

“Singing of God’s Glory”
Psalm 65
(Preached at Trinity, April 10, 2011)

I’m supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord’s Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I’ll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. **Psalm 65** begins as many of the Psalms of David. It is designated to be given to the chief musician and David is designated as the author. This one is a bit different, however, in that it is described as a Psalm and a song. Since the Psalms were largely meant to be sung why make this designation?
The word for “song” refers to a “lyrical poem.” Apparently this psalm we meant to be both read and sung.
We’ve seen it before as Psalms 30 & 48 also have this designation but from here we will find a series of psalms that begin in this way.
2. This psalm is a song of great praise unto the glory of God.
Psalm 65:1 – “Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Zion: and unto thee shall the vow be performed.”
 - a. God is worthy of praise and He receives praise of all His elect – praise waits for Him in Zion.
 - b. We owe God our praise – “unto thee shall the vow be performed.”
 - c. The word “waiteth” literally refers to silence. This is a moment of silent praise, a time of meditation upon God in His goodness. Perhaps it was a time of silent prayer, especially as we see **Verse 2**. Or it could refer to praise in the absence of the fear of enemies.
3. The occasion of this psalm isn’t definite. It could have been sung anytime and probably was. It can still be sung today as we sing forth the praises of God.
 - A. It is a refreshing psalm after so many where we’ve found David surrounded by fierce enemies. We find no enemies here – only the praise of the glory of God for His infinite goodness.
 - B. But David makes references to God’s rich bounty in harvest. He speaks of God watering the furrows and enriching the earth. He speaks of God crowning the hear with His bounty.
 - C. Because of these references this psalm was probably composed to be sung during the harvest festival – the Feast of Tabernacles.
4. We can divide this psalm into three sections:
 - I. The praise of God’s glory in His grace – **Verses 1-4**
 - II. The praise of God’s glory in His greatness – **Verses 5-8**
 - III. The praise of God’s glory in His goodness – **Verses 9-13**

I. The praise of God's glory in His grace – **Verses 1-4**

Remember, grace is an expression of God's boundless love as He gives good things to undeserving men. It is God's unmerited favor.

A. The grace of prayer – **Verse 2**

1. David is praising God for the grace of prayer.
 - a. We must never cease to marvel over the gift of prayer. That we can converse with God at any time. That we have access before His throne. That He allows the lowly to speak and He hears each one
 - b. This gift is limited to a select few – the elect. It is open to all, but only through Christ. None other upon the earth can pray except through Christ.
 - c. When I say this, of course lost people pray and God hears their utterance. But God is under no obligation to bless their prayer. God has promised to hear our prayers.
NAS **Proverbs 15:29** – “The LORD is far from the wicked, But He hears the prayer of the righteous.”
Proverbs 15:8 – “the prayer of the upright *is* his delight.”
2. This portion of David's psalm speaks of God's saving grace – of His mercy towards sinners
3. It speaks of the universal nature of the Gospel – men from all nations
“To You all men come.”
4. When God's people cry out to Him in faith He turns His ear towards them

B. The grace of atonement – **Verse 3**

1. David speaks of the power of sin – “Iniquities prevail against me”
 - a. The word for “prevail” refers to something strong or mighty
Our sins are mighty against us
 - b. Sin had a grip upon us. We were enslaved by sin. Sin holds tightly to us until it sends us to hell
 - c. No human being has the power to resist the power of sin by his own power of the will.
Romans 7:24 – “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?”
2. But God is a forgiving God
“*as for* our transgressions, thou shalt purge them away.”
 - a. The word for “purge” here is כִּפָּר kaphar which refers to covering or atonement
 - b. God has provided atonement – the means of purging our sin through the blood of Christ.
 - c. Notice atonement is presented as something God does – not man or even the high priest.
 In wonder lost, with trembling joy,
 We hail the pardon of our God,
 Pardon for crimes of deepest dye,
 A pardon traced in Jesus' blood.
 Who is a pardoning God like Thee or who has grace so rich and free or
 who has grace so rich and free.

C. The grace of election - **Verse 4**

Psalm 65:4 – “Blessed is the man whom thou chooseth, and causeth to approach unto thee”

1. Notice, the election here is not of the nation but of the individual
 “Blessed is the man” Literally translated, “blessed is the one”
 - a. Some argue that the references in the Bible to election and predestination refer to nations, not individuals. This is their explanation of **Romans 9**. This clearly points to God electing individuals.
 - b. This is the whole thrust of God’s electing grace. God chooses us and causes us to come.
John 15:16 Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and *that* your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.
 - The word “chosen” in John 15 is the same word the Septuagint uses in Psalm 65:4
 - c. Spurgeon – “since we cannot and will not come to God of ourselves, he works graciously in us, and attracts us powerfully; he subdues our unwillingness, and removes our inability by the almighty workings of his transforming grace.”
2. God’s electing grace is the greatest blessing any person could have
 It is absolutely unmerited, undeserved
 - a. Why would God choose me?
 - b. Why would God set His love upon me or send Christ to die for me
 - c. This is sovereign grace – God chooses us, God causes us to approach
3. Notice the rich blessings of God’s grace
Psalm 65:4 – “he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house”
 - a. That we might dwell in the presence of God
 - b. That we might be filled with all of God’s goodness
 - c. Indeed, there is nothing wanting for the child of God
4. As we consider the grace of God we are humbled and it drives us before Him in praise and worship.

