

I.N.I.

22nd Sunday after Pentecost
November 5, 2017
I Chron. 29:10-13

In Christ Jesus, who has all power, glory, majesty and honor and whose name we praise from one generation to the next, Dear Fellow Redeemed,

The Psalmist David reminds us in Psalm 27 that our desire as Christians is to **DWELL IN THE HOUSE OF THE LORD ALL THE DAYS OF OUR LIVES; TO BEHOLD THE BEAUTY OF THE LORD; TO INQUIRE IN HIS TEMPLE AND TO OFFER UP SACRIFICES OF JOY AND PRAISE TO OUR LORD.**

This thought of thanksgiving and praise is found also in our text this morning as we hear King David praise the Lord God for all of the blessings He has showered upon His people. Our sermon text this morning is therefore very fitting as we begin the month of November and look forward to the Thanksgiving holiday in a few weeks, but also fitting because the Christian's life should be one of continual praise and thanksgiving to God for all of His blessings and gifts to us. So we want to make the whole month of November a month of thanksgiving and praise.

We have entitled our theme after the familiar hymn we just finished singing:

NOW THANK WE ALL OUR GOD

We need to set the background to better understand this hymn of thanksgiving by King David. I Chronicles 29 details David's public turning over of the kingdom to his son Solomon. Solomon's chief mission as king would be to build the LORD's house in Jerusalem. David had dearly wanted to do that himself, but God revealed to him that He had not chosen him for that honor. Instead, God had chosen to build David a house, a spiritual house that would include the coming of the Savior and His rule in the hearts of His people forever and ever.

David accepted this will of His God and spent the rest of his life making sure everything was ready for his son to do the work. Chapter 29 opens up with David's final fund drive for the future temple. In an exhortation to the leaders of Israel assembled in Jerusalem, David began by publicly pledging his own personal fortune for building God's house: estimated value of David's gifts: 40 million dollars. He then concluded with this plea: **WHO THEN IS WILLING TO CONSECRATE HIMSELF THIS DAY TO THE LORD?** In other words: "who will follow me in this voluntary offering, who will make a free-will sacrifice to Jehovah?" The response of the leader's of Israel was so overwhelming that it led David to pour his heart out in joyful thanksgiving to the Lord before all the people. The words of our sermon text are the first words of David's hymn of praise and thanks---**BLESSED ARE YOU, LORD GOD OF ISRAEL, OUR FATHER, FOREVER AND EVER. YOURS, O LORD, IS THE GREATNESS, THE POWER AND THE GLORY, THE VICTORY AND THE MAJESTY; FOR ALL THAT IS IN HEAVEN AND IN EARTH IS YOURS; YOURS IS THE KINGDOM, O LORD, AND YOU ARE EXALTED AS HEAD OVER ALL. BOTH RICHES AND HONOR COME FROM YOU, AND YOU REIGN OVER ALL. IN YOUR HAND IS POWER AND MIGHT; IN YOUR HAND IT IS TO MAKE GREAT AND TO GIVE STRENGTH TO ALL. NOW THEREFORE, OUR GOD, WE THANK YOU AND PRAISE YOUR GLORIOUS NAME.**

David offered praise to God as the true possessor of all things. There is no greatness except that which comes from God. There is no power but what is given by God. We see three main thoughts in this hymn of praise.

I: IN LOVE, HE MADE US

II: IN LOVE, HE SAVED US

III: IN LOVE, HE RULES US

The first words of this hymn of praise acknowledges that all power comes from God and that man is utterly dependant upon God for every good thing. Literally the words, **BLESSED ARE YOU, LORD...read BE ADORED ON BENDED KNEE, LORD.** Here is the powerful king of Israel bowing on bended knee before the Lord God of Israel, his Creator, his Father, his King. In these words David is acknowledging that God is a God of love who has given this kingdom to

him. David was ruling this nation of Israel simply because of God's grace and His promise to David's ancestors. We also see that the God of Israel is forever, from **everlasting to everlasting**. Since He is eternal God we can be sure that His promises in the Messiah will stand firm. In Christ He forgives all of our yesterdays; in Christ He keeps us safe in this present moment of today, and in Christ He has promised us spiritual safety and security for all of our tomorrows on into eternity.

David continues: **YOURS, O LORD, IS THE GREATNESS, THE POWER AND THE GLORY, THE VICTORY AND THE MAJESTY; FOR ALL THAT IS IN HEAVEN AND IN EARTH IS YOURS; YOURS IS THE KINGDOM, O LORD, AND YOU ARE EXALTED AS HEAD OVER ALL.**

God called everything in heaven and on earth into existence simply through His powerful Word in six days. It all belongs to Him. God is the God of Glory and God is the God of Grace. All glory, power, honor, majesty and greatness are His because of His Creation. But He also is active in His creation for the redemption and salvation of all of mankind. His kingdom is not Israel, a piece of ground and a nation of people on earth. God's kingdom is His rule in the hearts and lives of all of His children.

It is what we are asking for when we pray "**Thy Kingdom Come.**" We are asking Jesus to rule in our hearts with His powerful Word, to be our true Lord and King ruling our thoughts, words and deeds. David knew that all that he had been able to accomplish, was by his Savior-God who rules in his heart in love. In this phrase, powerful King David casts his own crown down before the Lord, His King and in essence is humbly saying, "**It is not my kingdom, my throne, my glory, my people, my goals, my purposes or my plans. Yours is the kingdom. Yours alone!**"

Can we pray that kind of prayer? We all long for fulfillment, for purpose and meaning in our lives. Yet how selfishly we often seek that purpose by lifting up ourselves in some empty self-praise, in some self-indulgence in the pursuit of creature comforts, in the accumulation of the things of this earth, rather than finding our fulfillment, purpose and meaning to our lives in the blessings and comfort of our Creator-Redeemer-Savior and the praise of His name. Only when the human heart is won over to the kingdom of Christ can it know the joy of being part of God's world rule, a righteous, saving purpose at work in the history and in the lives of individuals. When the kingdom of Christ comes into our heart, we know the joy of being part of something far bigger and far more important than our puny selves. That is what David is expressing in this hymn of praise. His throne was not his own, but God's. His goods were not his own, but God's. His life was not his own, but God's.

David concludes the introduction to his hymn of praise, which goes on for another 7 verses, by reflecting on the way God deals with humanity. We read, **BOTH RICHES AND HONOR COME FROM YOU, AND YOU REIGN OVER ALL. IN YOUR HAND IS POWER AND MIGHT; IN YOUR HAND IT IS TO MAKE GREAT AND TO GIVE STRENGTH TO ALL. NOW THEREFORE, OUR GOD, WE THANK YOU AND PRAISE YOUR GLORIOUS NAME.** Two thoughts are set forth here. First: In ascribing to God all glory and power, mankind is stripped of every false claim of honor, title, talent or skill. Second: In affirming that God does indeed make great and give strength to human beings, David is praising the glory of God's name, not man's.

We think of all the symbols of power and prestige people have claimed for themselves throughout the centuries. From the prideful proclamations of Pharaoh---"**Who is the LORD, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I do not know the LORD, nor will I let Israel go.**"---to the boastful bragging of King Nebuchadnezzar---"**Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for a royal dwelling by my mighty power and for the honor of my majesty**"---we see arrogant mankind robbing God of His rightful glory and honor and claiming it for themselves. Do we do the same thing?

Rulers, monarchs, dictators and presidents engrave their great successes and accomplishments on monuments of bronze, in pyramids or large libraries so that generations to come can marvel at their greatness. David in direct contradiction to such a spirit of pride says, **YOURS, O LORD IS THE GREATNESS, THE POWER AND THE GLORY...BOTH RICHES AND HONOR COME FROM YOU, AND YOU REIGN OVER ALL.**

All of our getting, accumulating and spending is useless unless we realize this. At best, humans achieve a flower's glory---in a few days or weeks their glory and splendor fades and is forgotten. As long as one seeks only recognition and praise for self, one will wither along with every other achievement on earth when the wind of our God blows on them as Isaiah writes in cha. 40:6-8 **THE VOICE SAID, "CRY OUT!" AND HE SAID, "WHAT SHALL I CRY?" "ALL FLESH IS GRASS, AND ALL ITS LOVELINESS IS LIKE THE FLOWER OF THE FIELD. THE GRASS WITHERS, THE FLOWER FADES, BECAUSE THE BREATH OF THE LORD BLOWS UPON IT; SURELY THE PEOPLE ARE GRASS. THE GRASS WITHERS, THE FLOWER FADES, BUT THE WORD OF OUR GOD STANDS FOREVER.**

Yet when God enlightens the heart with His Spirit, people find themselves able to achieve far more than they ever thought possible. Paul declares, **I CAN DO ALL THINGS THROUGH CHRIST WHO STRENGTHENS ME.** When God quickens the heart with a living faith then believers will give freely, willingly, generously beyond all expectation as David witnessed. He had seen the power of God at work in the hearts of the people. He had seen the joy and generosity prompted by the Spirit. That is why David says in the verse following our sermon text: **BUT WHO AM I, AND WHO ARE MY PEOPLE, THAT WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO OFFER SO WILLINGLY AS THIS? FOR ALL THINGS COME FROM YOU, AND OF YOUR OWN WE HAVE GIVEN YOU.**

For David the words, **We give Thee but Thine own,** were more than just a trite phrase, they were a way of life. David knew that his own life was a record, not of his great accomplishments, but of God's great mercy and grace. God had taken him from tending sheep as a lowly shepherd boy and made him ruler over His people, the children of Israel. And if that were not enough, the Lord had graciously chosen David to be the founder of an eternal dynasty, from which the Savior of the world would come.

Who am I? Who are you? Who was David and his people? Sinners, but sinners amazed by God's grace in Christ Jesus our Lord and Savior, who though He was rich and owned all things made Himself poor and became one of us in order to live a perfect life of obedient love and to sacrifice Himself as full payment for all of our sins. Both we and David have good reason to give God thanks and to praise His glorious, saving name now and forever.

Let us rise and pray together verses 1-3 of hymn 38

Amen.