

Other Aspects of Salvation: Psalm33

I plan to put our Wednesday night study on Total Salvation on hold until we can meet in person again, so that we can discuss the material as we cover it. In these online “class sessions,” I will provide some material about other aspects of salvation that we probably weren’t going to get to spend much time on in that class. There may be some overlap between the two, but mainly the material here will be about other aspects of salvation.

Psalm 33

- A hymn of praise
- The outline is:
 - Call to praise God (1-3)
 - Reasons for praising him (4-5, note the word “for” at the beginning of v. 4)
 - God’s sovereignty over all (6-19), including over heaven and earth (6-9), nations and peoples (10-12), human beings (13-15), and those who fear God (16-19).
 - Trust and prayer (20-22)
- Not an acrostic, but it does have 22 verses, the same as the number of letters in the Hebrew alphabet. This may indicate completeness as far as reasons to trust and praise God. God is sovereign over everything and so we can trust him.

Questions about the Text of the Psalm

1. What do you learn about worship from the call to worship in vv. 1-3? How do you need to grow in worship in light of each of these words in that paragraph: sing, joyfully, righteous, fitting, praise, shout? (I’ll let you decide what you think the references to instruments may have to say about that matter.)
2. “For” in v. 4 indicates that these are the reasons for worshipping God. List all the words in vv. 4-5 that describe God and his word. How do you think the world is full of his unfailing love?
3. Verses 6-19 describe God’s sovereignty in various spheres (see outline above), which gives us additional reasons for praising him. Read that entire section and note which reason for praising God you especially resonate with.
4. How does v. 11 relate to the Covid 19 Virus?
5. The paragraph in vv. 16-19 is the part of this Psalm that most directly relates to salvation. In the NT, salvation is usually from sin. In the OT, salvation can be from sin but is also frequently from some physical threat or danger. What specific kinds of threats or dangers do you think the Lord saves his people from in vv. 16-17? How about v. 19. What kind of people does the Lord save from such things, according to v. 18? How, then, do vv. 16-19 relate to the Covid 19 Virus?
6. After praising God for all he has done, what two other things does it lead the author of the Psalm to do (vv. 20-21 and 22)?
7. Note that unfailing (or steadfast) love appears in both v. 5 and v. 22, like bookends around the long section of reasons to praise God. God’s praise-worthy deeds in the world grow out of his steadfast love.

Exercises/Applications

1. BASIC LEVEL: Can you think of 26 reasons for praising God (one for each letter of our alphabet, cf. 3rd bullet above)? CHALLENGING LEVEL: Can you think of a reason for praising God that begins with each letter of our alphabet? (as if this Psalm *were* an acrostic)(For example: Amazing, Before all things, Compassionate etc. You can fudge a little too if you need to to make it work)
2. Using what you just did and/or vv. 4-19, actually speak, pray, shout or sing praise to God out loud for each of those things.

Meditation about the Meaning of the Psalm

This Psalm teaches that we should praise God because he is sovereign over everything and saves those who fear him from trouble and danger. These praise-worthy deeds of God also make it fitting for us to trust in him and to pray. Spend some time in reflection and prayer about the relationship between praising God, trusting God, and praying to God. Also consider what the message of this Psalm overall says about Covid 19 and what guidance it gives you for handling the virus. Finally, spend time in prayer along the lines of what you learn from this Psalm.