

Let Us Go into the House of the Lord

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[0 : 0 0] That first verse, I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord. Some of you might be aware that Ron Hamilton, Patch the Pirate, he passed away yesterday. And he was used to write many kids songs that help people memorize the scripture.

How many of you grew up singing Patch the Pirate songs in here? And even on the mission field, the Holtz, Josh and Andrew grew up in Chile. They had a big Patch ministry.

And I feel like there's a song that speaks about, I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord. Is there a song that says that? If there's not, Charlotte, would you work on one, okay? You've got about 20 minutes and then you're going to come up here and lead us in a song.

It should be a song. It would be a good scripture for us to know because that passage is familiar to me, probably familiar to you as well. When was the last time, that statement there, I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord.

When was the last time you were able to say that you were sincerely glad and what was the cause? I love that Cecily is working the night in the nerd boat back there. She was sincerely glad for the opportunity to serve.

[1 : 0 4] When was the last time that you were sincerely glad? Patch was sincerely glad when he saw that supper was ready the night. And I was sincerely, I was excited about it as well. But when was the last time you were glad for something and what was the cause?

Psalms 37, 4 tells us, Delight ourselves in the Lord and he shall give the desires of your heart. Delighting in the Lord. The pleasure in God is the power for purity.

Pleasure in God is the power for purity. The things on earth will grow strangely dim when you look upon his glorious grace. As the song would say, as we spend time looking at him and beholding him, it places things in our lives in a proper order.

Delighting in him. I would encourage you, be people that delight in him. It breaks the power of sin. It's faith in the promise that the pleasures of sin are temporary and toxic, but at God's right hand are pleasures evermore.

That we want to have the pleasures he has for us. Even if that means saying no to something that is temporary, because we have faith in the promise that pleasures evermore are with him.

[2 : 1 4] That God offers the path of gladness and of delight. It's one of the things that you can learn in sports. Carson wants to play football.

And I was asking Austin and Alex some advice, and they very quickly realized, I don't know anything about football, and Carson's in trouble. All right? They have some friends that ask about this, and I'm not coaching him. But one of the things that they're going to have to learn is you're going to have to say, no to temporary pleasure so that you can have the win later on, right?

And so that pursuit of it is that we'd say, no, sin is, it looks pleasurable, and it's right there, and it's readily accessible, but I know that my delight is going to be found in the Lord.

And it's a challenge, something we never grow out of, but it's a principle that we learn. Jonathan Edwards, somebody that I would quote often when we talk about this idea of finding our gladness or delight or joy in the Lord, he writes a lot about it.

He said this at the age of 18. He said, They certainly are the wisest men that do those things that make most of their happiness. And this, in effect, is acknowledged by all the men in the world.

[3 : 22] For there is no man upon the earth who isn't earnestly seeking after happiness, and it appears abundantly by the variety of ways they so vigorously seek it. They will twist and turn every way, ply all instruments to make themselves happy men.

Some will wander all over the face of the earth to find it. They will seek it in the waters and in dry land, under the waters and the bowels of the earth. And although the true way to happiness lies right before them, they might easily step into it and walk in it and be brought into as a great happiness as they desire, and greater than they can conceive of, yet they will not enter into it.

They try all the false paths. They will spend and be spent, labor all their lives, time, life's time, endanger their lives, and will pass over mountains and valleys, go through fire and water, seeking for happiness amongst vanities, and always disappointed, never find what they seek for.

But yet, like fools and madmen, they violently rush forward, still in the same ways. But the righteous are not so. These only have the wisdom to find the right paths to happiness.

It's our job when we want to be people, helpers of joy, is we help them find paths of happiness. The world lays out all kinds of different paths that tell you at the end of it is going to be gladness, at the end of it is going to be joy, but every time you just find more emptiness.

[4 : 50] So the problem is not the pursuit, but it's the path in which we take. Because we all desire. Jesus, speaking of the cross, spoke about the joy that was set before them.

Psalms 16, 11 says, Thou wilt show me the path of life, and thy presence is fullness of joy. At thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore.

Pleasures, fullness of joy, the path of life, they're available to us. So that's the first statement. It says, I was glad. I was glad for something, which is the pursuit of our lives, to find our happiness, to find our joy and obedience to him.

All men are pursuing it, but we are people that have found the path. And now we find this path that says, When they said unto me, it was an invitation from fellow believers. This is part of our joy, that others would consider David's fellowship desirable, and that they would determine to worship God corporately.

