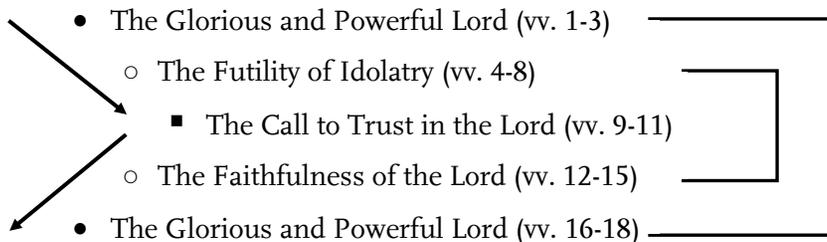


Summer of Psalms

The Faithfulness of God and the Futility of Idolatry
~ Psalm 115 ~
June 17, 2018

MAIN POINT: Our God, who is exalted and faithful and true, is to be trusted, while all worthless and futile forms of idolatry are to be turned from.

CHIASTIC STRUCTURE OF PSALM 115: Chiasms are multiple layers of parallel statements that either compare, contrast, or construct (i.e. build upon), and that usually drive toward a central point or emphasis. The chiasm of Psalm 115 looks like this:



THE GLORIOUS AND POWERFUL LORD (vv. 1-3)

- The psalmist asks for the Lord to display his glory through his steadfast love and faithfulness in the face of the nations' taunts (vv. 1, 2; cf. Ps. 2:1-6).
- Don't forget that our sovereign God rules and reigns (v. 3; cf. Dan. 4:34-35).

THE FUTILITY OF IDOLATRY (vv. 4-8)

- Handmade idols are vain and useless (vv. 4-7; cf. Ps. 135:15-18; Isa. 44:6-20).
- We become like what we worship (v. 8; Ps. 135:18; 2 Cor. 3:18; 1 John 3:2).

THE CALL TO TRUST IN THE LORD (vv. 9-11)

- Trust in the Lord, Beloved, for he is our help and our shield (cf. Ps. 33:20-22; Prov. 3:5-6; Jer. 17:7-8; Rom. 15:13)!

THE FAITHFULNESS OF THE LORD (vv. 12-15)

- Our God has not forgotten us, and he will act to bless all those who are united to Christ by grace through faith (vv. 12-14; Deut. 31:6; Josh. 1:5-9).
- The blessing of God is assured because the one who made all things can give all that he pleases (v. 15; Rom. 11:36; Col. 1:16).

THE GLORIOUS AND POWERFUL LORD (vv. 16-18)

- Trust in God while there is still breath in your lungs and while your heart is still beating (v. 16; Josh. 24:14-15; 2 Cor. 6:1-2).
- What end awaits you? Will you praise the Lord forevermore, or will there be silence on your lips (vv. 17-18; Rev. 21:5-8)?

RECOMMENDED READING:

- *Counterfeit Gods*, Timothy Keller
- *Gospel Treason*, Brad Bigney
- *The Blessed and Boundless God*, George Swinnock

Questions/Discovery Points for Life Groups/Families

Please read Psalm 115

1. What situations are you going through right now that have you facing, either externally or internally, the question, "Where is my God?" How does the psalmist help us answer that question?
2. In what ways does it comfort your heart to know that our God is seated on his throne and nothing can stay his hand?
3. What heart idols are you currently struggling with? Remember Tim Keller's good diagnostic definition: "What is an idol? It is anything more important to you than God, anything that absorbs your heart and imagination more than God, anything you seek to give you what only God can give... A counterfeit god is anything so central and essential to your life that, should you lose it, your life would feel hardly worth living." Spend some time asking the tough questions that might help identify your idols of the heart.
4. Discuss as a group the dehumanizing effects of idolatry that are seen in Psalm 115.
5. In what areas of your life, specifically, do you need to remind yourself that the Lord is your helper and shield? How does remembering this reality lead to a deeper trust and affection for God?
6. How does the reality of Psalm 115:16-18 motivate you to share the gospel?
7. Discuss any further thoughts or insights you might have about Psalm 115.