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PSALM 95-96

Psalms – Book IV – Series

[PRAYER] ...day because we're interested in what you have to offer us today and what you want to teach us today. We've come here today overcoming barriers and obstacles because we want to be here, we want to fellowship with other believers, we want to be connected to you and inspired for this next week. We want to understand what you have for us from your word. So Lord, I ask that you would reward each of us in our own hearts with the satisfaction of being able to serve you and coming here and giving and sharing with each other as well as receiving as we go back to our own respective homes. So today, Lord, we ask that you would bless us. Use your word to do that. In Jesus' name, amen.

Psalm 95. Psalm 95 starts this way – *Come, let us sing for joy to the LORD; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation. Let us come before him with thanksgiving and extol him with music and song.*

The first word is the word *come* and that's where we're going to start. There's a calling that's out there. I think that God is calling us to be worshipers.

It reminds me of what John 4:23 says. Jesus is talking to the woman at the well and she asks a question about do we worship here or there, where's the best place to worship. Jesus says, *Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks.*

So the Father is seeking worshipers. He invites us to come and worship. Worship is about coming before the Lord and acknowledging who He is. When we do that, good things happen. Let's just look at some characteristics of worship in these first two verses of this psalm.

First of all, *come* is an invitation. Calling us to come together and worship the Lord. But the next words, *let us*, are repeated three times. One in the first phrase (*let us sing*), the second phrase (*let us shout*), and the third phrase (*let us come*). So the idea is *let us* is a corporate thing, it's not just individual.

I think it's good for us to worship individually. I benefit a lot when I worship privately. That worship might just be admiring something that God has done in creation or it could be listening to a song on the radio while I'm driving in the car. There's worship that takes place in my heart and it does something in my devotional life, in my spiritual walk to draw my attention to the Lord again if for that moment or the next couple hours or however long that little worship experience lasts in my heart.

I do think private worship is valuable, but this is a psalm that's calling us to corporate worship. We come to a corporate worship experience for an important reason. There's something that happens corporately within the group that God works in the midst of that. So even though it might be freezing cold outside, there's a warmth that happens in our own hearts when we worship together. We go away saying, "Yes." God has done something in our hearts and we'll be able to lift up to Him praise. We focus on who He is and what He's done. So number one, it's *let us*.

Secondly notice the words there in verses 1 and 2 – *sing, shout, thanksgiving, extol*. The idea is it's vocal. It's not just silence. Something happens when we actually vocalize our worship. It comes out of our mouth. There's a confession that we make and that is a valuable thing that we do. So worship needs to be something that's vocal, ascribing greatness to God as part of who we are and what God has called us to. It's part of worship.

Another thing, notice in the second part of verse 1 it says *shout aloud*. In other words there's a sense of expressiveness or vibrancy to the worship that we have that we want to have present in our lives. I think some of us have grown up in situations and have experienced some rather vibrant worship that makes us feel uncomfortable, so sometimes we shy away from that.

It reminds me of the story in the Old Testament in 2 Samuel 6 where David was so excited and worshipping the Lord because the ark of the covenant was coming back to Jerusalem. So he was just worshipping the Lord, just physically praising Him and dancing, actually dancing as the ark is coming back into Jerusalem. His wife named Michal, up from the balcony of the palace, the Bible says that *she despised him in her heart* when she saw that. In other words she didn't like that. She felt like that's not appropriate, not appropriate for a king kind of thinking that she had in her mind.

David responded to her in a sense saying, "I'm focusing on the Lord. I will celebrate *before the Lord*." That's what David said to her. There's a sense of vibrancy that comes in.

Now some of us are more pulled back, laid back, introspective than others. I just want you to see this psalm is divided into three parts. The first part is the rejoicing part of this, and I think we need to maybe extend ourselves out a little bit. We need to express ourselves before the Lord and not be too restrained in our worship.

If you look at denominations, you've got Catholics, and you've got Methodists, and you've got Presbyterians, and Lutherans, and Pentecostals, Assembly of God. You've got all these different denominations that take on a certain flavor or worship. But I would suggest all of us need to strengthen our sense of vibrancy in our worship so that we are expressing ourselves before the Lord.

We have to be sensitive to other people, of course. If you're going to dance before the Lord here in worship, that's fine, just do it in the back so that it's not distracting to other people. I think that would be wise. If you're a tall person, don't stand where everybody else is sitting so nobody can see the words. We want to be sensitive to others as we're worshipping the Lord.

