

Are You Glad?

Joe Slater

“I was glad when they said to me, ‘Let us go unto the house of the Lord’” (Psalm 122:1).

David wrote this psalm before the Jerusalem Temple existed. He only recently had brought the Ark of the Covenant into the city, placing it into the Tabernacle (tent) he had prepared for it (either the Tabernacle that had been made after the Exodus or one David made of that design), 2 Samuel 6:17. Referring to the Tabernacle as the “house of the Lord” was entirely appropriate; it was the designated place where God’s people came to worship, and Jerusalem was the recognized city where they observed the three major annual feasts.

Question: Are you glad when it’s time to assemble for worship? We understand that it’s not the meeting house but the Christians meeting in it that are the “house of God.” But Christians do, indeed, meet! The very word “church” means “assembly.” So, my question remains: “Are you glad when it’s time to assemble for worship?”

Psalm 122 (quoted above) is a “song of ascents,” one of the songs the Israelites sang as they ascended to Zion (Jerusalem) for one of the feast days. For Christians, the first day of each week is a feast day. But the focus of our feast isn’t satisfying our stomachs with food and drink; it’s remembering the body and blood of our Savior by eating unleavened bread and drinking the fruit of the vine in memory of Him. We also celebrate our oneness in Christ as we observe this spiritual feast together.

I was greatly edified a short time back when one of our young men, while leading a prayer, mentioned that “we are happy to be here.” That certainly was David’s attitude as he penned the psalm, and it ought to be ours as well.

Do We Keep The Ten Commandments?

Not long after their deliverance from Egyptian Bondage, God made a covenant with the Jewish people on Mt. Sinai. The Lord said to Moses, “*Write down these words, for in accordance with these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel*” (Exodus 34:27). The text goes on to tell us that “*he wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments*” (v. 28). Intended to be their religious and political guide, the covenant God made with the children of Israel on Mt. Sinai, included the Ten Commandments.

The Law of Moses was a temporary measure designed, in part, to preserve the nation through which the Messiah would come to bless the world. Paul described the Law as a “*tutor to lead us to Christ...*” (Galatians 3:24). Then, he adds, “*But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor*” (v. 25).

In Colossians 2:14, Paul describes the Mosaic Law as having been nailed to the cross. Again, Romans 7:6, he tells us that “*we have been released from the Law....*” In the next verse, he identifies the Law from which we have been released as the Ten Commandments (cf. Ex. 20:17). Many are surprised to learn that we are no longer under the Ten Commandments.

Although nine of the ten commandments are repeated and amplified in the New Testament, we follow them, not because they are part of God’s covenant with Moses, but because they are part of our covenant with Jesus Christ. The only one of the ten not mentioned in the New Testament is the command to remember the Sabbath and keep it holy. While the Christian’s day of worship is connected to the resurrection of Christ on the first day of the week, those who insist on following the Ten Commandments obligate themselves to worship the Lord on Saturday rather than Sunday (cf. Gal. 5:3).

Actually, the discussion is moot if you are a Gentile inasmuch as God’s covenant with Moses, including the Ten Commandments, was made exclusively with the Israelite nation. It pointed toward the coming fulfillment of God’s promise to Abraham and the bringing it of a better covenant — one that included all nations.

--Glen Elliott (Greenbriar, AR)

Which Does God Believe?

A man had a habit of complaining about the food his wife served at family meals. Either it was not what he wanted, or it was prepared the wrong way. After his complaint, he would always lead the family in the blessing for the food.

One day, after his usual combination complaint-prayer, his little girl asked, “Daddy, does God hear us when we pray?” He replied, “Why, of course! God hears us every time we pray.” She pondered this a moment and then asked, “Does He hear us when we aren’t praying?” Encouraged that he had inspired his daughter to be curious about spiritual matters, the father replied: “Yes, dear, every word.” His little girl then asked, “Then which does God believe?”

A lot of people are in the habit of praising and thanking God for their lives and their blessings when they are at church or when they pray, but then spend the rest of their time complaining.

In some of his final instructions to the church in Thessalonica, Paul wrote: “Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you” (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18).

We need to make sure we aren’t just lifting up empty words or pretending to worship. We need to be the kind of people who are truly grateful. So, next time you find yourself thanking God in prayer, take a look at your life and make sure you’re living that way too.

--Luke Bower (Abilene, TX) via *Old Paths*

Water Down

“When we water down the meaning of sin, we water down the sacrifice which paid for it.”

--J.J. Hendrix (via Facebook)