

A Psalm for Thanksgiving

- *I invite you to turn to Psalm 100 this morning
- next week, Lord willing, we'll begin working our way through Matthew's Christmas story
 - but this morning, I think it's appropriate that we think about thanksgiving
 - and to do that, I want us to look at Psalm 100, which as the title says is a Psalm for Giving Thanks...

Psalm 100

Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth!

2 Serve the Lord with gladness! Come into his presence with singing!

3 Know that the Lord, he is God! It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

4 Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise! Give thanks to him; bless his name!

5 For the Lord is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations.

PRAYER

A Psalm for Thanksgiving

*One of the most significant changes that Jesus Christ wants to make in you and me is to transform us into people who are continually grateful.

Psalm 30:11-12

*You have turned for me my mourning into dancing; ^[1]_{SEP} you have loosed my sackcloth and clothed me with gladness, **12** that my glory may sing your praise and not be silent. O Lord my God, I will give thanks to you forever!*

-eternally grateful!

-and so I think Christians ought to be the most thankful people in the world

-no matter what the circumstances...

-Yet often we find ourselves sitting in the shoes of ungratefulness

*Julie Lowe, a biblical counselor, points out two causes of ungratefulness in our lives:

First, is the fact that...

***Our Society cultivates Discontentment**

-we are entering the Holiday season when businesses will launch a massive advertising campaign to convince us of all the things we do not have and desperately need

-I 'need' this new phone to be satisfied, or this new produce to be fulfilled

*We so easily forget the fact that this was the

same argument that was used on us last year to get the new and greatest thing, which has now become old and useless

-and so there's a cycle that it puts us in...

- *To be clear, there's nothing wrong with being comfortable, with having material blessings
- but there's a danger that where the more we have the less grateful we become...
- we begin to develop unrealistic expectations about life and possessions
- we are suddenly tempted to think its always suppose to be that way

For example..

- *Once you've had a steak from Ruth's Chris, it's harder to be thankful for that sirloin at the Golden Corral
- *Once your team wins a National Championship, winning the conference is kind of a let down
- *Once you go to Hawaii, vacationing at Land Between the Lakes doesn't seem the same
- The more you have the more temptation we experience to be ungrateful
- especially if times get tough, and those comforts are taken away!

Another cause of ingratitude Lowe notes is

***A Sense of Entitlement**

- when we start to believe that we deserve these things

-I deserve that new electronic device, or that vacation, or peace and quiet when I come home after working all day.

*One Pastor notes here...

*Some of you were spoiled rotten as children.

-your mothers and grandparents and your dad gave you almost everything you wanted.

-You were so pampered and protected that you have unrealistic expectations about life.

-You think all of life is supposed to be free of any pain and disappointment.

-So anytime life is less than 100% perfect, you think you're cheated.

-You focus on the negative and you miss the positive.

*You move into a beautiful new house, but instead of appreciating it, you just focus on that little crease in the carpet that's not the way it's supposed to be.

-You go out to a nice restaurant, but you complain that the waiter brought the main dish before you were finished with the salad or something.

-it's like, nothing is ever good enough!

(B. Russell, Sermon on Gratitude)

*What's more, I'm sure you've noticed, that ungratefulness is contagious

- and so many times we can develop an ungrateful spirit by hanging around ungrateful and grumpy people
- When your closest friends are chronic complainers, you can bet some of that is going to wear off on you
- if you associate with people who are always picking away, you'll soon become a grumpy old man or a grumpy old woman.

*Discontentment and Entitlement are strong pressures, but nevertheless, the Bible commands us to be Thankful...

*Psalm 100 is a Psalm for Giving Thanks

- I think it reminds us of not just our responsibility to give thanks, but the foundation from which our thanksgiving arises
- it's a great tune-up for our hearts as we enter the Thanksgiving season

*This is a beautiful Psalm, and one of the most well-known

- it's actually the climax of a grouping of Psalms beginning back in Psalm 92
- all of which are hailing Yahweh, God as King
- a Sovereign King who is Worthy of all Praise, Worship, and Thanksgiving

*We're to picture worshippers entering through the gates, into the heavenly courts
-and bringing praises to their King!
-and as the worshippers enter they are overwhelmed with gratitude for who God is and what He has done for them

*The structure of the Psalm is very simple...