The psalmist started his journey, if you remember three chapters ago in Psalm 120, he was surrounded by people who didn't care about God or God's way. And it said in Psalm 120, verse 6, My soul has long dwelt with them that hateth peace.

[5 : 59] He has come a long ways from three chapters ago where he surrounded people who hated peace. Now here he is about to enter into Jerusalem as we're picturing their journey, and he's with people that are inviting him.

Hey, let's go into the house of the Lord, and let's worship together. This isn't just an invitation to unbelieving people. This is an invitation from one believer to another one that says, Hey, let's get over here.

Let's worship our Lord. Let's go to the house of the Lord together. I don't often hear that when people come, but a John Pearsonism, when you're outside, he says, What does he say?

Who knows what he says? When you're about to leave, you're underneath the foyer, or you're outside under the portico, and he's been waiting on Miss Sandy for too long, he says, Let's go so we can come back, all right?

Kind of a Yoda-like John Pearson statement right there. Let's go so that we can come back, and anticipating the time again. We can't come back unless we leave. It's genius. It really is, all right?

[6 : 59] And anticipating coming back again. And so we might say that when we're leaving, but what an encouragement. I find such encouragement when I see you guys on Thursday night. This is very personal, just real practical to me.

I just look forward to it. I look forward to gathering with God's people, coming into this place, singing the songs that we sing, gathering around the Word. That's what was happening here.

They left the place where they were pilgrims and strangers. They had walked. God was guiding their steps. There was hills that there was dangers in, but they said, My hope is in the Lord. And now here they are, about to enter into Jerusalem, and they say, Let us, let's go into the house of the Lord, and let's worship.

It's a wonderful place to be. And verse number two, it says, Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem. Our feet. And so they're picturing it. We're finally here.

If your kids will on a drive, are we there yet? Are we there yet? We're here now, okay? And so all that walking to Jerusalem, they finally got there. Now their feet are going to be inside of the gate where they wanted to go.

[8 : 01] So I was reading a funny story. A person was invited to come and help a church with corporate worship, and the person that was going to come and play the instrument says, Corporate worship? I don't know what that's like.

Is it going to be a bunch of business people? Like, am I supposed to be like, I'm not ready for this. Do I need a briefcase? And they said, No, corporate. It just means all of us together, all right? Corporately.

And so explaining the psalm here, it wasn't just one person going into Jerusalem, but he said, We are, or are, our feet shall stand in Jerusalem, arriving together.

I mentioned for you the progression. I have a chart here, and so Alex will help me show it to you here. There's a flow here that happens. It says, We go from trouble, to trust, to triumph. We do it five different times in these psalms.

That's what we've done so far. We've started off where we were away from the Lord, surrounded by people who didn't love peace. And if you remember last time, we found hope. As we were looking in Psalm 121, My hope is in the Lord.

[8 : 58] The hills, there's troubles, but I look to the Lord, and then our hope, and now we're getting to a place of triumph, and that cycle is going to continue in these sets of three. And so it said, Let us go into the house of the Lord.

That's an expression that's used throughout the Old Testament. Some would have that David wrote this psalm. That's what you have above the psalm. And in doing so, they would shift out the phrase as a reference to the temple.

But through the Old Testament, you'll find the house of the Lord used that terminology, used several times. In Joshua 6, 24, it says, And they burnt the city with fire, and all that was therein, only the silver and the gold and vessels of brass and iron.

And they put treasury in the house of the Lord. That last expression, and that was in reference to the tabernacle. And so, though the city of Jerusalem is the utmost importance to the pilgrims, this is where the people are going.

It's the final place of worship that we want to focus on. Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the final place of worship for all of us as well in here, Zion. And it's, but what I want us to look at here is the desire that it had.

[10 : 02] So there's no need to allegorize Jerusalem and make ready application for the church, but it's the place that they were going to where they were going to worship God. What I'm saying here to you, I want to make it as simple as I can here, is that in this pilgrim song, they're talking about headed to Jerusalem.

But I want you to see what it was they were excited about that was going to take place in Jerusalem and recognize that we have that occurring in our lives as well.

And we pray for the day that we will be in a new Jerusalem and we will worship and our pilgrim journey will end as well. But I want you to look at the things that they say about their anticipation for it.

It's a song of a person who decides that they are ready to worship God. If you were to ask an unbelieving friend why they should join you at church, think about some of the things they may say to you is, you know, what are we going to do?

