

Psalm 122

Psalm 122 is an exuberant chapter of praise and thanksgiving. The very first verse sets the tone for the chapter as it says “I was glad when...” This gladness runs throughout the Psalm but the reason for the Psalmist joy, and dare I say happiness, is most instructive and helpful. As we walk through this Psalm together, let us pay attention to the reason for the joy and how we can apply that same guiding motivation to our Christian walk today.

1. The Fountain of Joy

- a. The opening statement of Psalm 122 is immediately further illuminated by the phrase that follows
- b. What was it that caused the Psalmist’s joy? The answer is that he was glad to go to Jerusalem, specifically to the “house of the Lord”
- c. The house of the Lord is understood here, quite apparently, to be the Temple of the living God
- d. The Psalmist was thrilled by the prospect of going to the temple... why?
 - i. There are at least three reasons, one is grounded in its location and two are grounded in the Temple’s function
 - ii. First, the Temple is located in Jerusalem which also happens to be the center of the rule and reign of God in the person of His ordained King
 1. We see this most obviously in verse 5 as the Bible tells us that it was “there” (in Jerusalem) that the “thrones of the house of David” were located
 2. Jerusalem was supposed to be the place where God’s ordained monarch ruled as His vice regent over His people
 3. Stated differently, it is joyous to journey to the place where the Lord is honored as Supreme
 - iii. Second, the Temple is the place of worship
 1. Why was it joyous to go to the Temple? Because the Temple was the location where God was to be exclusively glorified
 - a. While it is true that God deserves glory in other places, it is equally true that the Temple was designed to be the ultimate place of worship
 - b. It was where the Scriptures were read, where people came to sacrifice and honor the Lord and the place where the Lord’s presence most palpably dwelt
 2. To go to this Temple elicited gladness and joy in the hearts of those who loved God
 - iv. Third, the Temple was the place where God’s people gathered
 1. Part of the joy of going to the Temple was rooted in the fact that the Temple was supposed to be full of individuals who loved God
 2. This explains Jesus’ real angst that led to His cleansing the Temple on two occasions! He realized that the design of the Temple, for the gathering of the saints (Jew and Gentile) for worship of God was

being thwarted by greedy, illegitimate people who were restricting the function of the Temple for everyone

2. The Application for today

- a. Some might read this chapter and wonder... how does this apply to me?
- b. The answer is that the Temple itself no longer has significance for us but that is not because the concept and truths that made the Temple important have passed
- c. Instead, we should see that in Christ, each of the reasons for joy have simply been amplified in the Christian's life. Jesus has risen and His eternal rule stretches to the heavens and He has made it possible that the Temple is now realized within the souls of each of His children:
- d. First, we gather now as a united church, each of us being the Temple of the living God as the Holy Spirit indwells us and, when we come together, we unite underneath the banner and authority of King Jesus
 - i. Christ is the ultimate David
 - ii. He has come and He has ascended to His throne which is above all creation
 - iii. Furthermore, He has redeemed a people from every tribe, tongue and nation and commanded them to physically gather for His glory on the Lord's Day
 - iv. This means that the church, the gathered saints, are the ultimate and final Jerusalem in this sense
 - v. When we come together, we should do so in unity, believing and confessing that Jesus is Lord and attempting to live faithfully underneath His righteous rule
 - vi. Furthermore, we are convinced that we gather with our King in our midst!
 - vii. This leads us to conclude that coming to our assembly should bring us great joy
- e. Second, we gather together to worship the risen Savior
 - i. The explicit purpose of our worship is to sing and pray to God and hear from Him as His Word is preached and His ordinances observed
 - ii. When the church sees this as a priority, the result is unmitigated joy as we see Christ exalted and experience the joy and encouragement that flows from corporate praise
- f. Finally, the church is now the place where we gather with like-minded individuals
 - i. Our coming together on a Sunday is intended not just for God's glory but also for our encouragement
 - ii. We are encouraged when we are around folks who spur us on to love and good works and we are joyous when we consider the fact that we are heading to see the saints
 - iii. My dear friends, I long for Sundays. I enjoy you and I love the God we get to collectively worship and serve. I pray that our hearts sing with gladness in the way that the Psalmist's did thousands of years ago as our King is on the throne and He has made His temple within us!