II. The praise of God’s glory in His greatness – **Verses 5-8**

A. God’s greatness in delivering His people – **Verse 5**

1. What fearful things God performs upon the enemies of His people
Psalm 65:5 – “By terrible things in righteousness wilt thou answer us, O God of our salvation”
2. God is able to deliver – His is infinite in power
3. David is implying here that God’s people pray and He comes to them in a mighty show of His power

B. God’s greatness in governing creation – **Verses 6**

1. God demonstrates His infinite power in ruling over creation. He raises the mountains and calms the seas.

2. The mountains seem firm and immovable, yet God set them in their place. The seas at times seem fierce which anyone who has survived a hurricane on the ocean can testify. Yet the seas move at the hand of God.
- C. God's greatness in ruling the nations – **Verse 7-8**
1. After describing God's infinite control in calming the seas David adds: **Psalm 65:7** – “and the tumult of the people.”
 2. Spurgeon: “Nations are as difficult to rule as the sea itself, they are as fitful, treacherous, restless, and furious; they will not brook the bridle nor be restrained by laws.”
 3. God is mighty in ruling over the tumultuous nations. Nations would destroy each other save God's restraining grace. This has particular significance in the nuclear age. The whole earth owes its existence and preservation to the mighty power of God.
 4. As we consider the greatness of God we are humbled and bow before Him in worship.
- III. The praise of God's glory in His goodness – **Verses 9-13**
This section is the longest – it is as if the rest is leading up to this
- A. God's goodness in caring for the earth –
1. We often take for granted the extent of God's goodness
 2. David reminds us that every drop of rain is from the hand of God – God visits the earth with His abiding life-giving presence
Verses 9-10a
 - a. It is all an act of God's grace and goodness. Jesus reminds us: **Matthew 5:45** – “. . .for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.”
 - b. David says of God's life giving rains that they “greatly” enrich the earth. The river of God never runs dry.
 3. God's goodness in bringing forth the harvest – **Verses 10b-13**
Psalm 65:10-11 – “thou blessest the springing thereof. Thou crownest the year with thy goodness; and thy paths drop fatness.”
Every morsel of food we place in our mouth is by God's goodness
 4. For thousands of years since David penned these words, God is continuing to bless the earth with His goodness. The sun continues to rise and set. The seasons continue to come and go. The rains continue to water the earth which continues to bring forth abundantly.
 5. One moment left void of His watchful care and life would cease to exist
^{NAS} **Colossians 1:16-17** – “For by Him all things were created, *both* in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities-- all things have been created through Him and for Him. ¹⁷ He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.”

- B. Goodness is of the essence of the divine being – it is one of His attributes.
1. Everything God does is good
Six times in Genesis 1 we read that God’s creative work was good.
 2. Moses learned this when he asked God to see His glory
 - a. Moses asked God, **Exodus 33:18** – “I beseech thee, shew me thy glory.”
 - b. God’s glory is the fulness of His splendor, His divine essence, His attributes – to see God’s glory is to see the fullness of God – the full expression of God’s divine essence.
 - c. No man could stand such a revelation from God
Exodus 33:20 – “Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live.”
 - d. God did proclaim Himself to Moses
Exodus 33:19 – “And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy.”
Exodus 34:6 – “And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth,”
 - e. God’s goodness is another revelation of Himself
 2. David is reminding us of God’s goodness in creation
 - a. Look at how marvelous creation is with all of the living things, mountains, hills, and valleys, the stars above—all wondrous to behold. At the end of each day God looked upon His work and declared it to be good— “and God saw that *it was good.*” an expression of His goodness.
 - b. Even in our fallen world God’s creation is a manifestation of God’s goodness. Look at the rich resources—materials we use to make things.
 3. As we consider God’s goodness we are humbled and our hearts erupt in praise and worship. It is the goodness of God that broke our hearts and led us to repent and follow Him.

Conclusion:

1. David gives us a theology of God – His grace, His greatness, His goodness. There is so much more to know about God.
2. But David’s point is this: Theology must always lead to Doxology. The more we know about God the more our hearts are lifted up in praise.
3. The psalm ends with all the earth praising God for His goodness
Psalm 65:13 – “The pastures are clothed with flocks; the valleys also are covered over with corn; they shout for joy, they also sing.”
4. David writes in **Psalm 150**:
Psalm 150:6 – “Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD. Praise ye the LORD.”
5. God is worthy of all praise. May we give ourselves to a life of praise.