What do you do there? That would be a question that people ask. On occasion, we have people that visit here that have never been part of a church service before and they're looking around. If we're going to summarize what we're going to do when we meet and we're going to say it in one word, we're going to say that we're going to meet to worship.

[11 : 12] That encapsulates all the things in which we are doing where we are going to bring our mind and our heart and be attentive to the things of God. I'll give you a few definitions for worship. A wholehearted response to God or an engagement with God on His terms where only He makes it possible.

Or worship is our innermost being responding with praise for all that God is through our actions, our attitudes, actions, and thoughts, and words based on the truth of God as He has revealed Himself.

One last definition. Worship is all that we are reacting rightly to all that He is. All very solid definitions for worship. Psalm 96.8 would say it like this, Give unto the Lord the glory due unto His name, bring an offering, and come unto His courts.

See, God is not worshipped where He is not treasured and in joy. Praise is not an alternative to joy, but an expression of that joy. Not to enjoy God is to dishonor Him, to say to Him that something else satisfies you more is the opposite of worship is sacrilege.

We come here because we treasure Him. We come here to enjoy Him. This is how I believe Ben and Chris and Jonathan Charlotte, those involved, Zach Rye, leading music and preaching tonight.

[12 : 29] This is how I believe I'm involved in the music ministry here because you sang to remind us to take great joy in what God says and I get to open up the Bible and remind you as well.

That's what we do here. We're calling each other into remembrance that we treasure God. We sing about Him. We hear the Bible taught about Him. It's what we do. If you will turn with me to Psalm 96.

I want to read through that short psalm with you and letting it show you what is a good definition for what happens in worship. So in Psalm 96, 1 and 2, it's what we do.

We sing unto the Lord a new song, sing unto the Lord all the earth, sing unto the Lord, bless His name, show forth His salvation from day to day. And what reason? Because the Lord is great and greatly to be praised.

He is to be feared above all gods for all the gods of the nations are idols. But the Lord made the heavens and honor and majesty before Him, strength and beauty in His sanctuary. To what cause? Give unto the Lord, all you kindreds of people.

[13 : 29] Give unto the Lord glory and strength. Give unto the Lord the glory due unto His name. Bring an offering and come into His courts. And how do we go about this? Verse 9, O worship the Lord in the beauty of His holiness.

Fear before Him all the earth. Say among the heathen that the Lord reigneth. The world also shall be established that it shall not be moved. He shall judge the people righteously. Let the heavens rejoice and let the earth be glad.

Let the sea roar and the fullness thereof. Let the field be joyful and all that is therein. Then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice. Gladness, joyful, rejoicing.

It's part of our worship and the beauty of His holiness. It is the proper reacting. We said worship was reacting rightly to all that He is. Gladness and joy and delight is a proper reaction to see Him as He is.

Moving on to the psalm, it says, Jerusalem has builded a city. Jerusalem has builded a city that is compact together. Bo, this is the kind of city that Greg would like, right? We were talking about city development and planning, one of Greg's favorite pastimes to talk about it.

[14 : 34] He loves talking about it and Greg would like to see everything right on top of it with public transportation horizontally and vertically. You can get anywhere you want with the press of a button.

That is his future for us. I know some of you are slowing down the progress on that. That's the opposite of what you have in mind. We do know in Greg's defense, we all do end up in a city someday and it will be wonderful.

But the compact aspect here, it was overwhelming. When they come, picturing they come up on the gates here and they look to him, it's important here. Jerusalem's important because it's where the temple was.

The temple was important because it's where God met His people. And so why was he so glad to begin his journey? It's because he was going to worship God with His people. I've experienced watching people travel on a religious pilgrimage and the excitement that they have moving along to it.

That's what these people have been doing. They're going to the city and to a place of worship. Throughout the Bible, 1 Chronicles, particularly David's introducing different care that's going to be taken as they worship.

[15 : 40] He introduces music into the program. It says that David even created instruments of music by which people praise the Lord. 1 Chronicles 23, 5, Moreover, 4,000 were porters and 4,000 praised the Lord with the instruments which I've made, said David, to praise thee therewith.

If you ever want to, if you want to study somebody that was very effective with their time, study David. He's doing all kinds of stuff with his time. He is creating and putting together these instruments.

