

The Heart of Worship

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[0 : 00] All right, if you've got your Bible, go to Psalm 100.

Psalm 100 is going to be the psalm we look at this evening, continuing in a series we started just a few weeks ago called Summer in the Psalms, basically just spending the rest of our summer looking at various psalms.

And you have responded quite well in a couple of weeks ago or so. I think I asked you if you wanted to request a psalm. And many of you have requested several psalms.

In fact, I'm pretty much just going to preach psalms that have been requested for the rest of the series. In fact, I've got more psalms requested than I'll have time to preach. But thank you for your response in that.

And it's not too late if you still have a psalm that you would like for me to preach on to let me know. This is one of the few times that you actually get to tell me what to preach. OK, so take advantage of it.

[1 : 18] Tonight's a psalm that we're going to look at and we've looked at several different types of psalms, like a psalm of sovereignty in Psalm 2. We looked at the God who knows us in Psalm 139, maybe one of the most famous or popular psalms.

We're going to look at a psalm of worship tonight here in Psalm 100. So if you're able to stand, would you please do so as we honor the reading of God's Word. Psalm 100.

A very short psalm for a very long sermon. Psalm 100, verse 1. Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth.

Serve the Lord with gladness. Come into His presence with singing. Know that the Lord, He is God. And it is He who made us.

And we are His. We are His people. The sheep of His pasture. Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise.

[2 : 23] Give thanks to Him and bless His name. For the Lord is good. And His steadfast love endures forever.

And His faithfulness to all generations. This is God's Word. Pray for me. Pray with me now as we ask God to teach us tonight from His Word.

God, instruct us, teach us, command us. About the kind of worship you desire. Help us understand tonight the very heart of worship.

So that as we enter into a place like this, God, we would know precisely what you are calling us into. Come do whatever you want to do, God.

This is your time with your people. It is your power and your authority. Come and work. In Jesus' name we ask this. And God's people said, Amen.

[3 : 21] Amen. You can be seated. Sarah was 13 years old when she made a discovery that would forever alter her life. One morning, Sarah was there at the breakfast table and she was eating her cereal.

And her eyes were just kind of scanning the room. Just kind of a normal morning looking at everything in the kitchen. And her eyes caught something that looked quite familiar to her.

It was an object that captured her attention. There on the milk carton in front of her was the picture of a six-year-old girl. Sarah picked up the carton and she looked at it closer.

And as she looked at it closer, she froze. She stopped chomping on her cereal. She dropped the spoon to the table. And she just sat there lifeless.

She recognized that that picture of the little girl on the milk carton was her. Sarah said, quote, I got up. I took the carton to the bathroom.

[4 : 22] I poured it down the toilet. I took the carton and tore it into pieces, saving only the picture of me. What Sarah was about to discover over the next few days was that for the past ten years, she'd been kidnapped by her father.

You see, a decade before, Sarah's father had come to visit her and her mother in Norway for Easter. While her mother was preparing the Easter lunch, her dad said, I'm going to take Sarah to the playground to play.

By five o'clock in the afternoon, they had not returned. Her mother, being concerned, contacted the police to see if maybe an accident had been reported, but nothing had been reported.

And by the end of the evening, there was still no sign of them. You see, Sarah wasn't going to be coming home that night because Sarah was already on a plane flying to New York with her father.

It had been her father's plan to come and steal her the entire time. For a decade of her life, Sarah was brainwashed and abused and moved from one location to another, never even knowing that she had a mother out there who loved her and wanted her home.

[5 : 43] Think about that. It wasn't until that morning at the breakfast table that Sarah came to understand that hers was a life that had been stolen.

Can you even imagine the emotion of that? Can you even comprehend the emotion of that kind of a situation? Can you imagine having a childhood stolen? Can you imagine parents having a child stolen?

And all of us know that feeling of having something that belongs to you, something that you care about, taken by someone else. Maybe someone stole your car or your money or your identity or your seat at church or your time or your parking spot or your privacy or your computer or your merchandise or your phone or your opportunity or your idea or your purse or your song or your jewelry or your life.

And when something like that happens, don't you just want to scream like, hey, that doesn't belong to you. It's not yours. That's mine.

Do you know that emotion? Have you felt that emotion before? Like, how can you take something that isn't yours? In fact, the reason why I know you feel that way, and I do as well, is because think about all the links you go to to protect what's yours.

[7 : 04] You have locks on your doors. You have security systems in your home. You have surveillance cameras at work. You have identity protection on your finances. You have passwords to protect your computer.

You have fences to protect your home or your yard. Some of you even have these big, vicious guard dogs to protect your property like this one. Here's the robber running. Here's the big, vicious guard dog right there.

