

**Our Wonder Working God: Psalm 65**  
**Sunday, August 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020**  
**By Ryan Perry**

**Scripture:**

**Psalm 65**

*[1] Praise is due to you, O God, in Zion,  
and to you shall vows be performed.*

*[2] O you who hear prayer,  
to you shall all flesh come.*

*[3] When iniquities prevail against me,  
you atone for our transgressions.*

*[4] Blessed is the one you choose and bring near,  
to dwell in your courts!*

*We shall be satisfied with the goodness of your house,  
the holiness of your temple!*

*[5] By awesome deeds you answer us with righteousness,  
O God of our salvation,  
the hope of all the ends of the earth  
and of the farthest seas;*

*[6] the one who by his strength established the mountains,  
being girded with might;*

*[7] who stills the roaring of the seas,  
the roaring of their waves,  
the tumult of the peoples,*

*[8] so that those who dwell at the ends of the earth are in awe at your signs.  
You make the going out of the morning and the evening to shout for joy.*

*[9] You visit the earth and water it;  
you greatly enrich it;  
the river of God is full of water;  
you provide their grain,  
for so you have prepared it.*

*[10] You water its furrows abundantly,  
settling its ridges,  
softening it with showers,  
and blessing its growth.*

*[11] You crown the year with your bounty;  
your wagon tracks overflow with abundance.*

*[12] The pastures of the wilderness overflow,  
the hills gird themselves with joy,*

*[13] the meadows clothe themselves with flocks,  
the valleys deck themselves with grain,  
they shout and sing together for joy.*

## Let's Pray

### Introduction

Last week, John Young preached the final message in our summer preaching series on the book of Colossians entitled, **"The Supremacy of Christ and the Fruit of Gospel Hope."**

And as he so wonderfully concluded the series with some heart provoking questions, I found myself asking the following question: **"Did we get it?"** Meaning, did we all, at LEFC come away with a greater understanding and apprehension of the bigness, greatness, power, and authority of Christ. **That he is over all things, in control of all things, and that he is the only hope for our today, tomorrow, and eternity.**

And if we got it, did it produce anything? Did it create within us a deeper and more present experience of praise, awe, and joy? To be honest, as I pondered this question, and as we as elders have talked about similar things over the past month, the answer seems to keep coming up, **I don't know.**

So this morning, as we walk through Psalm 65 I want us to think of this sermon as a wrap-up to our series on Colossians. A wrap-up in the sense that I want to once again call our attention to the bigness, greatness, authority, and goodness of our triune God.

And, as we see God's goodness and grandeur, my prayer is that God will put within our hearts such a wonder for who he is that it will produce lives that are marked by praise, awe, joy.

So that when those outside the church look at us, they will not just see a group of people who go to church and live good lives. But they will see in us, and desire to be a part of, a community of people who live with an otherworldly hope in an unfailing and otherworldly God.

So let's start are journey this morning by calling our hearts to **praise our merciful God who draws all peoples to Himself.**

### 1. Praise the Merciful God who Draws all Peoples to Himself. (V.1-4)

#### Psalm 65:1-4:

*[1] Praise is due to you, O God, in Zion,  
and to you shall vows be performed.*

*[2] O you who hear prayer,  
to you shall all flesh come.*

*[3] When iniquities prevail against me,  
you atone for our transgressions.*

*[4] Blessed is the one you choose and bring near,  
to dwell in your courts!*

*We shall be satisfied with the goodness of your house,  
the holiness of your temple!*

Currently on Netflix there is a docuseries called **High Score**. I will tell you if you are or were ever a video game nerd you will surely enjoy it.

In the first episode, you learn about three MIT drop outs by the name of Doug Macrae, Steve Golson, Mike Horowitz, who, in the mid-1970's were making a substantial living by making game enhancements for classic **Atari** games like Space Invaders, Pac-Man, and an impossible game called Missile Command. These men would make these enhancement packs, and then sell them directly to the arcade owners who made tons of money off of them since Arcades were the major teens hang outs in the 70's.

