Happiness, Help, Hope

I. Slide 1 Announce:

A. Slide 2,3 Lar - Water Wave Park. Men’s Breakfast.

B. Slide 4 Children at Risk - 3-5pm Birth Choice of Tem. Various outreaches. Partner w/them

C. Slide 5 Jeff Jackson - I served with Jeff on his board with *Shepherd Staff* (Calvary Missions). I think he has 1 of the greatest minds/hearts in missions in Calvary.

   Jeff will be unpacking a fundamental difference between our *Western culture* and *non-western cultures*. And then looking at 2 familiar texts: the prodigal son *and* Jesus' first miracle...through *a non-western, honor and shame based lens*. [He’ll be here next 2 weeks]

   1. Its not just for missions...you will use this information with everyone you meet/work with/run into...that has a different culture than your own. [guilt/innocence]

D. Slide 6 Chad Robichaux. Chad is a former Special Operations Force Recon Marine *and* DoD Contractor with 8 deployments to Afghanistan as part of a Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC) Task Force. He has earned an MBA and is a Board Certified Pastoral Counselor with a focus on PTSD. Chad and his wife, Kathy, have been married for 21 years, and have 3 children. [I am 2nd. Worship with us here at CM now]

   1. He was also a police officer, *and* is a Pro MMA Champion, *but* Chad’s life spiraled because of PTSD. His marriage began to disintegrate. *He almost became a statistic of suicide*. Sunday August 6th, you’ll hear how God healed his own marriage and is now fighting for the lives of others. [invite!]

E. Prayer: I agree w/Spurgeon who said *I will sing as long as my breath lasts, & when I have none, I shall do it better.*

II. Slide 7 Intro:

A. The last 5 *Hallelujah Songs/Hymns* are marked by an opening & closing cry of *Praise the Lord*. [thus known as the *Hallelujah Psalms*]

   1. So 5 great doxologies bring *the Hebrew Hymnbook* to its close.

   2. The LXX attributes the *authorship* to the *prophets Haggai & Zechariah* at the dedication of the new temple (back from Babyl captivity, see Ezra/Neh).
B. What would it have been like for an old covenant believer to sing this song? What would it have been like for Jesus to have sang this song? What will it mean for us in Christ to sing this song? [read beginning & end]

C. Slide8 Praise the Lord - have you ever been challenged with how is your prayer life? in our Psalm this morning we would ask how is your praise life? But we’d already be starting off on the wrong foot.

1. We usually answer this 1 of 3 ways: 1) I’m doing well (which is usually a lie). 2) is the zealots response, I’ll try harder. 3) is just utter despair, just one more thing I’m not doing well in.

2. When it comes to praise there are 2 different aspects:
   a) Theological - If He’s not praised, He’s not known. He is immeasurably great, and to know Him is to praise Him.
   b) Spiritual - If praise does not characterize us, if joylessness characterizes us...we will be in a place of danger.

3. You can both give praise directly to your spouse or praise her to others.
   a) He calls for praise...yet to be given. Jesus listening to this in synagogue, praise the Lord, responds, okay yes I will. I will not only tell My Father how great He is. I will also make him known to all the world.

4. You and I do not have to start this praise, conjure up praise, or try to whip up people into a praise frenzy. Let me illustrate...
   a) I think we’ve all participated in the Wave at a baseball or soccer stadium. You don’t have to start a wave (someone has/Jesus) but you do have to decide when it’s my time to praise/stand will I? Will I join in?
   b) When the Psalms say, Praise the Lord, these are not challenges to grab the microphone, but an invitation to join the choir. Will you join in?

(1) Preach Praise as gospel rather than moralistic exhortation.

III. Slide9 Happiness, Help, Hope (1-10) [read all]

A. (1,2) This individual summons himself to praise & then pledges the praise of God as long as he lives.
B. (2) Twice the psalmist says I will. *Hope in God is a decision.* Thus his double resolved to *praise Him.*

1. Believers, you either trust in **your own** strength, or what **others** may offer, or reject a reliance on humans and resolve to trust in **God**.

C. (3,4) **Warning** - do not trust in princes *Slide10a* I’ve **never** put my trust in prince William, prince Harry, nor prince Charles. **Nor** in prince Charming, the fresh prince of Bel Air, nor Prince. **Nor** prince Albert, not even in *Prince Albert in the can.* [is yur frig runing? Do u hav PA in the can?]

1. It means don’t trust in **human beings, man, princes.**

2. *Slide10b Princes meaning:* rich people, gifted people, talented people, powerful people, people that can *make things happen.* People you’re attempted to put your trust in (doctors, financial planners, your *bookie*, etc.)
   a) Princes have a dangerous attraction.

3. The author does not deny the necessity of **mutual trust in the give & take of life.** We should thank God for the *princes and princesses* in your life...just don’t put your **trust** in them. If you do, at some point they will *let you down.* And it will save you from **bitterness** when they do let you down.

D. (3b,4a) **Play on words** - don’t trust in the **earthly** as they return to the **earth**. [ben adam - adamah]

1. What’s the problem with trusting in humans? well, every **human agent** is **human and** on the way to **death.** Humans die. Humans let you down.

