Psalm 100: A Psalm For Thanksgiving

Prepared by Nathan L Morrison for Sunday November 12th, 2023

Text: Psalm 100 Scripture Reading: Colossians 3:17

### Intro

1. We are entering the “holiday season” again and some people like to jump from Halloween to Christmas and they forget about Thanksgiving.
2. Our country has a holiday about giving thanks and it has been designated for the third Thursday of November, making this year’s Thanksgiving fall on Thursday November 23rd.
3. The holidays can be a fun time of cheer and family traditions, but it can also be a time of great discontent, greed, and ingratitude, and even some Christians can fall into that trap!
4. Christians aren’t to just be thankful one time a year (and I know that’s not the intent of the holiday) but are to make a habit of thanksgiving for all things at all times! *(Colossians 3:17)*
5. There are multiple places in God’s word that contain calls and reasons for giving thanks but instead of spending our time hopping around to various places in the Scriptures, I want to concentrate on one passage—one psalm. Psalm 100.
6. In fact, the ancient title for the psalm is, “A Psalm for Thanksgiving.”
7. It is also affectionately known as "Old Hundredth," from its tune in the *Geneva Psalter* (1551).
8. Some have called this Psalm the “Pilgrims’ Psalm” because it was especially cherished by the Puritans who felt it was an appropriate description of their experiences in coming to the New World. It may have been on the minds of the pilgrims as they celebrated the harvest feast that came to be known as “Thanksgiving.”
9. Psalm 100: A Psalm for Thanksgiving.
   1. Psalm 100:1  A Psalm for Thanksgiving. Shout joyfully to the LORD, all the earth.
   2. Psalm 100:2  Serve the LORD with gladness; Come before Him with joyful singing.
   3. Psalm 100:3  Know that the LORD Himself is God; It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; We are His people and the sheep of His pasture.
   4. Psalm 100:4  Enter His gates with thanksgiving And His courts with praise. Give thanks to Him, bless His name.
   5. Psalm 100:5  For the LORD is good; His lovingkindness is everlasting And His faithfulness to all generations.
10. Let’s observe the Psalmist’s “Call” and “Cause” for giving thanks to God!

