

# We Are Gathered to Worship

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## Psalm 100

In my childhood memories, gathering in the streets to protest about something is so vivid. Our demonstrations were organized by the government. I did not care for the cause, yet it was fun for us, because classes were canceled. Let me describe. We sat in the school buses and headed towards the demonstration. It was not just our school, but all the schools of the city. Thousands of students were shouting against someone, or some ideology, about which we did not care. But it had an impact on me. It was fun. We were gathered together and protesting together. There was a “hidden” power in the gathering.

In the book *Rediscover Church*, we read:

“What makes gathering so powerful? The fact that you are physically there. You see. You hear. You feel. Unlike watching something on a screen, in which you’re bodily removed from the thing you’re watching, a gathering literally surrounds you. It defines your entire reality. God made us soul and body, and somehow, mysteriously, he intertwines them so that what affects the body affects the soul.”<sup>1</sup>

Let us examine Psalm 100. A Psalm of thanksgiving and the steadfast love of God.

**A Psalm for giving thanks.**

**Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth!**

<sup>2</sup> **Serve (*Worship*) the LORD with gladness!**

**Come into his presence with (joyful) singing!**

<sup>3</sup> **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.**

<sup>4</sup> **Enter his gates with thanksgiving,**

**and his courts with praise!**

**Give thanks to him; bless his name!**

<sup>5</sup> **For the LORD is good;**

**his steadfast love endures forever,**

**and his faithfulness to all generations. (Psalm 100 ESV)**

## 1. Praise and Worship

**Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth!**

**Serve (*Worship*) the LORD with gladness! (1,2a)**

It appears the author is content and joyful in the presence of God. He is making noise, singing, clapping, maybe even dancing...

What does it mean to serve (worship) the Lord Yahweh in gladness?

My grandmother said to me in Turkish whenever she went to church,

“Son, I am going to service (*khezmet* in Turkish).”

We also call it worship service.

To worship the Lord is an act of service.

We use the words **worship** and **praise** as synonyms. In reality, they are not.

In the last years, worship has come to mean to sing songs. That is praise. Our church calls its band Praise Band.

**Praise is a part of worship, but worship has a larger meaning.**

Worship is when we make ourselves available to God to do whatever He requires of us. To Seek HIS will...

A few weeks ago we studied Romans 12:

**...offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. <sup>2</sup> Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.** (Romans 12:1b,2a)

-Worship is service.

-Worship is Christ-centered lifestyle.

-Worship is to appear before the Lord (literally face of the Lord) in an **obedient frame of mind**.

-Worship is like Isaiah recognizing that he is lost without God and he has unclean lips. Isaiah finds himself facing God, and he says:

**Here am I, send me... send me...**

**-Worship is to appear before the Lord in an obedient frame of mind.**

## 2. Come, gather

**Come into his presence with (joyful) singing! (2b)**

Look at the verbs in this psalm:

Come, gather, enter, serve, sing, give thanks, bless the name, and KNOW God...

My dear brothers and sisters, coming together in person is an essential part of the worship service.

“Badveli, I’ll come to service maybe if we have time...” ....NO, gathering is important part of worship.

-I am also thinking about people who are watching online,  
If you cannot meet in person for a medical reason, I understand; yet, during the week, find your group, connect with the group, connect with the church family.  
Share, sing, serve, pray, eat, make yourself available in the body of Christ.

Illustration: Barbara Garabedian whose funeral was yesterday was facing physical challenges; she could not come. She was a prayer warrior. When I visited her, she asked about people in my family and in the church. She was informed about them, as if in her sickness she was not separated from the body of Christ, the church... She was praying for them, for me daily...she was a prayer warrior. She will be missed.

### **3. Know the Lord**

**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. (3)**

Knowing God is not mind game, or just collecting information about God.

To Know the Yahweh, the LORD is a relationship...

It is an intimate relationship with God.

As Paul would say: **be transformed by the renewing of your mind.**

To know that he is GOD, and I am created by Him. To Know my limitations. And by knowing God, one can know himself/herself.

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

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

Do you know how important it is to remind ourselves that He is God and not us?

We are creatures; we did not fashion ourselves.

We did not make ourselves; we are created in His image.

In this context in the OT, God made the Israelites. God constituted the nation of Israel at Sinai. He guided them through the desert as the sheep of his pastures. God instructed them to courts of tabernacle. (Exodus 24, so 100:4 tallies with Exodus 25–31.)<sup>2</sup>

John Calvin interprets this as re-creation, the new birth that each of us needs. Calvin thinks that “sheep of the pastures” indicates the new birth that Jesus granted to us. In reality, when I see the image of the sheep and the pastures, my mind goes to Jesus as the Good Shepherd. Jesus became the new Shepherd, who is not a hired one, but a genuine Shepherd who gives his own life to save the sheep.

