

Psalm 100

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[0 : 00] I mean, when it all started, it must have been a very quiet planet. Certainly there were sounds as birds begin to take wing.

I've been told that if you live in Iowa, there are times when it's so quiet you can even hear the corn growing. There would have been the intimacy of voices just to, though, a man and a woman in a garden.

And it feels to me as though it would have been a very quiet place. Today, the sounds that emerge from the earth and rise into the atmosphere and dissipate into nothingness are quite different.

The diesel gas engine sound of a tow truck. The air conditioning units on the top of the University of Chicago hospitals, which I now hear humming, even though I live some six blocks away.

Before they were built, I didn't hear them. And now I hear those sounds. The sounds that emerge from households with just innumerable people all over the world.

[1 : 41] The distracted sounds. The painful sounds. You consider the cries of tears in the moments of isolation. If our tears were as indelible ink, all of us would be bearing the marks of the sounds of lament.

The TV gives me the sounds of thousands and thousands that are gathering in cities in this country and all across the world.

The united voices of humanity's discontent and humanity's progress.

All rising to the heavens. Psalm 100 instructs us concerning the sound that God would desire from us.

It's obvious, as you've heard the reading, that it implies the assembly of a people that is offering noise of a particular kind.

[3 : 05] If you're going to live well in the coming year, you not only need to be prepared for suffering, as we have seen for the last three weeks, but living well or wise living somehow will emerge out of knowing what to do in worship.

What to do with your voice in life. Interestingly, verse 1 says, Make a joyful noise to the Lord all the earth.

I would call this creation's call to worship. It's this jubilant, boisterous cry of praise.

A joyful noise. The Hebrew word that brings that notion together is elsewhere communicated in the sense of a shout.

That there is a place in corporate worship, not merely for private, introspective, contemplative meditation, but there is a place for loud music.

[4 : 30] There is a time for a shout. Now the word is used elsewhere both to call an army to attention as well as to signify the triumph of an assembly.

So here the context is obviously this triumphant acclamation. Notice, to the Lord. That there is a shout to the Lord.

That there is a triumphant exclamation. The word is used in 1 Samuel 10 when Samuel anoints Saul to be king. And he says to the people, You know, this is the one who is your king.

And the people cry out, Long live the king! And in Samuel's narrative, They do it with this same word. This joyful noise.

This acclamation of what God has brought forth in their midst. The surprise of the text, though, is the end of the verse there, isn't it?

[5 : 39] Make a joyful noise to the Lord all the earth. Eretz. The land. The land. Now, I realize that we can be included in that verse, But we're not prominently in play yet.

The call of the psalmist is that the earth itself would be exclaiming in triumphant acclamation Something that would rise to the very ears of Yahweh.

The text does not say all the people of the earth. It does not say make a joyful noise to the Lord, ye peoples of the earth.

It simply says all the earth. It does not say humanity. It does not say Israel. It just says the land.

When you think of it in those terms, We'd have to ask, Why?

Why is the created order Expressing some triumphant acclamation to the Lord? There are a couple of times in Isaiah that I found particularly expressive in this regard.

[7 : 13] And you might want to look at it. Isaiah 44. Just a little further along in the Bible, If you're not quite used to which direction to go. Isaiah 44 and verse 23 reads, Sing, O heavens.

See, there it is again. For the Lord has done it. Shout, O depths of the earth. Break forth into singing, O mountains.

O forest and every tree in it. This creation calling itself to worship. Notice the end of verse 23.

For the Lord has redeemed Jacob and will be glorified in Israel. So the earth is in Isaiah's prophetic discourse, intuitively, innately bringing noise from the created order because of what God has done for his people.

That's the preceding context as well in Isaiah. Verse 21. Remember these things, O Jacob and Israel. For you are my servant. I formed you. You're my servant. O Israel, you will not be forgotten by me.