But there's a sense of something that's coming from our hearts that comes out even in body movements or lifting our hands or clapping or something like that. So there seems to be a vibrancy described here that's important.

The other thing I want to point out in these first two verses – look in there how it says where the worship is directed to. It says *to the Lord, to the Rock. Come before him, extol him*. Our worship needs to be God-centered. Our lives need to be God-centered. Would you agree with that? That our worship should be God-centered? See, I don't think everybody agrees with that.

I'm going to show you a 35-second video clip, so watch carefully because it's going to come on and it's going to be gone quickly. I want you to just hear what's being said and then I'll comment about it. Okay?

[Start of Video]

[Victoria Osteen] I just want to encourage every one of us to realize when we obey God we're not doing it for God. I mean, that's one way to look at it. We're doing it for ourself. Because God takes pleasure when we're happy. That's the thing that gives Him the greatest joy this morning. So I want you to know this morning, just do good for your own self. Do good because God wants you to be happy. When you come to church, when you worship Him, you're not doing it for God really, you're doing it for yourself because that's what makes God happy. Amen?

[Bill Cosby] That's the *dumbest* thing I've ever heard in my life!

[End of Video]

Alright. Now look. I'm sure that that lady regrets having said what she said. Okay. I think that having this on YouTube and so on, she would be disappointed in herself about that. So we have to give a lot of grace. When you're trying to lead worship, sometimes you get caught up in what you're thinking and saying and it doesn't kind of come out the way you would think.

Certainly I've even talked about this idea of happiness. Does God want us happy or not? I talked about it again last week. We have to realize that happiness is something that God desires for us. He says *bless*. He wants us to be blessed. That means happy. But that is not our target. That's a result of the trials that go in our lives, the character that's being developed, the worship that we do. It's not something that we focus on. So we want to be careful with that.

But the idea is she's saying what I believe some people actually believe. I don't believe she believes that now. I think that she would not agree with that, but I think there are some people who would sense, who would make that kind of statement, that are coming in order to get a good feeling. "It's about me. I want to feel good in worship." I think we need to see from this passage that the point is it is God-centered, not man-centered as we go forward.

So the first five verses as we're going through these are a call to a rejoicing kind of worship. Verse 3 continues the idea. It says, *For the LORD is the great God, the great King above all gods.*

There's going to be three different pictures here in this passage. One is a picture of the king (God is King) and others, God is Creator and the third is God is Shepherd. If you like paintings then seeing the picture painted in front of you of God and who He is as we worship Him may be helpful for you, another form of art. Worship is a form of art, I think, in our heart bringing it to the Lord. So it's centered on God alone. These are three different pictures. He's talking about the great king here.

Verse 4: *In his hand are the depths of the earth, and the mountain peaks belong to him. The sea is his, for he made it, and his hands formed the dry land.*

So in His hands *are the depths of the earth*. That's just amazing to imagine. The mountain peaks – you know He holds all this together. His splendor is fascinating. He's not only the king; He's also the creator, as we see in this passage.

Now those are verses 1-5. And they represent a rejoicing kind of worship.

Starting in verse 6 the tone changes. Notice it starts in verse 6 – *come, let us* again. So it's another call to worship. But this kind of worship is more of a reverent kind of a worship. I would suggest that we need to also have this kind of worship as part of our understanding of worship and not always coming to rejoice in worship. Sometimes it's a penitent bowing of the knee.

Notice in verse 6-7 it says, *Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker; for he is our God and we are the people of his pasture, the flock under his care.*

So the second invitation to worship here is an invitation to worship within this sense of reverence together. Not only does the mood change, but the focus changes because now we have a different picture of God, not God as creator or king, now we have God as shepherd. We're the flock under His care and there's this personal relationship, this care that He has for us. He pays close attention to us personally, and in the midst of that we worship Him because we experience that. So we *kneel down before the Lord our God our Maker*.

I find it interesting that the rejoicing here in the first few verses is based on God's sovereignty and how He is the king, He's the ruler over everything. So we rejoice in that. But when it comes to reverence, it's based on the fact that we have this shepherd-sheep relationship with Him. So there's a personal relationship that draws us to reverence.

