

Let Us Come Before His Presence with Thanksgiving. . .

As we celebrate our National Day of Thanksgiving this week, it is fitting that our appointed psalm for Sunday November 26th, Christ the King Sunday, is Psalm 95: 1-7. In Psalm 95 we are called to live a life of thanks, not just on Thanksgiving, but every day in our daily life. Psalm 95 appears in a grouping of psalms that focus on the reign of God (Psalms 93, 95-99). These psalms are sometimes categorized as “enthronement psalms” because of their focus on God’s eternal kingship.

Psalm 95 contains two calls to praise and worship God . Verses 1-2 invite us to “come and sing to the LORD; shout for joy; come into His presence with thanksgiving; and raise a loud shout to him in psalms.” Verses 3-5 give reasons for the praise called for in verses 1-2. The most basic reason for praising God is that God is “a great King above all gods” (verse 3). Verses 4-5 give the primary evidence that God is “a great King above all gods.” Namely, God is the creator, the one who ordered and sustains the world.

The second call to praise and worship God comes in verses 6-7. “O come let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker. Verse 7 states why we should bow and kneel: “we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand”. The idea that God is a shepherd complements the earlier declaration that God is king. Verse 7 concludes with an exclamation that expresses the proper response to God the shepherd: “O that today you would listen to his voice.” The emphasis in the second call to worship is that the congregation belongs to God. God created this people and leads them, provides for them and protects them, and therefore, He is worthy of our praise.

This double call to worship makes it clear that God as both creator and redeemer is central to our faith. O that today, on this National Day of Thanksgiving, we would listen to His voice. God our creator, God our Redeemer—let us come before His presence with thanksgiving.

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise Him all creatures here below,
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host,
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.*