us to worship Him on a daily, ongoing basis, both on our own and by gathering together with other believers. Psalm 95 is an invitation to worship God and a reminder of why He is worthy of our worship.

UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

| Have a volunteer read Psalm 95:1-2.

What is the style of worship described in Psalm 95:1-2?

What words carry the invitation to join in worship?

God does not force anyone to worship Him; instead, He invites us to worship Him. The psalmist expressed the freewill nature of worship by repeatedly using the words “let us” (vv. 1-2,6). Through His Word, the Lord encourages people to come to Him in worship. The Bible teaches us to worship God both publicly and privately. Both corporate and individual worship are vital to a close walk with the Lord. This psalm relates to corporate worship first and foremost, although its principles apply to private worship as well.

When you think about worshipping God on your own, what specific acts come to mind?

How does that compare with the things you associate with corporate worship?

What value is there in participating in different means of worship?

One of the keys to God working effectively through the Jerusalem church was the believers' faithfulness in corporate worship (Acts 2:42-47). Believers who regularly meet together, hear and heed God's revealed truth, and serve the Lord make a united and fruitful church. Practicing the discipline of worship also means to worship privately, experiencing God speaking to you through reading His Word, and praying for His guidance and help in becoming who He wants you to be in His world.

What words and phrases did the psalmist use to describe God?

How do these descriptions fuel our worship of Him?

The psalmist described God as “the Lord,” a translation of the Hebrew name “Yahweh,” the covenant name of God. The covenant name of God stresses His loyal love and faithful care of those who trust and follow Him. By using this name, the psalmist not only praised God for who He is but also for what He had done for His people. God is further described as the rock of our salvation. God is the One in whom our deliverance is secure. Scriptures often use the term “salvation” to refer to God's deliverance from the hands of enemies. The term also can describe spiritual salvation. Through His Son, Jesus Christ, the Lord has provided the one and only Rock to whom we can look for salvation.

How does the psalmist tell us to approach God?

Why is thanksgiving an important part of our worship? What does it communicate to God?

One would not come before a king empty-handed but with a gift that indicated respect. The psalm calls on us to approach the throne of God with thanksgiving. The word literally pictures an extension of the hand, a way of expressing a public commitment as well as adoration. This

verse portrays not a solitary figure but a congregation of worshipers lifting their hands before the Lord in gratitude and praise.

| Have a volunteer read Psalm 95:3-7.

Why is God worthy of our worship, according to verses 3-5?

More important than our ways of worship is the object of our worship. True worship focuses on the only One worthy of our worship. The psalmist described God as the One True God who is greater than any so-called gods of other nations. God is the supreme authority in the spiritual realm, regardless of the claims of those who worshiped idols. The Lord also is the supreme authority in the material realm. We worship Him because He is the Creator of our world. The One we worship as the Lord not only created the earth and our environment but also is our Maker. He is involved in the creation of each human being.

What response to these facts is invited in verses 6 and 7? How does it help you to worship by recalling who our God is?

APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

How does the psalmist's invitation to worship challenge you today?

An important part of worship is focusing on God. What are some specific things you could do to help focus on God during your corporate worship times? your family worship times? Your times of private worship?

What attitudes or other distractions need to be eliminated so you can focus on God in your corporate or personal worship?

Read Hebrews 10:24-25. How does meeting together help you to worship?

How can we make our group gatherings a more intentional time of worship?

PRAYER

Close your group meeting with a time of prayer as an opportunity for worship. Encourage everyone to voice their own prayers of gratitude and praise to God for who He is and how He is working in their lives. Then close your prayer time by thanking God for the opportunity He gives us to come before Him in worship.

COMMENTARY

| Psalm 95

95:1. “The rock of our salvation” is a metaphorical expression denoting security and safety. The Hebrew word for “rock” describes the steadfast character of God (18:1-2,31; 73:26; 92:15; 144:1; Dt 32:15; 2Sam 22:47; Isa 44:8).

95:3. “The Lord is a great God” is an expression prevalent in the psalms that celebrate the Lord’s kingship (47:3,7-8; 48:2-3; 96:4; 97:9; 136:2; 149:2).

95:4. God understands incomprehensible things such as the foundations of the earth (Jer 31:37), the depths of the ocean (Job 38:16), or the depth of God Himself (Job 11:7). The power of God extends from the bottom of the sea to the mountain peaks.

95:5. The sea and the dry land belong to God because He created them. In Jonah 1:9 the same phrase is part of the prophet’s confessional statement about His identity.

95:6. The same God who created the world created humanity as well. Both the cosmos and humanity kneel before their Creator.

95:7. The Lord, who created the world, also created Israel. He serves a dual role as Creator and Shepherd in Isaiah 43:1,15. Those who truly belong to the Lord will hear His voice and respond to Him.

95:8-11. These verses recall Exodus 17:1-7 and Numbers 20:2-13. The psalm relies heavily on the covenantal associations and language of the two texts.

95:8-9. “Do not harden” warns against the self-reliance of God’s people, who followed their own counsel and complained in the wilderness. The names Meribah (lit “contention, controversy”) and Massah (“test”) were given by Moses to the location where God provided water from a rock after the people tested God (Ex 17:7; Num 20:13; Dt 6:16). The Lord tested Israel’s faithfulness in the wilderness (Dt 8:2; 33:8). The Hebrew word for “tested” describes the refining of precious metals by smelting (Zech 13:9).

95:10. Although the original group that departed Egypt would not enter Canaan because of their sinfulness, Caleb and Joshua would lead the next generation into the promised land (Num 14:30).

95:11. A person may rest at home or rest through relief from enemies. God rested on the Sabbath (Gen 2:2) and rests among His people (2Ch 6:41-42). The concept of rest reaches its full development in Heb 4:3-11.