

To Your Name Be the Glory ***Psalm 115:1-11***

After Jesus rose from the dead He was walking with two of His disciples on the road to Emmaus.

The two disciples didn't recognize Jesus, and they were downtrodden and confused because their hopes and dreams were crushed when their Messiah had been hung on a cross.

Luke 24 tells the account of how Jesus began to describe to them, how it was foretold in the Old Testament, all the things that would happen to the Messiah.

Luke 24:44 ***Then He said to them, "These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me."***

Please open your Bibles to ***Psalm 115*** as we continue with the survey through the ***Psalms***.

As we get to ***Psalm 115***, we realize that the psalmist is praising none other than the LORD Jesus Christ who deserves all glory.

Psalm 115 is in a section of the ***Psalms*** known as part of the Egyptian Hallel sequence and has famously been used for various liturgies, inscriptions on buildings, and famous musicals.

Psalm 115 was sung by the Jews for certain holidays, but especially during the last 6 days of Passover the Jews recited ***vs. 1-11***.

Because this *Psalm* was sung by the Jews during the Passover holiday, we can be assured that on the night He was betrayed, Jesus and His Disciples, sung this *Psalm* as well.

I. Give glory to the name of God.

Read *Psalm 115:1*

Chris Tomlin has a song from 2002 titled, “*Not to us*” some of the lyrics say...

“Not to us but to your name be the glory. Our hearts unfold before your throne, the only place for those who know. It's not for us it's all for you.”

The Hebrew word for *glory* means *honor, weighty, abundance, riches, and splendor*.

The psalmist says that when we want to honor or thank someone or something for any good thing that has happened, all the *glory* should be given to the LORD.

The LORD is the Creator of the heavens, the moon, the stars, and man as well so, He alone is worthy to be praised.

This past Monday, the Elders had several urgent things to pray about and by Tuesday morning, two of the urgent needs were met in a miraculous way.

Sometimes we hear of an answered prayer request, and we begin to reason away, how the problem was solved.

Sometimes we give modern medicine, other people, or even coincidence the credit when our prayers are answered.

I believe it is a terrible form of **blasphemy** to hear of an answered prayer and begin to give credit to anyone or anything before simply praising the LORD for His grace and mercy.

James 1:16 Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren.

James 1:17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning. NKJV

Even if the LORD used someone or something to fulfill the request, it was still the LORD who answered the prayer.

Paul asked in 1 Corinthians 4:7 what do you have that you did not receive? Now if you did indeed receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it? NKJV

I heard a story about a Christian lady who lived next door to an atheist. Every day, when the lady prayed, the atheist could hear her praying.

One day, the lady ran out of groceries, and she was short on money, so she prayed to the LORD and thanked Him for what He was going to do, before the need was ever met.

The atheist heard her praying so he bought some groceries, put them on her porch, rang the doorbell and then he hid in the bushes to see what would happen.

When the lady opened the door and saw the groceries, she began to praise the LORD and thank Him for the answered prayer.

The atheist jumped out of the bushes and told her, "*You crazy lady, God didn't buy you those groceries. I bought those groceries!*"

Then the lady thanked the LORD again and said, "*I knew the LORD would provide me with groceries, but I didn't know he was going to use an atheist to pay for them!*"

Again notice, "***Not unto us, but to Your name give glory.***"

Jesus sang these very words on the night before His crucifixion.

Imagine how these words impacted Him on that night.

Not even the psalmist, who originally wrote this could have imagined the significance of what the words of this ***Psalm***, would mean to Jesus on the night He was betrayed.

Then notice, "***Because of Your mercy, because of Your truth***".

When we receive God's ***mercy***, the biggest gift we receive is not getting what we deserve for our sin against the LORD.

Mercy in Hebrew is the word *hesed*, which means Yahweh's **grace**, His loyal love, and His covenant love, for His people.

Mercy is the word '***steadfast love***' in other places of scripture.

God's grace is receiving a gift we could never earn nor deserve, and His ***mercy*** is not getting what we do deserve for our sin.

By receiving the *mercy* of God, we realize He is worthy of praise and glory.

John 1:17 For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. NKJV

Unknowingly, the psalmist wrote about the *mercy* of God that was perfectly fulfilled in Jesus.

Adam Clarke said, “*Thy mercy gave thy promise, thy truth fulfilled it.*” (Clarke)

II. The LORD’s fame.

Read ***Psalm 115:2-3***

What the psalmist prayed to the LORD sounds very similar to what Moses prayed during the *Exodus* account.

In *Exodus 32*, when Moses went up on the Mountain to receive the Ten Commandments from the LORD, the people of Israel got impatient waiting for him and made a golden calf to worship.

The people began to praise the golden calf proclaiming it had performed God’s miracles, helping them to escape Egypt.

Exodus 32:6 Then they rose early on the next day, offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. NKJV

And rose up to play speaks of the immorality among the people.

Their worship included eating, drinking, and sexual immorality.

