

Psalm 145 "Glory Across the Generations"

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[0 : 00] You are listening to a message from Southwood Presbyterian Church in Huntsville, Alabama. Our passion is to experience and express grace. Join us.

We talked last Sunday about Psalm 96, about the incomparable greatness of God, that He's worthy of all praise.

And so everything that we are, everything that we have, should be in service of His name being made great, of His glory being made known here and everywhere else.

That that must be our driving passion as individuals and as a church. God's glory declared in Huntsville and beyond among the nations, right?

Right? I've stayed in the Psalms a lot this week, just reading more about the glory of God, the praise that's due to Him.

[1 : 02] I don't want us to lose the grandeur of His greatness or His glory and the significance that that ought to have for our lives, because that goes away so quickly and easily, doesn't it?

If you feel that your heart needs some help here too, I'd highly recommend the Psalms. It's a great place to camp out, to marinate for a little while, maybe just this Thanksgiving week or the rest of this year, to help our hearts get that vision for God's greatness and what it means for us.

So this morning I want us to look at Psalm 145. Look for a couple of things as I read it in just a minute. First, the basic message is this.

It's pretty similar to last week. The basic message of the Psalm is God is great everywhere and we will declare how everywhere, how He is great.

Look for that exhaustive, superlative language, the all and every and so on that you'll see throughout this Psalm. And then the second thing, in the midst of all of that, look for one particular way that God has designed for His glory to be declared everywhere.

[2 : 18] As I've read this week, I've seen it over and over and over this particular way. You'll notice it in verses 4 through 7 as we read and we're going to focus our attention there. You know, last week I really didn't give you any particulars on how it would shape our lives, how they'd be different if we were going to be about the glory of God here and everywhere.

I mean, except maybe go to India. But you're not all going to India, at least not today. Well, this is one particular. We're going to talk, spend the rest of our lives figuring out what those particular ways are.

We'll spend especially the next several months here talking about what that means for us together here at Southwood specifically to have our lives shaped around that. But here's one way this morning, highlighted by Psalm 145, where we can shape our lives around God's glory.

Look for that way and notice how it connects to God's incomparable greatness. Psalm 145, verse 1. I will extol you, my God and King, and bless your name forever and ever.

Every day I will bless you and praise your name forever and ever. Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised, and His greatness is unsearchable. One generation shall commend your works to another and shall declare your mighty acts.

[3 : 39] On the glorious splendor of your majesty and on your wondrous works I will meditate. They shall speak of the might of your awesome deeds and I will declare your greatness.

They shall pour forth the fame of your abundant goodness and shall sing aloud of your righteousness. The Lord is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

The Lord is good to all and His mercy is over all that He has made. All your works shall give thanks to you, O Lord, and all your saints shall bless you. They shall speak of the glory of your kingdom and tell of your power to make known to the children of man your mighty deeds and the glorious splendor of your kingdom.

Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom and your dominion endures throughout all generations. The Lord upholds all who are falling and raises up all who are bowed down. The eyes of all look to you and you give them their food in due season. You open your hand, you satisfy the desire of every living thing. The Lord is righteous in all His ways and kind in all His works. [4 : 46] The Lord is near to all who call on Him, to all who call on Him in truth. He fulfills the desire of those who fear Him. He also hears their cry and saves them. The Lord preserves all who love Him, but the wicked He will destroy.

My mouth will speak the praise of the Lord and let all flesh bless His holy name forever and ever. Back to verse 4.

One generation shall commend your works to another and shall declare your mighty acts. On the glorious splendor of your majesty and on your wondrous works I will meditate. They shall speak of the might of your awesome deeds and I will declare your greatness. They shall pour forth the fame of your abundant goodness and shall sing aloud of your righteousness. Let's pray and we'll look at this psalm together. Father, we have acknowledged your greatness. Might we know it more?

[5 : 46] Might we experience it more? And might you by your Spirit come and do what needs to be done in our hearts for that to impact us as it ought. Change us, we pray by your Spirit.

In Jesus' name, amen. Shortly after Christi and I got married, we spent four months together in Scotland while I was finishing up undergrad work.

We stayed while we were there in Glasgow with a pastor and his wife. And so because we were there with them, we went to church with them. They had a car, we didn't.

Every time the doors were open, we were there, Govan Hill Free Church of Scotland. When we became a part of that church as 24-year-old and 22-year-old, the average age of that congregation dropped drastically.

