**TOPIC: YOU HAVE MADE ME GLAD BY YOUR WORK**

Psalm 92:1-15

Key Verse: **4 - “*For you make me glad by your deeds, Lord; I sing for joy at what your hands have done.”***

By Thursday, we will celebrate Thanksgiving Day!! Hurray!!

Happy Thanksgiving Day 2024!!

Have you made plans for how you wish to spend Thanksgiving weekend? I hope a huge turkey is part of your plan? Enjoy (one of) God’s creation. I guess you will spend time with family/friends? Enjoy God’s provision. I also hope you will fellowship with other brethren in Christ? Enjoy God’s salvation.

Look around, observe the beautiful people and beautiful creations you see. Are you glad to see them? So, we want to learn thanksgiving that focuses on God Who makes us glad by all He did. A thanksgiving that acknowledges God– The Most High, Who has done many great works for us, especially saving us through Jesus Christ.

Psalm 92 is a popular Psalm for sabbath day. Jews enjoy sabbath day rest after six days of work. This was God’s command for them, so that they can come together to worship God without the distraction of work. They recite Psalm 92 during sabbath worship to reflect upon God’s goodness to them for the past week. In this thanksgiving service, let us learn this Psalm to express thanks for God’s goodness - either for the past week, or for the past year, or since the beginning of your life.

This message is in three parts:

* It is good to praise God (1-3)
* You make me glad (4-9)
* The righteous flourish (10-15)

**PART 1: IT IS GOOD TO PRAISE GOD (1-3)**

*Vs.1-3 - It is good to praise the Lord and make music to your name, O Most High, proclaiming your love in the morning and your faithfulness at night, to the music of the ten-stringed lyre and the melody of the harp.*

In the spirit of Thanksgiving, I like us to shout these words of praise to God:

Praise God! Halleluyah! Glory to God! Hosanna in the highest! Amen!

Wow! How did that feel? Good! It is good to praise God.

The opening of the passage is an encouragement for worshipers to praise God - ‘It is good to praise The Lord.’ Just as Jews gather for sabbath day worship, many Churches around the world fellowship together on Sundays. And whenever we gather, we think about all that God did for us during the week, and we are grateful. With grateful hearts we praise God, we make music and we dance before Him.

This kind of statement; ‘It is good to praise The Lord,’ can only come from someone who has experienced the love and faithfulness of God, and is totally convinced that God deserves our praises. I will give you a Biblical example of a man who understood that it is good to praise God. Who can tell me the author of this Psalm? It’s David!

David had many reasons to be thankful to God, because he experienced God’s faithfulness towards him, his family and his people. As a little teenager, David loved God so much. His love for God and for God’s people made him feel very uncomfortable when Goliath the Philistine giant was cursing and intimidating the Israelites. Though he was young, he decided to fight the giant, and God gave him victory. This must be one of the many reasons for which he said; it is good to praise The Lord.

*Vs.1 - It is good to praise the Lord and make music to your name, O Most High*

Do you know something else about David? He loved to play his musical instruments and he loved to dance in worship to God. It is good to praise God with our musical instruments. As mentioned in *vs.3 - to the music of the ten-stringed lyre and the melody of the harp*.. Lyre and harp were popular musical instruments in the Middle-east. They represent common musical instruments which we use in our Church services.

David played the lyre beautifully as our praise team played guitar today. Hope you enjoyed the praise team? That’s cool! Thank you..

David experienced victory over many enemies such as King Saul, the Philistines and other nations around Israel, and even at home - Absalom his son tried to kill him and take the kingdom. But God was with David and God gave him victory on every side. As David thought about the goodness and faithfulness of God in his life, he burst forth with praise and dancing, not caring what people think. David is an example of a worshiper who is thankful for all that God had done for Him. In the same way, God wants us to be glad/thankful worshipers who express thanksgiving with beautiful singing and dancing to the glory of God. Amen.

*Vs.2 - proclaiming your love in the morning and your faithfulness at night..*

Like David, we all enjoy the love and faithfulness of God from morning to night, or from the beginning of life until the end. The Psalmist encouraged worshipers to talk about / proclaim God’s love and faithfulness both on days that are bright and hopeful like the morning, and on days that are hopeless/dark like night.

**PART 2: YOU MAKE ME GLAD (4-9)**

One question for you today is this; ‘how has God made you glad?’ Or ‘what makes you glad?’

