

A Call to Worship Part 1

by Chuck Smith

Pastor Chuck Smith's sermon emphasizes the importance of worship through singing and thanksgiving, encouraging believers to respond to God's greatness and remain sensitive to His voice.

Duration: 25:05

Scripture: Exodus 15:2, Psalm 34:1, Psalm 95:1-7, Psalm 100:1-4, Psalm 118:1, Isaiah 12:5, John 4:24, Ephesians 5:19, Colossians 3:16, Hebrews 10:25

Topics: "Worship", "Sensitivity to God's Voice"

Description

In 'A Call to Worship Part 1', Pastor Chuck Smith emphasizes the significance of worship through singing, drawing from Psalm 95, which invites believers to joyfully come before the Lord. He highlights that worship is a response to God's greatness rather than a means to receive blessings, encouraging congregants to express their gratitude and praise. Smith illustrates the importance of being sensitive to God's voice and warns against hardening our hearts, using the Israelites' experiences as a cautionary tale. He reminds us that God is present in both our valleys and mountaintops, and calls for a heartfelt, spontaneous worship that reflects our relationship with Him.

Transcript

Oh let the Son of God enfold you, with His Spirit and His love. Let Him fill your heart and satisfy your soul. Oh let Him have the things that mold you, and His Spirit like a dove will descend upon your life and make you whole.

A call to worship, as we pick up in the 95th Psalm, beginning with verse 1. And now, with today's message, here is Pastor Chuck Smith. This 95th Psalm is known as an invitational psalm, because it is inviting us to come and to sing unto the Lord, to make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation. Singing unto the Lord has always been a very important part of the worship of Judaism and of the worship of the church.

You think of how many songs that have been inspired by the Lord. Songs that lead people to worship Him. Songs that express His glory, His wonders.

Songs that express praise and thanksgiving unto Him. We have hymnals filled with songs. People inspired to write songs that will give glory and honor unto Him.

The book of Psalms itself was the Hebrew songbook. These were the lyrics for their songs. Much as in the back of our book we have a lot of choruses where we just have the lyrics and we know the melodies.

So the Psalms was the lyrics, they knew the melodies. And they sang these songs. It is interesting, of course, that Jesus sang the hymns out of the Psalms.

I would have loved to have heard that. Wouldn't you love to have a recording of Jesus and the disciples singing a hymn? It was probably the 118th Psalm. That's sort of the traditional hymn that closes off the feast of the Passover.

And it would have been glorious to have heard that. But let us sing, a very important part of worship. Make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.

Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving. In Psalm 100, which is a part of 95 through 100, they sort of all tie together. Make a joyful noise unto the Lord all ye lands.

Serve the Lord with gladness. Come before His presence with singing. And be thankful unto Him, verse 4, enter into His gates with thanksgiving.

So let us come before His presence with thanksgiving. As they would be entering into the temple precincts for worship, they would enter with singing. One of the most exciting things, I think, over in Israel, even at the present time, is on Friday evenings, when they get ready to celebrate Passover, the Western Wall becomes the center of activity and celebration.

And hundreds upon hundreds of Jews gather there at the Western Wall to welcome the Sabbath, to offer their praise and their worship unto God. There is what they call a yeshiva, which is a school, really, for young rabbis, that is in the old quarter of Jerusalem there. And these young men come down the steps and across the pavement there, arm in arm, sort of dancing and singing, singing psalms of thanksgiving as they come to worship the Lord there at the Western Wall.

Sort of the traditional kind of thing, and it's always exciting. An exciting moment to watch them as they come down, sort of a little dance step, their arms around each other, about four abreast, and coming to the Western Wall to worship with songs of thanksgiving. And then as they get down there, they form a circle, and they begin to sing and dance and so forth before the Lord.

And it's just an inspiring sight. I'm always inspired by that. And I somehow wish that somehow we could incorporate that here at Calvary Chapel, where we could just sort of come in singing.

We wouldn't wait for us to get up here and say, Well, now let's have a word of prayer and begin. But it would be something in our hearts that would be spontaneous of thanksgiving and worship unto God. And so they were encouraged in that.

Come before His presence with thanksgiving. Make a joyful noise unto Him with the psalms. And so that is the singing right out of these psalms.

Now, it is interesting to me that we are encouraged to this kind of worship and praise and singing unto the Lord, not that the Lord would bless us. So many times we hear that today. Let's open our hearts to Him so God can come down and work in our lives and bless His people.

But that wasn't the motivation. It wasn't to motivate God to respond to us, but this is encouraged as a response to God. It isn't so the Lord, but it is for the Lord is a great God.

In other words, we don't worship Him in order to receive some kind of blessing or benefit, but we worship Him for what He is, for what He has done. For the Lord is a great God and a great King above all gods. Now, the Bible does recognize that there are many gods, but not true gods, but yet idols that people worship, passions that govern people's lives, philosophies and ideals by which people live, which in essence become their gods.

And so the psalmist is declaring that He is the King above all gods, no matter what it is that you may have enthroned in your life, what it is that you are worshipping, what is the first primary thrust of your heart. Our God, Jehovah, is a King above all gods. In His hand are the deep places of the earth, the depths and also the heights, for the mountains, the strength of the hills are His also.

In our lives we have experiences where we go through the valleys. He's the God of the valley. We have glorious mountain tops experience.

He's the God of the mountains. In the Old Testament, we remember when the children of Israel were fighting against an enemy, they met them in the hills and the children of Israel triumphed. And so the strategist of the enemy troops got together and they said, let's draw them down into the valley and fight them in the valley, because they no doubt worship the God of the hills.

So they were attributing their victory to the fact that He was the God of the hills. So the Lord said, go down and meet them in the valley. I'll utterly wipe them out, because they said I'm the God of the hills and not the God of the valleys.

I'll show them I'm the God of everything, you know. And so they met them next time in the valley and God overcame them in the valley. And so it is in our lives.

He is the God of the valleys. He's there. Many times we lose that consciousness of Him as we're going through a deep valley, as we're going through times of suffering.

We sort of lose the consciousness of Him, but He is the God of the valleys as well as the hills. The strength of the hills is His also. But the sea is His, for He made it and His hands formed the dry land.

I love to fly over Monument Valley. I love to look at those buttes out there just rising up out of the desert floor and you wonder just how in the world they got there. And if everything else washed away, why is it that they remain, you know.

And it's just a beautiful sight. Well, the geologists have all kinds of ideas how the earth was formed. If you go over to the area of Rosh Hanikra, which is right on the northern border of Israel with Lebanon on the seacoast, there is the most interesting formation there.

There is a huge sedimentary mountain there. But in this sedimentary mountain, there are all of these agates just filled with agates. Now just how did all of these agates get dispersed among this strata of sediment that is formed into that mountain? I find it absolutely fascinating.

As I study a lot of the geology, I find it absolutely fascinating as you try to figure out, you know, was this laid down over years by sediment process or was this carved out by a huge flood? Did this happen at a

time of a polar axis shift when the great oceans of the upper western area, Utah and all that area, were they flushed on down with perhaps a tilt of the earth or a rising of that area? And was the Grand Canyon formed by a mighty rush of water over a short period of time? Or was it just a gradual, you know, how did God do it? He formed it with His hands. It's absolutely glorious, the mysteries. The book Earths in Upheaval by Immanuel Wilikoski point out a lot of mysteries of the geological stratas and things that we still don't have any understanding.

How did God do that, you know? And He just kept a lot of mysteries to us. We guess, you know, but that's all. Oh come, let us worship and bow down.

Let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker. And so in their forms of worship, there was that bowing before the Lord. Bowing in a sign of submission as a servant bows to the Lord.

And I think that it's good to bow before the Lord. It sort of reminds us of relationship. Let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker.

And again, not so that He will move in our hearts, so that He will hearken to us. But it is in response to Him. Not trying to get Him to respond to us.

For He is our God. And we are the people of His pasture. And we are the sheep of His hand.

We're His people. We're His sheep. Now the psalmist exhorts them to hear the word of the Lord.

Today, if you will, hear His voice. How important that we learn to be sensitive to the voice of the Lord. God has spoken to us, every one of us.

The Bible is God's word to you. And it is amazing how that as you read the Bible, God so often will personalize it. As the scripture will just seem to come right off the pages and jump right into your heart.

And you say, oh, that's for me. That's wonderful. And it's just a wonderful thing how the word of God can just speak to our hearts.

It's also wonderful how God will speak to us many times through a sermon. A lot of times on Sunday morning someone will come up and say, I really appreciated that sermon this morning. And it's marvelous that all the other people were there to listen to it.

But I know that you were just speaking directly to me. That one was for me. And how many times God speaks to our hearts through the exposition of the word.

And how many times God speaks to our hearts directly. Today, if you will, hear His voice. The psalmist encourages them, don't harden your hearts.

There's always that danger of hardening our hearts to God and to the things of God. But the encouragement in the exhortation is don't harden your heart. As did the children of Israel in the wilderness provoked God.

They tempted Him, they proved Him, and they saw His work. The idea of tempting God is an interesting thought. And when Satan was tempting Jesus, one of the temptations took place when Satan took Him to the pinnacle of the temple.

And there he quoted to Him a passage of Scripture out of the Psalms. Encouraging Jesus to jump from the pinnacle of the temple, some 300, 250, 300 feet to the rocks below. Why don't you jump? For it is written, He will give His angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways, to bear thee up, lest at any time you dash your foot against a stone.

You've got the promise of God's word. Why don't you just jump? See if God will do it. See if you have enough faith.

And Jesus said, it is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. In other words, you are not to deliberately put yourself in jeopardy to prove some promise of the Scripture. You're not to go out and run all of your charge cards up to the max just to see if I will supply all of your needs is a true Scripture.

