

## PRAYER AND PRAISE 21// 4 AUGUST 2020

### Reading Psalm 95

One way of 'unwrapping' Psalm 95 is to see these verses in the form of three 'calls' to believers and three corresponding 'reasons why'.

**Call:** Praise the Lord! **Why?** God is above all 'gods'.

Read (1-2) Can you see here all the different ways we are called to worship the Lord? Are we always to worship God quietly?!

Notice how God is referred to as *the* Rock of salvation not *a* rock.

What are the 'rocks' we place our hopes in? Recall the wise and foolish builders in Jesus' parable (Matthew 7:24-27).

Read (3-5) These verses challenge us to turn away from the 'gods' in our lives and instead direct us toward God. What other 'gods' existed in the psalmist's day, and what ones exist today? [hint: think of your/my priorities] What is in God's hands? These humbling words naturally lead into the next 'call'.

**Call:** Bow down in Worship. **Why?** He is our God and we are his people.

Read (6) We are called to bow down and kneel [literally prostrate oneself] in humility. How is God described here?

Read (7) How are God's people described here? How far will God go to care for us? Why?

**Call:** Listen to his Word and soften your heart. **Why?** Sin is serious; God's rest is eternal.

Read (7b) How long should we wait to listen to God's voice?

Read (8-11) The generation of sinful people [Israel] failed to enter the 'rest' of the promised land. They were disobedient and failed to listen to and obey God's word. Can you see that their problem of the wayward heart is our problem too? Be thankful that only in Jesus we can finally enter God's rest [see Hebrews 4].

### Look Up: Looking up to God

*"Great is our Lord, and mighty in power; his understanding has no limit"* (Psalm 147: 5) Praise God for His greatness, sovereignty and infinite knowledge.

*"See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God!"* (1 John 3:1) Thank God that he is our Father who knows us and loves us as his children.

### Look Down: Look at ourselves

*"In Him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace that he lavished on us"* (Ephesians 1:7) Thank God for everything he gives us. Come to Jesus in repentance, thanking Jesus for forgiveness. Ask the Holy Spirit to grow the Fruits of the Spirit in us.

### Look to One Side: Think of those we know

*"Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up"* (Galatians 6:9) Thank God for family, friends and neighbours. Pray for those who don't yet know Jesus and to help us reach out in love. Pray for those with any needs.

### Look Forward: Think of the world

*"The earth is the Lord's and everything in it."* (Psalm 24:1) Pray for wisdom for leaders. Thank God for key workers and volunteers. Pray for Christian Charities working all over the world.

### **Creed: He will come to judge the living and the dead.**

*"Christ ... will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him."* (Hebrews 9:27-28)

Thank and worship Christ for His sacrifice which cleansed us from our sins and the gift of salvation. Pray that the Holy Spirit leads us each day into faithful lives as we await Jesus' return.