

Worship 10
True and Authentic Worship
Psa. 95:1-5

Introduction:

1. The Psalms are filled with magnificent insights into worship. Psa. 95 is only one of them, but it is a good representative.
2. Verses 1-6 constitute a call to true and authentic worship. Throughout the Psalm we learn something of the nature of true and authentic worship and in the closing verses true and authentic worship is evidenced by the actual hearing of God's voice with a heart softened by faith.
3. So what can we learn about true and authentic worship from Psa. 95?

Discussion:

- I. The Psalm opens with a call to come and sing for joy to the Lord (1-6).
 - A. It would seem that this is a call to cooperate worship.
 1. While individual worship is both appropriate and critical, cooperate worship is also both appropriate and critical.
 - a. In Psa. 51 David uses personal pronouns. He speaks of "my transgressions." He says, "I have sinned." It is a personal prayer of confession. It is individual worship.
 - b. But God called on His people to come together to worship too. He called them to Jerusalem for three major feasts. The temple was the central place that brought them together.
 - c. We are called together on the first day of every week.
 2. Even in cooperate worship individual hearts are involved. Because you have assembled with other worshipers does not mean that you have worshiped.
 3. Personal and individual worship is the foundation of cooperate worship. One is not a substitute for the other.
 - B. The call is to sing for joy to the Lord.
 1. First, note that the Lord is the object of worship. But why is God worthy of worship?
 - a. He is a great God (3a).
 - b. He is supreme among the gods (3b).
 - c. He is sovereign over the cosmos (4-5).
 - d. He has established a relationship with His people (7a).
 - e. He is "the rock of our salvation" (1b).
 - 1) This dovetails with the theme of God's glory as revealed in His graciousness (Ex. 33:18-23; 34:6-7a).
 - 2) He is the God who gives and forgives.
 2. Second, note that we are called to sing for joy.
 - a. Joy is the emotion and the motivation for the singing.
 - b. When reflecting on what God has done for us joy is the natural emotion.

- c. Singing is a natural reaction.
- 3. Third, note that we are to come before His presence with thanksgiving.
 - a. Thanksgiving in light of what He has done.
 - b. Singing and thanksgiving are associated together in Eph. 5:19-20 and Col. 2:16.
- C. True and authentic worship is expressed in the joyful singing of psalms and in the expression of thanksgiving.

II. The nature of true and authentic worship involves humility (95:6-7).

- A. "Come, and let us bow down, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker."
 - 1. Note that in this statement the object of our worship is "the Lord our Maker."
 - 2. This is the reason why we should worship Him. He is our Maker. We are the created.
 - 3. Honor and respect is due Him because of His status.
- B. It is personal. He is "our Maker." He is "our God" (7).
- C. It is a compassionate relationship. "We are the people of His pasture and the sheep of His hand."
 - 1. He cares to feed us.
 - 2. He cares to care for us and provide for us everything necessary to thrive.
 - 3. The shepherd's Psalm reiterates this theme in comforting language. Psa. 23.
 - 4. It is this compassionate care that leads us to respond in faith (Heb. 11:6).
 - 5. There are two kinds of people in the world.
 - a. There are those who see God as kind and compassionate and who are therefore able to place their trust in Him.
 - b. There are those who see God as out to get them and who withhold trust.
 - c. These in the last group withhold trust from others because they see everyone as out to get them. They think others are out to take advantage of them. They are fearful and cautious. They are always on the defensive. They do not make themselves vulnerable.
 - d. They do not see God as caring and they do not see others as caring. Their hearts are hardened. They constantly test the Lord for they do not know Him.

III. In contrast, the evidence of true and authentic worship is soft hearts that hear His voice and trust in Him (95:7b-11).

- A. "Today, if you would hear His voice, do not harden your hearts" (7b).
 - 1. As at Meribah (quarrel) (Ex. 17:1-7).
 - a. The people were in the wilderness of Sin, camped at Rephidim.
 - b. They quarreled with Moses saying, "Give us water to drink."
 - c. They grumbled and said, "Is the Lord among us or not?"
 - d. Thus they tested (Massah) the Lord's faithfulness.
 - 2. But God was their shepherd and shepherds lead their sheep beside quiet waters.
- B. God led them through the wilderness for 40 years and cared for them.
 - 1. Deut. 8:1-10. "He fed you with manna." Promised to bring them into a good land, with water and food in lavish quantity.

2. Neh. 9:21: "You provided for them in the wilderness and they were not in want. Their clothes did not wear out, nor did their feet swell."
- C. What was their error? They did not believe that God was a good shepherd. They did not believe He was a rewarder of those who seek Him.
 1. "They do not know My ways," the Lord said.
 2. Therefore they would not enter His rest because of their unbelief.

Conclusion:

1. Are you a believer or an unbeliever in the trustworthiness of God.
2. If you are an unbeliever, you cannot worship appropriately.
3. True and authentic worship sees God as the good shepherd who lays down His life for His sheep (Jn. 10:11).
4. They trust His word. They come and sing for joy. They come with thanksgiving. They come and bow down because they know the ways of the Lord. They know His compassion. They know His care.
5. They are the ones who enter His rest.