



DESERT VIEW BIBLE CHURCH

YOUR WORSHIP OF GOD • SERIES: THIS IS THE WAY •

PSALM 95:1-7 • 1.9.22

MAIN POINT

God's people are expected to worship Him regularly.

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?
(Possible responses may include eating, working out, spending money,
using your time.)**

**Most of us associate a need for discipline with the areas of our lives that
have been mentioned. 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. 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 wholeheartedly.

UNDERSTANDING

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

READ PSALM 95:1-2.

What is the style of worship described in verses 1-2?

What words carry the invitation to join in the worship?

The Lord 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, of course, relates to corporate worship.

When you think about worshiping 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's 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 worshiping privately, experiencing God speak to you through reading His Word and praying for His guidance.

What words and phrases did the psalmist use to describe God? How do these descriptions fuel our worship of Him?

Psalm 95:1 describes God with two terms. He is the Lord, a translation of the Hebrew name Yahweh, the covenant name of God. He promised through Moses that He would be the God of the Hebrew people on the condition that they remained faithful to Him. The Lord remained faithful to His covenant, though Israel's disobedience eventually brought His judgment on the nation. 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. These words depict an impregnable fortress in a rocky high mountain in which one can find refuge and rest. 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 can also describe spiritual salvation. Through His Son Jesus, the Lord has provided the one and only Rock to whom we can look for salvation.

What must all styles of worship include?

All worship should be marked by reverence, but reverence is not to be equated with quiet formality. The worship described in Psalm 95 is characterized by grateful exuberance. The people were invited to shout joyfully to the LORD. The word translated "shout" also carries the meaning of "sing." The expression was not used for soft-toned harmonies, but for jubilant songs of praise.

How did 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 utmost 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.

The worshipers were called to shout triumphantly to Him in song. One Hebrew word is used for “music” and song. It is a term that includes both instrumental music and vocal music with accompaniment. The God-inspired psalmist urged believers to join him in a victorious, joyous chorus of praise and worship.

READ PSALM 95:3-7.

What quality of God is presented in verse 3?

More important than our ways of worship is the object of our worship. True worship focuses on the only One worthy of our worship. In an earthly throne room, the eyes of the people are on the king. The psalmist wove a musical tapestry of praise, portraying the nature of God and offering reasons we should worship Him. This God is the great King who is above all gods. Verse 3 does not offer biblical support for polytheism, the belief in many gods. The word “gods” is “elohim,” a generic name for “god” that is often used for the one true God. Here, it is a reference to the so-called gods worshiped by nations that surrounded Israel. The LORD is the supreme authority in the spiritual realm, regardless of the empty claims of those who worship idols.

What do verses 4 and 5 say about the God you worship?

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

The Lord also is the supreme authority in the material realm. The depths of the earth are in His hand, meaning they are under His power and control. The highest mountain peaks are His. The sea is His because He made it. His hands formed the dry land. The extremes of the highest points of the land and the deepest crevices of the sea represent the whole world. We worship Him because He is the Creator of our world—He owns it all. The One we worship not only created the earth, but also humanity. He is involved in the creation of each human being. The Lord said to Jeremiah, “I chose you before I formed you in the womb” (Jer. 1:5). We worship Him who is the Author of our physical life and, as the “Rock of our salvation,” He is the Author of our eternity.

An important part of worship is focusing on God. What would you be doing if you were focusing on God?

What could you do to focus on God during your corporate worship times? Your family worship times? Your times of private worship?

APPLICATION

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

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 worship?

PRAYER

Have group members silently and individually voice their prayers of gratitude to God for who He is and how He is working in their lives. Then pray as a group together, worshipping God as a body of believers.

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.