

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION
Psalms: Living By Faith In God
LXV. A Gracious God In A Heartless World
(Psalm 65:1-13)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

We face an increasingly heartless world, and the high stakes involved call us to understand it and to handle it:

(1) We face it in our TV entertainment” “. . . (T)he so-called ‘ladies’ of ‘The View,’ have turned conversation into a weapon . . . ‘The View’ . . . started out . . . designed as a showcase for opinionated women . . . (b)ut . . . (i)t became increasingly evident that the only women allowed to crow” there “were the ones who swallowed the groupthink pill with their morning coffee” to assert, “Liberals good, conservatives evil . . . A recent example is when they tried to distinguish between the twin firings of Don Lemon (from CNN) and Tucker Carlson (from Fox), coming the same day. They cackled in glee at the termination of Tucker because he was a ‘fascist,’ but they made excuses for the fellow (Don Lemon) who had basically called every one of them ‘past their prime’ . . . A few days before that, Jane Fonda suggested that all pro-life Republican politicians should be murdered” though she tried “to walk back the comments when she saw the reaction from people online and in Congress. These are not normal conversations . . . worth having, or listening to, anywhere . . .” (Christine Flowers, “Trash TV masquerading as intelligent conversation,” Republican-American, May 3, 2023, p. 8A; parentheses ours)

(2) We face it in our politics: Brendan O’Neill’s April 29 Spiked column, “Why they hate Tucker Carlson” (“Quotable,” Ibid.), wrote, “You think you can condemn the masses as a ‘basket of deplorables,’ as imbeciles who ‘cling to guns or religion,’ as . . . transphobic, Islamophobic, xenophobic . . . and that there won’t be consequences? . . . (Tucker) Carlson is the consequence . . . [His] ‘power’ among the white working class is directly proportional to the elites’ visceral derision for the white working class. Dehumanize people for long enough and they’ll look high and low for someone who treats them as human. Carlson did that, at least: he treated his viewers as human.”

(3) We face it in our society: There have been nearly two mass shootings a day in the last three years in the U. S., but more than half of the deaths by gun violence in 2021 were suicides. (“How many US mass shootings have there been in 2023?”, May 8, 2023; news.yahoo.com, citing BBC News) Nevertheless, gun ownership has grown significantly the last few years, with about half of new gun owners being women and 40% of them being either Black or Hispanic. (Ibid.) Mental problems, fear and distrust are on the rise nationwide in an increasingly heartless world.

Need: *So, we ask, “WHY are we facing an increasingly heartless world, and HOW should we HANDLE it?!”*

- I. In a heartless pagan world, Psalm 65 was David’s psalm of praise for God’s gracious dealings with man:**
- A. David lived in a world where the pagans all around him viewed themselves as slaves to brutally self-serving, despotic gods, what was reflected in their culture. (Bruce K. Waltke, Creation and Chaos, 1974, p. 57-65)
 - B. In great contrast, David composed Psalm 65 to praise the very gracious dealings of Israel’s God with man:
 - 1. David opened the psalm by declaring great praise to God for hearing his prayers so that he would perform the vow he had made under duress when he gave his petition to the Lord, Psalm 65:1-2a.
 - 2. Thus, David anticipated the day when the whole world would join him to worship this gracious God, v. 2b.
 - C. David explained the Lord’s gracious dealings with him in Psalm 65:3-13 (as follows):
 - 1. When the words of the Mosaic Law that condemned David for his sins were too great for him to handle, God graciously made an atonement for David, covering all of his transgressions of the Law, Psalm 65:3.
 - 2. Consequently, David testified how blessed that he and his people in Israel were for having been forgiven by the Lord and brought into encouraging, nurturing spiritual fellowship with Him, Psalm 65:4.
 - 3. Indeed, with awesome deeds of righteousness, God their Savior answered them, becoming not only their Hope, but also the eventual Hope of all the Gentile peoples throughout the whole earth, Psalm 65:5.
 - 4. God’s great power is thus expressed all over the world at all times, from dawn to sunset, Psa. 65:6-8 NIV.
 - 5. Thus, God met His people’s needs, sending them rain for agricultural bounty to their joy, Psalm 65:9-13.
- II. This expressed goodness of David’s gracious God aligned with the Deuteronomy 28 Mosaic Covenant: God had promised greatly to bless Israel if she obeyed the Mosaic Law, Deuteronomy 28:1-14.**
- III. However, if the people of Israel sinned, the Mosaic Covenant promised divine punishment in the form of a hard life that lacked God’s blessing, Deuteronomy 28:15-68.**
- IV. Nevertheless, faithful believers in God like David who lived under the Mosaic Law found God graciously forgiving them when they believed in Israel’s God and confessed their sins as believers, cf. Romans 4:4-8.**

Lesson: *Surrounded by a heartless pagan world, David found God to be his Source of forgiveness for sin when he trusted in the Lord and confessed his sins as a believer so that God graciously forgave and greatly blessed him in life. David thus anticipated the time when all people worldwide would seek the Lord for forgiveness and blessing.*

Application: *(1) May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God's gift of eternal life, John 3:16; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11. (2) If we have committed sin following our expressed faith in Christ for salvation, God directs us in 1 John 1:9 to confess that sin to Him for His forgiveness and resulting blessing. (3) This program is meant for anyone today, the solution to today's heartless world (as explained below)!*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message and provide additional guidance . . .)