I thought it would be the other way around. I would've thought we would have reverence because He's this awesome creator and king and then we would rejoice because we have relationship. But that's not how it's tied together here.

As I started thinking, I'm asking the question why. Why does God give us an illustration here of the shepherd-sheep relationship and in the midst of that, that's when He calls us to bow down in worship before Him, in awe, in reverence. I thought about it. I realized that the greater we get to know God, the more we are in awe of the fact that He would care for us and that He would love us and He's having that personal relationship. We bow down before Him out of gratefulness, out

of admiration because of that close sheep-shepherd relationship that He's giving to us. It's a beautiful thing.

So I would suggest that in our corporate worship, as we worship together, maybe not always on one Sunday but over the course of our diet of worship together, we have some songs that are more reverent that draw us into contemplation or bowing the knee and there are other songs that are more jubilant and vibrant in causing us to rejoice. It seems to be that's the call of the passage here, drawing our attention to both of those kinds of worship. I would suggest we need them both.

Now there are some Sundays when we may emphasize more of one than the other and that's okay. But over the course of our church life we ought to be worshipping in both of those in order to maximize, I think, what God wants to do inside of our hearts. Because worship does something to us in order to draw ourselves to the Lord. It's not all about jubilation. Sometimes it's about reflection and awesomeness and bowing our knee before Him. So that's the first two portions of this psalm. The first part about rejoicing, the second part about reverence.

Now we come to the third part of the psalm, which is almost strikingly different. At first I'm looking at this part of the psalm and I'm saying, "This doesn't look like worship to me." All of a sudden we've entered into some different things here. First of all, God's speaking. It's not us speaking to God. Now God is speaking here. Which makes an application for me. Does God speak to us during worship? I think He does.

I think that's one of the reasons we have a response time after we have the teaching so that during those next couple of songs we can listen to what the Lord says because the Lord speaks into our hearts during those worship experiences. That's what we're going to see now as we go into the last part of the psalm. Worship isn't just about rejoicing before God and bowing our knee before God, but it's also listening to Him speak. So the psalm actually turns the voice of God now speaking and it's really a warning, almost a rebuke, kind of an ending to this psalm that's kind of scary.

Let's look and see what it says here as we go through. The end of verse 7 makes the switch. *Today, if only you would hear his voice.* So here we are in the middle of a song sung by all the Israelites and all of a sudden we have the switch and now we're going to listen to God's voice while we sing. Fascinating.

Verse 8: *"Do not harden your hearts as you did at Meribah, as you did that day at Massah in the wilderness, where your ancestors tested me; they tried me, though they had seen what I did."*

Now in order to understand this, we have to go back to the story in the Old Testament so we understand it. The Israelites came out of Egypt and they wandered in the wilderness. They were wandering toward the Promised Land. They would go to Mount Sinai, they would get the law, they would be following the Lord. So they're following the cloud during the day and the pillar of fire by night. God had already rescued them through the Red Sea and all of the Egyptian army was destroyed. They had already seen God work in a number of different ways.

They're going along in this path and all of a sudden they start grumbling against the Lord because they don't have water. God had been taking care of them all along, but for some reason they wanted it now and they start complaining. The complaining is a sign of a lack of trust.

Now this happens in the book of Exodus and it also happens in Numbers 20, so we have those words Meribah and Massah used in Exodus and then one of them used in Numbers. That's important because after the Psalms study that we're doing we're going to the book of Numbers and I'm going to walk through there the book of Numbers.

One of the recurring themes that we'll see in the book of Numbers is that grumbling (there's a lot of grumbling in the book of Numbers) is the sign of a lack of faith. We'll tie all of that together when we get to the book of Numbers. But the point is the psalmist now is reminding us through God's word – don't go back there. Don't go to a place where you're grumbling against the Lord and saying, "I want it now. I'm not content in God's timing and following His leadership. I want water now." So the people were complaining against Moses in Exodus. But in Numbers something worse happened.

In the book of Exodus when people complained about the water, Moses goes to the Lord and say, "Lord, what do I do? These guys are going to kill me!" God says, "Take your staff, go hit the rock, and water will come out." Now when you're going to feed that many people with water it must have been a gushing rock with a huge stream coming out of it when he hit the rock. So the people had the water that they needed.