[8 : 32] I have blotted out your transgressions like a cloud and your sins like mist. Return to me, for I have redeemed you. So the scriptures are indicating that the Lord Yahweh in heaven has redeemed his people.

He has done something for someone. And in doing something for someone, the created order is to give acclaiming praise for his work.

It's likewise put forward in Isaiah 55. Look at this in verse 12 of Isaiah 55. The same writer says, For you shall go out in joy and be led forth in peace, and mountains and the hills before you shall break forth into singing, and all of the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

And the context there is in Isaiah 55. Come everyone who thirsts, because God has done something that does not require you to pay for it himself.

In other words, the compassion of God upon men and women in mercy and forgiveness means that you go out in joy.

[9 : 50] You are led forth in peace. And notice, the mountains are breaking forth into singing, and the trees and the branches and the leaves are actually clapping, as if they are parting the way for you're going out and you're coming in.

When's the last time you thought of that? When you heard the leaves rustling, the midsummer breeze.

I've got two trees at my mother-in-law's lake house in Wisconsin. I'd love to cut them down in that they would give us more view of the lake, but she always referred to them as the clapping trees.

These leaves just seem to always be hitting one another when the wind is coming through. And what the psalmist is saying is that the created order is bearing its sound because of what God has done for his people.

Think of it. They are bowing their branches in acclamation of your forgiveness. I find this extraordinary.

[11 : 20] The created order celebrates our redemption through the land's worship.

Creation's jubilant cry of praise is in response to God's compassion on his people. Why would this be so?

It's because there's something in it for creation as well. Let me put it to you this way. The redemption of humanity through the mercy of God is God's means of renewing the whole creation.

Now you've got to get this. The land can't fathom its own renewal outside of your redemption.

Just as I can't fathom going green without going to Christ. There should be no great dichotomy between our stewardship of the land and the forgiveness of sins that actually emerge in our song.

[12 : 48] That the entire created order has been waiting for God with only songs of lament and groaning until it can acclaim in triumph that God is going to restore all that was set into motion at its early days, at its outset.

Oh, that we would give ourselves to stewarding the earth in which we live as a consequence and as a knowledge that God is in Christ restoring the very created order through our own redemption.

To know Jesus is to love the land. And the land's acclamation is in response to His love for you.

This is astounding. This is what's going on as you and I are walking through the course of the day. Get this. When you hear sound from the created order, it is in some measure not merely a function of its being, but a celebration of God's redemption.

[14:21] I know you're going to think I'm getting a little mystical on you. My great-grandfather laid down on a park bench in Colorado in the early 20th century to die.

Homeless, without help, without food, without a physical constitution that was ready to survive even a winter's night in Denver, let alone Chicago.

True story. And as he laid down in the park as a homeless man, intending to die, a bird lit on a branch directly above him and began to sing.

And it would not stop singing until my great-grandfather listened to the sound of the bird in the midst of a night he anticipated his death and felt as though God could redeem him and lead him to purposeful living.

And he arose and went forth. In other words, it was a, it was an experiential testimony in the history of my family of Psalm 100 verse 1.

[16:02] Make a joyful noise to the Lord all the earth because it is singing of the salvation that can come to you. Now, how does that inform the rest of the Psalm?

In three ways. In light of that truth, serve with gladness.

Know with certainty and give thanks in the assembly. Three simple implications for our consideration.

Serve the Lord with gladness. Come into his presence with singing. If the created order is singing for what God has done to rescue humanity, then humanity ought to be singing in response to the rescue that has been stowed upon them.

This idea of serving the Lord is really quite fascinating. I did a little look at the word again. I mean, what does it mean to serve the Lord? In Israel's history, when they were enslaved in Egypt and did not have a song of thanksgiving to sing, it indicates that they were under the harsh service or servitude to Pharaoh.

[17:34] Same word here. They were enslaved. And yet God comes to Moses and says, when you get to the mountain, you will serve me, you will worship me.

