

Psalm 63 – “What Is a Soul That Thirsts After God Like? Come and Drink Satisfyingly in God!”

****READ THE TEXT****

INTRO-

Introductory Illustration

- *I remember a number of years ago going on a hike with Elizabeth and another couple. It was mid-summer and our hike lasted from early morning to early afternoon.*
 - I was so thirsty by the end that I went up and asked other people for water, Gatorade. I couldn't make it any further! I was PARCHED! I needed drink!
 - We need to be this way with God—we must long and thirst for and *need* God like this.
 - A man with a parched throat needs water and, until he receives it, nothing else matters!

Background to Ps 63

- Amazingly, in this psalm there is “gladness, praise, communion with God, longing for His presence, but there is ***not one word of asking for temporal or even spiritual good.***”
- In the 4th c., **John Chrysostom** (late 4th c.) said of Ps 63: “*no day should pass without the public singing of this Psalm*”. And elsewhere he preached: “*the spirit and soul of the whole book of Psalms is contracted into this one psalm*” (both in Perowne, 486).

God (v.1 & v.11 – inclusio). Speaks *about* God – 2x (3person in v.11); Speaks *TO* God – 17x English (2p – *you*)

This Psalm remarkably is **comprehensive**: David worships God with his **lips** (v.3- my lips praise), and with his **tongue** (v.4, I will bless thee), with his **hands** (v.4, I will lift up my hands), with his **will** (v.5, my soul is satisfied), with his **mouth** (v.5, my mouth shall praise), with his **memory** (v.6, when I remember you on my bed), and with his **intellect** (v.6, meditate on thee in the night watches). ***Satisfaction of God engulfs one's entire being, faculties, senses & body.***

Rightly is this called “one of the most beautiful and touching psalms in the whole Psalter”

1. God - My **Personal** God
2. God - My **Powerful** God
3. God - My **Praiseworthy** God
4. God - My **Pleasure in** God
5. God - My **Protecting** God

THESIS—I want to give you **3 defining marks** of a ‘**SOUL THAT THIRSTS AFTER GOD**’.

Personal communion with God forms the center of this profound psalm.

I. YOUR SOUL IS CRAVING FOR GOD (vv 1-2)

The setting in v.1b – in the dry, weary wilderness. In Southern Israel - it’s real, full, total desert.

- a. V.1 – earnestly I seek for you
 - i. Could be rendered: “early”.
- b. V.1 – my soul thirsts – Isa 55:1-2; Matt 5:6; Rev 21:6
- c. V.2 – I’ve seen you in the sanctuary (he is far from Jerusalem).
- d. Ex 24:11 – Israel saw God.
 - i. **To see God’s POWER**
 - ii. **To see God’s GLORY**
 - iii. See Isaiah 6 (cf. Ezek 1, Rev 1, Matt 17)
 - 1. see God’s strength & God’s supremacy; see God’s greatness & God’s glory; see God’s power & God’s preeminence.
 - 2. When you see God’s power, you worship Him & Give Him glory!
 - iv. You crave God when you see God. When you see God, you crave for more of God. ***You see God’s power & glory fully embodied in Jesus Christ!*** I just want “HIM”.
 - v. Can you say that? The newborn child wants milk. The new husband just wants to be with his new bride! The child of God just wants to be with GOD! “SHOW ME YOUR GLORY” (Ex 33.18)!

II. YOUR SOUL IS CONTENT WITH GOD (vv 3-5)

If God is your supreme possession, then you sit on the ‘highest throne of joy.’ If God is your satisfying possession, then you enjoy the sweetest sunshine of delight (William Law).

Like someone who is **content** after just having had a well-nourishing, good-tasting meal.

Note the pattern in these verses:

Experience God (3a)

Praise (3b)

Praise (4)

Experience God (5a)

Praise (5b)

- a. V.3 – love better than life
 - i. **NT equivalent:** to me to live is Christ to die is gain (Phil 1.21).
 - ii. **Why is God’s love better than life?**
 - 1. God’s love **supersedes** human love.

2. God’s love **imparts** spiritual life.
3. God’s love **exceeds** all earthly joys.
4. God’s love **pitied** vile sinners.
5. God’s love **accomplished** eternal redemption.

No wonder “the love of Christ surpasses knowledge” (Eph 3.19).
See what kind of love the Father has bestowed on us (1 John 3.1)

- b. V.4 to bless & to lift up hands = *symbolize worship!*
- c. V.5- be satisfied w/ God **more than** any delicacy. More than any sumptuous meal.
More than any pleasing dinner, any satisfying dish.

To be content with God, you must...

1. Receive God’s Saving Love
2. Revel in heartfelt praise
3. Rest in having God Alone
4. Remember true forgiveness in Christ

When you’re content in God you’re like the description of the 144,000 during the future Tribulation who just “follow the Lamb wherever he goes” (Rev 14:4). ***You follow him! Like the disciples in Mark 3 - they were “with Jesus” (Mark 3.14)***

We see this brought together in Eph 3:14-21 – Paul speaks of God’s *power & glory* & then God’s *love* and then he bursts out in a doxology!

III. YOUR SOUL IS CONFIDENT IN GOD (vv 6-11)

Everyone is looking for something strong to anchor their hope. Some try to find that stability in relationships, in work, in earthly comforts, in family, in degrees, school, prestige. ***But the child of God says — my confidence is in GOD! (Ps 71.5; Prov 3.26)***

- a. Meditates on God (v6)
 - i. In the night, when David woke, his first and best thoughts were of God.
 - ii. ***David was a man with a mind that sought the LORD, no wonder he had a God-satisfied soul.***
 - iii. ***Do you meditate on GOD and on His character? His works and His ways?***
- b. Finds help in God (v7)
 - i. God is your help (strength, support)
 - ii. In shadow of wings (shade in desert is needed!). ***find this shade, this rest, this comfort, this help in God!***
- c. Clings to God (v8)
 - i. To **cling** is to cling **like** a husband and wife cling to each other (Gen 2.24) or like one who is in **hot pursuit** of another.

- ii. Cling to God but His right hand ‘upholds’ me --- speaks of God’s overruling strength & power.
 - iii. You powerfully HOLD on to God.
 - iv. He powerfully HOLDS on to you.
 - 1. It’s the idea of Jude: **keep yourself in the love of God (Jude 21)** and Jude 1 says that you are **beloved in God the Father (Jude 1)**.
- d. **Trusts in God (vv 9-11)**

Yet hear the **Warning** to the oppressors, to the arrogant, to the blasphemers, to the unbelievers—death & destruction!

But Geoff --- I’m just not there yet, I don’t thirst for God...

1. Keep seeking Him (v1a, 8)
2. Behold God’s Glory (v2)
3. Reflect on God’s Love (v3)
4. Faithfully Praise Him (v3, 4, 5, 7)

CONCL-

Concluding Illustration

- Or, what do you do?
 - **1) See God’s Glory**
 - **2) Savor God’s Glory**
 - **3) Show God’s Glory**
- So if anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and Drink (John 7:37). And he who believes in Christ, as the Scripture says, “from his innermost being will flow rivers of living water’ (John 7:38).
 - O soul—thirst after God!