The LORD saw what the people of Israel were doing...

Exodus 32:9 And the LORD said to Moses, "I have seen this people, and indeed it is a stiff-necked people!

Exodus 32:10 Now therefore, let Me alone, that My wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them. And I will make of you a great nation." NKJV

The LORD told Moses, He was going to destroy the people and then make a great nation from Moses' lineage, but Moses had a **shepherd's** heart, he loved his people, and he loved the LORD.

Moses asked the LORD to spare the people, not only for their sake, but also for the fame of the **LORD's name and reputation.**

Exodus 32:11 Then Moses pleaded with the LORD his God, and said: "LORD, why does Your wrath burn hot against Your people whom You have brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand?

Exodus 32:12 Why should the Egyptians speak, and say, 'He brought them out to harm them, to kill them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth'? Turn from Your fierce wrath and relent from this harm to Your people.

Exodus 32:13 Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, Your servants, to whom You swore by Your own self, and said to them, 'I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven; and all this land that I have spoken of I give to your descendants, and they shall inherit it forever.'" NKJV

Moses' prayer did not change the LORD, but it did change the standing of the people in God's sight. The people were now in a place of mercy, when before they were in a place of judgment.

Biblical warnings of judgment are given to call us to repentance and prayer, then the LORD's mercy stops the judgment.

The LORD did not destroy Israel, and the LORD *knew* He would not destroy Israel, beforehand, but Moses didn't know.

The LORD allowed Moses to be placed into this **position** so he would have to intercede for the people and show him that he had a shepherd's heart of love and compassion for the people.

Moses prayed just as the LORD wanted him to, as if salvation or destruction depended on his prayer. We cannot save anyone, but the LORD wants us to pray for the salvation of others.

Moses also asked the LORD not to destroy the people of Israel so the Egyptians would not say,

Exodus 32:12b 'He brought them out to harm them, to kill them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth'? NKJV

John Piper said, "*One of God's purposes in the **Exodus** and in the entrance into the land with a stretching forth of His mighty arm in dividing the seas*

...was so that the news would spread everywhere among all the nations. Yahweh, the God of Israel, is supremely mighty."

Psalm 96:3 Declare His glory among the nations, His wonders among all peoples. NKJV

“When the LORD chose Israel and began to do His mighty works in and for Israel, He was always doing them on the stage of the world with a view that the nations would see His glory.”

Habakkuk 3:2 LORD, I have heard of your fame; I stand in awe of your deeds, LORD. Repeat them in our day, in our time make them known; in wrath remember mercy. NIV

Notice, ***“Our God is in heaven, He does whatever He pleases”***.

The LORD is in heaven with a view of all eternity, knowing the future as well as the present. He sees all and can accomplish all, because He is **powerful** enough to do ***whatever He pleases***.

III. A god made from created things.

Read ***Psalm 115:4-8***

The psalmist declares all idols to be blind, deaf, mute and without any of the other senses.

The psalmist is describing a god without the ability to see, speak, move, or **act** on our behalf.

Then the psalmist adds ***so is everyone who trusts in them***.

Spurgeon said, *“A god who has eyes, and cannot see, is a blind deity; and blindness is a calamity, and not an attribute of godhead. “He must be very blind who worships a blind god: we pity a blind man, it is strange to worship a blind image.”*

We were created to worship. Everyone worships something.

When a person worships a created thing rather than the Creator, they show themselves as blind, deaf, mute, and without any other senses.

Romans 1:24 Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves,

Romans 1:25 who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. NKJV

We will become like the thing we worship. If we truly worship the LORD perfectly revealed in Christ, we will become like Him. When we worship anything else, we become like them.

Willem VanGemeran said, “*False worship is not innocent but demoralizing, and ultimately the worshipers will perish together with their perishable idols.*” (VanGemeran)

IV. The LORD is a shield to those who trust Him.

Read ***Psalm 115:9-11***

After revealing the senseless worship of created images, the psalmist gives the only reasonable answer to them, to ***trust***.

The word ***trust*** is similar to the word faith, it is an action word.

The literal meaning of the word ***trust*** in the Hebrew means to *have confidence, hope, to be bold, and to be secure*. (S. H982)

The psalmist lists different groups who should fear the LORD.

Matthew Henry said, *“Let those who are not of the seed of Israel, but fear the LORD, who worship Him and make conscience of their duty to him, let them trust in Him, for He will not fail nor forsake them.”*

“Wherever there is an awful fear of God, there may be a cheerful faith in Him: those that reverence His word may rely on it.”

Psalm 34:22 The LORD redeems the soul of His servants, and none of those who trust in Him shall be condemned. NKJV

“You who fear the LORD”. The word *fear* means reverence and those who have reverence for the LORD trust Him because we know He is **good**, and all of His ways are good.

Guzik said, *“To trust in God must have sounded especially sweet to Jesus on the night of the last supper, knowing how great the harvest among the Gentiles would soon be.”*

Notice, ***“He is their help and their shield.”***

Ephesians 6:16 above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.