But then Atari found out what they were doing and in 1978 they sued these three men for \$15 million. Now these dudes had made some money, but it was nowhere close to \$15 million dollars. And had Atari went forward with this case and won it (**which they would have**) these men would have been burdened with this debt for the rest of their lives.

But then Atari did something surprising. Instead of suing these men they decided to hire them to come make games for them. And these men who would have forever been indebt to Atari were now part of the Atari family and would go on to produce the well known and enhanced **Ms. Pac-Man**. So in their own way Atari was showing mercy to these three men.

Like the men in this story, each of use were crippled with an impossible debt. We had the weight of sin, the sins that each of us had committed against God, hanging around our neck and it would have been good and right for God to punish us for it.

But instead he did something else. As the Psalmist writes in verse 3:

*[3] When iniquities prevail against me,  
you atone for our transgressions.*

In the life of Israel these iniquities, transgressions, or sins would have been paid for through the sacrifices that the priests would have made at the temple. **And it is those sacrifices that the psalmist has in mind when he wrote verse 3.**

But as Christians we know that those sacrifices were just a picture of the ultimate sacrifice to come. The sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross.

And it is in his death on the cross Christ took our sin and punishment upon himself so that we could be made right with God.

As Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 5:21:

*[21] For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

Christ become sin to that we could be right, good, blameless, and holy in his sight. **He is now our God and we are now his people.**

However, If you were an Israelite when this Psalm was written, your praises would have been focused on how God had forgiven your sin as a nation, and on how he was working for you as his chosen people. **And that would be good and right. God had chosen Israel as a nation and he wanted to bless them and show them his glory and goodness.**

But God, speaking through the psalmist (**Who, according to commentators may or may not be David**), wants to open our eyes and the eyes of the Israelites to the greater redeeming work that he is doing when it says in verse 2:

*[2] O you who hear prayer,  
to you shall all flesh come.*

Not only should we praise God for the sheer fact that he would hear our prayers at all, but we praise God (**both in our words and in how we live**) because he is the one who is calling **all flesh** or all **peoples to himself.**

Now this isn't the Psalmist necessarily saying that everyone will come to God, but he is giving us in a few words the magnificent picture of Revelation 7:9-10 which says:

*[9] After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, [10] and crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!"*

Our God, who made atonement for sin through the shed blood of his son Jesus Christ, is a God who hears the prayers of all peoples and is doing an amazing work of saving men, women, and children from every tribe, tongue, and nation on the face of the planet.

And this is not just a random work of salvation that God does when someone finally chooses to seek after him. No! Everyone that seeks after God and finds him only does it because of God, who in his great mercy chose to draw them to himself.

We were dead in our sin, deserving the eternal punishment of hell, yet, God in his love chose us to be his children with the promise that we would forever dwell in his courts and be satisfied by his forever goodness. As verse 4 says:

*[4] Blessed is the one you choose and bring near,  
to dwell in your courts!  
We shall be satisfied with the goodness of your house,  
the holiness of your temple!*

This God, who has fulfilled these promises in Christ, is the wonder working God who is worthy of our praise. Praise not only given in word, but in the actions or “vows” performed as it says in verse 1.

Which means that we should be living lives that fully and boldly reflect the supreme worth, mercy, and goodness of our God. Like the 3 men in the opening story, who went to work for Atari, we now work for God.

And as his people and servants we need to be living lives that praise and proclaim his goodness. In particular the goodness of the gospel of Jesus Christ so that all nations and people groups will come and experience the forever satisfaction and life that only he gives.

