

“Revolution of Joy”

Psalm 100

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It's one of the shortest chapters in all the Bible.

It's one of the most memorized passages of the Bible.

It's often read at thanksgiving.

It's been put to music in one of the most familiar tunes in the church.

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...

Regardless of how popular this psalm is,

The reality is, that this psalm does not teach us anything that we don't already know.

It's a little remedial in that way.

Here it is:

God made us.

We are his.

Therefore we should worship him.

God is good.

God is loving.

God is faithful.

Amen.

That's pretty much it. (Let's go home.)

There is nothing here that we are going to go:

“O My gosh! I had no idea!

Holy Cow! Can you believe that?”

No, it's the stuff many of us have heard since we were “knee high to a grasshopper.”
as the saying goes.

However, we do need to pay attention to the message of this psalm

We need to pay attention particularly to the many action verbs in the psalm.

Because God made us...

because we are his...

because God is good, loving, and faithful...

what should we do?

(I want you to get out a pen and circle these in the passage in your bulletin)

Make noise *(I said, "Make some noise." Can I get an Amen?)*

Whoever said that worship should be quiet?

Don't get me wrong, I have spent time in monasteries and I love it there.

I love the idea of silently meditating on God
and worshipping God through the power of silence.

We live in a noisy world and sometimes we need to just turn off all the noise
and listen for God's "still small voice"

However, there are other times that we need turn the volume knob up to "11"
Sometimes, we need to get over our inherited tradition
and get a little excited for Jesus.

Some of us grew up in churches where you would get looked at funny
if you let out an "Amen" during the sermon

You might get a little talking to if you started clapping in church

And they would flat kick you out for bringing drums in this "sacred" place.

But that's not what we find in the Bible - Make some noise!

Let's get rowdy for Jesus up in here!

Worship

Listen to this passage from Louie Giglio:

Worship is simply about value. The simplest definition I can give is this: Worship is our response to what we value most...

Worship is the activity of the human soul.

Not only do all people worship, but they worship all the time. Worship isn't just a Sunday thing. It's an all-the-time thing.

Right this very instant, all across this city, people of all shapes and sizes, people of every age and purpose are doing it - continually making decisions based on what they value most. Worship happens everywhere . . . all day long.

In fact, some of the purest forms of worship are found outside the walls of the church and have no reference to the God of all creation. All you have to do is drop in on a concert at the local arena or take in a sporting event at a nearby stadium to see amazing worship. People are going for it: lifting their hands, shouting for joy, staking their claim, standing in awe, declaring their allegiance. Interestingly, these venues are filled with the same forms of worship mentioned in the pages of God's Word - the same expressions of worship that God desires.

(from *The Air I Breathe* by Louie Giglio)

Hebrew word for worship means to orient one's whole life and existence to a sovereign master

Great commandment: Love God all your heart, soul, mind, strength
in other words - with everything that you are.

Come [and sing]

I know that some of you don't really like to sing.

I've heard you say, "I'll be here and I'll stand, but I won't sing."
It's not my gift.

Remember, God said, "Make a joyful noise," not "Make a beautiful song."

Why sing?

Obedience - God tells us to

Formation - we may not remember a memory verse, but how many of us remember a
song - we learn theology through music (sometimes bad theology)

Holistic - connects head and heart (mind and emotions)

Unification - Singing together gets us all on the same page

Know

God knows us and wants to be known.

This is the whole reason he sent his son, Jesus, to earth:
that we might know him.

All of scripture is there to help reveal Jesus to us.

The ministry of the Holy Spirit is to remind us what Jesus taught
and to help us to know him.

I believe that God wants us to use our brains.

I will never ask you to check your brain at the door.

I want you to bring all your questions and struggles and doubts in here.

Let's put them on the table and be honest with one another.

Let's wrestle with the scripture.

Israel got its name because Jacob wrestled with God by the river Jabbok.

We need to continue to wrestle with God.

It's not enough to know about God,
we need to know God.

Enter

How many times have heard someone say, "Well I can worship God wherever.

I don't need to come to church.

God is just as present out in the woods as he is in a church building."

Look - I completely agree. I do. I completely agree.

God is present everywhere.

And yet, I think that is the most arrogant, narcissistic attitude we could possibly have.

"I don't need the rest of you, it's just me and Jesus."

We have not been called to God as individuals.

We have been called to be a part of the Body of Christ.

This whole baptism thing this morning?

that is what it is about.

Saying to the world - I am a part of something bigger than myself

The church saying to each one - you are a part of us.

We are called to this new community that the Spirit is forming.
We are called to live out Jesus' commands toward one another
Love one another
Forgive one another
Bear one another's burdens . . . and so on.

We cannot do this when we refuse to enter these doors
when we refuse to enter into community with one another.

Give Thanks

Isn't it amazing how thanksgiving and anger just can't seem to co-exist?
how thanksgiving seems to cancel out despair?
how thanksgiving seems to neutralize bitterness?

Have you ever tried to be angry at someone
and thank God for that person at the same time?
It's really hard!

What did Paul say to the church in Thessalonica?
Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will
for you in Christ Jesus.

When we form a heart of thanksgiving,
we learn that God is present in all things - both good and bad
and that we can grow closer to God through blessings and trials.

Bless God

We hear (and pray) all the time that God might bless us,
but how do we bless God?
How can we give God anything?
Doesn't God already have it all?

What does it actually mean to be blessed? In English the word bless means to pronounce
that something is good or to confer goodness upon something in a religious sense...
(Josh Moody)

To to bless God means to recognize his great richness, strength, and gracious bounty
and to express our gratitude and delight in seeing and experiencing it. (John Piper)

Blessing God is another way of saying "thanks"
It's another way acknowledging that God is good.
It's another way of praising God.
It's another way or orienting our entire lives around the God who has blessed us
time and time and time again.

But even those these are all important,

there's something even more important at the heart of this psalm.
If we look closely and read closely,
The dominant theme of this passage is this: JOY.

Look at the number of words in these five short verses that are connected to joy
joyful noise
gladness
singing
thanksgiving
praise
good
love
faithfulness

But the most important line that I find in the whole passage is vs. 1
Make a joyful noise to the Lord, ALL the earth.

ALL the earth?
Yes. ALL the earth.

But what about places where there is war?
Make a joyful noise of praise!

But what about places where there is hunger and poverty?
Make a joyful noise of praise!

But what about those places where there is exploitation?
Make a joyful noise of praise!

But what about those places where Christians are persecuted?
Make a joyful noise of praise!

But what about those places where there is apathy and the people are spiritually lethargic?
Make a joyful noise of praise!

What about those places where more than 200 girls are kidnapped just for getting an education?
Make a joyful noise of praise!

But about those who are sick, depressed, living with terminal disease, living in loveless marriages,
those who are broken-hearted, hurting, resentful, angry
those who

Make a joyful noise of praise!

“Look death in the eye and make a joyful noise!
Grab evil by the neck and shout loud Hosannas!”

Steven Miller, Feasting A3, 128

It is a call for a revolution of joy in the Holy Spirit!

Why? Because God is still God.

The Kingdom of heaven is breaking out on earth through God's church!

We are called to live in harmony - with God,
with one another,
with all of creation.

We're not there fully yet,
and we won't be until Christ returns,
but let the revolution begin! Amen.