I don't know if he's creating something new or he's just making them. Maybe I'll create an instrument someday, all right? I've been sung for us in Hebrew a couple weeks ago. If I created an instrument, I'd be bringing it to him. Over there.

In the days of David, the Levites were numbered from the age of 30 to 50. 38,000 of them. 24,000 of them were set forward in the sanctuary that would help the priest in all their offering.

6,000 of them were officers and judges. There were itinerant judges who went around and helped people with all the disputes and altercations that were being brought to them. 4,000 of them were doorkeepers.

[16 : 43] 4,000 of them played instruments. In the 1 Chronicles 25, 7, it speaks about a large number of them and it says 204 score and eight with them were cunning.

They were highly proficient. So, it makes a list of singers but then it talks about how many of them were really good at it, all right? And so, they must have been people that were giving instruction. And so, when you come upon this city, they're just, it's incredible.

The amount of attention that was given to the worship of their God, you could see why people that were strangers and far off anticipated coming to that place.

Down the road from my house, they announced this week they're going to build something that will have hockey at it, which I don't need any hockey but it's called the gathering. Have any of you, did you see that this week? They announced they're building it right down the road from the church.

And a few people asked what I thought about it. Does it really matter? Because the people building it won't ask what I think about it so I might as well enjoy it. And I like that there's people here so I'm all for it. But one of the things I do have against it is I don't like the name.

[17 : 48] I actually love the name. I just don't think that a hockey stadium ought to get the gathering because we are the gathering, right? God's people should be, we are the gathering of people that come together.

And as I read through this and I looked through the Old Testament for examples of why would they be anticipating Jerusalem so much? I mean, there's just no parallel to us. It's just, it's wonderful to see that, to be in that moment.

And I just pictured maybe God would give us 4,000 people to play instruments. And that may never happen but he would be most certainly worthy of it if we could have 4,000 people that would play instruments.

That we could have, be a place and a people that would just give themselves completely to the worship of the Lord. And so I anticipate coming here. I knew there wouldn't be 4,000 instruments playing but I look forward to all the things that I would see.

Look forward to grants updates. Look forward to singing together. And I look forward to our time. Verse 4, Whether the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord unto the testimony of Israel. The tribes of the Lord.

[18 : 49] That they're experiencing a closeness together. Behold how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. Psalm 133 verse 1. These tribes, 12 different families that have come together but their ties were more than blood or convenience.

They were the tribes of the Lord and Jerusalem was the place that they were going to meet. Not simply just one another but they were going to meet unto the Lord. And what a picture that is there for us.

That they were tribes unto the Lord. This afternoon, I don't imagine you have to put your GPS on. You've come here enough times that you don't have to punch it into the GPS to get here.

But this afternoon between 5 and 7 o'clock a bunch of different families headed their direction to this place and we are some people that are unto the Lord.

We're not tribes. Sometimes our homes may feel like tribal people, right? But we are families unto the Lord. We're not the 12 tribes of Israel but we're families that are scattered throughout this place and we come together.

[19 : 47] And it says a testimony of Israel which means it was prescribed or decreed for them to do it which means as their habit as it would say to us in Hebrew as they were given three festivals a year Israel was told bring the families in three times a year make your pilgrimage to this place.

It became their habit and they anticipated their time together and it said that they were the testimony of Israel and they give thanks unto the name of the Lord. The pilgrims purposed to give thanks unto the Lord.

It teaches us simply what the Hebrew pilgrim felt like. It's what God would have us to feel. Psalm 100 verse 4 Enter into his gates with thanksgiving and to his courts with praise. Be thankful unto him and to bless his name.

They anticipated coming together. They anticipated giving thanks unto the Lord. They anticipated the unity being that they were God's people. Verse 5 There set a throne of judgment the thrones of the house of David.

Jerusalem was both the religious and political center for Israel. They would receive direction from God's word. They anticipated receiving instruction from God's word. They set thrones of judgment and the thrones of the house of David.

[20 : 56] They looked forward to the time they would be underneath the instruction of God's word. They looked forward to the time that the authority of the throne that was there would solve the problems that they had brought in there with them.

The thrones of judgment and the place of the king. And then lastly verse 6 Pray for the peace of Jerusalem. They shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls and prosperity within thy palaces.

For my brethren and companions' sake I will now say peace be with thee because of the house of the Lord our God I will seek thy good. Two things quickly here. First of all it says pray for the peace of Jerusalem and we certainly should.