Almost all the members of that 25- or 30-person church were over the age of 70. Many of them older than that. And we were there three, four times a week for four months.

[6 : 54] We didn't know when we got there, but this congregation was going to be such a huge blessing to us through our time there and also have a huge impact on us, on what church meant to us even before we went to seminary to prepare for ministry in the church.

You see, this traditional Scottish church found themselves in the midst of a community that became almost overnight mostly Muslim immigrants, refugees, what they called asylum seekers in Scotland. So an older, traditional Scottish church in an even older and more traditional Scottish church building that had been there for a long time all of a sudden finds itself in a new world surrounded by different people.

And I think many such congregations in that situation would have turned inward. They would have cared for each other and in a few years died off.

I would have understood if they had. But instead, the folks at Govan Hill determined that they would share the good news of Jesus with their new neighbors. They began hosting ESL classes for the community, working with those asylum seekers on their many legal issues before them, having some multicultural, multilingual worship services in their very traditional building.

[8 : 19] Their heart was to see God's glory declared everywhere and to every nation. And having some different people around them wasn't going to dampen their passion for that one bit.

They refused to back down from that. In fact, they found that as they did that, their passion for Christ and His kingdom was inflamed by the youthful zeal of young Muslim moms and toddlers who came every week to meet with their much older Presbyterian playmates at a moms and toddlers group.

It gave them energy and zeal for the kingdom. Their church didn't always feel the same way that it used to, say, 30 years before. But they fervently followed the mission of Jesus no matter the cost. And they found that that cost and those changes were well worth the sacrifice for them. There are many things to consider about the community in which God has placed Southwood.

The people who live in our neighborhoods, the people that we work with and play with and share life with. But this morning, I want to consider one particular aspect of it that was true for them in that church.

[9 : 35] And that is different generations, young and old, together in one family. It's one of my very favorite things about Southwood since we came here 10 years ago.

And it's one of our greatest kingdom opportunities when we talk about seeing God's glory declared everywhere. Having a mixture of generations together in one family, genuinely loving each other. I loved being in a small group for years here with people two and even three times my age. I love how many of you have been asking me in the last couple of weeks about Jenny Doss. How is she? Where is she? She's always here. How come I don't see her? Because she's too weak to come to worship the last several weeks. I loved talking with Ivy Barber last week on the phone. Ivy, as you know, is 91 years young and for most of those 91 years has come to church every Sunday. But now it's difficult for her to walk very far and so she hasn't been coming for a while and she said, I so miss being there and you know what I especially miss?

[10:45] What does she miss the most, do you think? She didn't mention my preaching. I'm sure it was coming. It was granted, I think. She mentioned the children even though, and I think perhaps a little bit because, they run all around her while she's trying to walk down the hall.

This morning, our group of new members, like many such groups we've had here spanned 60 years. Three distinct generations. What an exciting thing.

What a neat opportunity to have these groups together. Southwood, this is one place where God has clearly called us to declare his glory among the nations, yes, and across the generations.

We have a privilege and an opportunity that many don't have. It's one of the things that's been so exciting about getting Derek Harris here on staff and installing him this morning. See, Derek is here for the oldest and for the youngest among us.

He's our shepherding pastor and so he will be caring for and ministering to our oldest members.

He's also our pastor for young families and so he's going to be working with the youngest among us and especially with their parents equipping them for how to shepherd their children and their families as they grow.

[12:11] See, that's what Psalm 145 lays out for the pattern for God's glory to spread everywhere. It's verse 4. One generation shall commend your works to another.

Remember the context of the whole psalm. What's the whole psalm saying? God is great everywhere and we will declare how everywhere.

In what ways is he great? We will say not merely that God is great but what his greatness looks like. Verse 8, for example. The Lord is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love. If you keep reading, you see his power, his mighty deeds, his glorious splendor, his everlasting kingdom. The way he lifts up the weak and downtrodden, verse 14.

The way he cares for every living thing, verse 16. The way he responds to those who cry, verse 19. Just stop and marvel for a minute.

[13:18] How incredible is this God? How great is Yahweh? Not just that he's mighty and powerful and dwells above and is different from us, but then he's also caring, entering in, drawing near the same God like this.

Isn't he great? There's no one like him. How have you seen his grace, mercy, abundant love, tender care, mighty deeds in your life?

You have unique stories, don't you? You can tell stories of how God is great, yes. Others need to hear those stories.