But when it comes to the book of Numbers, something different happens. Because in the book of Numbers when the people complained about the water, Moses got angry and God told him, "This time, Moses, I want you to speak to the rock." But Moses didn't do that. He hit the rock twice. That was a big mistake. It was a very serious mistake.

In verse 12 in the passage of Numbers 20 He says (this is talking to Moses), "*Because you did not trust in me enough to honor me as holy in the sight of the Israelites, you will not bring this community into the land I give them.*" The sin in Numbers 20 was not just a sin of the people; it was a sin of the leadership.

The people were grumbling as they had before, but sometimes when someone does something wrong -- let's apply this to parenting for just a moment because this happens in parenting a lot. A kid does something wrong and so we feel justified to do something wrong too by yelling at them. So we're going to be harsh with them and we're going to hit the rock twice. Maybe not literally. But God's saying, "I want you to speak to the rock." We say, "But they're doing the wrong thing!" We come in with a harshness that's not what God would have for us. In our mind we're saying, "Well he's doing the wrong thing." Moses must be saying that. "Well they're doing the wrong thing. I'm mad about this."

I would suggest that just because our kids are wrong doesn't mean that we can be wrong too. That is a valuable lesson for Moses and we need to learn that Moses made a serious mistake. He was wrong and even though his kids or his disciples or his people he was leading were wrong, he had no right to do that. He still needed to trust the Lord. He still needed to do the thing that was

right in the eyes of God and he didn't do it. And so he was not allowed to go into the Promised Land and take those people into that Promised Land. It's a pretty important message if you look in the passage.

Let's go back into the psalm. Because here's the point of the psalm, I think. He's saying we want to rejoice before the Lord and we want to be reverent before the Lord and we want to listen to the Lord, and sometimes the Lord warns us or convicts us about things in our lives and we need, as part of our worship, to obey the Lord. Worship also involves our daily life of obeying the Lord.

The psalm continues in verse 10. *For forty years I was angry with that generation; I said, 'They are a people whose hearts go astray, and they have not known my ways.' So I declared on oath in my anger, 'They shall never enter my rest.'*

Notice that they go astray in the heart first. That's where all of us go astray. Our hearts move away from the Lord. We're tempted in an area of our heart. Long before it comes out in our behavior it comes out in our heart. So we need to guard our hearts, as Proverbs says, and we need to be careful that our hearts are in the right place.

We often emphasize intelligence in our society and how important it is to be smart. But the truth of the matter is it's really about the heart, the intelligent portion of the heart is more important than the brain. When it comes to being successful in life or being able to move forward, the heart is where it's at. There are a lot of smart people who get themselves into serious trouble because their hearts are not in the right place.

The message of the psalm is an important one. It's calling us to rejoice in worship, to reverence in worship, and then to obey in worship. So we need to take that back and apply it to our lives and recognize that God wants obedience.

It's very interesting how this psalm ends. It starts like *come, let us* worship the Lord together! And in the end it says God was angry at these people because they were grumbling in their hearts and they sinned. It's a warning to us, I think, that we even experience in worship sometimes. So I hope that that takes place in your life sometimes too, that in the midst of a worship experience God speaks to you and says, "You better get that straight in your life." Listen to the Holy Spirit as He talks to you because those warnings come during worship.

We have enough time to go on to Psalm 96 so please turn there with me. I want you to see that this is a psalm that's harder to kind of take apart, analyze because it seems to be a quilt of praise running right through. I'll make some comments as I read it through, but it's really drawing our hearts to praise before the Lord.

The word God or His name or pronouns to His name are used 27 times in thirteen verses. A lot. It's all focused on the Lord. It's praising Him. Let's start with verse 1. *Sing to the LORD a new song. A new song.*

Now there are 150 psalms in the psalter that we have here. Those psalms were probably sung a lot. There were some that were repeated over and over again. The psalms that were sung were

Songs of Ascent that would go up. Song of Ascent means as they were on their way up to Jerusalem from one of the feasts, you could hear the songs being sung by the groups of people that would be walking up to Jerusalem. They're on their pilgrimage up to one of the feasts. So those are Songs of Ascent.

There are other psalms that we have seen that are sung on certain days of the week. There are some songs that were used as ritual or as a ceremony or tradition and those are valuable. But then there are those times when there's a new song.

New songs are valuable. We like to sing some of the newer songs that our artists are creating nowadays. We like to sing them in our worship service. They're valuable to us and we enjoy them because they lift us up to the Lord in a new way.

Sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth. Sing to the LORD, praise his name; proclaim his salvation day after day.

Now I want you to see the words *sing to the LORD* in verse 1 and 2 are mentioned three times. I just want to give you some insight about Hebrew. When something's mentioned in triplicate it's like adding 'est' on the end of a word. So if you say something is holy, you say it once. If you say holy holy, then it's holier. That's what it means. If you say holy, holy, holy, it means holiest. In other words, because you repeat it three times it's emphasizing its magnitude and drawing attention to the significance of that.

So here we have it repeated three times. We have *Sing to the LORD* mentioned, emphasizing the importance of it as we're trying to move forward. *Sing to the LORD* is an important thing, a fresh outburst of rejoicing before the Lord as a valuable thing as we come to the Lord.

Now the one word I want to point out in verse 2, the word *proclaim* is the word publish, which I'm attracted to because I publish books. Well publish, what does that mean? It means to proclaim. It means to declare. It means to get the word out. About what? See the rest of the line there. *Proclaim his salvation day after day.* We are in the business of publishing the salvation work of Christ. We share that by example, by word, and so on. So this is a worship psalm that is going to take us into worship out in the marketplace. How do we share with others? We're *proclaiming his salvation day after day.*

Verse 3: *Declare his glory among the nations.* Do you see how we're taking this out into the marketplace? This is not an easy thing to do. We think about worship in our private life or in church to prepare us to be out in the world. This is saying take your worship out into the world somehow. I don't even know how you do that, but that's what it's saying. Somehow you're acknowledging God and His greatness out with other people.

Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous deeds among all peoples. Very interesting idea. I think we need to think about that. Worship is not just a private thing or a church thing. It is something that we do with the nations, with the peoples. We're expressing His greatness.

Verse 4: *For great is the LORD and most worthy of praise; he is to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the nations are idols, but the LORD made the heavens.*

Again we should look at the word *idols* or *gods* there and recognize there are other options that people choose as far as gods. They are fake. They are not real. They are images. They are things that people put in their lives. You can make anything an idol. It could be a car, it could be a video game, it could be a day of the week, it could be your hobby, it could be your family. A family can be an idol.

But it's not so much the thing that's a problem; it's what it does to our heart because there's only room for one God in our hearts. When we allow another god or an idol to get into that space, it robs us of the worship that we could be giving to God Himself. So we want to be careful of those idols and those gods that creep into our lives. It could be a very good thing, but it gets into our lives and messes with the worship that God desires us to share with Him. So it says there that *he is to be feared above all gods*.

Verse 6: *Splendor and majesty are before him; strength and glory are in his sanctuary. Ascribe (that means to give or attribute) to the LORD, all you families of nations, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength. Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; bring an offering and come into his courts.*

So here we're being told to give God something. So give or ascribe to the Lord. It's talking about praise, but the last line talks about *bring an offering*. Now in our culture, because we're in New Testament times, we're not bringing animals or an offering of an animal or a bird or a fruit as they did in the Old Testament offerings. Instead we are often giving money to the Lord's work. We do that as a part of worship. Here's just another example of how that is an expression of worship before the Lord is the offerings that we bring as well.

If we ask the question, how do we worship? this particular psalm gives us a lot of ideas. One – we worship with music (verse 1). With proclamation in verse 2. By giving Him glory (verse 8). By bringing an offering (also in verse 8). By coming into His courts (verse 8). In verse 9 we're going to see by living holy lives. In verse 10 by witnessing about Him. There's lots of ways we can worship the Lord and they are illustrated here.

We want to think about worship in a greater sense than we typically use it as worship service. When we say we're going to have a worship service Sunday morning at ten o'clock, we tend to define worship in a smaller degree than what God would have us understand it to be. So worship is important. We need to understand it.

Verse 9: *Worship the LORD in the splendor of his holiness; tremble before him, all the earth.*

The holiness of God is beautiful. Splendor or beauty. It's the beauty of His holiness. Sometimes we think about holiness as legalism. Here it's referred to as something that's beautiful before God. Again, once we meditate on these things we start to capture a little bit more about how we understand God and who He is. It gives us a greater appreciation, something to dig our teeth into when it comes to worship.