### **Praise the Merciful God who Draws all Peoples to Himself.**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> thing the psalmist calls us to do it to:

#### **2. Stand in Awe of God’s Purposeful Power. (V. 5-8)**

##### **Psalm 65:5-8**

*[5] By awesome deeds you answer us with righteousness,  
O God of our salvation,  
the hope of all the ends of the earth  
and of the farthest seas;  
[6] the one who by his strength established the mountains,  
being girded with might;  
[7] who stills the roaring of the seas,  
the roaring of their waves,  
the tumult of the peoples,  
[8] so that those who dwell at the ends of the earth are in awe at your signs.  
You make the going out of the morning and the evening to shout for joy.*

In June of 1991, through a series of small earthquakes, a volcano erupted from underneath Mt. Pinatubo in the Philippines. The eruptions from this volcano were so massive that ash was shot up roughly 22 miles into the atmosphere, and the flows of lava were so thick that the volcanic deposits were up to 660 ft thick in some places.

That same year on October 30<sup>th</sup> a fishing boat called the “Andrea Gail” got caught in and was sank in an ocean storm off of the coast of Newfoundland. From bouy reports in the water and radio transmissions from the ship we know that the storm caused win speeds as high as 100 mph and waves that were anywhere from 60-100 ft high.

And finally, the recent explosion of a warehouse in Beirut, Lebanon created a crater in the earth that was roughly 460 ft wide and it damaged roughly 5 square miles of the city.

I've highlight these three events because they not only give us this grand picture of the devastating power of nature (Mountains and Oceans), but they also show us the power and devastation that can be caused by man, even in something that has been seen by many as an accident.

And as we hear of these events, watch the news reports, and even the videos of what happened, we are often left with a gasping sense of wonder and awe at the sheer massiveness of the events. But for many of us we are also left with a sense of heightened fear.

Fear over the global impacts of events like these on economies and nature, and fear over whether or not these kinds of events might come knocking at our own doors in the future.

**And when this kind of fear begins to grip us we find ourselves asking that old questions of why. Why did this happen? Why did the volcano erupt? Why did the ocean storm happen? Why did the officials in Beirut not move those explosive supplies? Will this happen again?**

Now we don't know the specific occasion of this Psalm, but some commentators do believe that it could have been written after a national deliverance from famine or possibly a surrounding nation. But even if it isn't, history of Israel it full of instances of captivity, famine, wonderings, and war, **and it would make a lot of sense for the Israelites to begin to ask these same kinds of questions.**

But instead of giving the Israelites or us a bag to hyperventilate in, the psalmist takes ours eyes off of the events and turns our attention to the God who has power over them.

He tells us in verse 6 that he is the God who, by his strength, established the highest mountains, including volcanos. He is the God who according to verse 7 calms the roughest of seas and oceans. And he is the one who "*calms the tumult of the peoples*"; meaning, that he is the one and only God who has power over all nations and people. **He has power over wars, riots, viruses, protests, killings, elections, and explosions. You name it, and he has power over it.**

And because he is the God who has established all things and has power over all things, he is the one and only one who rightly and perfectly works in and through all things for the good of his people. As the Psalmist says in verses 5:

*[5] By awesome deeds you answer us with righteousness,  
O God of our salvation,  
the hope of all the ends of the earth  
and of the farthest seas;*

The God who established the mountains, who calms the roughest oceans, and controls even the most powerful of nations, hears the prayers of his people and answers them by that same power.

And he is doing this both in our own personal lives and globally as he orchestrates and moves in all that is happening in the world.

And not only is he doing this for our good as his people, but he is orchestrating and working wonders in the whole of creation so that people from every tribe, tongue, and nation will come to him in awe and worship

The Psalmist says this perfectly in verse 8 when he writes:

*[8] so that those who dwell at the ends of the earth are in awe at your signs.  
You make the going out of the morning and the evening to shout for joy.*

And if we go back to the book of Colossians, we see Paul echoing this same thing about Christ when he says in Colossians 1:16-17:

*[16] For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. [17] And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.*

Christ created all things, has power over all things, holds all things together, and is working in all things for his kingdom purposes.

So, I want to encourage you this morning. If you are here and you are troubled or worried about what is happening in our nation and our world. Know that he is not silent.

