

- ***Read Psalm 29/Prayer*** When was the last time you used the word "ascribe?" I'll be honest, I don't think I've ever used the word in conversation, and I've only ever used the word while reading it from Scripture. We mostly find this word in the Psalms, and with good reason. To "ascribe" is to attribute, regard as, or give credit to something. We might rephrase it to say something along the lines of "Attribute to the Lord, glory and strength. Attribute to the Lord the glory due His name." This is a Psalm that simply recognizes God for who he is and what He does.
- I want to approach this lesson from the opposite perspective, this evening. Rightfully we ought to give God the credit for what is truly His, but let's not be foolish to think that we can't be guilty of robbing God. When we think of robbery we think of thieves breaking into our homes and stealing our stuff, and while we can't do that to God...we certainly can be guilty of taking for ourselves that which is rightfully God's or not giving Him what is rightfully His. This is stealing and robbery just as we might experience in this life.
- Within this **29th Psalm**, I find six things that we can be guilty of stealing away from God. Let's take a few minutes to be reminded of some very important things that belong to God that we ought not try to take or keep or ourselves because he alone is worthy and deserving of such things!

I. Don't rob God of His Glory.

- A. Rephrased, "Ascribe to the Lord the credit due His name." There are things that God deserves credit for, and it can be a temptation for us to fail to give credit to God where it is due. We can fail to acknowledge God for who He truly is, and this is falling short of David's example of giving God his proper due.
- B. So how can we fail to give God His glory? The easiest way is to simply not pray and give thanks often. The Christian's prayer is our acknowledgement to God that He is the giver of every good thing. **(James 1:17)** He is worthy of us stopping to give thanks.
- C. He is worthy of simply be recognized as being great as He is. "Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name." **(Matt. 6:9)** In other words, exalted, praised, and lifted up be your name. Do we take the time to acknowledge God in these ways? If not, then we need to recognize that we are robbing God of the glory that is due Him alone.

II. Don't rob God of holy worship.

- A. David continues the Psalm by stating that we need to "worship the Lord in holy array." Is this that verse where people come to show that we must only wear our "Sunday Best" to church? No, not at all. This is metaphorical in nature, and David is simply stating that we must worship God in a holy manner.
- B. We must recognize that we give glory to God in our worship. However, we can go through all of the motions of worship while still failing to glorify God and give Him the credit due His name if we are simply going through the motions while worshipping with our lips but having our heart far from where we are and what we are doing. **(Matt. 15:8)**
- C. Furthermore, we can fail to worship God in holy array if we worship God while actively and willfully living in sin. This is worship that is unacceptable by God because much like our last point, our heart hasn't been fully given to God. He won't worship from a people who live for self all of the time, but what to show others how they worship God. **(I Peter 1:14-16)**
- D. Lastly, we can rob God of holy worship by simply not worshipping. Our assembling of ourself together is an opportunity to praise God and give Him and credit. Our refusal to gather to worship robs Him of His glory for He certainly is worthy of our worship and praise.

III. Don't rob God of credit for His creation.

- A. I like to listen to a popular sports radio show from time to time, and on Tuesdays they have this zoologists come on air and answer questions people have about animals. One of the things that continually strikes me and really irks me a bit is how he answers questions about certain animal characteristics. He might say something like, "it is just so amazing how nature designed and developed this bird to do this amazing thing!" Certainly it is amazing, but this zoologist is failing to recognize and give credit to the one who is deserving, and that is God.
- B. This Psalm is one of a few that some believe are best read and understood during different times or circumstances. For example, **Psalm 8** is often thought to have been written at night. The reference to the moon and stars give the idea that David writes this as he stares into the night sky and recognizes God in the creations.

- C. **Psalm 19** is another Psalm like this as it makes mention of God's glory being seen in the sun. Some are under the impression that David writes this Psalm while being able to witness a strong storm go across the land. In the midst of the strength of this natural occurrence, David recognizes that it is a result of the mind of God. God created such powerful things simply with His voice. God created such amazing creature just with His words, and we need to make sure we give Him the credit and glory. Many men will seek to rob God of His handiwork, but let it never be said that we rob God of such.

IV. Don't rob God of His seat of judgment.

- A. The Psalm begins to conclude by David acknowledging God's seat of judgment. It was God, David says, who initiated the flood and sat by as it purified the earth. The flood was certainly a judgment of the immense wickedness that had covered the earth, and He couldn't just allow it to continue on. **(Gen. 6)** But notice, that David acknowledges that it was God would was able to sit in such a place as King of all that is.
- B. We can become guilty of trying to usurp God's seat of judgment. It might be that we think we know how things ought to be and what is right and wrong. In doing so, we try to rob God of His seat of judgement and initiate our standard as that which will be judged.
- C. We might also seek to rob God of his judgment seek by looking down at others in their sin. Our job is never to look down and condemn others, but it is instead to seek to help other rise up to the standard that God expects of His faithful. As many a wise man has said before, the only time we ought to look down upon others is when we are trying to help them up. May we never seek to condemn others...our responsibility is only to seek for their souls redemption through faith in Jesus. **(James 5:19,20)**

V. Don't rob God of the strength He provides.

- A. The last two lines of this Psalm are clear and straight to the point, the Lord gives strength to His people. How often do we seek to rob God of credit for the strength that He gives us in our times of weakness?
- B. Certainly, we would never confuse ourselves as being the ones who we think we gather strength from. May it never be said that we forget that it is Jesus who strengthens us to overcome the evils of this world. **(Phil. 4:13)** While we would probably never come right out and say, "yup, that was all me! I pulled myself through all of this without anyone's help!" might we indirectly say this when we achieve victory through Jesus, yet we never stop to give Him the glory?
- C. This might be the way we rob God when we don't take the time each day to bow our heads and thank Him for getting us through yet another day where Satan has constantly been trying to devour us. By ourselves we will constantly fall, but when we succeed we must acknowledge that we were able to do so through the strength that God supplies. Even just look to the next Psalm. **Psalm 30:1-4** is a perfect example of David giving God credit for His strength. We must seek to emulate his example.

VI. Don't rob God of the peace He gives.

- A. Just as the Lord provides strength, we must also freely acknowledge and give God the glory and credit for putting peace in our hearts. It can be easy to live this life with constant unrest and uneasiness in our hearts, but God is able and so willing to give us peace through His guidance. In fact, Paul refers to our God as the Lord of peace. **(II Thess. 3:16)**
- B. How can we rob God of the credit for "peace" in our lives? Again, we might just fail to acknowledge Him, but we might also rob Him of the glory by having a false perception of living in peace. It might be that we perceive our lives as being peaceful because we have focused on other things besides God. We might have filled our lives with so many goods and blessings that we perceive peace as simply being without physical need. Is this true peace?
- C. Let me suggest that this is not true peace. This a facade that masks itself as peace when in reality we are naked and wretched and miserable such as the church in Laodicea. **(Rev. 3:14-17)** We rob God when we fail to recognize true peace. True peace is only known when our souls are kept in the hand of God. At that point, no matter the situation, we can rest with sure confidence and peace knowing that our Lord is keeping us in His care. Anything else robs God of His glory in giving us peace.

Those who rob and steal in this life and are caught are punished for such poor decisions. Their punishments are often temporary and they can make better decisions after the fact. However, those who rob God of that which rightfully belongs to Him and never repent of such will find themselves in a place where there is no turning back. May we be a people who properly acknowledge God and give Him the glory due His name.