

Joyful Worship: The Response of a Thankful People

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[0 : 00] Be seated. As many of you know, I am Drew Arrington.

I am not a PCA minister.! I am a minister of an associated denomination,! the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, and I am a chaplain here at Fort Carson.

And it's my pleasure today to preach to you. And I want to start off by saying that as Christians, sometimes we get asked many questions.

And one of those questions that you might be asked is, why do you worship God? John Oatman Jr., a hymnist from the late 1800s to the early 1900s, wrote this in one of his famous hymns that kind of tries to answer that question or is perhaps a common answer that you might hear.

And he says this, count your blessings, name them one by one, count your many blessings, see what God has done. In many ways, Oatman was right.

[1 : 24] We worship God because of the manifold blessings that he pours out upon us. But if God's smiling providence gave way to his frowning providence, would the Christian, would you, have reason to joyfully worship God?

If cancer robs you of your youth, if your home is no more than a dirt floor and a thatched roof, if your parents are absent or worse yet, abusive, if your death or, if through death or divorce, your wife is stolen from you, if a vindictive investigation threatens your livelihood, do you know that even in all of those circumstances, you as a Christian have sufficient reason to not only worship God, but to do so joyfully?

Here at CNPC, you have a wonderful statement about joyful worship, and it's included on the backside of your bulletin. Simply stated, this helps us to answer the question, why do Christians worship God?

And I want you to grasp the depths of the words here in that statement. Because beyond the temporal blessings we enjoy, the Christian joyfully worships God because of God's wonderful works.

And in today's reading, we will look at three of those wonderful works. works that elicit joy from the heart of the Christian. Well, as we pray and then read Galatians 3 through 4, 7, I ask that you would ponder this question, why do I joyfully worship God?

[3 : 31] Gracious Heavenly Father, we come before you this morning reading your word. And God, I ask that your Holy Spirit might do what your Holy Spirit does, which is to apply that word to our very hearts.

God, that we might know you and love you more deeply and as a result, worship you with joyful hearts. this we ask in your Son's name, Jesus Christ.

Amen. So if you would, join me in reading Galatians 3, verse 21 through chapter 4, verse 7.

Is the law then contrary to the promise of God? Certainly not. For if a law had been given that could give life, then righteousness would indeed be by the law.

But the Scripture imprisoned everything under sin so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.

[4 : 36] Now, before faith came, we were held captive under the law, imprisoned until the coming faith would be revealed. So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came in order that we might be justified by faith.

But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian. For in Christ Jesus, you are all sons of God through faith. For as many of you were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

There is neither Jew nor Greek. There is neither slave nor free. There is no male and female for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise.

I mean that an heir, as long as he is a child, is no different from a slave, though he is the owner of everything. But he is under guardians and managers until the date set by his father.

in the same way, also, when we were children, we're enslaved to the elementary principles of this world. But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.

[6 : 00] And because you are sons, God has sent his spirit, the spirit of his son, into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father. So you are no longer a slave, but a son.

And if a son, then an heir through God. may God add the blessing to the reading of his word and the preaching thereof. In his commentary on Exodus, in this passage that we read earlier in Exodus, Matthew Henry observes, old mercies to ourselves or to our fathers must not be forgotten, that God may be praised and our faith encouraged.

And today, we're going to look at three of those old mercies in Exodus in light of our New Testament reading so that our faith can be encouraged and that our worship may truly be joyful.

And so with that, let's look at the precarious situation that the Hebrews found themselves in, in slavery in Egypt. See, they had come to Egypt and we see here that God for nine plagues had gone toe-to-toe with Pharaoh, but yet little progress had been made.

The Egyptians, the Hebrews were still enslaved to the Egyptians. And in this reading just previously, God had announced to Moses, I'm sending a tenth plague and I'm taking the gloves off.

[7 : 50] I am going to visit death upon every single house in Egypt. The firstborn in every house will die.

And this message, this was a message of mercy, but also a message of misery. We heard the misery that God in his wrath was executing judgment upon the population there in Egypt.

But there was also a message of mercy that God in his great love for us and for the Hebrews was providing a way that they could escape his judgment, escape his wrath.

in the previous nine, God had demonstrated his mercy in many ways by allowing certain plagues to not affect the land of Goshen where the Hebrews were, but this one is different.

Here God says, you, you must participate in your redemption. You must participate in avoiding the wrath to come. You must embrace the mercy that I am offering.

[9 : 05] And what was that mercy? That mercy was the Passover lamb. The lamb that Moses instructed the people, the Hebrews, to sacrifice so that the life of the oldest would be preserved.

But it wasn't just the shedding of blood that was required. No, the Hebrews had to take a bunch of hyssop and dip it like a brush into the shed blood of the lamb and then apply it to the doorposts and the cross member of the door.

In effect, they were sealing the house against God's coming wrath. but that wasn't all.

For the promise of deliverance to be received, they had to abide under that seal. They had to abide within the house that was marked with the blood.

You know that we, like our spiritual forefathers, the Hebrews, we also are subject to God's wrath. Not because God is going to send an angel of death as he did in the tenth plague, but that we are dealing with his eternal wrath, his judgment against our sin and against our lack of righteousness.

[10 : 42] And because of that, we are barred from entrance into his kingdom. We are non-participants in his great promises that we find all throughout scripture. But, Paul writes in Galatians 4, when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law.

Christ is that Passover lamb. Christ is the one whose blood shed for us allows us to escape God's wrath.

