

Psalm 111 • A Call to Praise God for His Wonderful Works

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Psalm chapter 111 is a very simple Psalm. I don't think there's going to be a whole lot that we can say here about this, because this is just a Psalm of praise. If you're having trouble, can I just tell you, if you're ever having trouble praising the Lord, open the Psalms, and just read a Psalm. And just let it do its work. Just let the praise just wash over your heart. And this is one of those Psalms.

We're not going to have time to do it with the next Psalm, which frankly goes very much in tandem with it. But this particular Psalm praises God for His mighty works. And the Bible does that a lot. The Bible praises God for His works.

What if... Have you ever sat down with a piece of paper and written down the things the Lord has done in your life? Have you ever done that? Just written down... I mean, start with whatever. If you want to start with maybe the day you got saved, or the day you gave your heart to the Lord, and just... You begin to write down things that the Lord did in your life: the deliverances and the answers to prayer.

This Psalm is about that. About praising God, magnifying God for the things that He did. And we can magnify God for the things that we don't even know that He did. I believe that one day you and I will stand in His presence and He's going to probably show us in an instant of time, the way He sovereignly oversaw our lives. And delivered us in ways that we had absolutely... We were clueless about.

And probably about a time when people are going, yeah, I went through a hard time. Where was God when that happened? He's going to show you someday. He's going to show you right where He was. And you're going to go... Well, I don't think you're going to go anything. I think you're going to have your mouth closed. Because there won't be any response. And God has a way of doing that and shutting our mouths.

Remember when He started talking to Job after Job was shooting off his mouth? When the Lord finally showed up, Job said, I put my hand over my mouth. I

have nothing more to say. (Job 40:4-5) There are things the Lord has done in your life that you are completely unaware of. And this psalm is all about praising Him.

It says,

"1 Praise the LORD! (That is hallelujah!) I will give thanks to the LORD with my whole heart, in the company of the upright, in the congregation." (ESV)

In other words, as I gather with other believers, I'm going to lift up my voice and I'm going to thank God for the good things that He's done in my life.

He says,

"2 Great are the works of the LORD, studied by all who delight in them."

Now that is a great verse. Isn't it greater? *"Great are the works of the LORD, studied by all who delight in them."* I hope that's what we're doing here tonight. And when we go through the Scriptures on Sunday morning. And whenever you go through the Scriptures, I hope that you're studying His works because you delight in them.

He says,

"3 Full of splendor and majesty is his work, and his righteousness endures forever."

4 He has caused his wondrous works to be remembered; the LORD is gracious and merciful."

5 He provides food for those who fear him; he remembers his covenant forever."

6 He has shown his people the power of his works, in giving them the inheritance of the nations."

Don't you love some of those verses? I mean... And I particularly love what he says there at the end of verse 5, when he says, *"...he remembers his covenant forever."* He remembers His covenant.

What is His covenant with you? Put your faith in My Son, right, for the forgiveness of sins and you are saved. Put your faith in the work that Jesus

Christ did on the cross and you will be saved. Do you think He's going to ever forget that covenant when it comes? Of course not. Right?

How many times though? I got a painful note from a young man who I think lives in... I'm not sure where he lives. I think he might live in Africa, somewhere in the continent of Africa. But he wrote me and he said, pastor Paul, I've sinned and I went to the Lord, and asked His forgiveness. But I don't think He's forgiven me and I think He's left me. And I wrote him back. And I said, the only way He could do that is if He forgot His promise.

And I quoted from 1 John 1:9, *"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just... (and will) forgive us... and... cleanse us from all unrighteousness."* That is His promise. And so I wrote him back and I said, I will only believe what you told me. If you write back and explain to me how God can go back on His promise. And he wrote me back and he said, you're right. God cannot go back on His promise.

And that's the point, you see. We have to be brought to that place of just remembering, hold it a second here. I'm the screw up. He's good. And He's never going to forget His promises to me. And no matter how many times I mess up, He's never going to forget His promise. He's always going to be loving.

And He will never stop being forgiving as I come to Him and repent of my sin and say, Lord, forgive me, cleanse me of my unrighteousness. He will never forget to forgive. He will never go back on His promise ever. You can take that to the bank. I love it.

It says, it right here, *"he remembers his covenant forever."*

Verse 7,

"The works of his hands are faithful and just; all his precepts are trustworthy;

8 they are established forever and ever, to be performed with faithfulness and uprightness."

And what he's talking, okay, *"The works of his hands..."* Right? *"...faithful and just."* And then he talks about His precepts that are trustworthy.

