

Psalm 95 – Joy of Salvation – Fellowship Group Notes – 8/9 July

Often called the 'Venite' meaning 'O come' this is a Psalm of two complimentary halves. One half; a call to joyful worship and reminder that we have a supreme, sovereign, creator God who is *our* God, and we the sheep of His pasture who can enjoy true joy found in resting in Him. The second half reminds us that it would be futile to harden our hearts against this gracious God who has worked to save us in the past; why purposely walk away from this rest in Him that He offers?

V1-5 – the foundation rock of our Joy

- Here is a jubilant joyful invitation to worship our Lord.
- In day to day life how can 'joyful worship' sometimes be a contrived thing? How and why might secular 'worship' be contrived?
- Why is this worship so defiantly not contrived? What reasons are we given to be joyful? '*For the Lord...*' What does each of these reasons mean for our joy?
 - Rock of Salvation – Deuteronomy 32:4 (and whole chapter)
 - God's supremacy
 - Look at v3-5. Look for the 'word picture' painted through the 'vertical' and 'horizontal' of God's rule and power (depths and heights, seas and lands). How is this a beautiful picture of why God is supreme?
 - What might this mean for our joy in Him?
 - Can you think of other 'word pictures' that the bible uses that we can rejoice in? (Psalm 103:12, Eph 3:18)
- **God the foundation rock of Joy.** How firm is a rock? How firm and secure then is our joy in Him?

V6-7 – attitude to worship

- *"This is the deep and basic note of worship, without which the 'joyful noise' of the opening will be shrill and self indulgent."* Derek Kidner.
- Why do you think that v6-7 describe this basic note? Why is it so important?
 - This is public and personal acknowledgement of who God is and who we are before Him.
- But does this then mean worship loses its joy?
 - This is no tribute of strangers to a far off king. This is intimate communing of the sheep with their shepherd, the loved son and daughter with their infinitely loving Father.
- How might we grasp hold of this attitude to worship more and more?

V8-11 – the warning

- **First for context:** It's possible that this Psalm may have been used during the 'feast of Tabernacles' (sometimes called Feast of Booths). Look at Lev 23:33-44 (especially v42-43) for more on the feast. The feast was Gods reminder of how He had rescued Israel from Egypt.
- For meaning behind 'Meribah and Massah' look at Exodus 17:1-7.
- The feast of Tabernacles was Israel in holiday mood.
- Why might this Psalm then have been used at such an occasion? What may misplaced joy lead to?
- And why would it be so futile, so pointless to harden our hearts before this God as Israel did in Exodus 17:1-7?
- What would we be missing out on? (v11)

Summary

- Consider how Psalm 16:11 summarises the idea of joy in Psalm 95. What do we see there?