

Introduction: Pg. 458 Dismiss Kids...

### Picture of Titus Storms...

- Name... Past year... renewal/revival... We knew we wanted to choose a name that represented what God was doing and what we longed to
- Boy or Girl? Me: I'm not talking names until we know. Fully expecting that we would be blessed with a 4<sup>th</sup> princess in our home...
- BUT... to my surprise when we went in for the gender reveal ultrasound I rediscovered the truth that There is a God, and He does answer prayer, because this long-prayed for son was on his way.
- And so... after giving me at least 24 hours to bask in the glory of this news... Marsha started talking names.
- She quickly mentioned the name Titus, which I was open to but not convinced (because I wanted to make sure we got his name right)...

... UNTIL she told me that one of the meanings of the name Titus is "Fire, or to burn."

- In the Bible, fire represents the presence of God and Spirit of God (Exodus 13:21-22, Acts 2:1-4). The presence of God brings life, joy, peace, freedom and 1,000 other gifts.
- Titus was also a strong and decisive leader in the early church described as earnest, affectionate, caring, and joyful (2 Corinthians 7:13-15, 8:16-17).

That's Titus, but why Storms?

- The next week Marsha & I went to Providence for a quick one-night, two-day getaway (married couples - pls do that), and while we were there, we connected with my good friend Pastor Stephen Mook. During the course of our meal, he mentioned the name of a pastor we have a lot of respect for named Sam Storms.
- Well... about an hour later as Marsha & I are driving back to the hotel... she said: "What about Titus Storms?"
- I said: "You're crazy." I mean, Titus is a strong, pretty bold name, but Titus Storms.. Off the charts!
- And.. a458s you might imagine... most of the time people associate storms with difficulty or destruction...
- But then... I got to thinking...
  - Storms... Sounds familiar... Storms bring wind and rain through audacious, faith-filled prayer and the power of God.
  - We see this in 1 Kings 18:41-46 - Elijah prayed that it would not rain for 3 & 1/2 years, and then he prayed again on Mt. Carmel, with his face between his knees, and God sent a mighty storm full of wind and rain to break the famine of their land. (cf. James 5:17-18) Titus Storms.
  - But it gets better. In Matthew 16:18, Jesus says to Peter: "And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Question: is the church on the offense or defense? Offense...!! In Christ, we storm the gates of hell and take back what belongs to the kingdom of light.
  - But on top of that... Jesus also said, "From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and the violent take it by force." In Christ (not only do we storm the gates of hell), we storm the gates of heaven and take hold of what is rightfully ours (Matthew 11:12).

Titus Storms Turley... Your name is loaded with vision and hope, and your name is a prayer to God... to not only fill your life with the fire of his presence but for his storms of revival and awakening to blow into our city and region in our day.

Give him back to Marsha...

Now.. That's his name...

## **“What's Your Name?” Psalm 24**

FCF: I believe our failures and victories in life ultimately flow from understanding our identity and living up to our name in Christ.

That is why some theologians have wisely said that the Christian life is all about “becoming who we are.”

“If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.” (2 Cor. 5:17)

“Put on the new self...” (Ephesians 4:24)

So... today... as we look at Psalm 24, I want to invite us to...

**The Point: Become who you are by seeking the face of God.**

*Read Psalm 24*

### **I. Become who you are by seeking the face of God.**

There are two essential ingredients in this psalm.

- The worshipers = people (like you and me), AND
- The WORSHIPED = GOD himself!

But we discover the key to worship begins with our vision of God, with perceiving the worth of the one we are seeking.

Listen: The value of what we desire will determine the intensity of our pursuit.

Look at the three dominant truths about God.

- God is the Creator (1-2)
  - Everything the eye can and cannot see belongs to him. All people, all nations, all of the created world: every blade of grass, every star in the sky, every quark in the universe was designed by him and made for him.
  - And with these opening words, David praises God for his creative work, and in the process helps us gain perspective regarding the expansive power of God vs. our limitations as created beings.
- God is Holy (3)
  - Look at *verse 3*.
  - While we cannot be certain of a specific setting that inspired this Psalm, we know that the location is “the hill of the Lord, and God’s holy place,” both references to the worship of God in Jerusalem, the city of God, where the temple symbolized the very presence of God with his people.
  - The questions of verse 3 heighten our awareness of God’s holiness and our sinfulness.
  - In light of this Creator God, who is perfectly holy, without flaw and infinitely perfection, who can come near to him? Who could dream of standing in his presence?
  - But God is not only holy, he is...

