

Psalm 24 – Clean Hands and a Pure Heart Small Group Notes

Opener: Have you ever been part of a liturgical church? How do you feel about liturgy (pattern for worship)?

The Psalm this week is liturgical worship which has been drawn together into one Psalm.
Read Psalm 24.

Q. The first part is verses 1&2. How would you summarise these verses?

Hint: There's definitely Canaanite cosmology at work in verse 2. Yam is the god of the sea whose other name is Nahar which means "river". Also water motifs suggest chaos.

A. Yahweh is God over everything – including other gods. He brought order out of chaos.

The next part (vv 3-6) is liturgy for pilgrimage to the temple mount / Mount Moriah / the temple in Jerusalem.

Representative of the Pilgrims: "Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord? And who shall stand in his holy place?"

Priest: "He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully. He will receive blessing from the Lord and righteousness from the God of his salvation."

Representative: "Such is the generation of those who seek him, who seek the face of the God of Jacob."

Q. The pilgrim was to make sure that they were righteous before Yahweh before they even set foot on the mountain, never mind in the temple. How does this translate for the church and us? Does it?

A. This liturgy is clearly pointing to the law – righteousness comes from the law and also blessings come from righteousness (keeping the law – Torah). Now we know that righteousness only comes through faith in Jesus (Phil 3:9). I'm not entirely sure that righteousness is even on our minds when head out to our worship services.

Q. Do we consider what we're actually doing when we join together in a worship service? Is it more about us or is it about bringing our all to worship the God of our salvation (Jesus)?

Talking about "bringing our all" – read 2 Sam 6:12-15.

This is probably what's in mind for the last part of the Psalm (vv 7-10) – the bringing of the Ark of the Covenant into Jerusalem (the city of David). The carriers of the Ark are telling the gates to open for the King of glory. The gatekeeper is asking (probably knowingly), "Who is this King of Glory?" The response is euphoric.

Q. Is this the God we worship as a church at FBC, Kelowna? Are we missing anything? Do we have clean hands and pure hearts as we gather together?

Close: If you rarely feel like being part of a worship service I would invite you to review what exactly you feel the point is of gathering together on a Sunday morning. What are our motives and how we can facilitate better entering into God's presence with righteous hearts. Feel free to submit your thoughts to Pastor Steve.