



St. Paul Evangelical Community Church (SPECC)

Worship Address : Cerritos High School Auditorium
12500 E. 183rd St., Cerritos, CA 90703
(Enter at Bloomfield, across Heritage Park)

Mailing Address : 11428 E. Artesia Blvd. # 4 ; Artesia, CA 90701
562-924-5051

Website : www.sp-ecc.org

March 7, 2010

Theme: Worship Yahweh Because His Mercy Endures Forever

Text: Psalm 136

In the past two decades there has been a great deal of reflection, discussion, preaching, and teaching about the subject of worship. This is important because we were created to worship God. I doubt that I can say anything new about worship. But it is important that we return to the subject often because it is our number one reason for existence and because we often need to be reminded about what a great God we serve. The apostle Peter wrote in his second letter that he would continue to remind believers about the truth of the Gospel as long as he lived.

The first verse of the Psalm says this: "O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good. His mercy endures forever." The word, "His mercy endures forever." appears in every verse. This is a clear indication that this Psalm, like many of the Psalms, was written to be sung in worship. That means that we can learn about worship by reading this Psalm. So, verse 1 calls the people to worship and gives us the reason for worship of the God of heaven. Put simply we worship God for Who He is and for what he has done.

One of the primary attributes of God is His Goodness. God is good. It is important to declare this because we live in a fallen world. We live in a world that has been mortally wounded by the impact that sin has had upon it. The effects of sin upon the lives of people cause people to wonder whether God exists at all. People are prone to wonder how a good God could let evil get so out of control. But God is good and He has shown this by making promises and keeping them. He has promised to keep his promises to those who place their faith in Christ. God is a Promise Keeper. He commits Himself to those who will commit themselves to Him. In fact, we could say that the Almighty and Holy and Gracious God is more committed to us than we are to Him.

Verses 2-3 declare that God is Sovereign and Omnipotent and the only True God. He is God of gods and Lord of lords. He shows Himself to be Almighty and All-Powerful through His actions in creation and salvation. He is to be glorified as the All-Powerful Creator of the world and Savior of his people. He is Almighty in creation because He brought the universe into existence by merely speaking. Genesis tells us, "Let there be light! And there was light." To look at the created order and then to deny that God exists is to speak nonsense. It requires that we believe that something came from nothing apart from any power—it just happened. This takes much more faith than to believe the Almighty God commanded something from nothing.

Verses 4-9 speak of the specific acts of creation which include: (1) Creating the universe from His wisdom by speaking it into existence. (2) By speaking the heavens into



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existence. (3) By speaking the earth into existence. All of this leads is to praise and thank God for His Almighty and Sovereign power in creation. As the apostle John has written in the book of Revelation: "You are worthy our Lord and our God, because You have created all things and by your will they exist and have their being." In what He has said so far, the Psalmist has worshipped God by thanking Him for revealing his goodness and mighty power through his works of creation.

Verses 10-24, speak of God's mighty deliverance of the Hebrews from slavery to Egypt. This was the ultimate act of salvation in the OT. God had prophesied that the Hebrews would be enslaved for about 400 years. But He had also promised that He would punish her oppressors and set His people free from their slavery. This was an event that the Hebrews were to remember until the end of Time, by celebrating the Passover. At the Last Supper, as Jesus celebrated His last Passover with the apostles, He transformed it into the Lord's Supper as he explained that the bread represented His body. He also explained that the cup represented the New Covenant in His blood. When he did this He interrupted the normal flow of he mean to make it all about Him. He made a connection between God's salvation of His people from Egypt and God's salvation of His people from sin and death through his own death and resurrection.

When Jesus changed the liturgy of the Passover, He said, "...Do this in remembrance of Me." The remembrance of which Jesus speaks means more than reflecting upon Jesus salvation mentally. He means to live as though we ourselves had been alive to witness Jesus' mighty deeds, His death, and His resurrection. Imagine what it would have been like to be alive when Jesus had carried out His ministry. Jesus called us to live out each day as though we had witnessed Jesus' ministry, death, and resurrection. Worship means that we live each day by expressing thanks and praise for God's salvation in Christ. It also means that we remember to thank God for the ways that He reveals Himself in our own lives on this earth.

Not a day should pass that we do not thank God for our eternal salvation. Not a day should pass that we do not thank God for the many salvations that we experience in this life. It has been my observation that many believers do not appreciate our eternal salvation enough. This may be because we have so good in this life—even if we are in a recession. It may also be because we do not fully understand what eternity without God will be like—an eternal existence without God. It will also be an eternal existence lived in complete isolation from other people.

But God is concerned about our lives in this world also. The Psalmist, Asaph, wrote that God's people could call upon Him for deliverance from the troubles of this life: "And call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me." We glorify Him when we worship Him. We worship Him by praising Him for his attributes and by thanking Him for salvation in both time and eternity.