#### A **CALL** to Give Thanks (Psalm 100:1-2, 4)

* 1. **“Shout joyfully to the LORD” (v. 1)**— The Hebrew here literally means to “shout,” or practically speaking, to “sing loudly.”
     1. A “joyful noise” (ESV) is a passionate, heart-felt sound.
        1. No jokes this morning about brother or sister so-and-so who thinks their singing is a “joyful noise.”
        2. We knew a woman who sang loudly. She sang off-key. Every. Single. Time. But she loved to sing and she sang out. We all loved her for it.
        3. To God that was a “joyful noise” because she sang from her heart!
     2. It’s singing done with gusto!
     3. It’s not the near silent murmuring of words. It’s a proclamation from the roof-tops!
     4. Does that describe your singing?
     5. **“Shout…all the earth” (v. 1)**—This is a reminder that ALL of the earth is subject to God.
        1. Everyone on earth should thank and praise the Lord. All are invited to come to Him.
        2. Every knee should & will bow before him (Philippians 2:10).
  2. **“Serve the Lord” (v. 2)**—Considering the context, the service here is referring to offering the sacrifice of worship.
     1. To worship is to show adoration. One Greek word translated in the New Testament as “worship” literally means “to prostrate oneself; to bow down before” *(G4352 proskyneo [pros-koo-neh'-o] from John 4:23-24).*
     2. That’s what we are being called to do. Knowing that context, let’s frame our understanding of this psalm in that way.
     3. **“Serve… with gladness” (v. 2)**—Serving the Lord shouldn’t be seen as drudgery, but as a grand opportunity.
        1. Thus, the admonition to approach the Lord with gladness in your heart.
  3. **“Come into His presence” (v. 2)**—Looking back to ancient Israel, going to the Tabernacle or Temple would have been considered entering the presence of God.
     1. In David’s great psalm of repentance (Psalm 51) you may remember that he begs God, “Cast me not away from your presence” (v. 11).
     2. What he meant by that was literally, “Don’t keep me from being able to come and worship you at your tabernacle!”
     3. **“Come… with singing” (v. 2)**—Singing was done in Israel as part of worship.
     4. Today, it’s still a major part of our assembling together.
     5. It’s not entertainment as many in the religious world often treat it. It’s a sacrifice, the fruit of our lips (Hebrews 13:15).
     6. It’s important that we keep this as our perspective when it comes to our coming into God’s presence in song.
  4. **“Enter His gates…courts” (v. 4)**—These things would have certainly brought to mind the Tabernacle or Temple for the Jews with their gates and courts.
     1. King Solomon recognized that no Tabernacle or Temple could hold God as he said at the dedication of the Temple to God, “But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain You, how much less this house which I have built!” (I Kings 8:27).
     2. As Christians we understand coming into God’s presence in a different way as stated by Steven, “…The Most High does not dwell in houses made by hands…” (Acts 7:48-49), where he quoted from Isaiah 66.
     3. Knowing that God is all around us makes it important to take the time to think on the meaning and the reality of being in God’s presence.
     4. When we are all assembled together is a great time to do that as well.
     5. **“Enter…with thanksgiving… praise” (v. 4)**—This is really at the heart of what we are doing, and thinking about now.
        1. We come into his presence with the only gift we truly have to offer God: our sacrifice of gratitude and praise (Psalm 50:10-15; 116:12).
  5. **“Give thanks” (v. 4)**—Simply stated, express your gratitude.
     1. That would be their purpose in coming into the presence of God, of entering his gates and courts.
     2. Sacrifices weren’t just made for sin.
     3. Some were made as free-will offerings, possibly of gratitude to the Lord (Ezra 3:5). That’s also our purpose in our worship.
     4. **“Give… bless His name” (v. 4)**—Just as God has blessed us, we are called to “bless” Him.
        1. For us this is another way of referring to giving praise. It means speaking of the greatness of God, acknowledging his goodness.
  6. You, brothers and sisters, are called to come to God and offer your sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving (Colossians 3:17: “Whatever you do in word or deed…giving thanks…”).
     1. We are called to do it in a different manner from the way the Jews did, but God is no less worthy of our honor and gratitude today than he was then.
     2. In fact, you and I ought to understand the goodness of God in an even deeper way—in that we stand on this side of the Cross!
     3. We’ve seen God’s love, mercy, kindness, compassion, and grace expressed in a way the writer of this psalm had never seen! “Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29)
  7. Our hearts are to be filled with thanksgiving to God through Jesus and should be heard and seen in our words and actions! (Colossians 3:17)

