

# Until The Nations Sing For Joy

Louie Giglio

## Psalm 67

For the director of music. With stringed instruments. A psalm. A song.

- 1 May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face shine upon us,
- 2 that your ways may be known on earth, your salvation among all nations.
- 3 May the peoples praise you, O God; may all the peoples praise you.
- 4 May the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you rule the peoples justly and guide the nations of the earth.
- 5 May the peoples praise you, O God; may all the peoples praise you.
- 6 Then the land will yield its harvest, and God, our God, will bless us.
- 7 God will bless us, and all the ends of the earth will fear him.

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*Getting hold of God's global plan of worship.*

Worship is a global thing.

We talk a lot about worship being a corporate thing. A personal thing. A lifestyle thing. A modern thing. A musical thing. A prophetic thing. But we must not forget that worship is also a global thing. By that I mean that we cannot be immersed in the presence of God without our hearts eventually turning to the lost peoples of the world.

In other words, it's another way of saying that true worship may bless us, but it never ends with us. Authentic worship in the presence of God always compels us beyond the walls of our lives, leading us outward to the waiting world. For if God is as awesome as we say He is, and if He alone does the wonderful things we attribute to Him, then we will soon find our hearts inextricably linked to His, longing for every single soul on planet earth to sing His praise.

If that's not where our hearts are today, chances are we have not truly worshipped.

Notice in this Psalm the connection between God's activity in our lives and His passion for the nations. It's pretty easy for anyone to get excited about the opening phrase, "May God be gracious to us and bless and make His face shine upon us." That's a prayer we can all embrace if I've ever heard one. Sadly, for many that's where their theology ends. Be gracious to me. Bless me. Shine on me. It's all about me, me, me!

Well, obviously it's OK to pray such a prayer (it's what the Psalmist is asking for), but the danger comes when we disconnect this opening line from the rest of the Psalm. To do so skews our worship, gently warping our focus away from the centrality of God and toward ourselves.

Fortunately, verses one and two are separated by a comma, not a period. The thought continues, "That Your ways may be known on earth, Your salvation among all nations." See it? Ultimately it's all about You, Yours, You. God's blessing in our lives serves as a witness to those around us, whether it's the guy across the street or on the other side of the globe. His activity on our behalf becomes a beacon for the watching world whereby we are His witnesses, "Here, there and to the ends of the earth." As He blesses us, He magnifies Himself.

At the heart of worship is a desire to see God worshipped by all peoples. Thus the Psalmist cries, "Let all the peoples praise You, O Lord, let all the peoples praise You. May the nations be glad and sing for joy." Do you have a desire today to hear the nations sing for joy? Does it bother you in any way that billions of their voices are silent, their eyes veiled to the glory of God? If the answer is not a resounding "YES" then God's grace in your life hasn't run its course, awakening you to the

treasure you possess and obligating you to every man who is yet to find it.

As John Piper opens the preface to his book, 'Let The Nations Be Glad', with these words. "This book is a partial payment of a debt I owe to the nations. The apostle Paul is not alone in saying, "I am a debtor to the Greeks and the Barbarians, to the wise and to the foolish." (Romans 1: 14). To those culturally near to me and those culturally far I am a debtor. Not because they gave me anything that I must pay back, but because God gave me what can't be paid back." That's worship.

So let us draw near with sincere hearts, asking for the gracious blessing of God in our lives, all the while recognizing that we already have it in Christ. And in so doing, let's allow the wonder of His grace to catapult us beyond ourselves, doing whatever necessary to magnify His name among the nations.