Same word. So what God is doing in the book of Exodus is he is taking a people who have no song to sing, bringing them to the mountain in which they will learn what service is.

So when you get to Exodus chapter 19 and 20, the time period where God said, when you get back to the mountain, you will worship me, you will serve me, we are all prepared to understand at that moment then, what is worship?

What is service? Because God said when we arrived here, we would do it. Interestingly, what happens is God comes down at that point and speaks for like 11 straight chapters.

Service, worship in Israel was listening to God's word and living under all that he communicated.

[18:47] It's the revelation of God and the response of obedience of his people. That's what it means to serve God. So when the church gathers today in the name of Jesus, we don't sit at the feet of a pastor who decides to sit in front of you for 30 minutes and talk from the scriptures because he thinks it's all about him.

No, it's because it's all about the word that's been revealed to us that we would hear God's voice and that we would walk forward living for him. And then it says serve the Lord with gladness.

I mean, this is what you are to do. Listen to the way Richard Baxter puts it. Come not to hear with a careless heart as if you were to hear a matter that little concerns you, but come with a sense of unspeakable weight, necessity, and consequence of the holy word which you are to hear.

And when you understand how much you are concerned in it, it will greatly help your understanding of every particular truth. I love this.

Chew the cud and call up all you can when you come home in secret and meditate on the preaching for yourselves.

[20:09] To serve the Lord in Psalm 100 is to come into the presence of God and to hear his word, but it's more than that. Many come, says Baxter, to these holy places and are so transported with a desire for hearing that they forget the fervency of praying and praising God.

God's service is not to be narrowed up in hearing. It hath greater latitude. There must be prayer, praise, and adoration. This is what it is to serve God.

This is what it is for you to live well in the coming year. It's to begin to realize that I need to be in worship. Because it is the one place where something happens that is unusual to the entire rest of my week.

It is the one place where hundreds of people are gathered intentionally to hear from God's word and to live joyfully in his ways and to praise and adore his name.

to lift a voice of triumph because he's redeemed people and he's restoring all of the created order unto himself. This is why it says serve him with gladness.

[21 : 32] There ought to be a that doesn't say you come every week glad. it means you intentionally commit your mind to the attentive hearing of the word because there's gladness in the voice of God.

And that you will of your own volition and will enter your voice and the affection of your heart in praise because God is worthy.

and to do it with gladness and to do it with singing. If verse one is true, then the implication for us in verse two is to serve.

In verse three, it's to know. 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.

I love the way Charles Spurgeon put it. Our worship ought to be intelligent. I mean, you got to know.

[22 : 49] Sometimes you don't know what you don't know, but genuine worship isn't some emptying of your mind in some mystical rebalancing act to ensure that you're at rest and at peace with the world and the world with you.

As if it's a mindless exercise. Worship is not only praise and adoration, but it has to be intelligent. It has to be in accord with knowledge.

It's knowing something. It's being fully present. Some people think that to be worshiping is to almost lose sense of all presence.

Our worship ought to be intelligent. And how should it be intelligent? Spurgeon goes on and says, we ought to know who and why we worship.

Well, and here it is. This is what you need to know. You need to know that Yahweh is God and that He made you. You worship because whether you know it or not yet, you're not the creative force that the world has been waiting for.

[24 : 13] You are the created one, not the creator. That you have been given life as a gift. The fact that you breathe unconsciously is a gift.

The fact that you woke up this morning is a gift. The fact that God in His mercy bears with you given the last week is an incredible mercy.

He made you. He created you. Know this. Know that you are not your own. That you are His. and the people of His pasture.

Wow, He goes into a metaphor here of He created us, but also that we are sheep.

We are His subjects and we are His sheep. That's the way you need to think of yourself. Most of us like to think of ourselves, I'm no sheep.

[25 : 20] Those sheep, I've been told they're dumb. I'm no subject. I'm not subject to anyone. I'm telling you this morning, know this, that He's God, you're not.

You're a subject, not a king. You're more like a sheep than you are a shepherd. Now, the beauty of it is that you have God as your shepherd.

It says you're the sheep of His pasture. Let me tell you something. Who's been shepherding you lately? I've been in some fields over my life.

I've eaten some food. I've tasted of the world. I've been led by many, but there is something about the Lord's pasture that is unlike any other food I eat.

the Lord leads me beside quiet waters. He feeds me. He restores my soul. He puts a table before me in the presence of my enemies.

[26 : 30] Tell me, what are you feeding on? The beauty of the psalm, what you're to know is that you get to actually roam in the pasture land of the Lord.

Lord. This is phenomenal to me. Serve, know, give thanks.

Let me close it out. Verses four and five. Notice the psalmist returns to the word thanksgiving, which was the title of the psalm, the only one of all the 150 psalms that bears a title of thanksgiving or giving thanks.

But in verse four, that word from the title is included twice here. This is what you're to do. Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise.

Give thanks to him. Bless his name. This idea of thanksgiving here, I'll give it to you in the way one of the books gave it to me this week. In the Hebrew Hithiel.

[27 : 39] There'll be about three of you that'll go, oh, wow. it's the causative action in the active voice.

I got to think about that for about 10 minutes. But when you come to give thanks, there's an active voice with causative action all in play.

In other words, you come to do something when you come into the assembly. You're to give thanks actively. In other words, you come to church to do something, not merely receive something.

you come to effectuate something. You actually come that your voice would rise from this world in the midst of this assembly so that God who reigns on high would know that you are giving thanks.

This is why it says, bless his name. Now, why do you come to church? I got to go to church. I need a blessing.

[28 : 57] Be blessed. Boy, I was blessed today. You know, I can't worship at that church. I haven't, I just don't feel that I've been blessed by the time I walk out the door.

In actual fact, we're supposed to come to bless his name. In other words, by the time you leave that door, you want God to feel good.

And he's only going to feel good when you are actively engaged for the reasons for which he created you and continues to give you breath. Imagine if we thought of it that way.

Here, week by week, we mitigate the noises rising from the world that God would receive the acclamation due his name, that his ear would hear your songs, that he would be blessed.

blessed. It's a complete game changer. You come to church to give something to God rather than trying to figure out how God might give something to you.

[30 : 34] you. Well, why would we do that? Because we all got all kinds of needs. Man, I came to church because I need stuff. Verse 5, for the Lord is good, and his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness is to all generations.

That's why. Why are you the active agent in the worship of God, bestowing blessing upon his name? Because he's good, and his steadfast love endures forever.

Do you know where that phrase, his steadfast love endures forever, originated? It originated on the backside of Mount Zion at the failure of God's people with the golden calf in the midst of the rebellion and the sin of a people.

And Moses is not sure how to go on, given the fact that we've made a mess of it all. And he wants to know God, and he wants to be near God, and he wants to see God, and God says, I'll come down and you'll see my back.

But when God comes, he expresses to Moses his name. And at that moment, God decides to communicate to Moses, I am slow to anger.

[31 : 59] I am abounding in love. My steadfast love endures forever. In other words, when God saw our rebellion, his word to us is, I am mercy.

I'm merciful. God's mercy is the reason for our song. God's love gives birth to the language of our soul.

God's everlasting kindness is what brings my eternal praise. grace. If this were to happen, if this were to happen, if we week by week this year understood how to prepare on Sunday morning, how to make sure that I arrive at enough time to on the first down beat from the platform, my voice is actively the agent of praise.

If we knew that our thanksgiving, our service, our knowledge, our songs, our affections, the gladness of our heart is for all that Christ has done for us, we would be fully engaged.

Regardless of the style, we would be offering ourselves to God. We would say, God, you got stuff for me to do all week, but I'm coming to church to do something for you.

[34 : 03] Bless your name.