

Limiting God

Psalm 78

What a good and glorious day it is today to be able to serve the living God. Thank you for joining me today again for "It's a Good Life." In just a few moments we'll be looking into Psalm chapter 78.

But first, let me invite you to look at our website, www.LRWM.org. On that website, you'll be able to download transcripts of this program and other programs of "It's a Good Life."

You'll also find Bible study helps on there. You can type in a verse, and it'll help you find where that verse is at. It also has commentaries there where you can look up things that you need to know from the Word of God, and it's a good guide for you to help you in your Bible study. That's www.LRWM.org.

I'll be looking forward to hearing from you this week.

Now, in Psalm chapter 78, we're going to look today at some ways that God can be limited. Now, that may seem strange to you to think that people could limit God, but as we read, we understand that there are things that people can do that can hinder the work of God. Now, there are many things that this person has written that baffled human understanding, but one of the most perplexing questions is why God should have limited Himself to human beings in His work of seeking sons and saving men. We remember that God used only the Spirit of God and the Word of God and redeemed lives.

"It is easy to understand," this person continues on, "His working through the Holy Spirit who is faithful and through the Word which never changes, why He should have limited Himself to men, even though they are redeemed, is beyond understanding. God is limited by His fellow

workers, both in the blessings which He would give to them individually and to others through them."

Now, in Psalm chapter 78, God speaks of the ways His people limited Him in that day, just as they limited God so we can do the same today in our daily lives. Let's look briefly now in Psalm 78 and see some of the ways that we can limit God. Now, I'm not trying to teach you how to limit God. I'm teaching you the ways that we do limit God. First of all, I see that God is limited by backsliding. In Psalm 78 and verse 9, it says there, that Israel had turned back in the day of battle. We sometimes turn back in the day of battle, don't we, as Christians? Things get rough and we say, "What's the use?" And we just turn our backs, and we run in the opposite direction.

Well, we need to do as that old hymn says, "I have decided to follow Jesus. No turning back. Though no one follow, still I will follow. No turning back." And we need to understand that in these trying times, too many people stop trying. We need to stay true to God. We need to stay true to ourselves, to the calling that God has given us to serve Him daily and stay true to Him.

Well, we can limit God by backsliding, by turning our backs upon God. And remember, God has never turned His back upon us. Even when we turn our backs on Him, He's still there. He's still our heavenly Father, and so many people don't understand that, and we'll look further in just a moment about that.

Another way to limit God is by disobedience. In Psalm 78 and verse 10, *They kept not the covenant of God, and refused to walk in his law....*

A farmer made six holes in his door as exits for his six cats. A friend asked, "Why did you make six holes in the door? One hole would have been enough."

But the farmer replied with emphasis, "When I say, Scat, I mean scat."

And we need to understand that, when God says jump, we need to say, "How high?" We don't need to say, "Oh, my," but we need to say, "How high?" We need to be in obedience to God instead of in disobedience. Do what God says.

Well, how do we know what God wants us to do? I submit to you today that we speak to God through prayer. We talk to Him. He listens to us as children of God, and then He speaks to us through His Word, through that still small voice that comes to us as we study the Word of God. We speak to Him through prayer. He speaks to us through our Bible reading, our Bible study, through His Word, the Word of God. Don't limit God by disobedience.

And next we see that God is limited by forgetfulness. In Psalm 78, verses 11, and 42, the Bible says there, *And [they] forgat his works, and his wonders that he had shewed them.*

A stranger asked John Wyeth, "Are you a Christian?"

Well, John Wyeth said, "I used to be but I've become cold and calloused. I've wandered far from God."

The questioner didn't comment but started singing, "Come thou Fount of every blessing."

And Wyeth said, "I wrote that."

You see, it doesn't make any difference who you are or how powerful you think you are; you can have a problem. You can forget the goodness of

God. You can turn on God. And that may seem strange to you, but it can happen to you. You need to take heed. The Bible says you need to take heed when you think you stand, lest you fall. Don't be raised up with pride. I don't care how great a Bible study person you are or how great a Bible teacher you are. If you forget God, if you start looking to yourself for your own strength, then the Bible teaches us that we're in for a fall. We need to look to God today, and we need to quit trusting in ourselves for the strength as Christians, but we need to look to God in His strength.

