

Introduction

- The war of 1812 - June 18, 1812, Congress declared war on England because of England's interference with international trade. 1814 - British troops set ablaze Capitol building and White House. September 13, 1814 - British warships bombarded Fort McHenry in Baltimore Harbor for 25 hours. September 14, amateur poet watched what happened from a ship several miles in the distance. Watched the rockets' red glare throughout the night. As morning came, saw the star spangled banner still waving over Ft. McHenry - scribbled the first verse of our national anthem on the back of a letter.
- Fourth verse on screen... 1931 - became our national anthem. Every good victory deserves a good song celebrating that victory. Every time you hear the national anthem, you rise to your feet - you celebrate the country you live in.
- In Christ, a greater victory than what US experienced in 1812. A victory worth celebrating - a victory worth singing about. When God brings about victory, it's worth singing about.
- Believers are a singing people because we have reason to sing. This morning, we've been singing about our victory. We've been worshipping God.
- Sunday morning corporate worship is our weekly opportunity to gather and celebrate everlasting victory.
- You've attended numerous Sunday morning gatherings as a Christian. You've worshiped in smaller churches, larger churches, with bands, with

piano or organ, with choirs, with no instrumentation, with hymns, with modern music, etc. Question: what makes worship good?

- Maybe you've walked away from a service thinking: "that was awesome!" Or, you've walked away thinking, "I didn't get much out of that."
- What makes worship good? Is it the size of the congregation? The style of music? That I was moved to tears? That I felt a warm tingly feeling in my heart?
- [Exodus 15](#) - a worship celebration after the Hebrews crossed the Red Sea. In this passage, two realities that make worship good.

What makes worship good is celebrating God because of the truth.

- The Hebrews had just witnessed an amazing miracle: hundreds of thousands of them had crossed the Red Sea on dry ground. They walked between giant walls of water, and they watched as the waters returned to normal swallowing the Egyptian army that had pursued them.
- Now, Moses and the Israelites sing - all we're given are the words to the song. We don't know the tune. You might not have liked the way it sounded. It may have been too traditional for you, or too modern for you. It wasn't done with a band, or a piano or organ - just voices - and apparently tambourines (vs. 20). They weren't baptists because they danced (vs. 20).
- While we don't know the tune of the song, we do know it contained truth about God that they had experienced.
- 14:31 - They experienced deliverance and believed. Israel on the verge of being captured by the Egyptians - death was staring them in the face, yet God delivered them.

- On the other side of the sea, they're relieved, they're exuberant - they had just experienced salvation. No wonder they sing in celebration.
- **We need to celebrate our death-defying salvation (vs. 1-2).** First hand experience of what God had done. Imagine what it must have been like to come through the waters. Imagine the gratefulness the Hebrews experienced in that moment. They still didn't know what awaited them as they made it to the Promised Land, but they did know that God had delivered them. "This is my God, my father's God..." Yahweh was the God of the covenant who had come through for His people.
- You were not simply on the verge of death, you were dead ([Ephesians 2:1](#)), but God made you alive in Christ. He gave you new life. He saved you from hell. It's easy to forget what we were saved from. It's easy to forget the horror of what awaited us because of our rebellion against God. However, just because it's easy to forget doesn't change the fact that God has saved us from death.
- **We need to thank God for His faithful love.** vs. 3 - The Lord is a warrior. vs. 4-10 describe the victory of our warrior God. Do you see God as a warrior? Tozer: "What we think about God is the most important thing about us..." Warrior? Big man upstairs? Out of touch grandfather?
- Moses' poetic recounting of the events that had just happened. The song of praise completely focused on what God had done. This is not about Israel's victory but God's victory on behalf of the Israelites.
- Pharaoh and Egypt the enemy of God because of their rebellion. God overthrew them by his majestic power (vs. 7). His wrath burned against them and He consumed them (vs. 7). The enemy thought they could defeat God's people, but just by the power of His breath, God covered them with the sea (vs. 9-10).

