

Psalm 92: 1-15; “To Be Planted in God’s House”, A Sermon Preached on the occasion of his 70th Birthday, by Pastor Paul Rendall on November 14th, 2021, in the Morning Worship Service.

In verse 12 we are told that the righteous shall flourish like a palm tree and shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon if they are planted in the house of the Lord. We must ask ourselves then – What does this mean, to be planted in the house of the Lord? For it says here that if you are planted in the house of the Lord you will flourish spiritually speaking in the courts of your God. In other words, in New Covenant, New Testament language, you will spiritually flourish in the local church that you are a part of, and you will do so, because of your real participation in worship of our great God.

I believe that to be “planted in the house of the Lord” according to this passage of Scripture means that the Lord Himself, by His Holy Spirit, has convinced you of the importance of learning to do certain things on the Sabbath Day when you come to worship Him, here at church. I want you to consider 4 of these things with me. 1st of all – The importance of Giving Thanks and Singing Praises to God on His Day. (verses 1-3) 2nd – The importance of Declaring How Great God’s works are. (verses 4-9) 3rd – The importance of being Anointed with fresh oil by God Himself. (verses 10 and 11) And 4th – The importance of your being a strong and fruit tree by seeing God as your Rock.

1st of all – Let us see the importance of Giving Thanks and Singing Praises to God on His Day.

The heading of this Psalm is just as much inspired as all of the verses in the Psalm are. It states that this is a Psalm. And then it goes on to say that it is a Song for the Sabbath Day. The children of Israel sung this Psalm on the Sabbath day in the days of king David and following. This Psalm was no doubt composed by king David himself, for mention is made of the musical instruments of praise, the ten-stringed lute and the harp, and the resounding music upon the lyre are mentioned here. What blessed Sabbath days they must have had in those days, in Jerusalem! The Sabbath day, for time of the whole Old Testament, from the beginning of the world, until the day on which Christ died, was the seventh day from the creation.

This was because on the 7th day of the creation week, God rested from all His works which He had made, and He blessed the 7th day, and He sanctified it for the sake of the man whom He had created. In doing this, He sanctified the Sabbath day for all of mankind’s sake, for Adam was the head of our Race. God’s intention was, that He would show mankind by His own example, that there would be one day set apart for us in order to find rest and in order that God would be worshiped on that day; that God would be given that day instead of working on it. One of the great purposes of God’s sanctifying of this day was so that His people in all generations would give thanks to Him for His works of creation, and His upholding all of those works by His Providential and Preservative care.

Let me ask you if you worship God for being the Creator/God? Do you see His goodness and His lovingkindness in all that He has created? Do you see that He has created so many things that that You might enjoy what He has created, and enjoy thinking about Him, the One who created them? God also instituted the Sabbath Day knowing that He wanted man to have a day to worship Him on. The Fall of Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden took place after God instituted the Sabbath day. The worship of God in the Garden must have been particularly wonderful to them; Adam and Eve giving God glory for His creating them upright; and that they were created in His blessed image and likeness. They no doubt gave thanks to the Lord and sang the praises to His name. They declared His lovingkindness in the morning and His faithfulness every night.

What a privilege is daily devotion to God! The lifting up your praises to the Lord God, and thanking Him for the wonders of His goodness and love. This is a very good thing. I simply ask – Do you do this? For God knows how to refresh His saints through their worship of Him on His Day. He will do this for you, body, soul, and spirit, if you will honor Him by being here for the services of the day. He is the one who gives the true rest. He is the One who gives true joy to your heart, when you honor Him by your worship here morning and afternoon. Our God is so very great, and merciful, and kind!

Do you praise and thank the Lord for His greatest work, the work of redeeming a people for His own possession? This great work of redemption, of buying back sinners from their sins, was purposed by the Triune God before time began. Even before He began the work of creating all things, God purposed that He would sum up all things in Christ. In the counsel and Covenant of Redemption, it was agreed by the 3 Persons of the Divine Trinity that the Father would send His only-begotten Son to this fallen world, and He would accomplish redemption; He would pay the ransom price. He would become Incarnate; He would take upon Himself our nature except without sin. It was decreed that He would keep all of God's commandments unto perfection, and fulfill the Law and the Prophets. It was predetermined that He would suffer, bleed and die upon the cross for our sins.

And so, when Christ came into the world, and the work of redemption was accomplished, Christ's body lay in the tomb resting that whole Sabbath Day, and then He rose from the dead, and the Christian Sabbath, or the first Lord's Day was observed in relation to God and Christ being worshiped by His disciples. This is why the Day of worship changed from the last day of the week to the first. It is because Christ was the firstborn of all creation. He was the firstborn of a New Creation. He was the firstborn of a Race of elect people; a New World of people of the Father's choosing, who would be planted in the Lord's house. The Lord's house is His people; those whom He has saved and gathered from all the nations, to worship Him. Oh, will you not declare His lovingkindness in the morning, and His faithfulness at night? Will you help uphold the worship of God here, every Lord's Day?

