



**WBC Verse for the Year 2020**

*'The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness'*  
(Lamentations 3 verses 22-23)

## Psalm 115

A summary, with some things to reflect on.

A video of this is on Youtube [https://youtu.be/a\\_mYYOUUuj0](https://youtu.be/a_mYYOUUuj0) or our website - [wychwoodbaptist.org.uk/resources/midweek-reflections/](http://wychwoodbaptist.org.uk/resources/midweek-reflections/)

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Last week we looked at Psalm 113, the start of a short selection of psalms (113-118) which were used at yearly passover celebrations. This week we are in another of those psalms, Psalm 115. A psalm which encourages us not to look to ourselves but God. To give him all the glory. He is the God we trust. He is the God who blesses us.

### READ: PSALM 115 verses 1-8

*Our living and active God*

*'Not to us, O LORD, not to us but to your name be glory, because of your love and faithfulness.'* So starts our Psalm.

You may recognise this as a familiar refrain. One which reminds us that in all life's circumstances, we are to look away from ourselves and give glory to God.

This would have been a timely reminder for Israel, as it is suggested this Psalm was written shortly after exile, and likely

used for the dedication of the temple. During the exile, one can imagine the taunts of their captors, as seen in verse 2. God seemingly inactive - yet continuing to work out his purposes (Romans 8v28), doing *'whatever pleases him'* (v3) - acting in accordance with his good and perfect will.

*'Where is their God?'* they may cry - Alive, living and active is the response (verses 4-7), in comparison to the lifeless idols of the nations around them.

Those who trust in such idols, will be as powerless as they are. Will end up as lifeless as they are!

### READ: PSALM 115 verses 9-11

*A God we can trust*

Other idols are lifeless, but since God is living and active, he is the source of our trust. So in response, the psalmist encourages such trust in the Lord.

The threefold repetition / refrain was commonplace in liturgy. Each here calling on a different group to *'trust in the LORD [for] he is their help and shield.'*

The people of Israel; Priests who intercede on their behalf; God-fearers (encompassing non Israelite Jewish converts) - all are called upon to trust in the LORD.

### READ: PSALM 115 verses 12-15

*A God who blesses us*

The people are to trust because God is *'their help and shield;'* and because he is the source of all blessing.

Each group represented in verses 9-11 are in view again here. They respond to the call to trust, by acknowledging (verses 12-13) that God does not forget his people - *'the LORD remembers us and will bless us.'*

This leads to the priestly blessing of verses 14-15. That the LORD in whom they trusted, the source of their blessing, who remembers his people, would indeed bless them and their family. That they'd be blessed by *'the Maker of heaven and earth'* (v15).

## **READ: PSALM 115 verses 16-18**

*To God be the glory!*

*'Not to us, O LORD, not to us but to your name be the glory'* (v1). Our Psalm closes with the same emphasis that it started with in verse 1. That all honour and glory goes to God.

As *'Maker of heaven and earth'* (v15), they are both his - and yet, verse 16 *'the earth he has given to man.'* A reminder of the creation mandate of Genesis 1 verses 28-30. The earth belongs to God, but given to us. It is God's gift to us, and in turn our responsibility to care for it.

So, as those living on the earth God has entrusted to us. As those who are trusting in Him, the source of all blessing, let us *'extol the LORD, both now and for evermore.'*

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This Psalm reminds us to direct our attention away from ourselves, and to give all the glory to our loving and faithful God. Perhaps there have been times, perhaps now, when you have faced the taunts of those around you. Questioning where God is, what he is doing, why he is not acting. There are times when we ourselves might question why God is not responding as we think he should to a particular situation.

At those times we need to remember that our God is working his purposes out. To keep our trust in our living and active God. That any other source of our trust is a lifeless idol.

Let us trust in the LORD, because he remembers us and will bless us. He has blessed us through his son. On the cross, Jesus faced the taunts of the crowd - to come down from the cross,

save himself, for God to rescue him (Matthew 27 verses 39-44). Yet it was God's will and purpose to work through that suffering for our blessing. So even when we can't understand God's purposes, let's trust in Him, giving the glory to our loving and faithful God, who works for the good of those who love Him (Romans 8v28).

*'Not to us, O LORD, not to us but to your name be the glory, because of your love and faithfulness.'* (v1)

## **REFLECTION**

*Spend some time re-reading the passage, and thinking about the following*

*'Not to us, O LORD, not to us but to your name be the glory'* (v1)  
We can at times trust in our own efforts, give glory to ourselves - yet we are reminded here to look away from ourselves and to give God the glory. Spend some time doing just that.

*'God is working for the good of those who love him.'* (Romans 8v28)  
Whilst some may question God's action, or perceived inaction, we are reminded in verse 3 that God is working according to his good and perfect purposes. Give thanks to God for doing that in your life. Pray that you would trust in God working his purposes out in those times when you struggle to understand what his purpose is.

*Who or what is the source of your trust?*

Verses 4-7 remind us of the folly of looking at the created instead of the creator. Give thanks that our trust is not in a lifeless idol, but in our living and active God.  
*'Trust in the LORD, he is our help and shield.'*

*Give thanks for God remembering and blessing us*

*Think of some specific times of God's blessing, and give thanks for those. Give thanks for the blessings we have through Jesus.*

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***These are just some thoughts, some things to reflect on.  
What else strikes you about this passage?***