- God is the King of Glory (7-10)
  - FIVE TIMES it says, God is “the King of Glory.”
  - He is the one above everything else. Nothing and no one can compare to his importance and worth.
  - In fact, (are you ready for this?) anything else in life that we perceive as glorious (beauty, sex, accomplish, friendship, work, service - John McCain), ultimately derives its glory from him.
  - God, as the King of Glory and Lord of angel armies, is strong and mighty, never taking an “L,” always victorious over every foe.

Is this your vision of God? Do you see him as the owner of everything, including your life, infinitely holy and glorious? If you do, then you should be all the more astounded by the invitation of verse 3!

- Can we stop for just a minute and be amazed that this God actually wants to have a relationship with us?!
- Don’t miss what’s happening here! God is inviting US into HIS presence! He’s saying: “I want you to know me. I want you to enjoy me. I want you to dwell with me.”
- In a Psalm explicitly focused on God as Creator, Holy, and Glorious, this invitation implicitly reveals God as good, loving, merciful, and gracious.
- But this relationship happens on his terms, not ours.

Seek God in...

- Holiness
  - With Clean Hands: This refers to our actions and deeds. But also...
  - With a Pure Heart: This tells us God has his eye on, not only what we do, but how we do it and why we do it. He is after....
- And... Complete Devotion
  - He is looking for people who “do not lift up their soul to what is false,” which implies anything contrary to God and his ways, any idol we are tempted to elevate above the place of God in our life.
  - God wants it all. He wants all of us! He wants people who lift up their souls to him – what a picture of surrender! – (not just on Sundays - but every day). That’s what worship is, lifting of our souls (Open arms/on knees)! God, my life is yours! Whatever you say, goes!
  - Those are the people who experience the blessing of God, his gift of righteousness and salvation.

T: But you have to see, everything is driving to verse 6. Those with clean hands, pure hearts, not lifting their souls to anything but God, not swearing deceitfully but speaking sincere and truth words, they are described like this: P

“Such is the generation of those who seek him, who seek the face of the God of Jacob.”

WOW. Above everything, a worshiper is a seeker of God. To seek something is to go after it... to search until you find... to look until that which you desire is in your possession!

But we are not seeking God in a generic way (as an idea or a means to some kind of selfish end), we are to seek his face!

Why? Because we recognize and know someone by their face. This is about a personal encounter! In fact, if you can leave this morning or close your Bible tonight or tomorrow morning, without the sense that you’ve been in the presence of God, that he has really spoken to you, that you’ve really enjoyed a relationship with him, something is missing.

You have said, "Seek my face." My heart says to you, "Your face, Lord, do I seek." (Psalm 27:8)

But as we seek God, we are "seeking the face of the God of Jacob." Why would David say this? To get a full picture of what God is calling us, we need to understand what is going on behind the text.

As we strive to...

II. Become who you are by seeking the face of God.

We need to understand the story behind this Psalm. David could have called God, the God of Moses, the God of Abraham, or the God of Issac, but he calls God, the God of Jacob because of the story of Jacob in Genesis 32.

Context: About to meet his brother Esau, who they last time he was around him, wanted to kill him, because he stole his birthright and inheritance. So it's understandable that Jacob fears for his life and that Jacob is praying...

**Genesis 32:24-30**

<sup>24</sup> And Jacob was left alone. And a man wrestled with him until the breaking of the day. <sup>25</sup> When the man saw that he did not prevail against Jacob, he touched his hip socket, and Jacob's hip was put out of joint as he wrestled with him. <sup>26</sup> Then he said, "Let me go, for the day has broken." But Jacob said, "I will not let you go unless you bless me." <sup>27</sup> And he said to him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Jacob." <sup>28</sup> Then he said, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with men, and have prevailed." <sup>29</sup> Then Jacob asked him, "Please tell me your name." But he said, "Why is it that you ask my name?" And there he blessed him. <sup>30</sup> So Jacob called the name of the place Peniel, saying, "For I have seen God face to face, and yet my life has been delivered."