Right? I mean, faith family, don't mess with the Yorkie. Do not mess with the Yorkie. But seriously, though, think about all the things you have that you prevent from being stolen.

And why is that? It's because we all know this. Notice it on the screen. We consider it an offense when someone takes something as their own that doesn't belong to them.

Amen? No, no, no. I mean, amen. Like, do you really, really resonate with that and agree? Amen? Then why do you steal the worship of God?

[8 : 13] Why do I steal the worship of God? You say, what do you mean? What I mean is this, and I want you to hear my heart.

Over the last 25 years of ministry, I've seen time and time again, myself included, that the people of God have stolen what isn't theirs.

Namely, the worship of God. How? By making it about us. We've taken something that is His and made it ours.

I grew up, as many of you know, in a traditional setting where we sang three hymns, and just as I am, every Sunday. I grew up in a youth group where we sang, Lord, I lift Your name on high 17,000 times, and I can sing of Your love forever and ever and ever and ever and ever and ever.

That was the context I grew up in. I've seen worship movements like the Gaithers, Passion, and Hillsong. I've had debates over traditional, modern, post-modern, ancient future, and emerging worship.

[9 : 17] I've been in conversations about organs versus drums, and books versus screens, and lyric videos versus live bands, and skinny jeans versus suits.

And as, listen to me, as I've studied the Scripture, I've come to realize we're asking the wrong question, we're having the wrong conversation, because we've started at the wrong place.

Somebody say preach, preacher. Because faith family, it is not my intent to offend us, but it is certainly my intent tonight to convict us that the question is not, what kind of worship do you like?

The question is, what kind of worship does God like? The question we have to stop asking is this, did you like the worship today?

And we need to start asking, are you listening? Did God like your worship today? Because we far too often come into the assembling of ourselves together in corporate worship with eyes that are looking to see whether or not we like the worship.

[10 : 34] It's too loud. It's too soft. I don't know that song. It should be a hymn. I like more modern music. Stop it! Because it isn't about you.

It's about Him and you're stealing from God what belongs to Him. And so the question we're not going to ask you is, did you like the worship?

We're going to ask, does God like your worship? Because worship is about your heart before your King.

And in Psalm 100, we see the kind of worship that God prefers. Not the worship God prefers, the worship God commands. Because in these five verses, there are seven commands of how we are to worship.

They are commands. That is not suggestions, not preferences. I like this. God is not taking a survey. Right? What do you think? What would you like? How could we offer something for you?

[11 : 38] No. No. This is our King commanding how He wants to be worshipped. Verse 1. Make a joyful noise to Yahweh all the earth.

The first thing we want to see here are the responses of worship that God desires. These are the kinds of responses that God wants from His people as we come together in worship.

The first is, God wants it joyfully loud. Make a, say it, joyful noise. Listen, if worship is to be anything, it is an expression of joy.

And in fact, the very word worship comes from jubilate. Jubilate is not a fancy drink at Starbucks. Right? I like a grande jubilate. No. Jubilate is Latin for be joyful.

That's what worship is. Worship is an expression of joy. And Psalm 100 says that God wants that in a loud noise.

[12 : 44] It's why the Psalms are filled with clapping and instruments and shouts of praise. It's this. Notice it on the screen. Worship is exaltation with an exclamation.

It's not ho-hum or just mumble around. It is an overflow of exaltation with an exclamation. It is a joyful noise to our King.

And we see this expression in so many other areas of life. Here's just one example. Michael. You have the trip, car. You bid \$42,500.

Actual retail price is \$42,989. \$489. Michael won a million dollars.

A million dollars for Michael. A million dollars for Michael. Michael's won \$1,127,062 today. Thanks for watching Price and Strike.

[13 : 47] Don't get to get the Pets to pay to do it. It's very important. That brother is like Pentecostal. But that's what a joyful noise looks like. Once he realizes what is his, he doesn't tell himself to respond that way.

He just naturally begins to shout with joy because of what is now his. Imagine that you had a piece of jewelry that you found and you didn't know what it was.

And so you took it to a jeweler and you discovered that it was something of extreme value. What would your response be? It would be a natural shout for joy.

It would be an overwhelming expression of joy. Well, listen to what Jesus says about those who discover the kingdom of God. Look here in Matthew 13, verse 44.

The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in a field. When a man, which a man found and covered up, say it with me, then in his joy, he goes and sells all that he has to buy that field.

[14 : 52] He's willing to sacrifice everything joyfully because he realizes the value of the prize. When we realize the true treasure that we have in God, as Psalm 100 says, that we are His and He is ours, we will make a joyful noise.