*Vs.4-5 - For you make me glad by your deeds, Lord; I sing for joy at what your hands have done. How great are your works, Lord, how profound your thoughts!*

Thanksgiving is a memorable event where we think about good things that happened for us within the year. The fathers of America - Pilgrims, celebrated thanksgiving with the Wampanoag tribe. The Wampanoag tribe were the Native American people that the Pilgrims first encountered when they arrived in Plymouth, Massachusetts, on the Mayflower in 1620, and the two groups shared a peace treaty which included a shared meal often referred to as the "First Thanksgiving." The Pilgrims were thankful because they successfully landed at the shores of this new land, and they were sustained by God Who provided a harvest for them in the fall season. So they were made glad by God’s provision of food so they did not starve in their new country. Today, God has blessed America with a lot of food. I believe you are glad to eat a lot of food in America. We see American ancestors giving thanks to God and acknowledging God for preserving America. One popular inscription: ‘In God we trust’ became the motto of this great nation, showing their understanding that God built America. With each new generation, this nation has gradually deviated from their foundation of trusting God and giving sincere thanks to God. UBF missionaries and many gospel workers continue to pray with vision to make America a Kingdom of Priests and holy nation through the gospel of Jesus Christ.

This thanksgiving, we may celebrate with faith and understanding that God is our Creator– He created everything we enjoy. In Genesis ch.1, we learn how God created the heavens and the earth by His spoken Word. God also created man from the dust of the earth and gave him the breath of life.

Truly, God has made us glad with many provisions for us to be physically sustained. When you eat Thanksgiving turkey and other meals on your table, just remember that it is God’s work/creation. As you enjoy free air everyday, the light of the sun and all of God’s creations. When you meditate on the abundant gifts from God to you everyday, you will have no doubts about God’s love for you and for everyone. Some other times you were troubled and not sure about what to do, or how to survive. You felt your world crashing in on you and help seemed far away, but alas, solution came, and your troubles did not consume you. When you experience these victories, you can thank God who makes you glad by His deeds. If you know I am talking to you here, please shout with joy; ‘God is faithful!’ *(response)* Hallelujah!

How about God’s love for your family, all His provision and protection. God has supported the students in many ways. Workers/business-people experience God’s blessings and testify that God has made us glad!

In our fellowship we experienced so many great deeds/works of God. We celebrated two PhD Missionaries, we welcomed new babies in our fellowship, we had a beautiful wedding between Sis Rebecca and humble Brother Nick. Some of our brethren received good responses to their immigration applications after many years. I am sure they/we are glad. That is God’s work to plant many Missionary families in America. Amen.

Think about birthdays. Each person celebrates their birthday on their special day of the year, we also celebrate anniversaries and all other celebrations. God is the one that gave you that special day to celebrate His beautiful creation - you.

All these are good reasons to be thankful and sing for joy.

There are many other reasons for our thanksgiving as a Church. This year we are thankful for our Luke Bible study, we learned about Jesus Who came to seek and save the lost. We also studied Revelation for GLEF, and raised next gen testimony sharers, many presenters and messengers like Mssn. Joel Park, Joseph Lee and Emmanuel. This semester we experienced the work of The Holy Spirit as God blessed us with twelve new students that study the Bible each week. And many young members were baptized in The name of Jesus– that is great work of The Holy Spirit among us.

Now, the most important thing to be glad about is our salvation through Jesus Christ. This is the greatest work that God did for you and me. Jesus is the reason for all our fellowship gathering, and He is the best reason for all your Thanksgiving. It is good to praise Jesus who has made us glad by saving us from sin, and has given us eternal life. Amen.

In *vs.6-7 - Senseless people do not know, fools do not understand, that though the wicked spring up like grass and all evildoers flourish, they will be destroyed forever.* It is a problem in the world today, that many people do not acknowledge the great work of God and His profound thoughts. The Bible shows us that anyone that does not believe in God is classified as a fool. *Psalm 14:1 - The fool says in his heart, “There is no God.”* Fools do not know the great work of God. They also don’t believe in Jesus Christ His Son. From vs.7, fools do not understand that even though the wicked spring up like grass and flourish, they will not flourish for long, they will be destroyed forever. Some Mssns may feel like they have worked so hard in the mission field but have not flourished. That is satan trying to steal your joy. We must not be like the senseless ones that don’t understand the work of God. Prayerfully open your eyes, see God’s great works in your life, and glorify God.

