

PEOPLE WHO TRUST GOD AND WILL BE BLESSED BY GOD ASK GOD AND ARE CONCERNED ABOUT GOD ELEVATING AND GLORIFYING HIMSELF, NOT THEM.

God's people have a responsibility to present an accurate portrait of God to this world. We have the responsibility to praise God and glorify God while we spend time for a while on this earth. Our job on earth is to glorify God, not ourselves. This Psalm clearly teaches that God alone is to be glorified and we are to glorify Him. Spurgeon said if you meet some system of theology that magnifies man, flee from it as fast as you can.

We are not sure of the background of this Psalm, but apparently Israel was at some threatening moment.

Psalm 115 is a Psalm in which God's people express to God that He should glorify Himself by delivering Israel. It is also a Psalm that expresses the need for God's people to trust in Him in times of difficulty and it is a Psalm that demonstrates God's people need to testify of God.

This Psalm breaks down nicely into five main themes:

THEME #1 – The Psalm expresses a need for God to vindicate Himself. 115:1-3

Now Israel needed God's help because godless nations and godless powers were walking all over her. It is interesting how this Psalm begins. There are two "not to us" statements. This is the only Psalm that begins this way. What this shows us is that the writer is solely interested in glorifying God.

The writer wanted deliverance and blessing, but not so that they would be honored, but so that God would be honored. **The writer does not ask God to help Israel because Israel deserves it, but because God deserves it.**

In **verse 1**, the writer asks God to glorify Himself and His name. The name of God refers to the various names that God has given to Himself to reveal His Person and Character.

As the writer opens the Psalm, as one commentator said, "the spotlight should be upon God and not us." We must make certain that we never try to take God's glory to ourselves (i.e. our salvation). Glory belongs solely to God.

Now there are four stated reasons why God should vindicate Himself and glorify Himself by helping His people:

Reason #1 - Because God is a God of mercy. 115:1a

The word "lovingkindness" is a word that refers to the mercy of God. The idea is that God's character has an eager desire and longing to graciously and mercifully reach out to helpless hurting people (William Gesenius, *Hebrew Lexicon*, pp. 293-294).

The point of this is that if God would come to the aid of His people, when they don't even deserve it, this glorifies Himself because it displays His mercy and lovingkindness.

Reason #2 - Because God is a God of truth. **115:1b**

God is a God who is always faithful to Himself and His Word. God is a God who cannot lie (Titus 1:2). God has made some great promises to His people. He has promised them a great future. He has promised that He will be with them and He will not fail them, nor forsake them. By God helping His people, He glorifies Himself because He shows that He is a God of truth. He remains faithful to His people, even if they are not faithful to Him.

Reason #3 - Because it will silence the God-mocking nations. **115:2**

Apparently, pagan nations were mocking God for His inactivity specifically in regard to Israel. Israel was being dominated by foreign powers who were saying, "where now is their God?" When God's people are being dominated by things, outsiders can begin to question the existence of God in their lives. But when God intervenes in behalf of His people, it shuts their God-mocking mouths. Israel needs to remember this right now and so do we.

Reason #4 - Because it will show that God does whatever He sovereignly pleases. **115:3**

Psalm 103:19 says God's sovereignty rules over all. God reveals that He is absolutely sovereign and it is time that God's people believe this and worship Him because of this. We live in a limited world and if someone can do something he does it and if he cannot do something he doesn't do it. God does whatever He wants at any time He wants. That is the sovereignty of God.

By God coming to the aid of His people and eliminating their enemies and giving them blessings, it shows that God can do whatever He pleases to do. The fact is no matter what is happening, God's providential sovereignty is totally undisturbed.

THEME #2 – The Psalm expresses a contrast between God and the idols. **115:4-8**

In sharp contrast to the true God who does whatever He pleases, there are false idols who cannot protect people, prosper people or empower people. Idols may have certain attributes of a human, but they are powerless and lifeless.

Trait #1 - False idols of people are silver and gold. **115:4a**

Money has always been an idol to people. But what good is a god that cannot save you? Put your trust in money and see where it takes you. Put your trust in your stocks and bonds and see where you end up. Use your silver and gold to glorify God and see where that will take you.

