

Missionary Conference, Christian Admiral, June 28

Copy!

(The first part is missing. The rest is here)

It is not necessary to read it that way. We can read the first part of it as praise to God as the last part it. But I think a good argument can be made for that, and I think perhaps there is a special food for our souls if we think of it that way. In other words that the first part of the Psalm recognizes a situation, not a situation as in those Psalms in which a man is in sorrow, in misery in suffering, and then he finds God answering later. But a situation in which he faces a fact and feels himself oppressed by the fact and then later on comes to glory in the very fact which seemed to oppress him at the first.

Now let's look at it from that viewpoint. Let's think of it as a man on this world here feeling a bit oppressed by the omniscience and omnipresence of God. Looked at from that viewpoint you find your problem in the first 12 vv. and particularly in the first 7.

"O Lord thou hast searched me and known me. Thou knowest my down sitting and my uprising. Thou understadest my thought afar off. Thou compasest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me behind and before and laid thy hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me. (Here now you get the problem) It is high I cannot attain unto it. Whither shall I go from thy spirit or whither shall I flee from thy presence."

C.S. Lewis tells how greatly he was influenced in his early life by the poem, The Hound of God. That poem shows the man trying to flee from God and God pursuing him, with love. I think we've got something of this same picture as Mr. Bancroft spoke to us of and told us something of his experience. How that with a Christian family background and with much knowledge of Christian things, he as a young man rebelled against it. As a young man he wanted to make his own life count for his own desires and pleasures, and above all things he was not going to be a minister. And if he were to be a minister he certainly would not be a missionary. Then he told how God put his hand upon him and led him and brought him to a realization of the marvels of what God had done, in sending His Son Jesus Christ to die that he might be saved through His precious blood. Then of how much more valuable it would be that his life should tell others about Christ than anything else he could do. And then eventually brought him to the point where he was ready to say, Wherever you want me to go, anywhere at all, there I'm ready to go.

Now you can read this Psalm simply as praise to God right from beginning to end. This is not necessarily the interpretation of the Psalm but it can be interpreted this way and it does fit with the experience of many many people if we take it that way.