As the God of our Salvation he will answer us, with awesome deeds. And he will use everything that his happening: riots, protests, COVID, political unrest, even our own personal turmoil. He will use them for our good, as his people, and so that his kingdom and glory will be proclaimed to the ends of the earth.

**So that all peoples, including us, will stand in awe of our wonder working God.**

### **3. Rejoice in the God Who Provides in Abundance. (V. 9-13)**

**[9] You visit the earth and water it;  
you greatly enrich it;  
the river of God is full of water;  
you provide their grain,  
for so you have prepared it.**

**[10] You water its furrows abundantly,  
settling its ridges,  
softening it with showers,  
and blessing its growth.**

**[11] You crown the year with your bounty;  
your wagon tracks overflow with abundance.  
[12] The pastures of the wilderness overflow,  
the hills gird themselves with joy,  
[13] the meadows clothe themselves with flocks,  
the valleys deck themselves with grain,  
they shout and sing together for joy.**

I remember, as a little kid getting so excited when my parents decided to make pancakes for breakfast. They would make the batter from scratch and would begin to cook them on the hot griddle with butter (**because everything is better with butter**). Now once enough pancakes were made they would call all of us kids to the table and would allow us to start eating.

Now, I don't know what it was like at your house, but when I was a young kid meals become a race to see who could get the most food before it was gone. The same was true with Pancakes. We would all scramble to get our pancakes, butter, and syrup before everyone else so that we didn't miss out on eating those fluffy circular disks of goodness.

But the silly thing was, we did all that panicking and hurrying to get our pancakes because we thought we would miss out even though more pancakes were about to be put on the plate. In fact, we never lacked enough pancakes and, there were usually plenty of leftovers for the next day.

In the same way we have a God who richly provides everything we need. As Peter wrote in 2 Peter 1:3:

***[3] His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence,***

Our God, through his Son Jesus Christ has given us everything we need for our physical life and our spiritual life.

Or as the Psalmist says: He waters the earth, he enriches it, and he provides the grain. But God does more than just provide enough for our needs. He also says in verse 11 that **God crowns the year with his bounty, his wagon tracks overflow with abundance**. Meaning, that our God gives us more than we could ever think or imagine.

And the only response to the almighty God who provides more than we could ever ask for should be an overwhelming and overflowing joy. We should be like the pastures, meadows, and the valleys in verses 12-13 of this psalm which says:

**[12] The pastures of the wilderness overflow,  
the hills gird themselves with joy,**



**[13] the meadows clothe themselves with flocks,  
the valleys deck themselves with grain,  
they shout and sing together for joy.**

But my fear is that we tend to live like I did during pancake time. Hurrying and panicking to get all I could because I never believed that my parents made enough even though they always did. And so, instead of taking joy and delighting in the pancakes and in my parents, who made them I spent more time worried and afraid that I would go hungry.

Is that you this morning? Are you so focused on your circumstances that you are missing out on the joy that comes from putting your firm trust and hope in the God who will richly and abundantly provide all that you need?

Are you so afraid of what is happening in the world around you that you are missing out on seeing the reality that the power of God is at work in our midst? That he is working all things, both good and bad, in our lives and in the world, so that the world would know that he is God.

Are you missing out on the reality that the God who chose you and called you to himself is wonderfully using everything that is happening today, tomorrow, and until he returns so that people from every tribe, tongue, and nation would know that he is God.

Church, my call to us today is to see our God and savior with fresh eyes and fresh hearts. To cast off our worries, doubts, and fears and once again be enthralled with our wonder working God. He is the one who draws all peoples to himself, he is the one who is powerfully in control of the whole universe and all that happens in it, and he is the one who is and will continue to richly and abundantly provide for us as his people.

And he is the one and only one who is worthy of our praise and our awe. And he is the one and only one who can and will provide us with a daily and everlasting joy.

**Let's Pray.**