2. *Slide11* The NIV sums it up very well in Is.2:22 *Stop trusting in mere humans, who have but a breath in their nostrils. Why hold them in esteem?* *(did you know that you can only hold but 1 breath?)*
   a) So humans, will return to the dust to which they’ve been decreed & his/her plans will die with them.

E. (5) This is our reminder that **God is all we need for today...and tomorrow.** It’s all about **His help**...**God** is the only one capable of helping those in distress.

1. When you know God, you have **happiness, help and hope.**
   a) *Slide12 Happiness* in *walking with Him.* **Help** for the **burdens** of the day. **Hope** for the **concerns** of the future. *What more could you want?*  *Warren Wiersbe*
2. This verse provides the **theme** of the song, and the following verses described His **power** and **compassion**.

F. **The God of Jacob** - Jacob stumbled and made mistakes, but God remained his God. :)

G. (6-9) Here we find the reason for the psalmist’s praise. God is Creator/Maker of heaven and earth & therefore has all power at his disposal.

1. **Slide13** He is also the **saving** Lord of history who meets the needs of the oppressed & the abused. The physically hungry & those spiritually malnourished. The local convicts, & those who find themselves captive to some drug or intoxicant, & those who are prisoners spiritually. The physically blind & those spiritually blind. Those bowed down by adversity. The refugees in our midst. The spouse who lost his/her mate. And kids w/o dads.

2. See, any God **great** enough, **wise** enough, and **strong** enough to create & sustain & run this universe, can take care of our problems today.

3. This psalm **praises the Lord** for His wonderful deeds, offering a catalog of the kinds of things God does.

   a) **Slide14** But the Bible shows that these are not absolutes - He has not vindicated **all** who are oppressed, or fed **all** who are hungry, or given sight to **all** who are blind.

   b) **But** it is His intent to do all these things, and He will. The Bible affirms that **all** the promises of God will be fulfilled, if not in this life, surely in the life **to come**.

   c) Everything will be put right. But the fact is that God has done these things again and again, and His greatest fulfillment has been in the work of **Christ**.

H. **Slide15** So, Jesus takes up these **themes** making them the program of His whole ministry. Lk4:16-21

1. Thus once again the Scripture combines the saving gospel with the hands/feet gospel. Or, the saving gospel w/the social/communal gospel. Or, the saving gospel w/the humanitarian gospel.

   a) Important sub-point: NOT the old social gospel that accepts the **2nd** great command, love your neighbor as yourself, but ignores the **1st** love the Lord God w/ all your heart, mind, soul.
b) Remember, Jesus was asked... what is the 1st commandment? (the foremost, 1st in rank, most imp)  
Jesus’ answer? He couldn’t separate them out. Mrk.12:28-34

2. Christ invested His life in people. He fed them, healed them, raised them from the dead. And He did this for both those who would follow Him & those He knew never would.

3. Jesus dealt with, and was concerned about, global poverty, hunger, sickness, injustice, & oppression. And yet of all the titles given to Christ, Humanitarian has not been one of them.

4. We constantly make it [the saving gospel & the humanitarian gospel] a dichotomy when maybe it should be envisioned as conjoined twins, or 2 sides of the same coin, or 2 pees in the same pod.

5. Jesus was a humanitarian, but of a unique kind. He healed to revealed true healing. He fed to reveal true food. He quenched thirst to reveal everlasting water. Christ’s actions were temporal, but is intended impact was for His every word and deed to be eternally transforming.


   a) He went on to say, God is in the slums, in the cardboard boxes where the poor play house. God is in the silence of a mother who has infected her child with a virus that will end both their lives. God is in the cries heard under the rubble of war. God is in the debris of wasted opportunity & lives, & God is with us if we are with them.

   I. Slide17a (8) 5 times the psalmist uses the Lord, thereby stressing the fact that God is the hope of the needy.

   J. The Lord raises those who are bowed down - this is a classic expression of depression.

      1. Someone so burdened by a load of care that he or she cannot even straighten up. Slide17b The God of hope comes along & lifts up, renews hope, invigorates

   K. If worship is praising God for who He is...then we must know who He is.

      1. The psalms set the worship of God in the context of teachings about God.

---

2. If we are not reflecting on what God is like & has done, we are not really worshipping.

3. So we can worship Him if we know something about Him. Something which excites our admiration, our gratitude, our faith, our joy.

4. So worship is heartfelt, emotionally-charged expression; but it is also a rational & thoughtful expression.

5. Worship is always a response to what we know of God, as a result of His revealing Himself to us.

L. (9a) Strangers - resident aliens who were outside of social power structures and vulnerable to injustice.

M. (9b) The sting of the tail - He’ll flip you upside down if you put your trust in princes.

1. Note in 9b God flanks the story of compassion with judgment.

2. Flank = sides (Flank steak, betw animal ribs/hip. Flanker/football, line up sides. Military term)

3. Here, on 1 side compassion, on the other judgment. This is one of the themes of the gospel. Slide19 Jn.3:18 He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

N. (10) Zion - unlike the human kings, God’s reign continues. Though He is the God of all creation, He has made Himself known in & through Zion.

1. In Christian terms, the one true God of the whole universe has chosen to make Himself known to the world through His Cov community, the Church.

O. Slide20 Call upon the God of Jacob, He will be your help, hope and happiness.