2nd – I want you to see the importance of your Declaring How Great God's works are. (verses 4-9)

Verse 4 – “For You, Lord, have made me glad through Your work; I will triumph in the works of Your hands.” “O Lord, how great are Your works!” “Your thoughts are very deep.” “A senseless man does not know, nor does a fool understand this.” “When the wicked spring up like grass, and when all the workers of iniquity flourish, it is that they may be destroyed forever.” “But You, Lord, are on high forevermore.” “For behold, Your enemies, O Lord, for behold, Your enemies shall perish; all the workers of iniquity shall be scattered.” In our worship of God it is our main business to declare the works of God. How great was the work of creation at the beginning of the world. But God's work of redemption through Christ His Son is far greater yet, for how great is it that God became a Man.

The implications of it, and the blessings that He bought by the sacrifice of Himself are infinitely great. The work of the Holy Spirit in the application of Christ's redemption to every believer's heart is greater than we can conceive. When you stop to think that the carnal mind is enmity to God? This is the way that it is with every man; that their heart is by nature actually hostile to God. And the idea of their needing to be saved from their sins is displeasing to them. And so, we find in the gospel that God calls to sinners. Come to Christ. And they at first refuse to come. But when God stretches forth his hand in the effectual call, this same heart which was hard and resistant, is now turned to behold the glory and the perfections of Christ. The preacher tells them that Christ died for sinners and they now see their need of Him, and they believe, and they are saved.

The believer in Christ always triumphs through the work of God's hands. Because of the finished work of Christ, they triumph over the reigning power of sin in their life when sin's power over them is broken when the Holy Spirit begins His Holy work. Their hard heart is made tender by grace. The Holy Spirit circumcises the heart, and then the believer in Christ experiences a death to sin in their soul and spirit. And they are made spiritually alive in Christ. The Spirit plants the seed of righteousness in the believer's heart, so that they now love righteousness and hate lawlessness. The believer also triumphs in their walk with Christ after they are saved. They begin to walk on the path of righteousness and love that path. This is another of the works of God's hands. 2nd Corinthians 2: 14-16 – "Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place." "For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing."

So, God is leading us in triumph through what He, the Father, has done for us in Christ, in supplying us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ. In 2nd Corinthians chapter 3, verses 17 & 18, we read – "Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." "But we all with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord Christ, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord." What a mighty work this is! And we should glory in it, that the Spirit takes the things of Christ's redemption, and He applies all the blessings of grace and truth to our mind and heart.

And then, over time there is a tremendous process of change and transformation taking place, where we become more and more like Christ; being taken from one degree of glory to another. We realize that God's thoughts towards us are very great; that He considers us in every way for our good. As Psalm 139 says – He searches me and He knows me, my sitting down and my rising up. He understands my thought from afar. He comprehends my path and my lying down. He is intimately acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word on my tongue, but behold, O Lord, You know it altogether. You have hedged me behind and before, and laid Your hand upon me." What a great work God does in this regard – In hedging me. God does this continually with us, whether we know it or not, experientially.

He is so near to us that everything that we do is perfectly known and understood by God, and He knows everything of the past concerning us perfectly, and everything of the future that will take place; indeed, He leads us and guides us into it with His eye upon us. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high and I cannot attain it, it says in Psalm 139, verse 6. Yes, dear Christian, this is so. But you ought not to be afraid of God's nearness to you, but rather glory in it. Verse 7 – Where can I go from Your Spirit?" "Or where can I flee from Your presence?" "If I ascend into heaven, You are there; if I make my bed in hell, (that is in the grave) behold, You are there." "If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there Your hand shall lead me, and Your right hand, (that is Christ) shall hold me."

So, the wonderful conclusion that the Psalmist David draws from all this reflection is found in verse 17 – "How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God!" "How great is the sum of them!" "If I should count them, they would be more in number than the sand; when I am awake, I am still with You." Let me ask you now whether you are comforted by the sovereign watchcare of God over your life, dear Christian? You ought to be, you know. He thinks upon you for good if you believe in Him. He thinks upon you continually. You ought to glory in His great and gracious thoughts toward you, and rejoice in the Lord always. And again I say – Rejoice!

The reason that I say this is found in verse 6 of Psalm 92 – "A senseless man does not know, nor does a fool understand this." God does not care for the wicked as He does the righteous. He is angry with the wicked every day. When the wicked spring up like grass, and when all the workers of iniquity flourish, it is that they may be destroyed forever, it says in verse 7. The Lord looks at it in just this way. He is on high forevermore. And all of His enemies shall perish.

