

Not To Us

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Preacher: Shawn Woo

[0 : 00] Psalm 115 Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to your name give glory for the sake of your steadfast love and your faithfulness.

Why should the nation say, where is their God? Our God is in heaven. He does all that he pleases. Their idols are silver and gold, the work of human hands.

They have mouths but do not speak, eyes but do not see. They have ears but do not hear, noses but do not smell. They have hands but do not feel, feet but do not walk, and they do not make a sound in their throat.

Those who make them become like them, so do all who trust in them. O Israel, trust in the Lord.

He is their help and their shield. O house of Aaron, trust in the Lord. He is their help and their shield. You who fear the Lord, trust in the Lord.

[1 : 13] He is their help and their shield. The Lord has remembered us. He will bless us. He will bless the house of Israel. He will bless the house of Aaron.

He will bless those who fear the Lord, both the small and the great. May the Lord give you increase, you and your children. May you be blessed by the Lord who made heaven and earth.

The heavens are the Lord's heavens, but the earth he has given to the children of man. The dead do not praise the Lord, nor do any who go down into silence. But we will bless the Lord from this time forth and forevermore.

Praise the Lord. This psalm seems like it was written in response to a taunting that the Israelites were receiving from their surrounding nations.

And we see that in verse 2. Where is their God? Verse 2. Where is your God? If God is real, why is your nation not as powerful as ours?

[2 : 13] We have kind of all heard variations of that same taunt in our lives. If God is real, why is your life full of setbacks and struggles?

If God is real, then why are Christians no better off than non-Christians? If God is real, why aren't you as successful as I am? Your visions and prophecies are figments of your imagination.

Your Bible is a patchwork of bigotry and barbarity and absurdity. So where is your God? That's the taunting of those who don't believe in God.

And this psalm is a response to that, and structured in two parts. First, in verses 1 to 8, we see an entreaty to God, entreaty to vindicate God's glory. To defend His honor.

And the second part we see in verses 9 to 18, is an exhortation to the people of God, to trust in God's blessing. And really the main point is that we can trust the Lord to help us, to deliver us, because of His steadfast love and faithfulness.

[3 : 20] So let's look at verses 1 to 8 to start. It begins in verse 1. Not to us, O Lord.

Not to us, but to your name give glory. For the sake of your steadfast love and your faithfulness. This is so that not, not so that we can be vindicated, feeling better about ourselves.

Not so that we can say, oh no, we are better than you, or we are stronger than you. But so that God's name can be vindicated. His psalmist is praying in this way. And Moses, I don't know if you guys remember, employed a similar strategy after the incident with the golden calf.

And the Israelites made a golden calf and worshipped it. And God's wrath was burning hot against them. And then Moses, this is the way Moses reasons with God in Exodus 32, 12 to 13.

He says, God in that way, it says that God relented from his wrath.

[4 : 43] And did not bring on the disaster that he had planned to bring to them. And too often, I think our concern is not with God's glory, but our own. Do we really work hard for God's glory?

Or so that we might be recognized and praised? In Psalm 115. Do we really seek success and blessing and happiness so that God might be made much of in our lives?

Or because we want to be made much of? And even when we do something that is, you know, on the surface very ostensibly for the Lord, even preaching, proclaiming the gospel, even doing good deeds in the world and serving others, that we can do it for ourselves to impress others.

We can do it to be seen by others so that we can get glory for ourselves. But this psalm is teaching us those should not be the basis, but because we want God's name to be vindicated, because he really is God, because he really is glorious, because he really deserves honor and praise, that's why we seek his purposes for our lives and do his will.

And so in verses 3 to 8, really, we see kind of a satirical writing mocking the idols of the world.

[6 : 22] Our God is in the heavens. He does all that he pleases. That's really kind of the definition of who God is. His name is the Lord. The Lord means I am who I am. He's the Lord who does what he wants to do.

The very definition of God is that he's sovereign. He's not beholden to anyone else for his actions, his thoughts. He can do whatever he wants.

He's the creator. And sometimes we put him in a box and say, well, you have to do this, or you've got to do this. Well, that's unfair.

It's not this. But God's very definition of God is that he does what he pleases. Our God is in the heavens. He does all that he pleases. That's the very definition of what it means to be the Lord.

I am who I am, the sovereign God. But unlike him, their idols are silver and gold, the work of human hands. They have mouths, but do not speak. Eyes, but do not see.

[7 : 23] They have ears, but do not hear. Noses, but do not smell. They have hands, but do not feel. Feet, but do not walk. And they do not make a sound in their throat. So, obviously, just mocking the idols because they're work of human hands.

And then it says in verse 8, those who make them become like them. So do all who trust in them. These idols have eyes, but they cannot see. They have ears, but they cannot hear.

And those who worship idols become, like later when Jesus says, people who have ears, but do not hear. People who have eyes, but cannot see. It's the, we become like what we worship.

And so the contrast with that begins, so that's the entreaty to God to vindicate his glory. And then now it's the exhortation to God's people to trust in God. And it starts in verse 9.

In contrast to verse 8, those who make them become like them, so do all who trust in them. O Israel, you trust in the Lord. He is their help and shield. So instead of trusting in idols and becoming like them, deaf and mute, unable to perceive the word of God, we are to trust in the Lord because he is their, he is our help and shield.

[8 : 37] And then he repeats that in three verses, addresses Israel, house of Aaron, and those who fear the Lord, really all parallel statements referring to the same group of people, God's people.

Trust in the Lord, he is their help and their shield. The Lord has remembered us, he will bless us, he will bless the house of Israel, he will bless the house of Aaron, he will bless those who fear the Lord, both the small and the great.

And then the promise of increase, may the Lord give you, increase you and your children, may you be blessed by the Lord who made heaven and earth. So there's a contrast here in verse 15.

God's the one who made heaven and earth, but the idols that were mocked in verses 4 to 8 are those who were made by human hands. So why do we worship the things that we make?

And that happens not just with these obvious images or idols that people worship, but also things that we prop up in our own lives, whether it's wealth, whether it's success, whether it's beauty.

[9 : 44] We create things with our own hands and then we worship them. We live for them. We enslave ourselves to them. And the Lord says, don't do that. Worship the Lord who alone created the heavens and the earth.

And then he says, verse 17 to 18, the dead do not praise the Lord, nor do any who go down into silence, but we will bless the Lord from this time forth and forevermore. Praise the Lord. This is not saying that there's no life after death.

It's just saying that God ordains praise for those who are living. So instead of waiting and dying, we have to, in our life together, seek to glorify God and live for Him and praise Him.

And the reason why the psalmist can say this and assure God's people that God will bless them and be with them, it's because of, for the sake of, on account of, it says in verse 1, God's steadfast love and faithfulness.

And that's really fulfilled ultimately in the coming of Jesus in John 1, when He's described as the one who is full of grace and truth.

[10 : 56] Grace and truth are the New Testament equivalents of steadfast love and faithfulness. That we can approach God to, and pray to Him and seek Him, seek His help in this way, not because we deserve it, not because we are worthy or because we are so great, but because of God's steadfast love, because of His namesake, because when we are unfaithful, He's still faithful to us.

And so that's really kind of the response when we hear the taunting of people. We should pray to God, Lord, vindicate Your honor and Your glory, and we should exhort one another to trust in Him, to know that He is the one that can bless us.

He is the one that's the sovereign God, the creator of the heavens and the earth. So with that, let's sing a song.

Can we sing Without My Vision? No. No.