

Psalm 63

Prayer: Renewal in the Presence of God

Rhythms of Renewal

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Overview

God brings new life to the dryness and weariness of our lives. Our souls can become parched, dry, and dusty, yet He makes a paradise out of a wasteland. The channels God uses to bring life are referred to as means of grace (also known as spiritual disciplines). These are the rhythms through which renewal comes. Last week we studied the Word and this week the means of grace is prayer.

The good life as described in Psalm 63 is the God-centered life.

1. An Appetite for God

To become a Christian is to receive a new appetite. All other desires are subordinated under the strongest, deepest desire. The soul's orientation toward the Lord becomes the ultimate joy in life. This is reflected throughout the book of Psalms as not something unique to David or a few especially spiritually-minded believers. Christianity is not primarily about mere mental assent, it is a vision of God that kindles a love for Him. As fallen creatures, our devotion will ebb and flow. The mark of true spirituality is not always being satisfied in Him, but always wanting to be knowing that a new desire has been planted within us.

2. Meditation on God

A longing for God motivates one to seek to know Him. Meditation is a mind set on knowing about God. You have to know a person in order to love him. If you love the person you will want to know him.

3. Joy in God

David writes of his lips praising, hands lifted, voice singing, and his soul clinging to God. Happy people sing and such are the people of God.

4. Allegiance to God

Humanity is divided by how they respond to God's anointed King. This was true in a limited geographical sense in David's time but is universally true now. The call to discipleship is a call to allegiance to King Jesus.

Quotation

“In spiritual communion with God David had long found his chief enjoyment... It is better not to exist than to exist without God’s favor. It is better to die enjoying his loving kindness than to live without it.”

Bible Commentator

As I read the words, there came into my soul, and was as it were diffused through it, a sense of the glory of the divine being; a new sense, quite different from anything I ever experienced before. Never any words of Scripture seemed to me as these words did. I thought with myself, how excellent a Being that was; and how happy I should be, if I might enjoy that God, and be wrapt up to God in heaven, and be as it were swallowed up in him. I kept saying, and as it were singing over these words of Scripture to myself; and went to prayer, to pray to God that I might enjoy him; and prayed in a manner quite different from what used to do; with a new sort of affection. From about that time, I began to have a new kind of apprehensions and ideas of Christ, and the work of redemption, and the glorious way of salvation by him. I had an inward, sweet sense of these things, that at times came into my heart.”

Jonathan Edwards

Understanding & Application

1. Describe the experience of your spiritual life becoming dry, weary, or parched? How or when does this occur?
2. What does it mean that your soul has appetites? Where do these come from? Explain what it was like for the Lord to give you a new appetite for Him.
3. The good life is to know God so that all other desires are subordinated under the greatest, strongest desire to be satisfied in Him. What increases this appetite? What in your life diminishes it?
4. In practical terms, what’s the difference between knowing God and knowing about Him? Why do people settle to simply know about Him rather than seek to know Him in real and personal ways?
5. In what ways is the joy that comes from knowing God missing in your life? What could be done about this?
6. We were exhorted to pray for a vision of God that included seeing Him as both majestic and near. Which one is a bigger challenge for you, to see Him as glorious and powerful or close and personally caring?