- there are two calls to thankful worship, followed by two reminders of why
- John Piper writes there's Singing v1-2 and then a Sermon in v3, there's more Singing in v4, followed by another Sermon in v5
- OR there's Exaltation and then Education
- there's more Exaltation and then more Education
- so let's divide this Psalm into two parts...

First, there is

1-The Call to Thanksgiving

-the 'singing', the 'exaltation' if you will...

-the first call is in **v1-2**

Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth! 2 Serve the Lord with gladness! Come into his presence with singing!

-and then the second call down in **v4**

4 Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise! Give thanks to him; bless his name!

1-The Call to Thanksgiving

*This is a remarkable call!

- notice that this call to give thanks extends over all the earth!
- it's a universal call!
- it is the will of our God, that the whole earth extend to Him thanksgiving!
- after all, He is worthy of all thanksgiving, right?
- and all thanks needs to be directed to Him!

Two friends, an atheist and a Christian, stepped outside on a beautiful fall morning. As the atheist saw the brilliant sun peaking through the haze, & the frost on the meadow, & the brightly colored leaves, she was filled with awe. And she said, "I am so thankful. I'm just so grateful for it all." And her believing friend asked, "Grateful to whom?"

- that's a great question isn't it?
- its really not enough just to 'be thankful'
- We have to have someone to Give thanks to!
- and that someone is the Sovereign King of the Universe!

*It's our commission as a Church to "Glorify God by making disciples from the neighborhood to the nations!"

- what a great reminder and challenge we heard last Sunday!
- b/c we believe God is deserving of Glory

- from every person on the earth
- we want to see more people give Him Glory and Praise and Thanksgiving
- we want atheists and agnostics to understand that the wonders they enjoy in creation, come from a Majestic and Holy Creator
- that the blessings they have, come at the mercies of a Great Blessor!
- from a faithful and true God

*That means that the direction of our thanks is not ourselves... it is to be directed toward God alone!

- the whole world belongs to Him, and thus any blessings that we have, come from Him alone
- this is our Father's World
- and Psalm 100 is a call to Thank Him

*Notice also, that our thanksgiving is not just an attitude but an action

- there are 7 imperatives in these verses
 - “make a joyful noise”
 - “serve the Lord”
 - “come into His presence”
 - “know that He is God”
 - “Enter” his gates
 - “Give thanks”
 - and “bless His name”
- these are the responses of thankful

worshippers

*Let's combine them into the two calls
First, there's an invitation to

A-Joyful Worship

v1 *Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth!*

- this is call to exuberant, vocal, joyful, worship of our God and King
- this is emotional language...
- there's singing, there's volume, NIV says "Shout", why? b/c there's emotion here
- there's joy!

A-Joyful Worship

*There's not sadness...

- there's not melancholy!
- no one is looking like they had bad Mexican for dinner the night before
- or like they've swallowed a lemon
- No, there's genuine joy
- there's gladness, there's a song on the heart; and shouting on the lips!

*Now, for the most part, as Baptists we don't like these "shouting" texts

- I mean the only person who shouts on Sunday morning is sometimes me, when I get a little too excited about

something or when I'm trying to keep you awake, right?

-There's a lot of shouting going on, on the way to church, "dad shouting at mom, mom shouting at the kids, kids shouting at each other"

*But what's the Psalmist saying?

-real worship involves your entire being...

-it is a call to exuberant, vocal, joyful, worship of our God and King

-and it should involve shouting, serving, and singing

*But where does this joy come from?

-this is going to develop as we get further in the texts...

-but let us say from the outset, that this joy is rooted in the Lord and what He has done

-it's not rooted in external circumstances

-I don't say that to mean that you shouldn't thank the Lord for outward or material blessings

-you should!

-there's just no mention of those things here in this Psalm

-the focus is on the Lord!

-I mean look at the text...it's filled with nothing but references to the Lord

-the Lord is whom our worship and

- thanksgiving is to be directed
-and our joyful worship is b/c of Him!
-it is for Him, about Him, and b/c of Him!