Verse 10. This is an interesting idea, truth in verse 10. *Say among the nations, "The LORD reigns."* Now wouldn't that be interesting to say among the nations, *"The LORD reigns." The world is firmly established, it cannot be moved; he will judge the peoples with equity.*

I've got to tell you a story about a man who was a mentor of mine (or still is a mentor of mine) who did this and it shocked me, quite frankly. His name is Cliff Clayborn. I saw him a couple week ago. He's a friend of my father's. I got to know him when I was working on my doctorate degree in southern California. I went to live at his house part of that time and he nurtured me in my spiritual walk. I was already a pastor, but he helped me learn a number of things.

He taught me about some of the spiritual gifts, for example, like word of knowledge and word of wisdom, and how to use those in my ministry as I'm working with people. He was in a Pentecostal Assembly of God church that tended to be more expressive in their gifts, so I really appreciated even ministering with him, going to his church, and ministering in the midst of that, and watching that take place.

But I remember one time we were sitting in a Denny's restaurant. We were in a restaurant in a booth, just he and I, eating dinner together. There was another group of guys in a booth nearby and they were loudly talking together, just focusing on themselves and talking. Their language wasn't very appropriate for anybody, but they were using some foul language and they were using the Lord's name in vain. Anybody who's a Christian knows the name of God, the name of Jesus is important and when you hear it being said it makes you kind of feel like you're going to cringe a bit.

They were so loud. We're eating and all of a sudden he says, "Hallelujah!" really loud. I'm going, "Whoa. What was that?" I said, "Why did you do that?" He says, "I'm reclaiming the territory for the Lord."

I don't know how to do that in life without being obnoxious. Or maybe we should be obnoxious. I don't know. All I know is there's something being said here we need to think about. *Say among the nations, "The LORD reigns."*

We have a message it says in the previous verses about the idols. There are idols out there. It says, *For all the gods of the nations are idols, but the LORD made the heavens.* So there's something that we have that people need and reclaiming the territory seems like a good idea. That seems to be what's said in this passage. *Say among the nations, "The Lord reigns."* I don't quite know how to do that, but that's what we're talking about here.

Verse 11: *Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad; let the sea resound, and all that is in it. Let the fields be jubilant, and everything in them; let all the trees of the forest sing for joy.*

There's something about being in God's creation that gives a message to us, that prompts us to worship. When you see something that God has done, you're prompted to worship Him. When

you see snow swirling around, you go, “Whoa, this is amazing,” and we’re prone to worship the Lord in those moments.

Verse 13: *Let all creation rejoice before the LORD, for he comes, he comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world in righteousness and the peoples in his faithfulness.*

It’s really interesting here to see that the psalmist is tying in the worship into the second coming of God or the judgment of the world yet to come. Do you see that there? *Let all creation rejoice before the LORD, for he comes, he comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world in righteousness and the peoples in his faithfulness.*

So there is this sense in which the whole purpose of God, the fact that He’s coming again for us, is part of that worship experience. We’re drawn into that because we know Christ is coming again and it’s an exciting thing.

So let’s ask some questions about worship. Who? Who do we worship? Twenty-seven times in those thirteen verses (at least that was my count of 27) it says the pronouns or the names of God. Where do we worship God? Among the nations, in His sanctuary, in His courts (verse 8). When do we worship Him? Verse 2 – day after day. Why do we worship Him? Because He saves us (in verse 4), He’s great (verse 5), He’s powerful (verse 6), He’s coming again (verse 13).

It just seems to me as we study the psalms we get a bigger picture of what worship is. When we understand that I think it draws us more into our daily communion with the Lord in a way that we’re able to exalt His name forever.

Let’s pray together.

[PRAYER] Heavenly Father, we thank you for your excellence and your kingliness and you are our Maker, that you’re a shepherd. All of those things, Lord, need to draw us to worship more and we know that, so right now we want to dedicate our hearts to worship you now in the next couple songs. But we want to dedicate our lives to worship you this week and ask that you would touch us and prompt us and help us know how to communicate to the nations that the Lord reigns. Help us to reclaim the territory for you that some are trampling on, not even realizing what they’re doing. Lord, you’ve given us a name, Christians, Christ-followers, so that we can take on who you are and we can enjoy that in each of our lives and we can emulate who you are. So we ask that you would bring us into worship, draw us to yourself all the more. In Jesus’ name, amen.