Wow! To seek the God of Jacob is to seek God as Jacob did.

- Jacob wrestled with God (24). **Prayer is wrestling with God.** Why?
  - Perhaps God wants to see and even "test" our faith.
  - Perhaps God wants to change us (like Jacob) in the process, which is what prayer is really about (not us changing God, but God changing us!).
  - Perhaps God wants to measure the level of our desire, because as we persevere, as we "will not let go until he blesses us" we're saying to God you're the only solution, I would go to another source, I would wrestle with someone else, but you are God alone, and only you have the power to bring me peace, to give me joy, to set me free, to advance your kingdom, to open blind eyes, to glorify your name. Wow.
- Jacob was not leaving without a blessing (27)! **Prayer is taking hold of God.**
  - When is the last time you would not let God go?
  - Asking, seeking, knocking, crying out night and day, until God responds as he sees fit?
- Jacob received a new name (28). **Prayer is living out our new identity as the people of God.**
  - Your name was Jacob, but now it will be Israel. Israel means "to strive with God."
  - He was given a new name because this is what he should be known for, this what people should remember him for... (Jesus, God saves)
  - This was his new identity, and the people of God would forever be known as the Israel of God.

- If you have placed your faith in God through Christ, you belong to the people of God. This is your identity as well. This is what should characterize your life, as a seeker of God, someone who goes after God with this kind of intimacy, intensity, and passion!

T: But there is more... That's what's behind the text. What's on the horizon of Psalm 24?

III. Even more than giving us the name Israel, God has given us the name of his Son.

We are Christians! Our highest privilege and responsibility is to live out our identity in Christ and live up to HIS NAME.

- Luke's picture of Jesus praying...
- after his baptism, Jesus was praying when the Spirit descended on him like a dove (hey, the Spirit moves, when we pray!)
- fasting (don't miss that) and praying in the wilderness when he was tempted for 40 days (4:1-15),
- regularly withdrew from the crowds to get alone and pray. "But he would withdraw to desolate places and pray." (Luke 5:16)
- Before selecting his twelve closest followers: "In these days he went out to the mountain to pray, and all night he continued in prayer to God." (Luke 6:12)
- When the disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray (in Luke 11), it's because they saw him praying.
- Before he was crucified, knowing he was about to die for the sin of the world and bear the immeasurable weight of the wrath of God, and he was praying: "Father, if you are willing, let this cup pass from me, yet not what I will, your will be done."

**"In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence." (Hebrews 5:7)**

T: So what does this mean for us...

The Point: Become who you are by seeking the face of God.

1. Seek God for more of God.

- The greatest gift God can give us IS the gift of himself.
- God, I want more of you. More time, greater focus, deeper intimacy.
- More of you, more Christlikeness, more of your Spirit powerfully working in me.
- "Be being filled with the Spirit..."

Are you a praying man? Are you a praying woman? Are you a seeker of God? Are you living with clean hands and a pure heart because of your passionate pursuit of God? Are you praying with your friends, your kids, your spouse? Is prayer your first reflex or last resort?

- All true ministry is born out of intimacy.
- What we do for God flows from who we are before God.

Are we a praying church? When people think about Redemption Hill, oh, that is a church that prays, that is a church that believes everything depends on God, that is a church that is in tune with and empowered by Holy Spirit!

That is a church that is saying... They will...

2. Never stop until the fullness of the Spirit overflows into revival and awakening.

**2018 Vision: The Fullness of God in us Overflowing through us**

*Conclusion:*

In the words of A.W. Tozer: "Revival comes to those who want it badly enough." In the words of Isaiah 62, "give God no rest" until it happens!

What will be said of our generation? What will be said of you? What will be said of us?

Lead into Prayer... As the band comes up... Give you an opportunity to pray...