Trait #2 - False idols are the work of man's hands. **115:4b**

What good is a god that you can make with your own hands?

Trait #3 - False idols have mouths but cannot speak. **115:5a**

What good is a god that cannot talk to you, counsel you or comfort you?

Trait #4 - False idols have eyes but cannot see. **115:5b**

What good is a god that cannot see you or see anything related to you?

Trait #5 - False idols have ears but cannot hear. **115:6a**

What good is a god who cannot hear your cries or prayers?

Trait #6 - False idols have noses but cannot smell. **115:6b**

What good is a god that cannot smell the sweet fragrance of godly worship?

Trait #7 - False idols have hands but cannot feel. **115:7a**

What good is a god who cannot use hands to save you or help you?

Trait #8 - False idols have feet but cannot walk. **115:7b**

What good is a god that cannot move?

Trait #9 - False idols cannot make a sound. **115:7c**

What good is a god that cannot make a sound?

Think for a moment of the “gods” and “goddesses” of Greek mythology. They captivate people and schools actually have courses to study about them. Those “gods” and “goddesses” have never lived or said or done anything. They have never said a word, they have never revealed anything. They have never promised anything. They have never even made a sound.

People who devote themselves to silver and gold or money are just as foolish. Think of how ridiculous it is to sit in front of a Buddha.

One minister said one time he looked into a Hindu temple in India and monkeys were in the temple eating the offerings.

Verse 8 is interesting and informative; people tend to become like the god they worship.

In other words, people who worship a false god will become just as blind, deaf, dead and lifeless as the idol they worship.

Someone wisely said the real purpose of life is not to try to find yourself or your freedom, but to try to find your master. You will be mastered by what you continually devote yourself to. There is only one Being worthy of our devotion and it is the true God of the Bible.

THEME #3 – The Psalm expresses a need for God’s people to trust God. **115:9-11**

In contrast to the false trust in false idols in **verse 8** comes a challenge to trust the true God.

It is interesting that the address is first to Israel—the covenant nation (**v. 9**); then to the priests—the controllers of worship (**v. 10**); then to all who fear the LORD (**v. 11**).

All of these groups of people are admonished to trust in the LORD. In contrast to trusting in false idols, God wants His people trusting in Him. God’s people need to trust in Him for two reasons:

Reason #1 - God is their help.

Reason #2 - God is their shield.

In other words, the true God of the Bible is the only God who can help and defend His people. People need to know this.

Now this world will try to get you to trust in money and other man-made diversions. God says you trust in Me. I am the only One who can help and protect you.

THEME #4 – The Psalm expresses the results of those who trust God. **115:12-15**

God is the source of all blessing. He is the source of every good gift.

If God’s people will trust in Him, there will be two amazing results:

Result #1 - God will be mindful of His people and bless them. **115:12-13**

God will actually think about ways to bless His people. He will bless all classes of His people.

(Class #1) - He will bless Israel. **115:12a**

(Class #2) - He will bless the priests. **115:12b**

(Class #3) - He will bless all who fear Him. **115:13a**

(Class #4) - He will bless the small and the great. **115:13b**

Worldly success will not influence Him; He will bless all who trust Him. You do not need to be a spiritual superstar, but you need to trust God.

Result #2 - God will give His people increase. **115:14-15**

Think about this; the maker of the heaven and the earth is able to abundantly bless and prosper His people.

THEME #5 – The Psalm expresses the need for God’s people to praise the LORD now.
115:16-18

Now God controls the heavens. They are His heavens. However, He has permitted sinful, finite man to live on this earth and they are devoted to worshipping false deities. This is why it is so important for God’s people to worship the true God and to bless Him while they are here on earth.

When they die they cannot do this anymore. When we die, we will not be able to do one more thing for God. It is imperative that we as God’s people testify of the truth of God.

It is our responsibility to remind the people that we know a living God. It is our responsibility to let them know that we have a relationship with a sovereign God.