This will become more clear when we look at v3,
but also in the second call to thanksgiving... or
what we might describe as....

B-Thankful Praise

v4 *Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his
courts with praise! Give thanks to him; bless
his name!*

B-Thankful Praise

- *Think with me for a moment, about gates...
- when I think of a gate, I think of an entrance
 - I think of a gate being to keep us out
 - if you've been to the White House, there's a gate there...
 - some of you have been to Buckingham Palace in London, and you've stood at the gates
 - gates which are closed, guarded...
 - in that case to protect those behind the gate...the President or the Queen
 - there's limited access...

*Isn't it wonderful that in this Psalm, "the gates to God are open!"

- the Psalmists says, we are to *Enter his*

gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise!

- now we're getting to the heart of why we're to have joyful worship and thankful praise
- and why we as Christians need to be eternally grateful!
- the Son of the King has opened the gate!

*Now that being said, I would remind you, that no one just walks in unannounced!

-you have to be invited by Him!

John 6:44 *"No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him."*

-and then secondly, no one gets to the Father, except through the Son" (John 14:6)

-Jesus is the Gate!

-Jesus is the Gatekeeper according to the Gospel of John

*Jesus is the one who makes it possible for us to enter into the gates and the courts of God!

-He is the one, whom the writer of Hebrews says, *"Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace,* (Heb. 4:16)

-why? B/c of Jesus Holiness, and Perfection

-B/c of His perfect sacrifice on the Cross, in our place, we can be made right with God; we can come to God...

-in Jesus, the gates are open! The courts

are open

-the veil that separated the Holy of Holies,
where God resided, as been torn in two

*This is why the worshipper leader, here, is
calling them to Joyful Worship, and Thankful
Praise

-they are to sing b/c they have been
redeemed

-it's **Isa 51:11**

*And the ransomed of the Lord shall return
and come to Zion with singing; everlasting
joy shall be upon their heads; they shall
obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and
sighing shall flee away.*

-why? B/c of what Christ has done for us

-what He has achieved for us by
obedient life

-what He has accomplished for us as a
perfect sacrifice

-what He has attained for us by His
resurrection!

-the only appropriate response is to “serve
Him with gladness” and to “come into
His presence with singing!”

-and to enter his gates with thanksgiving and
his courts with praise!

*Maybe you came in this morning, and you're far
away from God, and you think the gates are
closed for you

- that there's no way you could have access to the King of Kings and Lord of Lords
- but you can...
- this call to thanksgiving is a call that extends to all the earth
- but the only way to the Father, is through the Son, Jesus
 - He is the Way, the Truth, and in the Life
 - He is the Gate
- and you must turn from your sin, you must leave it behind, and surrender to the King...

*For some of you, this call to thanksgiving, has a sour sound, today...

- perhaps you've entered the gates today, not with gratitude but with grumbling, b/c of the difficulties of life...

This is the significance of this Psalm; it reminds us of...

2-The Basis of Thanksgiving

- it's not happy circumstances
- we are never promised good times, and beds of roses, and lolly pops
- I'm not making light of your trials, of your hurts, of your worries...

*I'm just reminding you that the Basis of our thanksgiving is not found in our outward circumstances, BUT rather a knowledge of who God is and what He has

done

-what does he say in **v3** *Know that the Lord, he is God! It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.*

-knowledge is the basis of praise

-thanksgiving begins in the head and moves to the heart!

-it does not begin in the heart and move to the head

2-The Basis of Thanksgiving

*Getting those two reversed is why we have so much trouble being thankful

-my heart, my emotions, are fluctuating all the time

-my happiness level, on a day to day basis, is all over the place

-whether I had a good night sleep or not

-but then there's coffee, praise the Lord!

-then there's the stresses of work!

-but then there are Saturdays on the Sofa

-then I run out of M and M's, it's bad day

-but then my wife makes me something nice for dinner

*So much of our thanksgiving is "self focused"

-it has to do with our stomach, or our feelings, or our comforts

-if these were taken away, what would we

- sing about, with whom would we gather,
and for what would we give thanks?!
- but what the Psalmists is saying, is that for the Redeemed of the Lord, it really has little to do with those things
 - and that I should be thankful, in fact, I CAN be thankful b/c of what I know!

First, KNOW that...

A-The Lord is God

v3a Know that the Lord, he is God!

- that He alone is God
- that He alone is my source of life!
- He alone is my source of every good and perfect gift
- and remarkably, We are His!

v3b It is he who made us, and we are his;

- the word there is not referring so much to the fact that He is our creator, though that is true
- but rather His redeeming work
- the work of Christ, in which God has made us His own!

*Then there is the knowledge that I belong to Him as a result!

v3c we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

- He has redeemed us
- He now cares for us and nurtures us as a

shepherd nurtures his flock
-His provides for us, He protects us

It's not just that the Lord is God, It's that

B-The Lord is Good

-that's what the Psalmist writes...

v5 *For the Lord is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations.*

- there's absolutely no ending to His love for His own!
- there's no ending to the flow of his perfect goodness to his People!
- He is good all the time, and all the time He is good!
- His faithfulness never ends towards His own
- and therefore, our joyful worship and thankful praise should never end!

*This is the knowledge that leads us on!

-its the reality of **Psalm 40:2-3**

He drew me up from the pit of destruction, out of the miry bog, and set my feet upon a rock, making my steps secure. 3 He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God.

-that's what this Psalm is about too!

B-The Lord is Good

-it's one worshipper saying to another...

"Hey are you new here? How did you get in here, how did you get past the gates?"

“Who, Me? Oh, he drew me out of the pit of destruction and set my feet upon rock!”

“No kidding, you too?” That’s wonderful!

-why don’t we make a joyful noise together!

-let’s serve Lord with gladness!

-let’s give thanks to Him!

*Now, We don’t say that out loud, but that’s exactly what’s happening when we gather, right?

-that’s the focus of the songs we sing, and the prayers we pray, and the sermons we preach!

-we’re proclaiming that the Lord is God and that He is good!

-that the gospel of Jesus Christ is the basis for our worship, praise and thanksgiving!

-He’s redeemed us!

-He’s opened the gates

-He’s torn the veil

-He’s ransomed us and redeemed us

-out of His great love!!

-Praise His name!

*That’s so important to understand, lest we be confused...

-when our voices are overcome with tears,

-when our hearts fail us,

-when our circumstances frustrate us,

-when life lets us down,

-when we are disappointment to those who

love us, or a disappointment to ourselves,
-when we endure tragedy or sickness, or loved ones die
-in spite of all of this...it is God's steadfast love that is the foundation for our thankful praise!

(Adapted from Alistair Begg, Sermon on Psalm 100)

*We think of David in Psalm 63, who is likely being pursued by his own son, Absalom, who has made a play for the throne...
-Absalom has turned many of David's top advisors against him
-and David is fleeing for his life...
-but listen to what he says... **Ps. 63:3**
Because your steadfast love is better than life, my lips will praise you.
-repeat... think about that...
-that's very different from, b/c everything is going tremendously well, b/c I got the promotion at work and the turkey was perfect...I will praise you... NO....
-that kind of thanksgiving holds no appeal for the person who is going to be alone on Thanksgiving, who has to go down to the Shoney's and eat, b/c they've been separated from loved ones...
-Only b/c God's love is better than life can there be praise and thanksgiving!

(Alistair Begg, Sermon on Psalm 100)

- Do you have that knowledge today?
- Do you know the Lord?

*Maybe you're honest enough to say it today....

- you've been trying to enjoy the goodness and gifts of God, without enjoying God Himself
- and you've thought these things would fulfill your deepest longings
- but they haven't, and they won't
- as Pascal said, *"the void inside of us is a god-shaped void that can't be filled by His gifts or goodness, but only by Himself!"*

*Hear the invitation this morning!

- Know that the Lord, he is God!*
- that He is good, even when days are bad, and doubts arise, and fears consume us
- Humble yourself before Him!
- Don't turn your back on Him!
- Turn from your Sin
- The gates are swinging open today for you!
- Enter His gates by the way of Jesus Christ
- Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise!