

Seven Precious Truths from Psalm 100

Psalm 100

Fairview Evangelical Presbyterian Church

October 9, 2016

Sing Through The Centuries

Reason to Celebrate!

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

Psalm 100 is one of the best known Psalms. In its five verses we find seven truths. First, know the Lord God as creator.

One: We know the Lord God as Creator

³ Know that the LORD, he is God! It is he who made us, and we are his;

It is God who made us. We belong to him. This is basic Christian doctrine. It is a key distinction between the religions of the East and those of the West. Western religions - Christianity, Islam, and Judaism – declare that God created the world and all that is in it. God is distinct from the world. He is over and above it. He is the creator of the cosmos.

In contrast, Eastern religions, Hinduism, the varieties of Buddhism, and so on, collapse the oneness of God and world. All that is, is God. God is in the world, not distinct from it. The cosmos is uncreated. It is eternal.

First, we know the Lord God as creator. Second, we are his people.

Two: We are his people

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

Those who are created owe allegiance to their creator. Acknowledging God as creator makes explicit our duty owed solely to him. Most people live as though they are self-created, believing that they are the center of the universe. God's people know that he has claim upon our lives. We are his people. We are the sheep of his pasture.

There are two meanings to this image. First, God cares for us. Shepherds care for the sheep. Our Lord God cares for us. It is so valuable to remember in the difficulties of life to know that the Lord cares. The shepherd knows his sheep. He watches out for them. He rescues them when needed.

Secondly, God leads us. He offers guidance. Shepherds watch out for the flock. Shepherds take the flock to water and fertile pastures. The shepherd stables the flock at night. The imagery is that God leads us and guides us and protects us.

We know God as creator. Secondly, we are his people and God watches over us. Thirdly, we enter in his presence.

Three: We enter God's presence

⁴Enter his gates with thanksgiving,

The knowledge of God as our creator and shepherd should lead us to enter his gates with thanksgiving. A gate is a point of entry. Every ancient city had a main entry point, with entry gates that controlled access to the city. So the imagery here is that of the entry point into God's presence. It is not mere knowledge that is important, but to also live in God's presence.

As Christian parents, we do all that we can to raise our children in the knowledge of the Lord. We bring them to worship. We teach them the Bible. Together with our children we are involved in small groups. These are good things. At the same time, there comes a point where our children must choose to make the faith their own. They must enter the gates and make their own confession of faith in Christ.

Our story begins with the knowledge of God as our creator. It continues as we see his loving hand of care upon us. In response, we turn to God and enter his gates. We believe and follow him. There comes a point where the faith of our parents becomes our own. Joshua challenged the people of Israel. "Choose you this day, whom you will serve." Elijah asked, "Why do you limp between two opinions?" Jesus declared, "You are neither hot nor cold. Would that you were either hot or cold." In every life there comes a time to choose, to show some spiritual backbone, to respond to God's call and enter his presence.

Having entered into God's presence, we now offer him our praise.

Four: We give God praise

and his courts with praise!

If a gate is a point of entry, a point of action, courts are a place of praise. We enter God's presence offering praise to his greatness and glory. Praise is a Christian endeavor. We offer praise to God for his greatness, goodness and glory.

And, we should seek to give praise to one another. Let me challenge you to seek to increase the level of praise in your life. Seek to cultivate praise. Praise your children. Praise your spouse. Praise your friends and your co-workers.

Why are some folk lacking in praise? I believe that some who do not offer praise are silent because they have not cultivated thankfulness in their heart. Some do not praise because they have a problem with gratitude. They have not learned to be thankful God's provision and grace in their life.

We know God as creator. Secondly, we are his people and God watches over us. Thirdly, we enter in his presence. We give God praise. Fifthly, we claim his name.

Five: We claim his Name

Give thanks to him; bless his name!

We are God's people. We belong to him. He cares and watches over us. We have entered his gates, affirming the faith personally. Entering God's presence, we offer praise. Specifically, we praise God's name.

The reference to God's name reflects God's authority. A person's name summarizes who they are. It is important to possess a good name. To do so is a sign of honor and character. We say of Jesus that his is the "Name above all names." And, that "At the name of Jesus, every knee shall bow." His name equals his authority. In claiming Christ's name, we claim his authority. Whatever we do as a church, we do it in Christ's name. We have no spiritual authority other than Christ.

Sixthly, the psalm reminds us that we have been given God's mercy.

Six: We receive God's Mercy

⁵ For the LORD is good; his steadfast love endures forever,

The Lord is good. We come into God's presence not upon our authority or moral goodness. We could not stand before the holiness of God. We need his grace and mercy. The Psalm declares a theme that is found repeated in the psalter: God's steadfast love endures forever. We cannot earn God's love. We can never be good enough to deserve his grace. What we cannot earn, God offers to us freely.

Lastly, we follow God's truth.

Seventh: We know God's Faithfulness

and his faithfulness to all generations.

The psalmist tells us that God's faithfulness continues through the ages, to all generations. God's truth passes down through time. We are the latest wave of the covenant community. Our story is larger than the story of your life or mine. It is larger than the story of the one hundred and seventy-seven years of Fairview Evangelical Presbyterian Church. It is greater than the five hundred years of settlement in the New World. We trace our story back to the first century and into the time of the Old Covenant, back to the days of the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. God has been faithful to his people through the ages. And he continues his faithfulness to us, today. That is an encouraging thought.

Review

Psalm 100 tell us several key truths. We are God's people. We belong to him. He cares and watches over us. We have entered his gates, affirming our faith in God personally, individually. We seek to live before God's face, offering him praise. What we have is not based on our own authority. We claim the name of Christ. He is our authority. And, through Christ, we find God's mercy and truth. And we are thus included into the covenant community's story. It is the story of God's faithfulness that has been unfolding through the ages.

Say "Amen" Somebody.

Psalm 100

100 A PSALM FOR GIVING THANKS.

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- 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.