You say, well, pastor, I'm not really an emotional person. I'm uncomfortable with all that expression of joy.

And for the record, if you're taking a survey, I think the music's too loud. Well, guess what? Worship doesn't belong to you.

And therefore, it isn't about you. And if your king wants a joyful noise, guess what you make?

A joyful noise. Verse 2. Serve the Lord with gladness. It's another command. That is, God not only wants worship that is joyfully loud, but He wants that which is gladly surrendered.

[16 : 08] Gladly surrendered. Now this word serve throws us off because we throw this word around so much in church speak. We need people to serve.

And what do we automatically think when somebody says we need people to serve? Okay, we need people to set up tables and we need people to help with the kids and we need people to teach a class and we need people to do something.

But in Psalm 100, this word serve really is more of the relationship between a slave and a king. In other words, notice this here on the screen.

Serving has less to do with the action of the hands, doing something, and more to do with the attitude of the heart. Listen, serving here is a posture.

It's not an activity. Think of it this way. It's more Mary than Martha. Martha is in the kitchen working and we tend to call that service.

[17 : 09] Mary's at the feet of Jesus wanting to learn and listen and worship. This serve the Lord is a surrendered heart. It's a life surrendered to God.

Much like Romans 12, verse 1. I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God to present your bodies as a living sacrifice. Holy and acceptable to God, which is your, say it with me, spiritual worship.

That is, part of your spiritual worship is that your life is a surrendered sacrifice to God. It's not, I do a bunch, look at all the things I do for God.

No, it's a posture of surrender before your King. And Psalm 100 says that we are to do this with gladness, which sounds like an oxymoron, right?

You know, like jumbo shrimp. It doesn't seem to really make sense. Gladly surrendered? How, like, I hate the idea of surrender. There seems to be nothing I would enjoy about surrender.

[18 : 17] Listen, surrender is done gladly when you know how good your King is. When your King is good, you gladly surrender.

You see, those who know the heart of God are happy to submit to Him, are glad to be surrendered before Him. In fact, this is actually the very idea that the Apostle Paul used in the New Testament with the Greek word *doulos*.

It means bondservant is how it typically gets translated. It's really more of, people will say bondservant, it's really more bondslave, because the idea is this, a *doulos*, a bondservant or a bondslave in the ancient Near East was somebody that was under slavery, but then they got purchased out from under that slavery by someone else, and then they were so indebted and grateful to the person that bought them out of that slavery, they became a joyful slave to them.

And so what Paul means by that is, I was enslaved to sin. I was under the bondage of sin. And Jesus redeemed me out of that. And I am so glad and so joyful of what Jesus did in my life, I can't wait to be for the rest of my life His slave.

His servant. I gladly surrender the rest of my eternity to serve my King Jesus. That's what serve the Lord with gladness is.

[19 : 48] And this gets to the heart of worship. Listen, hymn books, instruments, lyric videos, they're superficial. They're superficial. They're superficial when it comes to worship.

Because worship's about a surrendered heart. And at the end of the day, it won't matter if it's a lyric video or a live band if your heart surrendered to the King.

You say, well, pastor, I mean, if you want my opinion, and I don't, but if you want my opinion, I just don't really like the idea of surrender. I'm a sophisticated person to which my response to you would be, but worship doesn't belong to you.

And therefore it isn't about you. And if your King tells you to surrender, you surrender. Verse 2 again.

The next command, come into His presence with singing. God wants joyful, joyfully loud. He wants gladly surrendered hearts.

[20 : 55] And He wants purposeful singing. I think this may be one of the most violated commands in all of Scripture. And it's commanded everywhere. That is namely, the people of God to sing.

I'm going to mess with some of you. I'm not calling anybody out. I'm not making fun of you or picking at you. But again, I'm not trying to offend you. I have no problems convicting you. Listen to, like, you can't even get out of the Psalms.

Look at Psalm 30, verse 4. Sing praises to the Lord, you righteous ones. Psalm 47, verse 6. Sing praises to God. Sing praises. Sing praises to our King. Sing praises.

Psalm 68, verse 4. Sing to our God. Sing praises to His name. Lift up a song to the Lord. 81, verse 1. Sing for joy to the God of our strength.

Shout joyfully to the God of Jacob. Psalm 95, verse 1. O come, let us sing for the joy to the Lord. And look at Psalm 98, verse 1. O sing to the Lord a new song, for He has done wonderful things.

[21 : 59] Well, pastor, if you want my opinion, I don't really like singing. I'm just not really much of a singer. But worship doesn't belong to you.