His blood applied to our hearts by the Holy Spirit saves us, marks us as his. And when we abide under the blood of Christ, Christ's work speaks on our behalf.

love. Well, reflecting on the wonder of that deliverance, Charles Simeon declares and has written on your bulletin, that deliverance will be indeed wonderful, and eternity will be too short to explore the unsearchable riches of grace and love contained in it.

God has joyfully worship because God has delivered us from his wrath.

[12 : 16] And that is great and excellent news. And we could stop there this morning. But like the infomercial guy, I want to say, but wait, there's more. There's more.

And if we go back to Exodus and we see the second of God's old mercies, we see that in addition to being at risk of suffering God's wrath, the Hebrews were subjects of slavery at the cruel hand of Egyptian taskmasters.

They came to Egypt seeking satisfaction and security during a time of famine. And over the years, they found themselves enslaved, brutalized, devalued, and in that precarious position, Exodus 3, 7 through 8 tells us that they cried out for a deliverer and that God heard their cry.

And not only did he hear their cry, but he provided for their deliverance. And he provided for their deliverance. he provided for their deliverance. And do you know that nearly 4,000 years since then, people today find themselves enslaved, brutalized, and devalued.

Such were we. We were brutalized, enslaved, and devalued by sin and by the law.

[14 : 02] And we could spend an entire Sunday morning talking about how impactful our sin and our enslavement to the law changes us and enslaved us.

But what is essential to understand is that just as the Hebrews needed a deliverer from the Egyptians, we need a deliverer.

We are incarcerated by our own sin, and the law cannot deliver us, but only condemn us. And that's where Martin Luther found himself.

He found himself at the point where he realized that he could not save himself. And he records this as his opening argument in the Heidelberg Disputation when he writes, the law of God, which is the most beneficial doctrine of life, is not able to advance man towards righteousness, but rather stands against him.

What then is our hope? How does God liberate us from our sin and from the law? Martin Luther near the end of that same work says, he is not justified who does many works, but he who, without work, believes much in Christ.

[15 : 35] The law says, do this, and it is never done. Grace says, believe in this, and all things are already done.

God will do this. And what great news to those of us who are enslaved to sin and brutalized by the law.

I hope you heard it. Believe that God through Christ paid the penalty for our sin, and that Jesus' perfect obedience satisfies the demands of the law, and it's all done.

You don't have to struggle or worry about being enslaved to sin and about being brutalized by the law because it's all been taken care of by grace.

through faith in Jesus Christ. And if that doesn't elicit joyful worship from you, question what will.

[16 : 44] Well, we look one more time back to Exodus, and we see again the last of God's old mercies that elicit joyful worship from his people. As we see that not only were the Hebrews rescued from God's wrath, not only were they liberated from slavery, but the Hebrews found themselves after all of this wandering.

They were without a home. They were without a future. They were without an identity. identity. And it's here that the confession that we read this morning about the preamble to the Ten Commandments proves instructive.

God says, I am the Lord, your God, which have brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. And through this, God is saying, look, I am your identity.

I am giving you a new identity. You are no longer a people who are enslaved in Egypt because I delivered you from that bondage.

You are not wandering vagabonds. You are my people and I am your God. We, too, need a new identity.

[18 : 12] We, too, having suffered an enslavement and having been liberated need a new identity. And Paul points to that in chapter 4 of Galatians when he writes this and painting such a beautiful picture of that new identity.

But when the fullness of time came, God sent forth his son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law so that we might receive adoption as sons.

And because you are sons, God has sent the spirit of his son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father, so you are no longer a slave, but a son.

And if a son, then an heir through God. You see, we were slaves to sin and the law without hope, but we were freed by faith and now we have a hope that is certain and sure through Christ Jesus.

We were sons of wrath, separated from God for all eternity. But now we are separated from the world, having been adopted as God's sons.

[19 : 42] We were heirs to death and destruction, and now we are heirs of God's kingdom through Jesus Christ. And we see that in all of that, it is the Holy Spirit who is sealing us just like the Father in the Old Testament in Hebrews were enslaved, dipped that hyssop into the blood and applied it to the doorposts.

The Holy Spirit takes the finished work of Christ and applies it to our very hearts, marking out once and for all that we are gods, sealed for eternity.

And not only that, we are adopted into the very family of God. Not at a distance, but intimately brought in to the very presence of God through the Holy Spirit in such that we can cry, Abba, Father, Daddy.

Daddy. Not God of the universe, but Daddy. What a wonderful state the Holy Spirit has transferred us into.

We are no longer slaves. We are no longer subject to God's wrath, but we are the very children of God, able to cry out to him in all of life and call him Dad.

[21 : 34] Oh, Christian, God has infused you with a new identity as his dearly beloved child. Would you joyfully worship him for that?

Well, as we conclude today's sermon, I do so with a simple, but what I would say a profound encouragement. when you count your blessings and you name them one by one, start with these three old mercies.

Start with the fact that God the Father has delivered us from his wrath. Start, secondly, knowing that through Jesus he has liberated us from slavery to sin and oppression to the law.

third, that by the working of the Holy Spirit, he has adopted us as his beloved children.

In doing so, we will remind ourselves of, instruct our children in, and bear witness to the great works of our gracious God, to whom belongs all joyful worship, glory, and honor, both now and forever more.

[22 : 58] Amen. Let us pray. Oh God, thank you that you have done a remarkable work, of which we have seen three today.

voy voy Amen.