

FROM THE SERVANT GENERAL

ON WORSHIP (Part 5)

OUR TIME OF WORSHIP

The book of Psalms is a prayer and hymn book for liturgical worship, used by God's chosen people, the Israelites. When we look to worship, the psalms are a rich resource. They are full of praise of God, exhortations to trust and joy, and specific prayers for many specific needs.

The psalms certainly enrich our prayer and worship life. They teach us about who God is, and how we can properly relate to Him. The psalms are a school of prayer.

Today we take one verse in one particular psalm (reading for September 8), which gives us the ingredients of what we encounter in a typical time of worship in our household meetings.

“I trust in your faithfulness.
Grant my heart joy in your help,
That I may sing of the Lord,
‘How good our God has been to me!’”
(Psalm 13:6)

Ingredients of our time of worship

“That I may sing of the Lord.” We start off with singing songs of praise. We come into the Lord's presence, and give Him the praise and worship that is His due.

“How good our God has been to me!” Then we have our prayers of thanksgiving. We acknowledge all the blessings God has bestowed on us.

“I trust in your faithfulness. Grant my heart joy in your help.” Then we have our prayers of petition and intercession. We look to God's help in our problems and challenges in life.

The “process” of worship is a process of building up one on the other.

It starts with our entering into the presence of God, and acknowledging Him for who He is. He is our God and our King. He is Lord of all. This is the proper posture between the Creator and His creatures, between the Savior and those whom He has redeemed, between the Master and His servants. Thus we sing and we shout out our praises.

Then we voice out how good is the God whom we worship. We recall the many blessings we have received. We have a posture of great gratitude, recognizing the big and small miracles in our lives, and the continued outpouring of God's grace upon us.

Finally, recognizing God as the Almighty and powerful One, recalling all His blessings upon us and His faithfulness to us, we bring to Him our petitions. We seek His continued help for all our needs.

Proper attitudes in worship

During our time of worship, we must have the right posture before God. We manifest great love for Him. We have great gratitude in our hearts for how He has blessed us. We humble ourselves in His awesome presence.

In this particular psalm, there are two other important aspects.

First there is trust. "I trust in your faithfulness."

When we acknowledge God for who He is, we are saying that we can trust Him. He is our Father. He is our Savior. He is the One who loves us, who keeps us always in the palm of His hands. He guides our steps. He desires to bring us to eternal life with Him in heaven. He is a faithful God.

Then there is joy. "Grant my heart joy in your help."

Having acknowledged God for who He is, knowing how much He has been blessing us throughout our whole lives, having assurance that He will provide for all our needs and will always answer our prayers, this cannot but bring us great joy. Our help is our God.

Our life together

Now notice that the above speaks about our themes for last year and this year. In 2008 we had the theme of joy. In 2009 we have the theme of trust.

Coming out of our lamentations and being restored to our authentic charism, now being in line with God's eternal plan for us all along, then we have joy in Christ and we trust in Jesus.

These are two very important postures that we need to have. The basics of course are faith, hope and love. In addition, there is joy and trust. With joy and trust, nothing can ever faze us. We need never be afraid. We can move on confidently, knowing that God loves us and that God desires to use us as His instruments.

Coming together in worship, whether as a household or in a larger assembly, is a great event. It is all about living out the faith that we have. It is about connecting with a good and faithful God.

God is good, all the time. God is faithful, from generation to generation.

Because of that, we trust in Him, and our hearts are filled with joy.