See, it's in the context of saying how great God is that David writes, one generation shall commend your works to another. They're not just for you.

The things you've experienced aren't just for you to know how great God is. They're for you to tell others, even other generations, how else will they know what our God has been like for thousands and thousands of years, generation after generation.

[14:30] So notice how it works for us. It begins first with our meditating on his wondrous works, the glorious splendor of his majesty there in verse 5.

In other words, we all need to be experiencing his grace for ourselves. Learning more, even the most mature among us, learning of how God's greatness impacts us, soaking in that, getting to know more and more what he's like and how he works in our lives.

That's where it starts, isn't it? We meditate on that, we learn more of that and then we get to verses 6 and 7. Speaking, declaring, pouring forth, singing aloud.

That's how God designs his family to work, right? One generation learns to praise him, continues to experience more of his greatness and then as they worship, they commend him to the next generations.

Isn't that how it works in our families? Don't our kids often begin to praise what we praise? I remember growing up watching my grandfather cheer for the Atlanta Braves.
[15 : 45] He loved the Braves, he lived in Atlanta. I didn't, though. I lived in Memphis and I really had no reason to like the Braves.

All they'd done was lose my entire childhood. Year after year. But nonetheless, despite never seeing them win, I cheered for the Braves.

Why? Because my grandfather thought they were great and so I thought they were great. We cheered together. Our girls have never experienced in person the wonderful reality of the Clemson football team running down the hill before the game.

But if you watched them watching it on television, you'd think they'd been there before. The way they get excited, the way they cheer. They have no fond memories of campus that that brings to mind.

No great experiences to look back upon, but they've seen their parents cheer and they get excited as well. God has designed His family to work that way too.

[16 : 51] It's one of the reasons we're so glad to have our kids regularly in these worship services with us because even when you don't realize it, they're learning something. They're learning who is worthy of praise, who's worth worshiping and shaping our lives around.

And they need to hear from the experiences of their spiritual parents and grandparents how God is great, how He has been faithful, how He's been merciful in your life.

It's the thing I've noticed this week reading in the Psalms. It's one of the primary ways God has designed for His glory to be declared here and everywhere.

We've already read Psalm 145. I'm not going to laundry list all the Psalms for you this morning. You can look up a bunch of them. But look also in places like Deuteronomy 6 that we read earlier.

Titus 2. And you'll see how Old Testament, New Testament, wherever it is, God designs this pattern for His family. And maybe that's why little children and elderly saints are consistently highlighted as valuable to Jesus and significant in His church.

[18 : 06] We need each other, don't we? It's the way He's designed it. I guess that means Derek has a pretty significant role here on our pastoral team.

And he's going to stand up before us and be charged to that role in a few minutes. But more importantly, see that's not just Derek's job, that's our job as a family to relate that way.

Each of us has a significant role in that. And I didn't want any of us to miss out on the chance to stand up, hear from God's Word and be charged this morning. So this is going to be fun, isn't it? Oh boy, y'all are excited.

You've always wanted to stand up and get charged during the sermon. Here goes. Three groups. First group, if you were born before 1960, would you please stand up and remain standing for a minute if you're able?

You notice that I have no idea how old you are. I'm going by when you were born. Age is, I have no idea what the age is. Born before 1960. Awesome. We're so glad that y'all are here at Southwood.

[19 : 11] We're really thankful to have you here. I know sometimes the way we young people dress or sing or parent seems strange and different to you.

I know there are many places you could go where everyone is your age. I'm aware of that. But we need you here. We do. And I want to charge you to do more than just be here.

You're here. Thank you. Wonderful. I want to charge you to something more than just being present. Listen to Psalm 71. what it has to say. Oh God, from my youth you have taught me and I still proclaim your wondrous deeds.

So even to old age and gray hairs, oh God, do not forsake me until I proclaim your might to another generation. Your power to all those to come.

I think this is why God has you here. There may be other reasons. But I think this is an important part of it. It would be easy for you as long as you have served to say, I've done my time. It's time to retire from church.

[20 : 20] I've been teaching a long time. I've been in the nursery. I've been in a lot of places. It would be easy as it would have been for our friends in Scotland to see all these different people around you and just turn inward and just care about yourself.

Would you make this your prayer? The end of that? That every day that God would give you strength, it wouldn't be just to get by or just to show up, but to proclaim His might to the next

generations?