#### A **CAUSE** to Give Thanks (Psalm 100:3, 5)

* 1. Lots of times we ask the “Why?” of a thing. Why are we told to do that?
     1. It’s important to know that we are to serve and praise God, and it’s just as important to know the reasons why we serve and praise God!
     2. The Psalmist here gives us several reasons “WHY” all the world should worship & serve God Almighty and not any other created thing in the universe!
  2. **He is our Creator (v. 3)**—“It is he who made us, and we are His.”
     1. Truly, if it were not for God, none of us would exist!
     2. And not only did He create us, He created everything around us, and everything we need to live (Colossians 1:16-17: Jesus is revealed as the Creator). He sustains us (Hebrews 1:1-4).
     3. Since He created us, we belong to Him. We are His possession, in a special way in Christ (I Peter 2:9).
  3. **He is our Shepherd (v. 3)**—When I read this I think of the first line of the 23rd Psalm: “The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.”
     1. A shepherd in those times was more than a mere farmer. He was a guide for his sheep, a protector for his sheep, a provider for his sheep. The shepherd would see to their every need.
     2. Thus, it ought to be no surprise that the same picture is used to portray God’s relationship with His people.
     3. Jesus is our Good Shepherd (John 10:11), our guide, our protector, our provider. We are His sheep (John 10:11-18, 26-30: We know His voice).
  4. **He is Good (v. 5)**—The Hebrew word here refers to something that is desirable, beautiful, or pleasing.
     1. Sure, God is morally “good,” in that He is holy and perfect. But God is good all around!
     2. This “good” is the same as the one we see in Genesis 1, where everything that God created was “good” and “very good.” It was pleasing, whole, perfect, complete—beautiful. *(Genesis 1:4-25, 31)*
     3. That’s what God is: Beautiful. David wrote in Psalm 34:8, “O taste and see that the LORD is good; How blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him!”
  5. **He is Loving (v. 5)**—I have summarized the various translations to just say, “God is loving.”
     1. The ESV refers to God’s “steadfast love.” The NASU refers to His “lovingkindness.” The NET refers to God’s “loyal love.” The NKJV simply says “mercy” (KJV as well).
     2. This love is more than an affection. It is an undying, never ending loyalty.
     3. The Hebrew term here *(H2617 chêsêd [kheh'-sed])* could be thought of as the Old Testament counterpart to the New Testament’s *“agape” love (G26).*
     4. Think about how incredible and comforting this ought to be: God is eternally loyal to his people. Moses wrote, “Know therefore that the Lord your God is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love Him and keep His commandments, to a thousand generations” (Deuteronomy. 7:9).
  6. **He is Faithful (v. 5)**— The NKJV says, “His truth endures to all generations.”
     1. That’s probably as good a description of the sense of this point as any.
     2. God is honest, steadfast, trustworthy. God is a God of integrity, of consistency.
     3. He keeps His promises.
     4. He who calls us is faithful, as Paul wrote in I Thessalonians 5:24.
     5. God never lies, as Paul also wrote in Titus 1:2.
     6. God’s truth endures. His promises never fail. Never.
  7. We serve an Awesome God, a God who is Loving & Faithful, our Creator and Good Shepherd, Who laid down His life for His sheep that we might be washed from our sins and one day enter into His eternal rest and be with Him forever!

## Conclusion

1. It’s all these attributes combined that call us to praise Him, to give thanks to Him, to worship Him.
   1. No one else has the power to give and sustain life.
   2. No one else guides, protects, and cares for us like God does.
   3. No one else is as glorious and completely beautiful as God.
   4. No one loves with the same loyal, eternal love as God has.
   5. No one else keeps their promises as God keeps His.
   6. There is no one like the Lord!
2. So…
   1. Shout joyfully to Him!
   2. Serve Him with gladness in your heart.
   3. Come into His presence with singing from your heart!
   4. Enter His gates with thanksgiving! Because he is our creator, sustainer, and guide.
   5. We are His people, for His own possession, to do His will.
3. The Scottish Psalter as it appeared in the *Geneva Psalter* (1551) that derived its words from Psalm 100 (Hymn 60 in *Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs*)

All people that on earth do dwell,

Sing to the Lord with cheerful voice;

Him serve with mirth, His praise forth tell!

Come ye before Him and rejoice.

Know that the Lord is God indeed;

Without our aid He did us make;

We are His flock, He doth us feed,

And for His sheep, He doth us take.

Oh, enter then His gates with praise

Approach with joy His courts unto;

Praise, laud, and bless His name always,

For it is seemly so to do.

For why? the Lord our God is good,

His mercy is forever sure;

His truth at all times firmly stood,

And shall from age to age endure.

1. Look at what Peter wrote in I Peter 2:9 (NASU):
   1. “But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.”
2. Anyone and everyone should be thankful to God for their existence, and God’s providing care.
3. Only those who are His children can proclaim His excellencies to the world around them.
4. Only those who have come out of darkness and into light by obeying the gospel can truly, and fully give thanks to God -- Can you?
5. If you are not a Christian, you need to be. Repent and be baptized into His name!
6. If a Christian in error, don’t wait till it’s eternally too late. Repent and be renewed!
7. Whatever your requests, let them be made known ***NOW*** while we stand & sing!