Well, we cannot only limit God by forgetfulness, as these people in Psalm 78 did, but we can limit God by murmuring. In Psalm 78, verse 19, it says, *Yea, they spake against God....* Well, how do we murmur? Have you been guilty of this? "God, why have you brought me to this place in my life? Why have You done me this way? Why have you turned on me, God?" That's murmuring. That's questioning God's authority in your life. Instead of murmuring, we need to thank God. "God, thank you for bringing me to this point. You're trying to teach me something, and, God, I pray that I would learn." And might I add today that, if you're going through a difficult time, you might add this: "God, please hurry. Help me get through this difficult time so that I can serve You to my fullest."

Well, we can limit God by murmuring, and we can also limit God by unbelief. In Psalm 78, verses 22 and 32, the Bible teaches there that they limited God because they believed not in God and trusted not in His salvation. We can limit God today by our unbelief. You say, "Well, what do you mean by that?" Well, I firmly believe that many people do not witness for the Lord, those people who are saved....they do not witness for the Lord because they are too wrapped up in their own salvation. And what do I mean by that? I mean that they are concerned, "Am I saved today or am I lost? Am I going to be

saved tomorrow or am I going to be lost?" Well, the Bible tells us that, in Titus 3:5, it says, *Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us....*

Ephesians chapter 2, verses 8-9, that it's by grace we're saved through faith and that not of ourselves. It's a gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast. So many people today are concerned about their own salvation that they're wringing their hands, not even realizing that it's totally of God. And when they do that, they're letting the devil get the upper hand in their lives. They are forgetting God. They have unbelief in their heart that God is going to do what He said, that He would save them to the uttermost, that He would never leave them nor forsake them once they have trusted in Him. Jesus said that He is the way, He is the life, and no man cometh to the Father but by Him. It's not because of you that you're going to go to heaven; it's because and only because of the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

We can also limit God by our insincerity. We say one thing with our mouths, and we think of something else in our hearts. We do something constantly different. In verses 36 and 37 of Psalm 78, it teaches there that they nevertheless did flatter Him with their mouth and lied to Him with their tongues. Their heart was not right, neither steadfast in His covenant. Are you doing God's work today? Are you doing God's will today? Are you saying one thing with your mouth and doing something else? Is your heart right with God today? Are you serving Him? Are you a Christian? Have you trusted Jesus as your Saviour? Well, we can limit God by our insincerity.

And finally, we can limit God by our unfaithfulness. Psalm 78 and verse 57 says that, *But turned back, and dealt unfaithfully like their fathers....* One person has said, "If your faith isn't contagious, it must be contaminated." And let me

submit to you today that your faith should be a faith that is leading you to lead others to the Lord Jesus Christ. Your faith should be leading you that you are an example to this lost and dying world. We are living in perilous times, but my faith is still built upon the Lord Jesus Christ. You see, I know that things are going to turn out right, because I have the book. I have the road map. I have the plan. I've seen the end of the story. I've seen the end. I've seen the beginning. I know that God is in control, and God is going to take care of me, and He'll take care of you if you'll only let Him.

I pray today that, if you've never trusted Jesus as your Saviour, that you'll trust Him right now right where you're at. Realize that it's all of God. It's nothing you can do except accepting Him. You need to accept Jesus as your Saviour. Remember, For by grace are ye saved through faith, not of yourself. It's a gift of God lest any man should boast. It's not of works. It's a gift of God.... Ephesians chapter 2, verses 8 and 9.

Right where you're at, why not bow your head and ask Jesus to come into your heart. "Lord, I'm sorry for my sin. I'm sorry, Lord, that I have run from you for so long. Please save me today for Jesus sake."

And if you are saved and you're not serving Him today, you need to fall on your face and ask His forgiveness, not to get saved all over again. You're saved. You're on your way to heaven, but why not let Jesus, why not let God be the God of your life, and let Him help you lead others to the Lord.

Thank you for joining me today, and I'll be looking for you at this same time next week when you'll hear me say, "It's a good life." In the meantime, look at our website, www.LRWM.org. May the Lord bless you richly in my prayer.