Workers of iniquity will be scattered. Let us always remember that our God sees the wicked perfectly. In His will of desire, He commands that they will repent. If they will turn away from their sins and turn to Him in faith, they will know every blessing of salvation. We ought to pray for our enemies that they will repent. Truly, we as Christ's Church, should praise the Lord for His works and His thoughts which are very deep. His thoughts are all righteous and good.

3rd – I want you to see the importance of being Anointed with fresh oil by God Himself.

Verses 10 & 11 – “But my horn You have exalted like a wild ox; I have been anointed with fresh oil.” “My eye also has seen my desire on my enemies; my ears hear my desire on the wicked who rise up against me.” By “horn” here, David means his power; the strength that He exercised to deal with the enemies of Israel, and to do what was right in every situation, the Lord enabling him to do so. Because of the Lord giving him wisdom and discernment on what to do in every situation, he was able to defeat the enemies of Israel, those who came against them at various times.

David was anointed to be king 3 times, the first time by Samuel in 1st Samuel 16: 13, he was anointed to become king of Israel in the place of Saul. Then in 2nd Samuel chapter 2, verse 4, the men of Judah came to him after Saul was killed in battle, and they anointed David to be king over them. And then in 2nd Samuel 5, verse 3, all the elders of Israel came to David at Hebron, and he made a covenant with them before the Lord. And they anointed him king over all Israel. In each of these cases, no doubt, he was anointed with fresh oil. This repeated anointing with fresh oil shows us the working of the Holy Spirit in His anointing of God's saints with fresh supplies of Christ's grace at critical times in their lives, to indicate to them that they shall be victorious in their personal ministry and in their running the race of the Christian life.

2nd Corinthians chapter 1, verses 18-22 – “But as God is faithful, our word to you was not Yes and No.” “For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us – by me, Silvanus, and Timothy – was not Yes and No, but in Him was Yes.” “For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us.” “Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us is God, who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.” You can see here the faithfulness of God to His promises. They are not Yes and No, but in Christ they are always Yes to the glory of God. The good work that He has begun in our lives, He will complete until the Day of Christ.

He will give you, dear Christian, the fresh oil of His anointing, whenever He sees that you need it. Christ will give you assurances through His Holy Spirit's conveying it, that spiritually will speak to your heart, and you will be able to confess, as David said in Psalm 23 – “You prepare a table for me in the presence of my enemies.” “You anoint my head with oil, my cup overflows.” “Surely goodness and mercy shall me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.” David, after being anointed, was able to see his desire upon his enemies. His ears heard his desire on the wicked who rose up against him. In 1st Chronicles 14, verse 8 it says – “Now when the Philistines heard that David had been anointed king over all Israel, all the Philistines went up to search for David.” “And David heard of it and went out against them.” “Then the Philistines went and made a raid on the Valley of Rephaim.” “And David inquired of God, saying, ‘Shall I go up against the Philistines?’” “Will You deliver them into my hand?” “The Lord said to him, ‘Go up, for I will deliver them into your hand.’”

And a little later in verses 13-17 of that same chapter it says that, “The Philistines once again made a raid on the valley.” “Therefore David inquired again of God and God said to him, ‘You shall not go up after them; circle around them, and come upon them in front of the mulberry trees.’” “And it shall be, when you hear a sound of marching in the tops of the mulberry trees, then you shall go out to battle, for God has gone out before you to strike the camp of the Philistines.” “So David did as God commanded him, and they drove back the army of the

philistines from Gibeon as far as Gezer.” “The the fame of David went out into all lands, and the Lord brought the fear of him upon all nations.”

This is encouraging, is it not? All of these victories came from David’s horn being exalted; his strength to lead all Israel after he was anointed to be king. And similarly, the victories that you shall have in driving sin out of your heart and life, the victories that you shall have in terms of serving God and being successful in glorifying Him in the ministry that He has given you, they all will come from His having anointed you with fresh oil. You and I have to learn to see things this way instead of thinking that our successes in living the Christian life are due to our own wisdom, our own strength, or our own cleverness. Let us see that our victory is in Jesus giving us unction through the Holy Spirit.

4th – I see the importance of your being a strong and fruit tree by declaring God to be your Rock.

Verse 12 – “The righteous shall flourish like a palm tree, he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.” “Those who are planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God.” “They shall still bear fruit in old age; they shall be fresh and flourishing, to declare that the Lord is upright; He is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in Him.” These words are something for everyone in every local church to take notice of. The righteous here in these verses are compared to strong and fruitful trees because they have been planted by God in His house.

A tree does not plant itself. In our case, spiritually speaking, we are planted in the house of the Lord when we receive the apostolic teaching of the Bible, Sunday by Sunday. The apostle Paul said – “I planted, Apollos watered, but it is God who causes the growth. Let us take notice of this. You are a tree of the Lord’s planting. You start out being born again by the incorruptible seed of the word of God which lives and abides forever. And then the Lord makes you into a mighty tree. Just because a tree is older does not mean that it cannot be strong or bear fruit. This will be the case if you are planted in the Lord’s house.

