

# God, Gladness, and Glory

## Psalm 67

### 1. Introduction.

- a. We spent the past few weeks looking at the Great Commission (Matt. 28:16-20).
- b. This morning I want to take a step back and ask why this is important.
  - i. We know the Great Commission is a command—so that should be sufficient reason to obey. However, I want to look at God’s motivation for this command. In other words, why does God do anything that He does?
    1. Why did He create? Why does He love? Why does He bless us?
    2. What drives the heart of God to accomplish His purposes in the world?
  - ii. The answer to these questions will help us better understand what fuels God for His own mission. And, in turn, my hope is that it might help fuel us to join Him in that mission.
- c. Main point of the sermon: *God has put us on mission for the joy and gladness of all people, but for the ultimate purpose of bringing glory and fame to His name.*
- d. Structure of the Psalm:
  - i. The Psalmist’s Prayer (1).
  - ii. The Psalmist’s Purpose (2).
  - iii. The Psalmist’s Passion (3-5).
  - iv. The Psalmist’s Privilege (6-7).

### 2. The Psalmist’s Prayer (1).

- a. The superscription is an inspired portion of the Psalm. It gives instruction for how the song was to be accompanied. The term, “Selah” (1, 4), was likely a musical insertion for the purpose of pause and reflection.

- b. The formal portion of the Psalm opens with a prayer that picks up on the Levitical blessing of Numbers 6:24-26.
    - i. This was more than a wish, or religious sentiment.
    - ii. When the priest would pronounce this blessing, He would invoke the covenant name of YHWH. When the priest did this, it was understood to be a guaranteed blessing from God (c.f., Num. 6:27).
  - c. The Psalmist turns this blessing into a petition for grace.
    - i. Built into the idea of grace is the understanding that you are a sinner, and do not deserve blessing.
    - ii. Yet the Psalmist asks for it, but based upon God's desire to give it (Num. 6).
      - 1. The Psalmist has in mind a physical blessing (v.6).
      - 2. Likely, this was a psalm that was sung during times of harvest.
  - d. The Psalmist then asks for God's face to shine upon them—a Hebrew idiom, meaning, "to smile."
    - i. This is a word picture of God's pleasure in giving grace.
    - ii. It picks up on the gladness of God over His people (c.f., Zeph. 3:17).
3. The Psalmist's Purpose.
- a. This is the most important verse of the Psalm.
  - b. The most important word in this verse is "that," as it shows the purpose of the request.
  - c. So why does God answer requests for blessing, ultimately? Answer: the praise of His name.
    - i. Notice the Selah after verse 1. It is a pause, not a period.
    - ii. The Psalmist is not asking to be blessed, simply to be blessed. Rather, He asks for blessing, but for the greater purpose of God's way being made known.

- iii. In other words, God’s motivation for anything that He does, is the praise of His name (c.f., Num. 14:13-16). He is the most God-centered reality in the universe.

4. The Psalmist’s Passion (3-5).

- a. He calls forth for passionate praise among all peoples and nations.
  - i. This is a genuine joy.
  - ii. No one sings for joy because they are commanded. Rather, the gladness of the nations is the natural response to seeing the blessing of God.
- b. “Judging” and “guiding” in verse 4 is a positive statement.
  - i. It is the idea of governance, but from an upright position.
  - ii. God will govern the nations from with a pure justice—something most nations have never experienced. This is a forward looking statement. It speaks of the eternal Kingdom of God.
  - iii. Verses 3 and 5 are parallel statements, forming an inclusio (i.e., bookends). The purpose is to highlight what is in the middle—which is v.4. God is passionate for the gladness of all people, where they get the joy, and He gets the glory.
- c. This is picking up on the Abrahamic promise (Gen. 12:1-3).
  - i. God blesses people, so that through them, others might be blessed.
  - ii. This is most fully realized in Jesus Christ. The blessing of Abraham brings forth Jesus Christ, who, then, in turn, blesses the nations.
  - iii. This gets into the Kingdom of God concept.
    - 1. Why is God establishing His Kingdom, ultimately? Why does He want to gather the nations under one Kingdom? Answer: to create an eternal house of worship.
    - 2. God’s Kingdom is His divine vehicle through which He will receive eternal worship and praise.

- iv. So this Psalm looks back to the Abrahamic promise, but points forward to the fullness of the Kingdom, through Jesus Christ. And the entire plan is being accomplished, but so that God's name might be praised by all.

5. The Psalmist's Privilege (6-7).

- a. Vss. 1-5 have been forward looking. Vss. 6-7 now become present tense. So the prayer of vss.1-2 has been realized in vss. 6-7.
- b. This is a physical blessing ("the earth has yielded its produce").
  - i. As the nations see the blessing of Israel, they will gather and see God's kindness to His people.
  - ii. In turn, Israel will become a blessing to the famished nations.
  - iii. Again, the goal is the worship of God among the nations ("fear" v.7).

6. Conclusion.

- a. Under the inspiration of the Spirit, the Psalmist pens a song to realign His heart with the purposes of God.
- b. Until we can become as God-centered as God is, then our joy will always be lacking.
  - i. Our joy is a direct product of making the Gospel public.
  - ii. As God blesses us, we then ought to bless others, but so that they might, in turn, bless God.
  - iii. The joy of the Psalmist is not bound up with the blessing, but with how the blessing allows Him to join in God's mission for the worship of His name.
  - iv. So as Christians, who live in the top 1% of the history of the world, we have a massive calling on our lives—if we're thinking as Christians.
  - v. So may we play our part, and be that blessed conduit that God intends us to be.

**Small Group Questions:**

1. Discuss anything that stood out to you in the Psalm.
2. Practice giving the Gospel to each other. Keep it 1-2 minutes at maximum.
3. Pray for the people you are seeking to reach.