

A Ray of Light in Dark Times - Psalm 105:3
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Psalm 105. We will just read the first three verses in a few minutes, but I would encourage you to read all of this. It's always been at the top for me. And there's so many in the Psalms, but you find Joseph in here, and how the Lord used him, and how God worked from olden times, what we call them, and still at work, but not as he has been.

Psalm 105. And I want to, I guess, title this from verse three, A Ray of Light in Dark Times. If you're there, would you join with me as we approach the throne of grace?

My Father, it has been delightful to my heart just sitting here. And though the truth sometimes and the reality of that in our day is something that is hard to accept, but the children will. They must. Aware of the times and of the seasons, the darkness around us, but a little light within, shining from the throne of glory, and that of Christ our Lord. Gracious, gracious Lord God, now lay hold of hearts and turn them outward and upward. Most of the time, everybody's got their hearts turned inward. It's a "me" society. But grant that Christ our Lord might be exalted and that our great God would be glorified in giving us the spirit, giving us ears to hear, giving that to say, which is edifying to the saints, encouraging to the discouraged, hope to those where hope is so small, and light, shine within hearts. Light from Him who is the light of the world. And help your children, and give us of thy Spirit to do these things for us, for Thy great name's sake, and the glory and the exaltation of the Lamb of God, our Savior and our Lord. In His name we pray, Amen.

The first three verses of Psalm 105. **O give thanks unto the Lord; call upon his name: make known his deeds among the people. Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him: talk ye of all his wondrous works.** That doesn't take place much today. Occasionally, you'll find someone that's had great things done for them, and they will speak about those. But it's usually about what I've done, what I intend to do, what I want to do. No, this is to the Christian that Day Star that shines in their hearts.

In verse three from our text, or for our text, **Glory ye in his holy name: let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord.** And I've had this verse before me, and this thought before me, but it was only yesterday that it was brought to mind about JC Ryle's *Light from Old Times*. I already had the title before I ever remembered. And he's got, I don't know how many volumes, and I'm

sure you can find it somewhere still in print, if you like the history of the church. And he goes back to pre-1500s. brings you all the way through the 1700s of men and women that suffered and the old Puritans that died defending their faith.

The world has always tried to extinguish the testimony of the Christians or the light that they bear, but the more they've tried to put it out, the brighter it has shined. Kind of like that in the history of Israel, Pharaoh said, all right, we have to kill all the boy babies. They're just becoming too many. They could join together and rebel against us, so we have to destroy them. But God prevented that. Now you and I live in a different day, a day where there is one of great darkness across and throughout the world. And what passes today as biblical Christianity is little to none compared to the teachings of our Lord and of the scripture. And it is this darkness that I speak of that little ray of light, small, small beam in the hearts of children from time to time. The psalmist said, **O give thanks**. Well, you don't hear of that. **Make known, make known** his name. Not today. Do you know any that you can talk with? Or even in your own heart, does there arise those songs of praise and thanksgiving? And you get quite enough within your heart, your mind, silent, just to sing to Him psalms and hymns? "Well, I can't sing." Well, I know I can't either. But I do that. I do that quite often, more so now than ever before.

And what I speak to you about today would resemble a candle during the time that John spoke to you about when the Spirit of God was working and when he was speaking. If he speaks to your heart, you are a blessed individual.

But all of you know true Christianity, it's been on life support in the land, going back almost 100 years. Oh, we have a lot of churches, we have a lot of big churches, we still have a lot of people going. But I'm talking about true Christianity. I'm talking about Christ exalted in the midst of the congregation of His children. Not many. Very few today. And as I said, that light began to go out well over a hundred years ago.

And that which passes as Christianity today is as close to being what the word calls Christianity as, you may not be familiar with this term (and it's okay). When, what they called themselves chemists, and where we get that word, but in the early years it was called alchemy. Their goal was to take the base metals of the earth and change those to gold and silver. They worked tirelessly to make gold and silver out of old, rare, or over metals that were abundant in the earth. Another part of their work was they were searching for the elixir to life, for life. The herbs and the minerals they experimented with seeking to find in that eternal life. You may have read about and remember Ponce de Leon in his journey over here, and he found what was called that fountain of youth. It's down there in Florida. Ponce de Leon. But those men that claimed to be doing all this for the good of mankind, They were as close to finding the secret of eternal life and finding the elixir to help everybody enjoy life...they were as close to finding that as preachers

today are in finding the secret of eternal life. Any and everything passes today and they call it “You get this and you've got eternal life”.

