

Lesson 141
Psalm 133

I. Introduction

- A. Psalm 133 is the fourteenth of the "ascent Psalms." It is a Psalm of David that is called the "Psalm of Unity." The "ascent" of the Psalm is that it is a culmination of the previous Psalms: fearing the LORD and walking in His ways, (128) promise of protection from our enemies, (129) joy of forgiveness, (130) simple trust in the LORD, (131) and the glorious anticipation of the Messiah's reign on earth! (132)
- B. The Psalm might be dated from when David was coronated over all Israel. (2 Sam 5:1-7) Can you imagine the joy of the united government in David's heart! David knew full well the agonies of disunity! He had experienced it within his own family: his brothers before he became king, (1 Sam 17:28) his own sons Amon and Absalom, (2 Sam 13) Absalom's betrayal of David, (2 Sam 17-19) Ahithophel's betrayal of David, (2 Sam 16,17, Psalm 55) Saul's bitterness and jealousy, (1 Sam 18-31) even David's own wife Michal, (2 Sam 6:16-23)
- C. We will outline this short Psalm in the following way: Praise of unity, (v1) Picture of unity, (v2,3a) and the power of unity. (v3b) The majority of the lesson will be the parallels and applications to the church, the body of Christ!
- D. Thomas Watson said, "there is but one God, and they that serve him should be one. There is nothing that would render the true religion more lovely, or make more proselytes to it, than to see the professors of it tied together with the heartstrings of love. If God be one, let all that profess him be on one mind, and one heart, and thus fulfill Christ's prayer, "that they all may be one." In his book "The Pursuit of God," A.W. Tozer wrote, "when believers try to tune themselves to one another, it results in disharmony. But when each saint brings himself into one accord with Jesus Christ, glorious unity results in the body of Christ."

II. Praise of unity (v1)

- A. Unity defined. The word unity in the Hebrew is yahad. It means to be together in close relationship, alike mindedness. (Ps 86:11; Gen 49:6) I could find only two usages of the word in the O.T. One has a positive connotation and is from the LORD, the other is negative, and its source is Satan! The unity among men must come from the unity that exists in God! (Gen 1:1,26-27, 2:24; Dt 6:4)
- B. We are to behold it! Spurgeon proclaims, "it is a wonder seldom seen, therefore behold it! It may be seen, for it is the characteristic of real saints, and is worthy of admiration; pause and look at it and it will charm you into imitation, God looks on with approval."
 - 1. It is good. This means unity is excellent, choice, agreeable to the senses.
 - 2. It is pleasant. This means it is sweet. It is pleasant to God, acceptable to God, and He takes great delight in it! The Hebrew word is remarkably like aroma, or incense. (Gen 8:21; Eph 5:2; Phil 4:18; Rev 8:4) It has a close affiliation to the harmony that is in music, where the notes come together in perfect pitch and tone.
 - 3. For brethren. In this context, unity is for the physical descendants of Abraham who have faith, and believe in the LORD, and trust Him, and love Him!
 - 4. Dwell together. The word dwell means to reside, abide together, continue together in perseverance and persistency. It is to be separate from those who do not share the "like-mindedness" of the nation of Israel.

III. Picture of unity (v2-3a)

- A. It is like precious oil. This first simile comes from the anointing of Aaron as high priest. (Ex 29:7, 30:30)
 - 1. It consecrated the priesthood. It set him apart, anointed him for service.
 - 2. It poured out in abundance and overflowed to his feet.
 - 3. To the church, it typifies the Lord Jesus Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit in his anointing as Priest and King! (Ps 45:6-7; Heb 1:8-9) Thomas Adams states, "Christ's grace is so diffusive of itself, that it conveys holiness to us, "running down from the head to the skirts," to all his members. He was not only anointed himself, but he is our anointer."
- B. It is like the dew of Hermon. Hermon was a mountain of over nine thousand feet in elevation in Northern Israel. This simile pictures the refreshment that unity gives. This dew "penetrated everywhere and saturated everything." (Henry Baker) It flowed down from above pictures the source of the unity was God! It could not come from man.

IV. Power of unity (v3b) The LORD has commanded the blessing! Thomas Goodwin helps us with this comment, "by a bare word of command he blesseth: that blessing of blessings, even eternal life! This speaks of abundant life in this world and in the world to come!

V. Parallels and application to the church

- A. What is our unity? (Eph 4:1-6) It is to be uniquely unified like the Godhead! We are to be humble, gentle, long-suffering, peaceful, bearing with one another in love and in the unity of the Spirit. We are one body, called in one hope, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father, one Lord Jesus Christ, in one Spirit! We are to be one as God and Christ are! (John 17:20-26)
- B. Unity is not uniformity. (Eph 4:7-16) We are all gifted differently for the edification of the whole body!
- C. Unity is not complete agreement on the secondary issues. What are some issues we can agree to disagree on and still maintain a biblical unity?
- D. Unity is the work of the Holy Spirit. How else can you explain this church? We are so different in personality, background, position in life, preferences. The Spirit produces love in us for one another; that is the tangible evidence we are His.
- E. How do we break unity?
- F. Lawson concludes with, "Unity is what God desires for his people to promote. Unity is what Satan dreads and works to undo. Unity is what Jesus prayed for and what the Holy Spirit came to achieve. Unity is what will convince the world of the gospel"