Now we're talking about the Word of God. You see, he's got this twin thing that he's praising. Look, His works are fantastic. His word is trustworthy. His Word

has been established. And as I walk it out in obedience, there's faithfulness and uprightness in my life.

Man, it's incredible. You and I look at a life. We look at a life that has lived, on the one hand totally for self, just lived in the world.

Do you remember when you lived in the world? Do you remember when you lived the way the world lives? I do! Because I really didn't start walking with the Lord, till I was 25 years old. And I remember very well, just living in just total absolute... I was lord of my life. I was on the throne; small "I" of course. And the I was more like this. (Pastor Paul makes an "I" in front of his forehead indicating loser) But it was me. I was in charge.

And I remember, Oh man! The heartache I invited into my life. The difficulty that I embraced because of my stupidity, and my bad choices, and my dumb decisions in life. And I look at this and he talks about the faithfulness and the uprightness of those who walk out the Word of God, the trustworthy Word of God. And how that reflects itself in the life of an individual who makes a determination, I will walk with the Lord. I am going to walk with God. I'm going to walk in obedience to God's Word.

You look at that life, and that's... It's not a perfect life. And it's not a perfect string of decisions necessarily, but there's an uprightness to it. There's a strength to it. There's a stability to it. Jesus talked about it using a parable saying, "it's like a man who built his house on a firm foundation." (Matthew 7:24-27) There's a firmness there. Does that person suffer the storms of life? Oh yes! Do the wind and the waves crash against their house? Absolutely. Does the house fall? No! It does not get washed away. There's a stability. There's an uprightness. There's a faithfulness from God that is seen in their life.

That's what I want in my life. Man, I've been fortunate enough, even in the almost 29 years I've been pastoring this church, to see people's, to watch people's lives over of years. And in some cases, I've done funeral services for wonderful aged saints who sat here in this very auditorium and then went home to be with the Lord.

And I've watched their lives. I've watched those people who said, I'm going to be in church when the doors are open. And I'm going to be into the Word. And I'm going to live that Word in my life. And I'm going to raise my children after the things of the Lord. And we're going to be involved. And we're going to do what the Word of God says. And they go through their lives. And yes, they go through challenges! The same challenges everybody else goes through.

But man, they get to the end of their life and they're still rock solid. There's a firmness that you have to look at and just really admire. But it's the Lord doing it, don't you know. It's the Lord. Oh, I want that in my life. I want that stability.

Verse 9 and 10 ending out this Psalm,

"9 He sent redemption to his people; he has commanded his covenant forever. Holy and awesome is his name!

10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; all those who practice it have a good understanding. His praise endures forever!"

I love verse 10. And it's a statement that is mentioned and repeated in the book of Psalms. It's repeated in the book of Proverbs, *"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom;"*

Again, we talk a lot about people making bad choices, bad decisions, not walking in wisdom. And we think, well, how do you get wisdom? You got to go to college - get a degree. No, the beginning of wisdom starts by fearing the Lord, the fear of the Lord. And that simply means, understanding, recognizing, there's only one God and it's not you. And that's really where the fear of the Lord begins.

There's only one God in heaven and He's not you. And so, serve the Lord with all of your heart. Fear the Lord, that's the beginning of wisdom. And it goes from there.

We're going to stop there tonight. Let's pray:

Lord, as we go through the Scriptures, like we do it just, the Word has such a powerful impact in our hearts. And I long to embrace Your Word. Like the apostle Paul, I also see a law in me that drags me away, that draws me away from the wisdom of Your Word. But Lord, I desire, along with my brothers and sisters here tonight, to live for You, to live my life for You.

I desire, Lord, to walk in wisdom. I desire to walk in the stability and uprightness of the Lord. To see the faithfulness of God, played out in my life as I learn to trust in You. And put no trust in the flesh, no trust in man. It is a vain thing to trust in man, or, in the strength of man.

Lord, help us to just really learn from this. Our deliverance comes from You. And that deliverance began at the cross of Jesus Christ, when You bore the

penalty of our sin. We thank You Lord, for bearing our penalty, for suffering intensely for the sin that we committed. Thank You, Lord.

And now that You have done that, what will You refuse us here on out? You've already shown us, Lord, the greatest act of love. Oh, Lord God, help us to trust in You. And to live for You with all of our hearts.

Give us the strength, Lord God, to say no to self, no to the flesh, and no to the people of the world. And to say yes to Your Holy Spirit. Yes to Your Word. Yes, to obedience. Not an obedience that comes from our own strength or power, but an obedience that comes from You living in us, giving us the desire and the ability to walk out Your Word.

Do this thing in us we pray. For we ask it in the mighty name of Jesus Christ, our Savior, amen.