And I said the professing church has been on life support for a long time. Drive by and see their buildings. Get a program and see their activities. They're always busy doing. They must be. They have no grounds to fix what they do not see as the problem.

But to all of you, there's a little light in the darkness in the world in which we live. We can go back to the first murder. A brother jealous of his brother, the Lord accepting his sacrifice and worship and not his. And he was branded as an outcast and he told the Lord, **my punishment is greater than I can bear**. Genesis 4:13. But he finally just went his own way, established his own life, married, began raising children, built a city. And the scripture said that he went out from the presence of the Lord. Now that's impossible if God is, as we say He is, in all places and all times. No place where He is not, no place where He never has been, and yet this man went out from the presence of the Lord. All he did was get rid of God in his mind by activity. And from the sin of his mother and father, the world continued to get worse and worse. And God came down to see it was unbearable. So God called out a man, you know, as Noah, And He said, “within 120 years I'm going to destroy this world and every living thing in it except that that you get on the ark that I'm going to give you the dimensions of how to make it and the size.” - paraphrase of Genesis 6.

Six people got on that ark. Not all of them were Christians. For it was not long till again man was forming his own gods. And the world continued from the call of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and the 12 tribes of Israel. And when they split, then one built a place for them to go worship on the high mountains. He picked two places where it was convenient for them to go. And soon after, within just a short period of time, the entire 10 tribes, the 10 northern tribes, were rejected of God and reprobated.

But God still had a little light in dark times. Darkness for 400 years because heaven had no word for mankind. Then He that is the light of the world came. They thought they would put that out. They tried, but it only spread. But less than a hundred years after the death of Christ and the Spirit coming in great power, the world was back in darkness. And it never improves.

In the 1500s, you've got one of the meanest, most wicked women that has ever been exalted to the throne. There in England and in Scotland, Bloody Mary. And in the 1600s, pilgrims came over to America. They began settling in the early colonies here. And then in the 1700s, William Tennants and his family came, establishing what then was the first college to train young preachers, known as the Log Cabin up there in Pennsylvania. And Jonathan Edwards, and under him, revival there. Whitfield came over from the eastern coast of South Georgia all the way up

the eastern states, colonies. He was preaching. And many, not by the hundreds, but by the thousands, were converted.

But then, darkness set in again. And by the mid-1800s, all that had been accomplished and all God had done for His people here in the early land, it was all over. A little fella called Scofield, C.I. Scofield was born, and Finney. And by the turn of the 20th century, the new gospel and new methods of making Christians was here in America. And now instead of the alchemy trying to make gold and silver. Now false preachers are now making converts. Everywhere you turn, you run into these that say that they have been saved. but they have no evidence. They have no light shining from them nor light within them. No true light.

Now you and I find ourselves laboring when the true light is all but extinguished and the mystery of iniquity is so great that it's almost felt in this land, but the one true living supreme Lord over all, still sits on the throne. And He has not abandoned his little flock, and He never will. So light still flickers in the pages of this old Spirit-breathed book sitting on your lap that I hope you're looking within.

And now that brings us to Psalm 105:3, **rejoice**. I wish that there would be some of you that would get here. I know I'm not the best of speakers. I sure would like to have the Lord say something, but He has to have your attention. Now you that seek the Lord, rejoice. You'll find that verse almost word for word, 1 Chronicles 16:10. And He says "rejoice". Now doesn't that seem premature? Knowing what you do, just a little brief history of Christianity in the world, just a little. Doesn't it seem premature that a preacher would be up here in the pulpit and saying to you, "rejoice" if there is this in your heart? Well, I don't have much. Some days I don't know that I'm a Christian, whether I'm a Christian or not. Some days it seems I'm closer to being what's called a reprobate, given up by God, than I am as a Christian.

Are you seeking God? That's a question that all of you can answer. I'm not asking you or telling you that you have to seek Him 30 minutes or an hour a day or five hours. That you must seek Him in His word, in prayer, in the assembly. All that's true, but there is that heart after Him. Whether you're a Christian or not - and many will say, "Well, that doesn't seem right to say rejoice and yet I don't know if I'm a Christian. So is not the Lord a little premature in telling you to rejoice?"

Like a man digging in the earth, hunting gold, search for it day after day, week after week, months after months, and one day he returns home, little food for the family. Now what if that man gathered all the children and the wife around the table and said, "I know that you don't have food to eat right now, and you don't have money to go purchase things that you need right now, but I want all of you to rejoice and be happy because I'm searching for gold." Well, his seeking did not put food on the table - it did not put clothes on their back, But when he settled here, he

staked out a good piece of land. Including in that was a mountain that just looked like it had to have gold in those hills. So he staked out a claim and that was his. But when he got home and saw the condition of his family, he said, "Well, tomorrow I will go into the villages nearby, and I will seek a buyer for our land." And everybody that he approaches asks, "Why? Why should I buy your land? Just because you say that there's gold there." "And preacher, you're saying for us to rejoice if we've got the slightest inclination within of seeking the Lord, isn't that similar to what that man's trying to sell?"

Well, he would say, "I know it's there. You just have to take what resources you have." But at the end of the day, he found no buyers. For there is a difference in searching for gold, or wealth, or earthly treasures in this old world, than there is in the sincere heart searching for the Lord in His hidden treasures lying in the book.

This is certain. Nothing in life is certain. Whether you'll be here tomorrow, whether your children will be here tomorrow, whether your mate will be here tomorrow, whether you're able to get up and go to work tomorrow, nothing is certain. Nobody would buy that man's property because he said there's gold on that. But I'm telling you that in the pages of this book, when the Spirit of God just works a small degree in your heart to seek the Lord, He did not work that in vain. And He never begins something that He doesn't finish.

Now, you're gonna say, and you're sitting there thinking, "Well, I know this one that made a profession of faith, and it lasted several years, but he left. Can't find him in church anymore today." I'm not talking about, I said, if you, in sincerity of heart have a little interest. I'm not saying how much. If you've got just a little interest in finding Him, and if you search for knowledge and wisdom as you would for earthly fortunes, He will provide that for you, wisdom and knowledge.

Psalm 40:16 says, **Let all those that seek thee rejoice.** That seek thee. Now I want you to turn with me to Proverbs 8. Just a couple of places. Proverbs 8:17. **I love them that love me.**

Evangelism today has a wrong starting point. And everywhere you turn, you're gonna hear somebody saying "God loves you. And God has a wonderful plan for your life." That's starting at the wrong place. I love them that love me. You mean that God doesn't love anyone until they love Him? Well, I'd have a problem saying that because when you got into this old world and you knew nothing about the love of God, little about God, and you certainly didn't know anything about His love, but here you sit. Were not you always on the heart of God? And when Jesus Christ went to the cross, did He not go for all those that the Father had given Him? And was not that gift to Him from the very foundation of the world? Well, if you read the scriptures, you'll find all that I've told you to be true, all. But true evangelism does not begin with this, "God

loves you and wants to save you and will save you if you'll just repeat this prayer". And what they've done is just about seal up thousands upon thousands to eternal damnation.

True evangelism, instead of beginning with "God loves you", it begins with you as a sinner. Only that. And in your soul, when just a little stirring begins, there's something about that that wants you to get to the Lord and just tell Him, I am a sinner. Somebody didn't tell me, I just found out for myself. When a little light beamed from the Lord Jesus, Jesus Christ the Lord on the throne, just a little light beamed from that throne, I found out what I'd never known. I had a small inkling inclination that I'd done things wrong. But it never brought me to repentance like it did that day with that little light.

I love those that love me, now listen, **and those that seek me early**. Don't put it off. Don't wait. "Those that seek me early, well, I might...I might save them." No, they **shall find me**. Now that's a definite. And so God can say, the psalmist writing by inspiration of the Spirit, can say to everybody that is honest in their soul, those that seek me can rejoice. And you can rejoice only in the fact that you don't know if you've gotten to Him yet or not - you can rejoice in the fact that there is that desire in your heart. Dead men and women, boys and girls, they've got no desire for eternal life. If you do not believe that, go read Ephesians chapter 2 - **dead in trespasses and sins**. We came into the world as dead people. You say, "But I have a lot of interest in life and I have..." True. But all your interest is on a vertical. And that One on the throne. And all your interest is you. "What will make me happy? What will bring fulfillment to my life here?" But when somebody begins seeking the Lord, God's already kindled a spark.

I jotted down while you were singing. *He sheds the beams of light divine, or this benighted soul of mine* - from the hymn *Jesus, and Shall It Ever Be* by Joseph Grigg. It's dark in my heart, but no matter the darkness that I might be in right now, there is a desire to find Him. And you're gonna find out that desire's gonna lead you to Calvary every time.

Now, one other, and this is just still to your right there, Isaiah 45:19. Thus said the Lord, **I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth: I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain: I the Lord speak righteousness, I declare things that are right**. Seek me, get to me and you shall live. But what about joining the church? And what about being baptized? Get to the Lord. Those things will work themselves out in time.

Verse three in this chapter, **And I will give thee the treasures of darkness**, light in the midst of this great darkness. I'll give thee the treasures of darkness, **and the hidden riches of the secret places that thou mayest know that I, the Lord, which called thee by thy name, am the God of Israel**.

A man that's been made alive, or woman, made alive by the operation of the Spirit of God has one emphasis and one goal in life. Now, it doesn't kill out all the other goals that you might have, but this one takes preeminence. Get to the only One that can do something about this weight on my back. I've got to get to Him.

And in his seeking help, Evangelist comes along and says, "You see yonder mount?" Well, it's not clear, but I think I can see it in the distance. "You go there." What about this weight on my back? *Paraphrased from The Pilgrim's Progress by John Bunyan*

Moms and dads, can I plead with you? Don't ever pick green fruit on the tree. Let God finish the work in your children's hearts. I know you don't want to see them hurt. I know that. That's not theory. I know that. You don't want to see them hurt. But it's better for them to hurt for a few months or even a few years than for you to go to them with a man-made remedy to get them out of that state of grief and sorrow.

"You see yonder mount, get to it". But he has an obstacle, not only the distance, but his wife and children begin calling, "Don't leave us. Stay with us, we must have you". But in all relationships, even as dear as wife and children, fingers must be stuck in your ears so that you cannot hear their cries, lest you be doomed in this old land. It's going to be destroyed. Whatever it takes, get to that mount.

And there you'll see three crosses. And the one in the middle is the only one that can do anything about the weight that you're carrying on your back. And he found the preacher to be truthful. For there that weight of sin on his back, he saw rolling down the hill into a large bottomless pit. And now meeting Jesus, he's been forgiven. Was his seeking in vain? No. Will yours be in vain? Not if the Lord ignited that desire. Get to the one on the cross, dear ones. And your seeking and your searching will never be in vain.

So, if you this morning sit here with a heart to seek the Lord, rejoice. Whether a Christian or not, rejoice. For the one that brought that is the only one that can provide. In your time of stress and grief and sorrow, just keep seeking. He will be found.

Now most of you here are too young to remember Robert Kearns. I think that's the correct pronunciation. And I think that there was a movie that came out several years back about his life. But he had a degree and he had this desire within to search and develop and have his own workplace. And after months and months and years, he finally developed a wiper on the windshields that had more than on and off. It used to be when you turned them on, they were going full speed then. But he developed this and he took it to Ford Motor Company. And for six months, he had this testing in that thing that he brought to show them. And they ended up stealing that from him. It devastated him. Put him in a mental institute. He finally got out and

went through three or four law firms to get Ford to do right. All of them failed. So he just started getting all his paperwork, everything he'd done, decided I'll settle this myself. But in the meantime, he lost his family. He was so obsessed.

And for 30 years, he waged this almost, almost impossible battle. You don't settle with these giant corporations. They find a way around it. The firms that he had hired gave up. So he started defending it himself. And finally, after 30 years, he settled with Ford for \$13 or \$17 million. And later with Dodge, again, either \$13 or \$17 million, but both of them together was \$30 million that they had to pay him. He died shortly after that. He lost his family, lost everything he had, and then became a multimillionaire, but never got to enjoy it.

And a lost person can spend their lifetime searching for things that the heart calls treasures, and in the end die a pauper. But no one that seeks after this. He that seeketh after the Lord, will get the greatest of treasures. There has never been a sinner yet that has found out that the Lord said, "No, no, you don't qualify". No. Every honest seeker has reason to rejoice.

And ultimately seeking is only a means. Praying - which most think is just a religious duty. Attending the service in some church building - a religious duty. And when all these are over, "I can now go on with life". No, seeking, praying, searching in scripture, attending service, all of them have this in common, they are but means to bring you to the God of Scripture. And you begin reading your Bible for more than just a religious thing you're supposed to do. "I am seeking the one that the Bible informs me about, the living God".

And the Spirit of God, with that little ray of light in the midst of all the darkness around us, is from the Spirit who works in you to seek. But the seeking brings you into the reality of the divine being called the Lord of Glory. "Now do I give up when I find him? Do I give up my church attendance?" No, not if it's in the right place. "Do I give up reading my Bible?" No. "Do I give up praying?" No. Because once you have found him, there is an eternal thirst that has been created in your soul. And so for all you do, religious duties that you do are for that purpose, to get to Him that can do such great things for me.

And I close. Rejoice any or all of you that have a desire within to seek the Lord. But that desire must ultimately come to a confrontation with your great God.