God is merciful. He wants everyone to experience His great work of salvation through Jesus, so God sent many Missionaries and Bible teachers to teach students about the great love of God (John 3:16). He provides many opportunities for sinners to hear the gospel, repent from sin and believe in Jesus Christ. Today, with this thanksgiving message, God is calling every unbeliever to repent and be saved by Jesus Christ, so we can enjoy eternal life. There will come a time when judgment will be passed on everyone, the faithful believers will receive eternal life and be glad forever, while unbelievers will face destruction and sadness forever. *Rev.21:8 - But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars—they will be consigned to the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death.”*

Let’s go to *vs.8-9 - But you, Lord, are forever exalted. For surely your enemies, Lord, surely your enemies will perish; all evildoers will be scattered.*

This is the testimony of the believers. God is exalted. God is greater than everyone. Anyone who does not believe in Jesus The Savior is an enemy of God. Unbelievers/enemies of God do not understand how God makes us glad. So when they celebrate thanksgiving, instead of glorifying God, they would dishonor Him. Vs.9 says that all enemies of God will perish, they will be scattered when God judges the world.

**PART 3: THE RIGHTEOUS FLOURISH (10-15)**

*Vs.10 - You have exalted my horn like that of a wild ox; fine oils have been poured on me.*

After considering the misfortune of the enemies of God, the Psalmist testifies about the blessings of the believers. You have exalted my horn like that of a wild ox *(unicorn)*. You have anointed me with fine oil.

Once again, this sounds like David’s thanksgiving. He was troubled by many enemies, especially King Saul, who did not want David to be King of Israel. But God exalted David and anointed him as King of Israel. *Vs.11 - My eyes have seen the defeat of my adversaries..* David really experienced the end of his enemies. They were defeated by God, while David was exalted. Believers have this same victory in Christ. Through Jesus, we defeat our strongest enemy - sin. Through Jesus Christ we are anointed with The Holy Spirit, we are exalted from this perishing world and established in God’s everlasting Kingdom. Hallelujah!

*Vs.12-15 - The righteous will flourish like a palm tree, they will grow like a cedar of Lebanon; planted in the house of the Lord, they will flourish in the courts of our God. They will still bear fruit in old age, they will stay fresh and green, proclaiming, “The Lord is upright; He is my Rock, and there is no wickedness in him.”*

The Psalmist uses two very important plants in their region to describe the everlasting success of the believers. They shall flourish like a palm tree, and grow like a cedar of Lebanon.

These two trees are known for fruitfulness and strength. The palm mentioned here is the date-palm, a very sweet fruit. A good date-palm tree may produce so many fruits in one harvest, and they continue to produce fruits for as long as 100 years. The cedar trees are known to be strong and have a pleasant smell. It could be called royal wood. King Solomon used cedar wood to build the temple of God and his palace. So it is a very desirable tree. The believers are likened to palm trees and cedars, planted in God. God is The One Who makes us flourish and grow as we are nourished everyday with His God. *Vs. 14* says; *They will still bear fruit in old age, (and) they will stay fresh and green.* In our midst today, you will find many evergreen palm trees and cedars, who continue to teach the Bible and bear fruit in old age. God has made them fresh and green for serving Rutgers University students with The Word of God. Their common testimony and our testimony is this: *Vs.15 - “The Lord is upright; He is my Rock, and there is no wickedness in him.”* God is the reason we flourish. He is our Rock. Jesus Christ is the Rock of our salvation that assures us of everlasting life in the house of God. For this reason we are full of thanks.

Let us go into the week with glad and thankful hearts, knowing that it is good to praise The Lord, for He made us glad by His works. While America celebrates Thanksgiving in different ways and with many different reasons, let us keep the focus on Jesus Christ our Savior— He is the reason for our eternal joy and celebration. Your faith in Jesus and your humble obedience to The Word of God is the best thanksgiving you can offer to God.

(As we close, let me officially/spiritually launch your Thanksgiving 2024)

Join me to say “Thank You Jesus, for you make me glad!..” *(response)*

Key Verse: **4 - “*For you make me glad by your deeds, Lord; I sing for joy at what your hands have done.”***