

## ***The Lord's Faithfulness Endures Forever - Psalms 117, 1*** **Notes, Family Worship, Bible Reading**

### **Notes from the Sermon**

Music is one of God's gifts to us, as it allows us to add artistry to our words and therefore feel and express deep emotion in a way that only music can give us. From hearing locker room songs that fire up a sports team, to rebellious anthems calling for revolution, to melancholy diddys that make you cry, to the oldie that is the song you sang to your girl, music draws us in, moves our heart, and invites us to join the song. And no music can have more impact than the songs of worship we sing to our God. Martin Luther said, "I have no use for cranks who despise music, because it is a gift of God. Music drives away the Devil and makes people joyful; they forget thereby all wrath, unchastity, arrogance, and the like. Next after theology, I give to music the highest place and the greatest honor."

The church I grew up attending had hard wooden pews with a rack on the back holding two books. One was the Bible, and the other a hymnal. Way before there were projectors, screens, and powerpoint, if you wanted to sing along you had to find the song in this book containing the hymns of the faith, prayers, corporate readings, and other helpful things we would use in our Sunday gatherings. The Old Testament book of Psalms functioned as the hymnal for God's covenant people used in their corporate gatherings and private prayer and worship. These 150 poems, many set to music were Israel's greatest hits. The collection expresses virtually the entire gammet of human emotions, including love, sorrow over sin and the brokenness in the world, fear, frustration, depression, joy, hope, and hopelessness. They also interact with the great theological themes found throughout scripture including the character and attributes of God, His creating and redeeming acts, God's election and purpose for His people Israel, human sinfulness and need, and the beauty of the rescued people of God in community. But the Psalms turn these great themes into poetic songs that were to be sung together among the people of God or poems to be recited as an act of worship. In this, Psalms becomes the key source in the Scriptures to teach us how to have the vertical conversation with God. During the winter months leading up to Easter this year we will be spending time looking at some of the Greatest Hits in the Psalms, these amazing songs in the Bible and seek their help as they teach us how to pray, worship, lament, and rejoice in our God. We begin our series looking at two key Psalms, Psalm 1 and 117, the first and the shortest in the book. But these Psalms will help us understand how to read the Psalms.

Psalm 117 is a short text calling all peoples and nations to enter the song of praise to Jehovah God. The thing, though, is that for this to happen the Old Testament people of God need to fulfill their role as a worshiping community whose lips and lives of praise should be visible evidences of their God to the idolatrous world around them. The Hebrews never really got this, as they both joined the idolatry of the other nations while hating the people. They believed they were special, loved by God, and they believe the reason God loved them was because they were somehow better than all others. As a result, they thought they were great but lost the view of the glory of their God revealed in His grace and mercy. So the Psalmist reminds them that it is the greatest of God's steadfast love and the endurance of God's faithfulness toward them that matters. These two words (in the original) are so important, because they are the two character traits God reveals of Himself as it related to the relationship He has with His people in covenant. God loves His people with what Sally Lloyd Jones, in the *Jesus Storybook Bible* calls, "A never stopping, never giving up, unbreaking, always and forever love." This love leads to His mercy and grace toward His people, meaning God gives abundance of gifts we do not deserve and witholds what we do deserve from His holiness. And God is faithful, meaning He is a promise making and promise keeping God, and His faithfulness will never end. Times may be tough, but we can

know that God has not given up on us and in the end we will find that He is accomplishing His good will for us.

Psalm 1 is the introductory Psalm, and is a bit different. It focuses on two ways of living, but what distinguishes the blessed man and the wicked is the way the first delights and focuses on God's Law, called the Torah. For the original reader this would have been a reference to the first five books of the Bible written by Moses. But for the Psalms it points us to the purpose of the Psalms, because the truths found in the Torah are repeated over and over in the Psalms in poems to be prayed and songs to be sung. By singing and engaging the truths of God the Word of God is driven deeper. This is one of the means God uses to make us more like Jesus. So we will spend a few months looking at some of these songs, and encouraging you to read all of them.

**Bible Reading for the Week**

Daily Bible Readings

Sun	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat
Psalm 123	Psalm 124	Psalm 125	Psalm 126	Psalm 127	Psalm 128	Psalm 129

Reading from this past week: Psalm 1, 117

Reading in preparation for this coming Sunday: Psalm 46

**Family Worship**

Song - *Christ is Mine Forevermore*

<https://youtu.be/roQovDZeAWE>

Gospel Project

Story: Living Like Jesus

Story Point: Peter instructed believers to live like Jesus.

Big Picture Question: How does the Holy Spirit help Christians?

Answer: The Holy Spirit comforts us, shows us our sin, and guides us as we live for God's glory.

Scripture: 2 Peter 1

New City Catechism

Question #1: What is our only hope in life and death?

Answer: That we are not our own but belong to God.

Verse: Romans 14:7-8

Scripture

Psalm 117

- What is your favorite worship song? Why do you like singing it to Jesus?
- God wants all peoples and nations to praise Him. How does our praise help make that happen?
- Why is it so important for us to remember God's steadfast love and faithfulness, and what do these things mean for those who follow Jesus?

Prayer

\*Pray for the Slater family as they leave Genesis and begin a new adventure at their new church. Also pray for our church as we search for a new leader for our youth ministry.

\*Praise the LORD for His steadfast love and faithfulness.