And therefore, it isn't about you. And if your king says sing, you sing.

For if the king says, come into my courts with singing, then we come into his courts with singing. And we're starting to notice a pattern here.

That is, shouts that are joyful and service or surrender that is grateful and singing that is praise filled. What we're beginning to see is what makes any of us from Baptist type backgrounds uncomfortable.

Namely, worship gets emotional. Not here. No, no, no. Not in Minnesota. We don't get emotional. We keep it to ourselves.

[23 : 00] Well, it's not about you. It's about God. And He wants passionate praise. He wants your affection. A great book from Jonathan Edwards.

It's a book called Religious Affections. I highly recommend it to you. In Religious Affections, Edwards writes this, quote, The things of God take hold of our souls only so much as they affect our hearts.

Many people hear the Word of God, but what they hear has no effect on them. And neither their natures nor their behavior is changed because they're not emotionally affected by what they hear.

They hear of God's infinite goodness and mercy. They hear of the great works of God's wisdom and power. They hear of the unspeakable love of God and the great things that Christ has done.

They hear all these things, and yet they remain as they were because they're not emotionally affected by what they hear. And until they are affected, they will never be changed.

[24 : 14] You see, truth is meant to bring about a response. It's not just a, hmm, that's neat.

God's love is steadfast. I'll remember that for my theological quiz. No, it's meant to stir up in you passionate praise of a God that could love you like that.

It's meant to affect us. I remember in 2 Samuel 6, the ark has been returned to the people of God, and they begin to offer sacrifices, and they're playing instruments, and they're singing.

And David, do you remember this? King David takes off his robe and starts dancing before God. And Saul's daughter-in-law, Saul's daughter-in-law, who I think must have been the first Baptist.

I think she was the first Baptist recorded in Scripture. Despises David for dancing. And David's response is this, I will celebrate before the Lord.

[25 : 22] And then he says this, I'll become even more undignified than this. God commands purposeful singing.

Passionate praise. Verse 3. Know that Yahweh, know that the Lord, He is God. It is He who made us, and we are His.

We are His people, the sheep of His pasture. That is another aspect of the worship that God commands. He wants it joyfully loud and gladly surrendered and purposefully singing, but He also wants it increasingly knowing Him.

So those of you that run with the point I just made, that's right, it needs to be emotional, emotional, emotional. Well, God comes right back and balances with this, emotional based on truth.

Emotion based on knowledge of God. The Bible is not describing a worship experience that is absent from content or truth. The Bible is not describing worship as entertainment or purely having an emotional experience just to have an emotional experience.

[26 : 36] Amen? I'll say it for you then. Amen, Pastor. That was a really good point. They're not listening, but keep preaching. Here we go. Listen, we do not want knowledge of God without affections for God, but we also do not want affections for God abstract or disconnected from the knowledge of God.

It's both. It's knowledge of God that leads to the affections for God and vice versa. In other words, notice this on the screen. There must be substance to our experience.

And this is the... Listen, there's a rightful criticism for those that just want emotion. Emotion just for emotion without substance isn't worship. And knowledge just for the sake of knowledge that doesn't lead to affectual praise isn't worship.

It's both. Your king wants passionate praise that's growing out of the knowledge that he is God. God. And we are his. We are his people.

The sheep of his pasture. That is why we... I'm not in any way suggesting that we're perfect with this, but we do try hard to emphasize content. It's why we preach the Bible.

[27 : 59] I don't get up here with the intent to just entertain you with Yorkie videos or The Price is Right. I want you to have substance. I want you to have the truth of God.

It's why we try to pick songs that have some substance to them. You know, I grew up... I'll pick on a hymn that I grew up... I come to the garden alone while the dew is still on the roses.

And he walks with me and he talks with me. And it's just like, are you dating? Like, it's just this very kind of... I'm just walking with Jesus in the garden like he's my boyfriend or something.

Okay? Listen, there are songs that aren't... Listen, all worship songs are not good content. Amen? But when there is good content and there is godly truth, then we are to sing it as a way of knowing that he is our God.

And you say, well, pastor, if you're asking my opinion... And I'm not. But if you want to know my opinion, I just want to feel good. You know?

[29 : 06] I mean, it's been a rough week and I just... I come to worship because I want to feel good. I don't really care about theology. But worship doesn't belong to you.

And therefore, it's not about you. And so if your king commands you to know him, then pursue him. And know him in all the ways he has revealed himself.

Amen? I've made some of you so uncomfortable and I love it. Verse 4. Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise.

Give thanks to him and bless his name. Here it is. God wants it joyfully loud and gladly surrendered and purposefully singing and increasing in our knowledge of God.

