

A FAITH PSALM

Monday, May 7

Reading: Psalm 66

Psalm 66:16 Come and hear, all you who fear God; let me tell you what he has done for me.

Many people are confused about their faith. Some say, “I have trusted Jesus as my Savior. Therefore I don’t need the church. I have a personal faith!” On the other end are people who say, “I go to church. I’ve been baptized. I give money to support the church. That’s all I need. I have a corporate faith!” Both of these statements are extremes, for faith has both personal and corporate aspects. Psalm 66 shows us how this was true for ancient Israel and how it can help us understand our faith in Christ today.

Psalm 66 begins with three corporate truths about faith.

WE SHARE IN A FUTURE GLORY (66:1-4). The focus on “all the earth” in these verses tells us this looks forward to that future day when God reigns and sets everything right. It is then that all people will bow before Him and praise His name. In faith, we look forward to this glorious day when we shall rule and reign with Christ.

WE SHARE IN A PAST REDEMPTION (66:5-7). The psalm continues by remembering how God freed Israel from Egypt with awesome deeds and parting the Red Sea. The events of the Exodus are repeated often in the Old Testament. This was Israel’s day of redemption, the day God called them to be His people. We too look back to the day of our redemption - the day Christ died for our sins and rose again.

WE SHARE IN A PRESENT SANCTIFICATION (66:8-12). Israel’s history is one of “testing.” God wanted them to be a holy people. Though they often failed, God kept working in the lives of His people to bring them to “a place of abundance.” Sanctification is the process by which God shapes us into the image of Christ. This process can be painful as we often grow in faith the most through trials and suffering.

The pronouns now turn from plural to singular in the last half of Psalm 66 to remind us that faith is also personal. Both our individual relationship with God and being part of a community of faith are important. The psalmist calls for us to do two things in our personal walk of faith.

I WILL WORSHIP THE LORD (66:13-15). A staple of Old Testament worship was offering sacrifices at the Temple to praise God and atone for sin. Believers today no longer sacrifice animals in worship, but we are called to be “a living sacrifice” (Rom. 12:1). We are to offer sacrifices of love (Eph. 5:2), generosity (Philp. 4:18), and thanksgiving (Heb. 13:15).

I WILL WITNESS FOR THE LORD (66:16-20). Like ancient Israel, we are called to tell others “what He has done for me.” How He hears our prayers, forgives our sins, and spreads His love abroad in our hearts.

Faith is both personal and corporate. Each of us must make a personal decision to follow Christ in faith. Then we must allow God to show us where we fit into the body of Christ and work together to reach the world with the gospel.

THRU THE BIBLE Reading: 2 Samuel 10-12; Acts 2