- vs. 11-12 - God demonstrated power that no other god could replicate because there is no other god. God is glorious and holy, worthy of praise, and revered for His wonder.
- Why did God bring about such a great victory? He was zealous for His people (vs. 13). They didn't deserve His love, but in His grace, God chose to set His love on this people that He would use for His glory. God, a warrior, passionate about us, who rejoices over us ([Zephaniah 3:17](#)).
- Thank God because He is your warrior who has defeated sin and death for you so you could have life. He has defeated sin and death for you because He loves you, not because you are deserving, but because He has chosen to love you.
- **We need to magnify God because of His triumphant reign.** God is a warrior who reigns, and when the nations realize who God really is, they will tremble. vs. 14-17 look towards Israel's future. God will bring the Hebrews safely into the Promised Land. Their enemies will be terrified - this is what happened in [Joshua 2](#) - Rahab and the people of Jericho had heard about the God of the Hebrews and they feared.
- AND God would use Israel to show the glory of God to the nations. A missional purpose - God's Messiah, Jesus, would die not only for the Hebrews but all sinners - One day - every nation will be represented around the throne. All will know that He is the King, and many will give their lives to the King - there will be a healing of the nations ([Revelation 22:2](#)).
- vs. 18 - God will reign forever and ever. The foreign gods we read about in the Bible, where are they? None of them are worshipped today. They fell with those ancient civilizations, but an untold number of people worship the true God today because He is the King who reigns forever, who has revealed Himself to us, and saved us through the death and resurrection of His Son.

- vs. 19-21 - Miriam joins in the praise for God's salvation.
- Truth: our God is a triumphant King. No idols you worship will stand - at the end, all will see only one God reigns and rules.
- What makes worship good is celebrating God because of the truth. It's not a style of music that makes worship good, or what you feel, or how motivational the preaching was. What makes worship good is truth - each week faithfully remembering the truth and celebrating the God we know.
- What makes worship good is lived truth - The God we know is not distant from us or simply a God we read about in an ancient book. We worship because we know the truth and we've experienced the truth. You WERE dead - facing eternal hell. But now you ARE alive - that's your reality. You're living in the truth of God's victory.

What makes worship good is celebrating God regardless of how I feel.

- On that day that the Hebrews came through the Red Sea, how did they feel? Exuberant, joyous, excited, hopeful, etc. It's easy to worship on days when everything is going your way. It's easy to celebrate when you feel like God is blessing you.
- But not everyday after this day would be an exuberant, joyous day for Israel.
- But what about the days when you don't feel like your life is blessed? What about when you're overwhelmed? What about when your worn out from life? What about when you get really bad news? What about when you are burned out? What about when people you care about turn on you?
- Job - Knew what it was like to have everything taken away from him yet said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I will leave this

life. The Lord gives, and the Lord takes away. Blessed be the name of the Lord” ([Job 1:21](#)).

- I don't know what you came to worship feeling this morning. I don't know your emotional state, but whatever your emotional state this morning, your feelings do not change one thing about the character and nature of God. On your best days, God is faithful and good. On your worst days, when you feel like life is caving in around you, God is faithful and good.
- However you feel this morning, worship. Lift up your voice. Give God thanks. Celebrate that He has brought you from death to life. What makes worship good is knowing that no matter what's going on in your life, it is well with your soul.
- What makes worship good is celebrating God regardless of how I feel. Also, we don't worship to feel something. Temptation to think that God is not present or that the “Spirit isn't moving” because I don't feel something. We don't worship God because we want to feel something. We worship God because we know something to be true: we've been delivered.
- It's not that worship does not engage your emotions, it does. It's good to feel overjoyed by worship. There's nothing wrong with being moved to tears. BUT... those feelings are not the indicator of good worship - celebrating God because of the truth we know and live out is good worship. The challenge this morning:
- **Engage your brain before you engage your emotions.** I want you to love the Lord and His truth. I want you to be confident in what God has done for you. I want you to love theology - I want you to learn as much about God as possible because the more you know about God the more you will be compelled to worship. What are you doing right now to grow in your knowledge of God? Engage your brain when we gather - what truths that we sing can you reflect on or thank God for? What attribute of

God can you rejoice in as you hear His Word proclaimed? This morning, a commitment to grow in your knowledge of God.

- **Engage your heart by living with an engaged brain.** Know the truth and live the truth - live with assurance that God is a warrior who has won the victory for you. You know truth and you have experienced truth - how has the truth shaped the way that you live? [Romans 12:1](#) - Daily giving yourself to God is an act of worship - striving for obedience in every area of your life, living on His mission, putting sin to death, and conforming to Jesus. Some us will turn off our brains and our hearts when we leave here because we compartmentalize worship as something we do on Sundays instead of realizing that worship is a life lived for the glory of God.
- [Rev. 19](#) - another song - a song in the future - celebrating the marriage of the Lamb to His bride. We will celebrate forever because 2,000 years ago Jesus came, lived, died, and rose again for us so our sins could be forgiven and we might know for certain that we are forever His.
- This morning, an invitation to join in the celebration. If you are not a follower of Jesus, turn to Him by faith today. If you are a follower of Jesus, let's stand and worship the God we know.