Roman soldiers used arrows with “fire” so the harm inflicted would **continue**, even after the initial attack.

Just as the Roman’s shield could stop flaming arrows, our **trust** in the LORD extinguishes the flaming arrows of the evil one and prevents ongoing damage.

The metaphor of *fiery darts* illustrates an assault that is to be defended against. The LORD Himself **fights our battles**.

A normal shield would protect against an arrow or spear, but having the ability to extinguish the “*fiery darts*” took a special shield for the Roman soldier as well as the Christian soldier.

The enemy intended to harm the soldier by adding a fire element

What are some of the fiery darts the enemy lobs at us?

Lies, doubt, fears, insecurity, self-reliance, self-indulgence, temptations of the flesh and others as well.

I can't put my *trust* in myself for protection. I should only put my *trust* in the LORD Jesus Christ.

For a Christ follower, our faith in Christ has the power to stop or put out the fire from the enemy, but your faith is only as good as where your hope comes from and what your faith is placed on!

Charles Allen once said, “*When you say a situation or a person is hopeless, you are slamming the door on the face of God!*”

God promises that He is working everything in your life out for His Glory and a good outcome for us.

We need to remember who Jesus is and what He has **already done** for us, and believing Him is called faith!

We need to stop **leaning** on our own **understanding!**

When you only look at life through what you see in the natural world, you are not seeing the whole picture.

Corrie Ten Boom said, “*Faith is like radar that sees through the fog.*”

V. Practical Application.

There are two main take-aways from this morning’s passage.

The first point is what I spoke about earlier.

Sometimes we hear of a result of something we have prayed about, and we begin to reason away how the thing was solved.

1. We give modern medicine, other people, or even a supposed coincidence **credit** when prayers are answered.

James 1:16 Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren.

James 1:17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning. NKJV

So again, like the psalmist said in Psalm 115:1 Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but to Your name give glory, because of Your mercy, because of Your truth. NKJV

I have shared this before, but it bears repeating.

In Bible College on the first things, they taught us and often reminded us of was not to touch God’s three **g’s** and it will go well for you.

a) Don't touch God's gold.

Do not misappropriate the LORD's money nor try to manipulate giving.

b) Don't touch God's girls.

Many good people in the ministry have fallen from grace because of inappropriate relationships with people of the opposite sex. **The worst is the final one.**

c) Do not touch God's glory.

Do not take credit for anything the LORD has done and always give Him the glory due His name.

I believe it is a terrible form of **blasphemy** to hear of an answered prayer and begin to give credit to anyone or anything before simply praising the LORD for His grace and mercy.

2. Be careful not to **defame** the LORD.

Psalm 115:2 Why should the Gentiles say, "So where is their God?" NKJV

How can we defame the LORD?

By our behavior, our lifestyles, un-thankfulness, complaining, or even failing to recognize how good the LORD has been to us.

Listen to the words of Paul to the hypocrite Judaizers.

Romans 2:24 For "the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you," as it is written. (Isaiah 52) NKJV

The Jews failure to obey the LORD and walk in His ways caused many Gentiles to blaspheme the LORD.

The Jews claimed that they were separated as God's special people, yet their behavior was worse than the heathens at times.

Even though this warning from Paul was spoken to Jews, *how can Christians cause unbelievers to blaspheme the LORD?*

I am not trying to put a legalistic guilt trip on us this morning, but we are called to be set apart for Christ and His kingdom.

Paul said in *Ephesians 5:15 See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, Ephesians 5:16 redeeming the time, because the days are evil.*

Our lives should reflect our new identity in Christ. The word *circumspect* means "*to be cautious or careful*".

Walk circumspectly can mean that we are to walk with extreme caution, while inspecting our surroundings and *walk* is a reference to our **relationship** with the LORD.

Our Christian Walk needs to happen by living empowered by the Holy Spirit and is the result of our new life in Christ.

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. NKJV

The enemy is extremely effective in presenting temptations at those times when we are least prepared.

1 Peter 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. NKJV

The LORD has provided us with a source of light through His Holy Spirit and His Word to help us to walk carefully.

Psalm 119:105 Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. NKJV

In order to continue growing in our relationship with Christ and to shine brightly in a dark world, we must walk in the power and presence of the Holy Spirit and in the light of **His Word**.

But we are also to seize opportunities the LORD puts in our path. ***Redeeming the time (Ephesians 5:5)*** literally means to buy up something, or to take advantage of the **opportunity**.

1 Corinthians 16:13, Paul said to ***Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong.***

- ***Watch*** means to give strict **attention** to something.
- ***Stand fast in the faith*** means to stand firm, to persevere, or to persist in trusting in Jesus and what He has promised.
- ***Be brave*** means to have courage in **Christ** and not yourself
- ***Be strong*** means to increase in strength, and to grow strong in the LORD, not our own strength.

When we live empowered by Jesus, unbelievers will see Him in us and want what we have.