These verses show us that even though the outer man may be decaying, yet the reality of grace and the Holy Spirit’s working in that person is well able to renew them, day by day as they get older, so that they will be fresh and flourishing in the courts of our God in the ministry that the Lord has given them. This principle of truth applies to all in the local church who are getting older. If you are planted in the house of the Lord, you will still be able to be fresh and flourishing. The word “fresh” here in verse 14, means literally – “Full of oil or sap”. In other words, it is because of the strength of Christ’s grace to you, the older person, and because of the working of the Holy Spirit in your life, that you can still bear great fruit to God. The Lord is the Rock of your strength. You want to show forth God’s righteousness and His strength to everyone around you.

Today on my 70th birthday, I will remember these verses and take heart from them. The promise is true. I can still be fat and flourishing spiritually speaking, even though I am getting older. But I want you to see that this principle is true for people at any age of their life. If you are planted in the house of the Lord you will be like a palm tree. I am told that the palm-tree yields about three hundred pounds’ weight of dates annually. It can sometimes produce even as much as six hundred pounds’ weight sometimes. Age makes the physical body decay, but the person who is godly will flourish and be fruitful in old age.

Let us think about the cedar for a moment as well. Joseph Benson the commentator tells us – “The cedars in Lebanon are immensely large, being some of them thirty-five, or even forty feet in the girth, and thirty-seven yards in the spread of their boughs. They flourish for ages, and are always green; and, when cut down, yield a most beautiful kind of wood, inclining to a brown colour, solid, durable, and, in some sort, incorruptible.” I would remind you that it was out of the cedars of Lebanon that the temple was built in Solomon’s day. Back in 1st Kings chapter 5, verse 1, it says – “Now Hiram king of Tyre sent his servants to Solomon, because he heard that

they had anointed him king in place of his father, for Hiram had always loved David.” “Then Solomon sent to Hiram, saying: ‘You know how my father David could not build a house for the name of the Lord his God because of the wars which were fought against him on every side, until the Lord put his foes under the soles of his feet .’ “But now the Lord my God has given me rest on every side; for there is neither adversary nor evil occurrence.”

“And behold, I propose to build a house for the name of the Lord my God, as the Lord spoke to my father David, saying, ‘Your son, whom I will set on your throne in your place, he shall build the house for My name.’ “Now therefore, command that they cut down cedars for me from Lebanon; and my servants will be with your servants according to whatever you say.” “For you know there is none among us who has skill to cut timber like the Sidonians.” “So it was, when Hiram heard the words of Solomon, that he rejoiced greatly and said, ‘Blessed be the Lord this day, for He has given David a wise son over this great people.”

All of this is typical, my brethren. Solomon is a type of Christ in the building of the temple. Our Lord Jesus Christ is building His Church in these New Testament times. Hiram was the king of Tyre. He was a Gentile. And Solomon and his people who worked to build the temple were Jews. When we read the New Testament letters of Peter and Paul we see that the New Testament Church is composed of Jews and Gentiles who are planted together in this house, and they are living stones in the building of the Lord’s house. Christ is the foundation and cornerstone of this spiritual building, the temple of God. And there have been many workman over the generations of the Church age who have been building on the foundation that He laid. It says in 1st Kings 5, verse 17 – “And the king commanded them to quarry large stones, costly stones, and hewn stones, to lay the foundation of the temple.” And then they began to build.

Let me ask in closing if you see how great this building is, the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ, the temple of the Living God that He is building? It is built with beams of cedar and costly stones. You who are listening to me today are trees in this house. You are also described as living stones purchased with the costly blood of Christ. He is the Rock that you rest your faith upon. And there is no unrighteousness in Him. Do you see Him this way? When you get home today, take out your Bible and read Psalm 71, the prayer of a believer when they reach old age. It says there in verse 7 – “I have become a wonder to many, but You are my strong refuge.” “Let my mouth be filled with Your praise and Your glory all the day.” “Do not cast me of in the time of old age; do not forsake me when my strength fails.”

Well, this is a prayer that He will answer. But it goes on in verse 14 – “But I will hope continually, and will praise You yet more and more.” “My mouth shall tell of Your righteousness and Your salvation all the day, for I do not know their limits.” “I will go in the strength of the Lord God; I will make mention of our righteousness of Yours only.” “O God, You have taught me from my youth; and to this day I declare Your wondrous works.” “Now also when I am old and gray-headed, O God, do not forsake me, until I declare Your strength to this generation, Your power to everyone who is to come.” If this is your desire and your prayer, dear Christian, God will answer it and bless you in just this way.