You do that for us a lot. I'm charging you to something I know you love. I know it's why you're here. Please pray for that. Think of someone right now that needs to hear about this great God from you. You can pick me if you can't think of anybody else. If you don't know where to start, I've actually got a specific opportunity. We need your help. You can help with the youth, children's ministry, but we really need your help in the nursery right now.

If you look at the front of your bulletin towards the bottom of the announcements, it says cross-generational opportunities. And there's an opportunity there, an email address that you can send and say, I want to take a turn in the nursery rotation.

[21 : 35] And one of the beautiful things about that is you can not only talk to the kids, but as a parent, I can tell you when I walk down to pick up my child and you're rocking them in the chair, I want to talk to you because I see how you love my child.

So there's a great place if you don't have another place to start. But would you think of some way during the next few weeks during this holiday season that you could do that? We would love that. Thank you. You may be seated. If you are under the age of 13 or live with someone under the age of 13 in your home, would you please stand and remain standing for just a minute?

Under the age of 13 or live with someone under the age of 13 in your home? I knew you were there. There you go. Isn't that exciting? Those of you who were just standing up a minute ago, isn't this exciting?

I know it's part of why you're here. There are a lot of y'all. Listen to Psalm 78 for a second. We will not hide these things about God from their children, but tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the Lord and His might and the wonders that He has done.

[22 : 49] He established a testimony in Jacob and appointed a law in Israel which He commanded our fathers to teach their children that the next generation might know them, the children yet unborn.

Some of those out there, I know there are. You're keeping it secret. And arise and tell them to their children so that they should set their hope in God. What's it going to take for us to have our hope in God?

Well, one of the things is that we have to listen to the ones who were standing up before you. It's the way God says He's designed it to be that they would teach us of who God is and of His glorious deeds.

Proverbs says wisdom is with the aged and we in our pride forget that too often, don't we? We think we're okay without our parents' help, without our grandparents' wisdom and that can happen in the church too.

I charge each of you to find someone older to listen to and love during the holidays. It could be someone in your own family. Those are neat opportunities. But I'd especially encourage you to think of someone in this family.

[24 : 01] The deacons would love to help connect you with one of our widows or older couples in the church and they would love to be with you and to share with you during this holiday season that same place in the bulletin.

There's an email address for you so you can sign up right now during the rest of the service or this week. Love for you to be a part of that. Thank you.

Please be seated. Now if you are surrounding those first two groups age-wise and you haven't stood yet, anyone who hasn't stood yet, will you stand now and remain standing for a minute?

Awesome. I knew the range we were going to have in this group. That's so fun. You may get the most exciting and most challenging charge yet. Listen to Psalm 89, just the first verse.

I will sing of the steadfast love of the Lord forever. With my mouth I will make known your faithfulness to all generations. You get the chance to look in both directions from where you sit.

[25 : 08] There are people ahead of you in this family and people behind you in this family. Both of whom you're charged to tell with your mouth the glory of God and of His faithfulness to all generations.

You get to go in both directions. You can pick one to start with or you can do both. In fact, you can sign up for both of those email opportunities if you'd like and I know you don't have anything to do in the next few weeks so go ahead and do them both.

Look around you in your church family and think about the people in this family and in this community that God has called you to. you're in stages of life where it's really easy to think that it's all about you.

I'm in college. I'm an empty nester and I've poured in and now life is about me and I'm here to remind you that it's not.

That it's about God. It's about His kingdom and you get to be a part of that and it's so much more exciting than everything just being about you. So look up, look down and find someone that you can connect with during this season to tell God's glory and shape your life around declaring that not declaring yourself.

[26 : 24] Thank you. Please be seated. See, that being about that is really the heart of this for all of us. Right? There's really one story that we all get to declare.

Even in the Psalms you'll notice that story is about God's glorious and gracious deliverance. The story of glory and grace that we talk about every week here. Our glorious God made us to share in His glory with Him but we turned away from Him.

And our gracious God ran after us faster than we could run away from Him especially in sending His Son, Jesus Christ, in whom we see the glory and the grace of God most fully.

The one who lives perfectly. The one who dies sacrificially to deliver us. And so we come and we revel in that story young and old all of us and then we get to tell that one story of one glorious God one gracious Savior to every nation and every generation.

my mouth will speak the praise of the Lord and let all flesh bless His holy name forever and ever.

[27 : 49] Amen and Amen. For more information visit us online at southwood.org