I'm not going to say pray for the peace of your church. I would say that for sure. Pray for the peace of one another most certainly. But I'm not going to take away from the fact that we should pray for the peace of Jerusalem.

800 references to it both in the Old Testament and the New Testament. Israel, Jerusalem, the Jewish people still have a place in God's heart and believe they still have a place in God's plan.

[21 : 54] Jesus is the promised Messiah and only Jesus will bring the Jewish people true peace. So we pray for the salvation of those in Jerusalem. We pray for the day that he will rule and reign for that.

And then we pray for one another. Verse 8 For my brother and companion's sake I will now say peace be within thee. You know there's steps to being an informed citizen. You should all vote.

I won't say probably. You should all vote and you should do it informed. And if you're not going to do it informed don't do it. Alright? There's no harm in that. If you're not going to be informed. But you know what's another part of informed citizenship among the family of God is to pray one for another for your brother and companion's sake.

Let me encourage you to have an organized way of collecting prayer requests of the people that you attend church with. That you can take them down and you can pray for them and then you can follow it up.

It's a pilgrimage. They come there to do something. They came there to worship. And worship was an active thing that they were going to do. It wasn't just something they were going to watch. They were going to share testimonies.

[22 : 59] There's preparation that takes place put out for a service. Different people do it. And I would say that every one of us ought to come prepared when we meet. There's the preparation of our heart. But there's also a ministry for you to do while you're here.

Pray for one another. Pray for one another that's on a pilgrimage. If you don't see it here you'll see it elsewhere in scripture. Ephesians 6.18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.

I'm going to pray through this psalm and then I'm going to ask those that sung that song earlier and if in the back I think they had the words to the song in every season we'll praise the Lord. We'll sing that as we leave here tonight. But here's the bottom line from this pilgrim song.

If you love our God then you love God's people and if you love God's people you will love gathering with God's people to worship God and we need each other for this journey.

So I'm not sure what brought you here tonight but I'm glad that you are here and it is good for us to be together in worship. And so as John said let's go so we can come back.

[24 : 04] Alright? And so we're going to end but I look forward if the Lord doesn't return and He gives me until Sunday to coming back and doing this once again I look forward to giving my time and focus about Him because so much of my week can be taken up in lesser things but I'm thankful for an opportunity together with God's people for a purpose.

So I encourage you in that anticipation to understand the wonder of it. Maybe you're tired and maybe you've got to a place where you just say well I come because it's tradition or I need some or I'm coming for some other reason but I say keep coming for whatever reason it is but don't stay at that.

Recognize the wonder that we have of meeting together. It's wonderful. And I don't know why other people they say you're preaching to the choir I'm preaching to the Thursday night crowd right? You're obviously here but those that aren't here and then those that are here I tell you it's just a wonderful gift from God to come together and worship and just like those people in that pilgrimage anticipated that time together with everything in my heart I want that to be true for you as well.

I want us to make sure that our time is focused on the things of God that we don't allow other things to distract because we have a purpose in gathering together. I want to remind you of it. I'm going to pray this song and then we're going to sing this song before we leave.

Heavenly Father I am glad to be able to come into this house where this is the house of the Lord for me because this is the house where those that have been changed by the Holy Spirit have gathered together.

[25 : 30] Lord these aren't the tribes of Israel I know but these are people of the Lord and I thank you for that and our feet stand here Lord in your presence recognizing that you are most worthy of all the worship that we can give to you.

We are worthy of the glory that is due unto your name and just like Jerusalem was built together compacted together in a purpose and intentionality I'm thankful for a place that is designated for your worship.

And so Father we come here out of habit we come here out of conviction Lord to give thanks unto your name to set the thrones and judgments in the throne of the house of David where we recognize that your ways are right that in you our pleasures evermore that the ways that we live our lives that are contrary to your word Lord will not bring us the joy that we're seeking for Lord and so we see that your ways are right and that you are the king that the throne of David is your throne and that you will rule and reign on it and you are the king of all kings.

Father we pray for the peace of Jerusalem we pray for the people Lord who do not yet know the Messiah we pray for those that are unbelieving we pray for the day we will end our pilgrim journey and that we will worship all together with the saints of all the ages Lord our brother and a companion say Lord we pray for them we pray for peace within them Lord pray for peace within families that come here and Father it is your house and it is a good thing and we came here seeking your good not the good of this world Lord that always disappoints but we came here to seek what you said was good and Father we have found it to be so in Jesus name I pray Amen