Clips from Psalms

Psalms 117:1-2

A Psalm of Praise

"1 Oh praise Jehovah all you nations; Laud him all you peoples. 2 For his lovingkindness is great toward us; and the truth of Jehovah endures for ever. Praise Jehovah."

More Americans Have No Religion

The Program on Public Values at Trinity College conducted a large study on American religious life found that the percentage of “Christians” in the nation has declined and 15% of respondents said they had no religion, an increase from 14.2 percent in 2001 and 8.2 percent in 1990.

Northern New England is the least religious region, with Vermont reporting the highest share of those claiming no religion, at 34%. Also, the study found that the numbers of Americans with no religion rose in every state.

Across the nation, Catholics remain the largest religious group, with 57 million adherents. The group gained 11 million followers since 1990, but its share of the population fell by about a percentage point to 25%. Christians who are not Catholic also are a declining segment of the country. In 2008, 76% of adults considered themselves “Christians” (used in a broad sense), compared to about 77% in 2001 and about 86% in 1990. Over the last seven years, mainline Protestants dropped from just over 17% to 12.9% of the population.

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John Robertson
About 12% of Americans believe in a higher power but not the one true God. Furthermore, since 1990, a slightly greater share of respondents (1.2%) said they were part of “New Age” religious movements, including Scientology, Wicca, and Santeria.

There is also a growing influence of churches that either do not belong to a denomination or play down their membership in a religious group. Respondents who called themselves “non-denominational Christian” grew from 0.1% in 1990 to 3.5% last year. Congregations that most often use the term are megachurches considered “seeker sensitive,” using “Christian rock” music and a “contemporary” worship to attract people who do not usually attend worship services.

While this may seem disheartening, we need to look at this as an opportunity. As our country continues through its financial hardships, there will be more people looking for God, perhaps for the first time. You may be at a convenient time and place in their life to bring them to Jesus. “Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest” (John 4:35).

Kyle Campbell

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Psalms 118

1 Oh give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever! 2 Let Israel say, "His steadfast love endures forever." 3 Let the house of Aaron say, "His steadfast love endures forever." 4 Let those who fear the LORD say, "His steadfast love endures forever." 5 Out of my distress I called on the LORD; the LORD answered me and set me free. 6 The LORD is on my side; I will not fear. What can man do to me? 7 The LORD is on my side as my helper; I shall look in triumph on those who hate me. 8 It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in man. 9 It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in princes. 10 All nations surrounded me; in the name of the LORD I cut them off! 11 They surrounded me, surrounded me on every side; in the name of the LORD I cut them off! 12 They surrounded me like bees; they went out like a fire among thorns; in the name of the LORD I cut them off! 13 I was pushed hard, so that I was falling, but the LORD helped me. 14 The LORD is my strength and my song; he has become my salvation. 15 Glad songs of salvation are in the tents of the righteous: "The right hand of the LORD does valiantly, 16 the right hand of the LORD exalts, the right hand of the LORD does valiantly!" 17 I shall not die, but I shall live, and recount the deeds of the LORD. 18 The LORD has disciplined me severely, but he has not given me over to death. 19 Open to me the gates of righteousness, that I may enter through them and give thanks to the LORD. 20 This is the gate of the LORD; the righteous shall enter through it. 21 I thank you that you have answered me and have become my salvation. 22 The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. 23 This is the LORD's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. 24 This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. 25 Save us, we pray, O LORD! O LORD, we pray, give us success! 26 Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD! We bless you from the house of the LORD. 27 The LORD is God, and he has made his light to shine upon us. Bind the festal sacrifice with cords, up to the horns of the altar! 28 You are my God, and I will give thanks to you; you are my God; I will extol you. 29 Oh give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever!