



Tim Pauley
PO Box 58403, Charleston, WV 25358
304.767.8430
tim.pauley@capitolcom.org

A Psalm for Thanksgiving (Psalm 100)

There are probably few things that bother us as much as ingratitude. When we do something for someone or give something to another and they do not thank us, or they demonstrate ungratefulness, we are disappointed, hurt, and angry. "After all I've done for them" is often what we think.

Yet when we stop and consider all that God has done for us and all He has given us in Christ, are any of us ever as thankful to Him as we should be? Do we forget to thank God for what He given? Do we demonstrate ungratefulness by our sinful thoughts and actions or our murmuring and complaining? How often might God say of us, "After all I've done for them...?"

During this Thanksgiving season we should ask ourselves how we might grow to be as thankful and grateful to God as we should. We find the answer in Psalm 100 – A Psalm for Thanksgiving.

Psalm 100

All Men Exhorted to Praise God. A Psalm for Thanksgiving.

¹Shout joyfully to the LORD, all the earth.

²Serve the LORD with gladness;

Come before Him with joyful singing.

³Know 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.

⁴Enter His gates with thanksgiving

And His courts with praise.

Give thanks to Him, bless His name.

⁵For the LORD is good;

His lovingkindness is everlasting

And His faithfulness to all generations.

The fourth again gives us the reasons we should thank and praise Him.

The very structure of this Psalm teaches us an important lesson. All our worship, service, praise, and thanksgiving to God is based on what we know, understand, appreciate, and value about Him. This Psalm is an exhortation to sing, praise, and give thanks based on what we know about God and all He has done for us. How do we grow to be as thankful to God as we should be? By seeking to know God better and striving to have a greater understanding of all He has done for us and all He has given us through Christ.

As one pastor described it, "*We must know God truly, and respond with our affections duly. We must see Him clearly and worship Him dearly. We must think biblical thoughts about God and feel biblical emotions for God.*"¹

Another pastor put it plainly for us:

The intensity of our thanksgiving depends upon the value we place on the benefit received.²

We must strive to know God better, to have a greater understanding of what He has done, and to grow in our appreciation and value of the blessings He has given us.

How We Worship and Give Thanks

Stanzas 1 and 3 are calls to worship, praise and thanksgiving. Stanza 1 seems to focus on the heart attitude with which we are to come before God. We are exhorted to:

Shout joyfully to the Lord

Serve the Lord with gladness

Come before the Lord with joyful singing.

Throughout church history this has been one of the best known and most loved Psalms. Scottish pastor and Bible translator William Kethe wrote a metrical version to be sung in churches, first appearing in a hymnal in 1561. This popular and oft sung hymn came to be known as "The Old One Hundredth". We might wonder what songs the pilgrims sang as they celebrated that first Thanksgiving in 1621. We do not know but we can almost be certain that this was one of those songs – perhaps the only one that remains in our hymnbooks today. Before we dig into the specifics of this Psalm, let us see what we learn from how it is laid out.

The Structure of Psalm 100

There are four stanzas. The first (vs. 1-2) is a call to joyful worship, service and praise. The second (vs. 3) tells us WHY we are to worship, serve, and praise the Lord. The third is another call for thanksgiving and praise to God.

We might ask ourselves if joy and gladness characterize our lives. In the face of all the challenges and trials of life and the difficulties of serving in capitol, do we still have hearts that are filled with joy and gladness?

Stanza 3 is a call to praise and thanksgiving. We are encouraged to:

Enter His gates with thanksgiving
Enter His courts with praise
Give thanks to Him and bless His name

The picture here is of believers entering the temple to worship God. As they approached the temple and entered through the gates into the outer courts, they would sing songs of praise and thanks. The temple was a picture of how sinful people could come into the presence of and worship a Holy God. The fact that they could even approach Him was great cause for praise and thanks.

We realize that now we as sinful people can freely and boldly come into the presence of our Holy God. Today this is not done through the sacrifice of animals as it was for the people of Israel, but through the suffering and death of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Now we can ***“Draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need”*** (Hebrews 4:16). When we realize that despite our sinfulness we can enter the very presence of our awesome and holy God through our faith in Christ, we certainly do so with a heart of praise and thanksgiving.

What We Can Know to Give Thanks

Stanzas 2 and 4 enumerate just a few of the truths we can know about our God what will lead us to worship, praise, and give thanks to Him. We could easily pursue an in-depth study of each of these. For now, let us just briefly consider how a greater knowledge and appreciation of these truths can lead us to grow in joyful worship and thanksgiving to God.

Stanza 2 (vs. 3) tells us:

Know that the Lord is God
Know that He made us
Know that we are his people and the sheep of His pasture

If the Lord is God, and He made us, that means we are dependent upon Him for everything in our lives. For many today the Thanksgiving holiday seems to bring about some generic sense they should be grateful for their blessings, but to who? We are thankful TO GOD for it is He who made us.

Though He created us, we have all rebelled and sinned against Him. Yet because of His mercy and grace He has made us His people, the sheep of His pasture. Paul writes of how God made us His people:

4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were

dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)...

Ephesians 2:4-5

Stanza 4 reminds us:

The Lord is Good
His Lovingkindness is everlasting
God is faithful to all generations (forever)

If we constantly meditate on God's goodness, lovingkindness, and faithfulness, this will lead us to a greater attitude and expression of praise and thanksgiving to God. God is good. He is living, merciful, and gracious. This is all wrapped up in this word, lovingkindness. And He is faithful to keep and care for His people.

Do we truly know, understand, appreciate, and value these truths about God and what He has done for us? Remember,

The intensity of our thanksgiving depends upon the value we place on the benefit received.

After all God has done for us, let us grow in our value and appreciation of Him this Thanksgiving. Perhaps we might even sing as the pilgrims did our praise and thanks to God.

The Old 100th

All people that on earth do dwell, Sing to the Lord with cheerful voice. Him serve with fear, His praise forth tell; Come ye before Him and rejoice.	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.
The Lord, ye know, is God indeed; Without our aid He did us make; We are His folk, He doth us feed, And for His sheep He doth us take.	To Father, Son and Holy Ghost, The God Whom Heaven and earth adore, From men and from the angel host Be praise and glory evermore.
O 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.	

Sung to the tune of The Doxology
(Praise God from Whom All Blessing Flow)

¹Piper, John. *Education for Exultation: A Psalm for Thanksgiving*. 2002. <https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/education-for-exultation>.

²Clouse, Rev. Larry. *Psalm 100: Praise and Thanksgiving*. 2002. <https://www.sermonaudio.com/sermoninfo.asp?SID=11270215212>

INTERIM BIBLE STUDY

Monday, November 13

8:00 AM McManus Conference Room (M252)

Located by House Minority Offices