



To God be Glory

Psalm 115

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To God be glory forever.

InterVarsity's Doctrinal Basis begins each statement by asserting, "We believe . . .," and concludes with a ringing affirmation, "To God be glory forever." This framework is designed to help us see the value that doctrinal conviction brings to the life of Christian discipleship.

This study of [Psalm 115](#) will probe the relationship of faith, worship and living to the glory of God.

1. [Psalm 115](#) is "as alive as an act of worship as it is in its theology," says theologian Alec Motyer. He suggests that we look at Psalm 115 as antiphonal worship involving two choirs, a congregation, and a leader -- all interacting to praise the LORD. Experience this lively interaction by reading the psalm aloud. Divide your group into two parts (**A** and **B** below). Ask one person to volunteer to be the **leader**. Read it in the follow way:

All:	vv. 1-3		
Leader:	vv. 4-8		
A:	v. 9a	B:	v. 9b
A:	v. 10a	B:	v. 10b
A:	v. 11a	B:	v. 11b
All:	v. 12a		
A:	v. 12b	B:	v. 12c
All:	v. 13		
Leader:	vv. 14-15		
All:	vv. 16-18		

2. The most frequently repeated word in this psalm is "LORD." It is important to remember that this is not a generic name, like "God" in English. It is the personal name of the Old Testament God of the Covenant. Sometimes it is translated "Yahweh," (or "YHWH" with only Hebrew consonants).
 - What does this repetition tell you about what the author was trying to accomplish?
 - Look through the psalm and make a list of the attributes (characteristics) of the LORD. Turn your list into praise by expressing adoration to the LORD using your own words, but based on the concepts and words of the psalm.
3. The psalm begins by rejecting the false paths of self-glorification and idolatry (vv. 1-8). How is self-glorification inconsistent with the characteristics of the LORD on your list (#2)? Can you be both self-glorifying and a worshipper of the LORD? Why not?
 - What is the central error of idolatry?
 - Is idolatry only an ancient problem? Can you identify contemporary forms of idolatry? What fruit does idolatry produce in the lives of its devotees (v. 7)?

4. The key verb in vv. 9-11 is *trust*. Who is called to trust? In what are they called to trust? How is “trust” something more than intellectual assent to these statements about the LORD?
5. What is the key verb in vv. 12-15? Can you define this word?
 - What does the psalmist mean by stating, “*The LORD remembers us?*” Can the LORD have a memory lapse?
 - What is the relationship between the LORD “remembering” and the LORD “blessing?”
 - Who are the recipients of blessing from the LORD?
6. Review the entire psalm. Notice the connections in the psalm between the rejection of false belief, clarity of belief, trust, giving God glory, and worship.
 - What effect does false belief have on worship, on giving glory to God, on trusting in God and receiving his blessing?
 - How does self-glorification undercut trust in the LORD, worship to the LORD, or clarity of belief about the LORD?
 - What effect does clarity of belief have on trust in the LORD, worship to the LORD, or false beliefs about the LORD?

MAKING IT PERSONAL

- Think of all of the spiritual realities mentioned in the psalm:
 - giving glory to God
 - rejecting self-glorification and idolatry (false belief)
 - clarity of belief
 - trust in the LORD
 - blessing from the LORD
 - worship of the LORD
- Which of the above realities are personal strengths, or strengths in your fellowship? Which are weaknesses?
 - What can you do to more fully practice your personal strengths and strengthen your weaknesses?
 - What can you do as leaders in your fellowship to enhance strengths and strengthen weakness?
- Pray together about these matters, giving glory to God and seeking his blessing.
- Sing a song of praise to the LORD that focuses on him (and not on you).
- Shout aloud together the final word of the psalm, “*Hallelujah!*”