And he wants us to be personally thankful. Remember the Exodus. Remember the Exodus. Why? Because what do you remember in the Exodus? You were not a people.

[30 : 12] But I made you mine. I entered into a covenant with you at Sinai and I brought you, redeemed you out of Egypt and made you my people.

Remember what you got out of slavery and bondage. Remember how you got out because you had such an amazing military. Eh! You got out because of the grace of God and only by the grace of God.

It was God that delivered you from Egypt. And remember what God did for you. He made you his people. And remember what he promised you. A great future. And what did the Exodus prove?

Again, verse 5. That the Lord is good and his steadfast love endures forever and his faithfulness is to all generations. And my point is this, faith family. Lean in.

Listen close. If that is true for Israel and the Exodus of the Old Testament, how much more for us, the people of God, the church of God, who have experienced the greater and ultimate Exodus in Jesus.

[31 : 18] Because Jesus, like Israel, came up out of Egypt. Jesus went through the waters of baptism. Jesus was the Passover lamb. Jesus prepared a tabernacle for us.

Jesus is greater than Moses because Jesus led the greater Exodus. As I've told you many times, the Exodus of the Old Testament is only foreshadowing the gospel of the new.

The greater Exodus, the ultimate redemption, not through Moses, but through Jesus. And if Israel was commanded to worship this way in Psalm 100, how much more should we?

Because if you are in this place tonight and you are a child of God and you have put your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, remember what he saved you out of, slavery from sin and death. Remember how you got out, not because you're good, but because he is good and full of grace.

And now you have become his. You are a part, John says, of the family of God and promised everlasting life. That's your story.

[32 : 26] That's your identity, regardless of what kind of week you had. Amen. So it doesn't have anything to do with how good your life is right now.

It has everything to do with the covenant faithfulness of God and his steadfast love that endures forever. Peter says it this way to us, believers, 1 Peter 2.9, you're a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people of his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into marvelous light.

Hey, once you were not a people, but now you're God's people. Once you had not received mercy, but now you have.

Dear Christian, dear friend, dear faith family, if you need a reason to worship, look no further than the cross.

For when you are rightly focused on the cross, can I tell you what you won't care about? Organs! Or drums!

[33 : 46] Or lyric videos! Or live bands! Or Saturday nights! Or Sunday mornings! Because if the cross reminds us of anything, it's that redemption was never ultimately about you, it has always been about Jesus.

And all that other worship, surface-y, superficial stuff, begins to fade when we realize it was never about us to begin with.

So, five of you like this sermon, the rest of you hate me. I get it. I get it. But I'll end with this.

It's not about me. That's true. That's true. That's true. And I'm the preacher, not you, alright? There's a reason the Lord makes me preach this, alright?

Alright? Well, let me tell you, faith family, there's a day coming. There is a day coming when we're all going to do Psalm 100. Those of you that are a part of the people of God, we are all going to do Psalm 100.

[34:52] Revelation gives us this vision of the ransomed people of God who are coming together singing a new song with a loud voice. And they are joyfully proclaiming, worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing forever and ever and ever.

And sometimes I think we, including myself, forget that this little gathering is just getting you ready for that larger gathering. And when that day comes, here's what I promise you no one will be saying.

God, it's too loud. Could you just turn it down a little bit? God, I don't really want to sing. God, you better play my favorite hymn.

God, I think I'll just stay home today. No, no one will respond that way on that day. Why? Because in that moment, we would not dare steal what God has purchased for His Son.

And we will know on that day that worship never belonged to us. It will forever belong to God. And so if we will know that then, why, for heaven's sake, would we dare do that now?

[36 : 31] And all God's people said, Amen. Amen. Let's pray. Lord, thank You for helping us understand tonight from Your Word the heart of worship. I confess that even throughout my own journey, I've made worship about me.

And sure, we all have preferences, and preferences are fine, but we're not the one making commands You do. You're the one that tells us how to worship.

And so Lord, I just pray that You would bring us back to that heart of worship to realize it really isn't about us. It has always been about You. And so, we can leave our preferences at the door and be less concerned about what we like and more concerned about what You command.

because this is about our King as we gladly surrender to Him. So, I pray that You would help tonight be instructive and deepen our worship here at Faith Family to take our minds and eyes off of the things that we want and just remember what it's truly all about.

So, help us now as we do that through communion. We're going to focus our eyes on what it's all about and that is Jesus and His sacrifice for us.

[37:56] The greater Exodus. The ultimate act of redemption that He did for us on the cross. So, bring us into the heart of worship now as we remember in Jesus' name. Amen.

[illegible]