The people back in the hills of Kentucky who in the midst of their religious fervor get out the rattlesnakes and begin to pass rattlesnakes around because of a Scripture in Mark that says, If they take up any deadly thing, it shall not harm them. That would be classified as tempting God. I believe that that Scripture has its application probably in the mission field because that was the context in which Jesus gave it.

He said, Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature and he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. And in that context, he said, And these signs shall follow them that believe. And he talked about drinking deadly things and not being harmed and taking up serpents.

And so many times as missionaries are carrying the gospel into all the world, they're exposed to those dangers, to snakes, to poisonous snakes, to waters that are polluted. And I believe that you can take that promise of God and if you're bitten by a snake like Paul, you remember on the island there, a deadly viper came out of the fire and fasted itself on Paul and they all began to look at him and said, Man, this guy must be a real rank criminal because though he escaped from the storm and the sea, yet the gods aren't going to let him live. And they just waited for Paul to go into convulsions and roll over and die.

He just shook the thing back into the fire, went on gathering wood and tossing it in. And pretty soon they began to look in another way. They said, This guy must be a god, you know.

But there was that promise, you know, that the serpents wouldn't harm them. He was engaged in the carrying of the gospel. But just to deliberately go out and gather rattlesnakes and decide to test your faith and get in a religious frenzy and pass them around is tempting God.

To just pass around a vial of poison and let everyone drink to find out who has faith is tempting God. So, we're not to deliberately put ourselves in jeopardy to prove some scripture, to prove some promise, as Jesus pointed out to Satan. But people have tempted God.

We tempt God with our unbelief. The children of Israel, God had been providing for them manna in the wilderness. But they got tired of it.

They said, We hate this bland stuff. We're sick of it. Can God provide meat or flesh in the wilderness? So, the Lord told Moses to tell the people to get up the next morning and get some sticks.

And the quail came flying in at about three feet high. And the guys went out and started batting them. Kids began to gather them, put them into piles.

But even then, even then, their lust overcame them. They were gathering more than what they could possibly eat. And they started to just eat the quail, so hungry for flesh.

And while the meat was still in their mouth, God sent a plague. He said He gave them their desires of their heart but leanness of soul. So, the example here that He's using, don't harden your heart.

Listen to God. Don't harden your heart to the word of God, which they had done. God had given their law, but they hardened their hearts to God's word.

And as a result, they did not enter into God's rest, but they perished in the wilderness. We'll return with more of our verse-by-verse venture through the Bible in our next lesson as Pastor Chuck Smith continues to guide us through the study of the Psalms. And we do hope you'll make plans to join us.

But right now, I'd like to remind you that if you missed any part of today's message, or perhaps you'd like to order a copy for that special friend or loved one, you can do so by simply contacting one of our customer service representatives, and they'd be more than happy to assist you with the ordering details. Simply call 1-800-272-WORD and phone orders can be taken Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Pacific Time. Once again, our toll-free number is 1-800-272-9673.

And for your added convenience, you can order online anytime when you go to the thewordfortoday.org. And while you're there, be sure to browse through the additional resources that include Bible studies, commentaries, CDs, DVDs, and so much more. Once again, that's the Word for Today online at thewordfortoday.org. And for those of you who still prefer to write, you can use our mailing address, which is The Word for Today, P.O. Box 8000, Costa Mesa, California, 92628. And be sure to include the call letters of this station with your correspondence.

And now, on behalf of the Word for Today, we'd like to thank all of you who share in supporting this ministry with your prayers and financial support. And be sure to join us again next time as Pastor Chuck Smith continues his verse-by-verse venture through the Psalms. That's right here on the next edition of The Word for Today.

Now, once again, here's Pastor Chuck Smith with today's closing comments. May the Lord be with you. Give you a good week.

May His love just fill your heart until you just overflow. In fact, may your heart sort of be like just pressured with God's love so great that you feel you're gonna pop. May you just experience the consciousness of God's presence as He leads and guides you in His path.

May it be just a week of spiritual growth drawing closer to God. In Jesus' name. Trick or Treat! Well, it's that time of year again.

It may seem so innocent, but the symbols of Halloween, like carving pumpkins and trick-or-treaters, all have roots in Satanism. We would never knowingly get involved with anything related to Satan, but many Christians don't understand what's really behind Halloween. For this reason, Pastor Chuck and Don Stewart have released an informative DVD entitled Halloween, Innocent Fun or Spiritual Deception.

Join Pastor Chuck and Don as they answer America's most asked questions about Halloween, such as the origins of Halloween, what the Bible says about witchcraft, and the effects of Halloween upon our society. To order this Halloween DVD hosted by Pastor Chuck and Don Stewart, call The Word For Today

at 800-272-WORD or visit us online to watch a preview at thewordfortoday.org. This program has been sponsored by The Word for Today in Costa Mesa, California.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/25/SID25616.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/chuck-smith/a-call-to-worship-part-1/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net