(1) First, to explain **why** the world is turning so increasingly heartless, and **why** and **how** Psalm 65 gives the **solution**, we view Church History (as follows): (a) In the 3rd century A. D., the School of Alexandria, Egypt tried to harmonize systematic theology with pagan Platonic philosophy by interpreting Scripture nonliterally. This led to amillennialism, the view that the Revelation 20:4-6 thousand year reign of Christ was figurative, and that the Church would fulfill Revelation 20:4-6 by ruling the world righteously before Christ returned to start the eternal state. This view was adopted by the Catholic Church and mainline Protestants. (John F. Walvoord, The Blessed Hope and the Tribulation, 1976, p. 12-14) (b) In the 19th century A. D., Darwin formed the theory of evolution that taught that the universe came into its current state by natural means, including the heartless survival of the fittest process, not by supernatural creation by a Benevolent Creator as taught in Genesis 1-2. Evolution with rationalism were then applied to the Bible, forming Liberal Theology that taught the Bible evolved by human authors, that it was not God inspired with God's authority so that Scripture was neither infallible nor inerrant. (Z. P. E. B., v. One, p. 591) (c) Karl Marx and Friederich Engels, atheistic authors of "The Communist Manifesto" and admirers of Darwin, applied his theory of evolution to man's social structures, including the heartless idea of the survival of the fittest to changes in human society. (Bolton Davidheiser, Evolution and Christian Faith, 1976, p. 350-354) (d) Today, leftists promote the beliefs of Liberal Theology that views people as essentially good, not sinful and deserving of eternal divine punishment in hell, providing they are liberated from social arrangements that prevent them from living happy, productive lives. (Brannon S. Howse, Marxianity, 2018, p. 192) However, Marxism is now hijacking Liberal Theology and adding its atheistic idea that man is not accountable to a righteous, sovereign Creator, so social change can be instigated by even evil means and pushing false narratives to manipulate public thinking to destroy social order in a **heartless survival of the fittest process** to set up communism in an alleged utopia. ("Goals, 'Communist Manifesto,'" learn-usa.com) (e) In contrast, premillennialists like us who **still** hold to the **literal** interpretation of Scripture, the **divine inspiration** and **authority** of **Scripture** and **pure creationism**, assert the Bible's claims that man is a sinner since Adam's fall, and that the world will go from bad to worse in sin until Christ's Second Coming **before His literal thousand year reign on earth**. (Ibid., Howse, p. 191) Premillennialists thus also believe that man is a freewill individual who is personally responsible for his own actions, that he must individually trust in Christ for salvation to enjoy God's blessings, Ibid., p. 193. (f) Thus, in contrast to the leftists' views, Psalm 65:1-13, like premillennialism, presents the Biblical view of God, man, sin, righteousness and salvation: David acknowledged that he was fallen in sin as exposed by God's Law, so he needed trust in God Who in grace atoned for his sin, forgave him, and blessed him, providing bounty in life as the Good, Sovereign Creator. ***So, the solution to increasing heartlessness in today's world is for individuals to view themselves as fallen sinners in great need of God's salvation, and thus to cleave to Christ by faith for salvation that God in grace might save them from sin and bless them with orderly, bountiful lives of God's blessing to His glory.***

(2) Second, to handle the issues noted in our introduction, we thus need to heed the Bible (as follows): (a) On the TV show "The View," we should obey Ephesians 5:11-12 and have nothing to do with the unfruitful works of darkness by not watching the show! (b) On fielding dehumanizing remarks from leftists, we believers in Christ can recall God's edifying declarations about us such as (+) our being His children (John 1:12-13), (+) our being accepted by Him in Christ (Ephesians 1:6), (+) our being made close to Him by Christ's death (Ephesians 2:13), and (+) our being translated into the kingdom of the Son of His love (Colossians 1:13). (c) On the increases of mass shootings and the buying of guns even by women and especially by minority women, (+) Psalm 127:1-2 calls us to rely on God for safety, for without Him, we are not safe. Also, (+) Jesus in John 11:7-16 told His disciples that He would return to Judaea where the religious rulers had tried to kill Him, that as long as He walked in the light of God's will, He would be safe there. (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, ftn. to John 11:8-10). Thus, we should stay focused on God's calling to enjoy His safety in that calling (+) while also avoiding obvious harm like Paul told Timothy in 2 Timothy 4:14-15.

May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God's gift of eternal life. May we as believers in Christ then align our thinking and actions to Biblical truth for blessing.