#### **4. Enter His Gates**

**Enter his gates with thanksgiving,  
and his courts with praise!**

**Give thanks to him; bless his name! (4)**

How can I enter his gates with thanksgiving?

How can I remain joyful and make a joyful noise in all circumstances?

During the week I faced so many tough issues. Some of our congregation passed away, some are dying, and other individuals who are facing terminal illness. I was called to pray with Lance his last prayers before he departs to his heavenly home.

We also have a new birth, a baby girl. A joyful moment.

Yet coming back to Lance, his joy is to know Jesus; his joy is in God. He also was a warrior and wanted to survive to be there for his son’s achievements. Some of Lance’s desires were granted, some I am not sure. But that never stopped him from worshiping God, never....

God is sovereign. He understands our pain; and He is in control of the situations and events. To thank God in all circumstances is an important part of worship and our Christian maturity.

**To be together** in these circumstances and to worship together is healing to the body of the Christ. In good days and bad days to thank Him.

“We are not told to enter his courts because we feel good, but because God is good. We are commanded to worship and be thankful, whether we feel it or not. It has been observed that we can act our way into feeling more easily than we can feel our way into acting.”<sup>3</sup>

**Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.** (1 Thessalonians. 5:16-18 ESV)

## **5. *Hesed*, the Steadfast love of God**

**For the LORD is good;**

**his steadfast love endures forever,**

**and his faithfulness to all generations. (5)**

Yes, *hesed*, God's mercy, God's love, endures forever. (Please recall sermons on *Hesed*)

How true is this?

Don't we experience God's mercy and love by knowing Jesus Christ?

The mercy and grace of our Lord Jesus...

### **Application:**

**God loves to see His creatures gathering.**

-The first gathering was in the **Garden of Eden**. He created Adam and Eve physically, not virtually. Adam and Eve were not ideas floating in the air. God loves the gathering of His creation.

-Then we see in the OT how Israelites were encouraged by God to **gather to serve and worship**.

In Exodus, God is reminding how important it is to gather and remember what God did to them:

**And when you come to the land that the LORD will give you, as he has promised, you shall keep this service.** <sup>26</sup> **And when your children say to you, 'What do you mean by this service?' (Exd 12:25 ESV)**

-How **about the incarnation of Jesus**. God did not send a video tape message; God sent his Son, in a physical body.

"Our assembled local churches represent God's presence with man—where heaven comes to earth. 'Where two or three are gathered in my name there am I among them'. (Matt 18:20)"<sup>4</sup>

Sometimes people like to say, "The church is a people, not a place." There is truth in that, yet "it is a slightly more accurate to say that a church is a people

assembled in a place. Regularly assembling or gathering makes a church a church.”<sup>5</sup>

I know a church that has a large sign that reads “Peninsula Bible Church meets here.”

Warning, church attending does not make us Christians. No. it is faith in Jesus Christ who redeemed us from sin, that is foundation of our belief.

Yet, there is something **spiritual** in worshiping together in person.

-Maybe you have a problem with a brother or sister, and you take communion together, and God’s Spirit convicts you.

-Maybe you have an issue with someone who is next to you and while you are singing the same song the Spirit of the Lord touches you.

-Maybe the sermon is on giving and you see a need in the congregation, and God speaks to you that day.

Brothers and sisters,

Attending church does not make you Christian; “attending church is what Christians do. It demonstrates that the spirit of Christ is in us, and therefore we desire to be with Christ’s people.”<sup>6</sup>

We are Christians; we are followers of Christ.

God is good, and his steadfast endures from generation to generation.

How?

You and I part of that plan of God, to be witnesses to each other and the world.

We will not stop from gathering in the name of Jesus to pray, to sing, to enter his gates, to come, to confess, to be fed His Word, and to serve each other and others who are outside the walls of the church.

**We are one body. We belong to each other and need each other.**

Lord, Make us ONE in CHRIST.

1. Collin Hansen & Jonathan Leeman, *Rediscover Church*, p 46

2. Michael Wilcock, *Bible Speaks Today (Psalms)*, P 108

3. Rub Suggs, *Christian Community Bible Study Book*, p 54

4. Collin Hansen & Jonathan Leeman, *Rediscover Church*, p 46

5. *ibid* p 48

6. *ibid* p 49